

# MFS II EVALUATIONS

Joint evaluations of the Dutch Co-Financing System 2011 - 2015

*Civil Society contribution  
towards achieving  
the Millennium Development Goals*

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Country report

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO  
(DRC)

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July 2015

**SGE** Stichting Gezamenlijke Evaluaties



Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research  
WOTRO Science for Global Development

## PREFACE

This report is one of a series of evaluation reports, consisting of ten reports in total, reflecting the results of the jointly-organised MFS II evaluation:

- eight country reports (India, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Uganda, Indonesia, DR Congo, Liberia, Pakistan);
- a synthesis report (covering the eight country studies); and
- a report with the results of the international lobbying and advocacy programmes.

This series of reports assessed the 2011-2015 contribution of the Dutch Co-Financing System (MFS II) towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, strengthening international civil society, setting the international agenda and changing decision-makers' policy and practice, with the ultimate goal of reducing structural poverty. On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015, the reports were approved by the independent steering committee (see below), which concluded that they meet the quality standards of validity, reliability and usefulness set by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

MFS II has been the 2011-2015 grant framework for Co-Financing Agencies (CFAs). A total of 20 alliances of Dutch CFAs were awarded € 1.9 billion in MFS II grants by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. CFAs receiving MFS II funding work through partnerships with Southern partner organisations supporting a wide range of development activities in over 70 countries and at the global policy level.

The MFS II framework required each alliance to carry out independent external evaluations of the effective use of the available funding. These evaluations had to meet quality standards in terms of validity, reliability and usefulness. The evaluations had to focus on four categories of priority result areas, as defined by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and comprise baseline assessments serving as a basis for measuring subsequent progress.

Out of the 20 alliances receiving MFS II funding, 19 decided to have their MFS II-funded activities evaluated jointly. These 19 alliances formed the *Stichting Gezamenlijke Evaluaties (SGE)*<sup>1</sup>, which acted on their behalf in relation to the joint MFS II evaluation. The SGE was assisted by an 'Internal Reference Group', consisting of seven evaluation experts of the participating CFAs.

The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO/WOTRO) managed the evaluation and selected ten research teams to carry out the joint MFS II evaluation: eight teams responsible for carrying out studies at country level, one team responsible for the synthesis of these country studies, and one team responsible for the study of international lobbying and advocacy. Each study comprises a baseline assessment (2012) and a final assessment (2014). Research teams were required to analyse the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of development interventions funded by MFS II. An independent steering committee was appointed to verify whether the studies met with the required quality standards. In its appraisal, the steering committee drew on assessments by two separate advisory committees.

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<sup>1</sup> *Stichting Gezamenlijke Evaluaties can be translated as Joint Evaluation Trust.*

The evaluation has been implemented independently. The influence of the CFAs was limited to giving feedback on the first draft reports, in particular to correct inaccuracies. The contents and presentation of information in this report, including annexes and attachments, are therefore entirely the responsibility of the research team and/or NWO/WOTRO.

However, as SGE we are responsible for adding this preface, the list with parties involved and a table of contents, in the cases that the report is a compilation of several reports.

In addition we would like to note that when reference is made to individual case studies, this should be seen as illustrative examples, rather than as representative of a CFA's entire partner portfolio.

The Dutch CFAs participating in this unique joint evaluation are pleased that the evaluation process has been successfully completed, and thank all the parties involved for their contribution (see the next pages for all the parties involved). We hope that the enormous richness of the report will serve not only accountability but also learning.

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People Unlimited 4.1 (Hivos)  
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# **Joint MFSII evaluation DR Congo**

Synthesis report

Development  
Economics and  
Humanitarian Aid and  
Reconstruction

DATE  
April 9, 2015

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background and aim<sup>1</sup>

MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organizations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of Southern partner organizations in over 70 countries.

The MFS II framework stipulates that each consortium of Co-Financing Agencies (CFAs) is required to carry out independent external evaluations to account for results of MFS II-funded or –co-funded development interventions implemented by Dutch CFAs and/or their Southern partners and to contribute to the improvement of future development interventions. 19 consortia decided to have their MFS II-funded or co-funded activities jointly evaluated. Eight country studies –one of which is the study for DR Congo; a synthesis study; and a study on international lobbying and advocacy were defined and put out to tender through the Dutch Science Council (NWO-WOTRO).

The specific aims of the country studies are:

- To assess the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of development interventions funded by MFS II;
- To develop and apply innovative methodologies for the evaluations of development interventions;
- To provide justified recommendations that enable Dutch CFAs and/or their Southern partners to draw lessons for future development interventions.

The studies should focus on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern partner organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening.

The research questions for each category are:

- What are the changes in the relevant priority areas during the 2012–2014 period?
- To what degree are these changes due to the development interventions of Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?
- What is the relevance of these changes? (for the MDGs/themes and civil society strengthening priority results areas)
- What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

For the priority results area of MDGs/themes there is one additional question:

- Were the development interventions efficient?

To answer the research questions, the country evaluations involve baseline assessments in 2012 and follow-up assessments in 2014. The selection of projects and SPOs for the first two priority areas was pre-defined using stratified random sampling. Sample selection for the third priority area was left to the researchers.

### 1.2 The DR Congo study

This document presents the methodology and some preliminary findings from the baseline study for DR Congo. The evaluation has been awarded to a consortium of the Development Economics and Disaster Studies/Humanitarian Aid and Reconstruction Groups from Wageningen University, the Institute of Development Policy and Management (IOB) of the University of Antwerp, the Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural and the Catholic University of Bukavu, and Graben University in Butembo.

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<sup>1</sup> Summarized from the call for proposals.  
Joint MFSII evaluation DR Congo, Synthesis report

Fieldwork for the first round of data collection for the project evaluations took place in June/July 2012. All projects activities that have been evaluated are located in the Kivu provinces of the Eastern DRC; Réseau CREF/AGIR in North Kivu, the others in South Kivu. We worked with two Dutch researchers, supported by local researchers that were different in North and South Kivu. In South Kivu 6 teams of 6 enumerators each were trained. The group of enumerators included both men and women. The women strongly requested not to be sent to Fizi territory for security reasons. We granted this request, and put them in teams that only visited Kabare, Bagira and Uvira. In North Kivu 2 teams of 6 people each were trained. In both North- and South-Kivu, care was taken that everyone could manage language-wise throughout the places they worked. In both provinces the teams of enumerators consisted of students (from the local partner universities) and people with experience from other research programs in the area. The second round of data collection took place in June/July 2014. Where possible, the same enumerators were used, to facilitate finding the respondents. In South Kivu, fewer teams were used, but a seventh person was added to each team to find the households before the arrival of the rest of the team. In North Kivu teams were smaller, and each team (consisting of two or three enumerators) stayed in one village to collect data there.

For the studies on capacity development and civil society strengthening, fieldwork for the baseline was carried out in September/October 2012. Most fieldwork took place in South Kivu, but also some organisations were visited in North Kivu, Orientale, Maniema, Bas-Congo and Kinshasa (See Figure 1.1). The work was done by two teams, each consisting of one Dutch researcher and one Congolese researcher/assistant. Each team was responsible for part of the organisations. To assure comparability, the first organization was visited by the two teams together. In November 2013 we carried out interim visits to 3 out of 5 organisations in our capacity development sample. In the same period, we carried out a more in-depth study focusing on a specific part of civil society in South Kivu: the women's movement. Findings of the latter are presented in a separate paper by Hilhorst and Bashwira, available in Annex D. For our endline evaluation we carried out fieldwork with the full team in May 2014 and July 2014 to allow for optimal comparability. Our Congolese team members carried out additional fieldwork in the period between April-September 2014. Findings for both components were validated during a feedback workshop in Bukavu 4-6 February 2015.

We have tried to maximize the overlap between the three parts of the evaluation by including all organizations involved in the MDG projects and/or the capacity studies in the sample for the civil society strengthening component. To allow sufficient width of the civil society evaluation, we selected 11 more organisations to come to a total of 19 (see Table 1.1). Selection criteria are described in more detail in Annex C. Our project sample deviates slightly from the call: a large project of Réseau CREF, supported by IUCN, had been selected for evaluation of its impact on MDG7a/b. Réseau CREF is a network organisation, and the project would involve a concerted effort of its member organizations. It soon became clear that this setup was too ambitious, and the larger project was divided into small projects directly managed and executed by individual member organizations. Only two of these projects were larger than the MFSII evaluation limit of €50,000, one of which was implemented in a very insecure area. In consultation with the synthesis team, we therefore replaced the original project with the remaining project of sufficient scale: "Appui au plan de gestion participative et durable des écosystèmes pour le développement du Secteur des Bapère" of AGIR. For the civil society evaluation, we kept our focus on Réseau CREF: AGIR is not in the list of partner organisations from which we could select our sample, and civil society strengthening efforts of AGIR and other member organizations go through Réseau CREF.

As we only have reliable cost data for two of the five projects under evaluation and reliable benchmarks for none, we discuss the answers to the question whether or not the interventions were efficient only in the detailed organization reports and not in the main text of this synthesis report.

### **1.3 Overview of the report**

Overall, we find limited impact of the MFS-interventions in all three research areas for various reasons, partly related to the interventions and partly related to the set-up of the evaluation.

We find very little impact on MDGs & Themes, mainly because the projects under evaluation are very small. This limits the scope for impact –as interventions are highly fragmented, and at the same time decreases the power of our quantitative analyses –small projects imply small samples, so that our econometric methods can only detect relatively large effects. We find some negative impacts, but these are most likely the results of flaws of the evaluation design. Firstly, most projects had started before the evaluation. Short-term impact through, *e.g.*, one-time input provision that have no sustainable effect will show up as negative impact. Secondly, we could not always identify a proper control group. For example, one project targets the only well-functioning cooperatives in the region and their members a relatively frequent users of fertilizers, which is rare among non-members. An overall decrease in the availability or attractiveness of fertilizers, *e.g.* due to a rise in insecurity, would therefore lead to a decrease in fertilizer use for the cooperative members –our treatment group, but not for others –our control group, simply because their fertilizer use was already close to zero.

In terms of organisational capacity development, we find minor improvements for some SPOs and minor decline of others. Until 2012, CFAs put considerable efforts (both financially and technically) in capacity development, but in the course of the evaluation period this was greatly reduced. Instead, there is now a stronger focus on building synergies between SPOs to make them more autonomous. Thus far, results are limited.

Our civil society evaluation shows that SPOs achieve results mostly at the level of the community-based organisations (CBOs) with which they partner. Members of the CBOs are both beneficiaries of SPO interventions but often also the ones who are responsible for the execution and daily running of the projects. The field of gender and women empowerment is very vibrant in eastern DRC and organisations working on this theme are omnipresent. They all cover different elements of the theme and together are able to provide a fairly all-embracing package to beneficiaries. Within the field of agriculture we observe a tendency to promote cooperatives and savings groups. SPOs in this field advocate a value-chain approach that brings together all stakeholders, but thus far engagement of public and private sector remains limited. In the field of good governance/fragile states, we observe a great variation in approach and focus of organisations working on this theme and no unitary assessment can be given of their realisations. There are many different initiatives that have their impact mostly at the local level.

The remainder of the report is structured as follows. Section 2 describes the country background around the main areas of activities of the SPOs included in the evaluation. Section 3 summarizes the methodology. Sections 4, 5, and 6 synthesize the information resulting from our evaluation on MDGs and themes, capacity development, and civil society strengthening. Section 7 discusses the limitations of the evaluation, and section 8 provides our overall conclusions.



**Table 1.1 Overview of organisations included in the evaluation**

| <b>SPO</b>  | <b>Consortium</b>                         | <b>Responsible Dutch NGO</b>       | <b>Project</b>   | <b>MDGs &amp; Themes</b> | <b>Capacity Dev</b> | <b>Civil Society</b> |
|---|---|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| AGIR/ Réseau CREF   | Ecosystem Alliance                        | IUCN NL                            | Support to participatory and sustainable ecosystem management for the development of Bapère sector. Multi-actor synergy for participatory ecosystem management in North Kivu | X                        | X                   | x                    |
| Armée du Salut  | ICCO Alliance                             | Leger des Heils                    | Construction and support of primary schools  | X                        |                     | x                    |
| Solidarité des Femmes pour le Bien-être Familial (SOFIBEF)          | ICCO Alliance                             | ICCO                               | Support to empowerment of women and girls in difficult situations (PAF)/Promotion of women leadership  | X                        |                     | x                    |
| Vredeseilanden Congo (VECO)   | Communities of Change                     | Cordaid                            | Development of value chains in RD Congo  | X                        | X                   | x                    |
| Comité pour l'Éducation et la Promotion des Femmes de Fizi (CEPROF) | Dutch Consortium for Rehabilitation       | ZOA                                | DCR Pamoja: support to victims of the conflict, in four main domains (agriculture, livestock rearing, savings and credit, and governance)                                    | X                        | X                   | x                    |
| Association des Femmes des Médias du Sud-Kivu (AFEM-SK)             | Communities of Change                     | Cordaid                            | Campaign of sensitization and advocacy on gender-based violence in South-Kivu  |                          | X                   | x                    |
| Kamati la Maji Safi (KMS) <sup>2</sup>                              | ICCO Alliance                             | ICCO                               | Drinking water and food security   |                          | X                   | x                    |
| Réseau Haki na Amani (RHA)  | Communities of Change/ Freedom from Fear  | Cordaid/ IKV Pax Christi (now PAX) | Reconciliation and community security  |                          | X                   | x                    |
| Innovation et Formation pour le Développement et la Paix (IFDP)     | Communities of Change/ Ecosystem Alliance | Cordaid/ IUCN-NL                   | Vision PATS/ Participatory rehabilitation-protection of community forestry sites for the   |                          |                     | x                    |

<sup>2</sup> During the evaluation visit for the baseline, KMS was in the process of changing its name to 'Association pour le développement du Sud' (ADS). For the purpose of consistency (and to avoid confusion with AdS), we will use the old abbreviation, 'KMS'.

|  |  |  |                                |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
|  |  |  | biodiversity and local economy |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------|--|--|--|

**Table 1.1 Overview of organisations included in the evaluation, continuation**

| <b>SPO</b>   | <b>Consortium</b>     | <b>Responsible Dutch NGO</b> | <b>Project</b>  | <b>MDGs &amp; Themes</b> | <b>Capacity Dev</b> | <b>Civil Society</b> |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Villages Cobaye (VICO) <sup>3</sup>  | Communities of Change | Cordaid                      | Socio-economic support to victims of conflict in the east of DRC, South Kivu, Walungu territory |                          |                     | x                    |
| Groupe Jérémie   | Communities of Change | Mensen met een Missie        | Improving prison conditions and state of justice  |                          |                     | x                    |
| Réseau d'Education Civique au Congo (RECIC-Kinshasa)                           | IMPACT                | Oxfam Novib                  | Civic education around elections (project ended)  |                          |                     | x                    |
| Centre Médical Evangélique de Nyankunde (CME)                                  | ICCO Alliance         | Tear/Prisma                  | Basic health care (incl. community-based health insurance scheme) and HIV/AIDS-ALOCES           |                          |                     | x                    |
| Réseau des Médias Associatives et Communautaire du Bas-Congo (REMACOB)         | People Unlimited 4.1  | Free Press Unlimited         | INFOMORAC/Election reporting Bas Congo  |                          |                     | x                    |
| Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral (UPDI)                           | ICCO Alliance         | ICCO                         | Various projects on food security. Cluster lead for food security                               |                          |                     | x                    |
| Réseau des Femmes pour les Droits et la Paix (RFDP)                            | Communities of Change | Cordaid                      | Programme for the reduction of vulnerability of victims of sexual violence                      |                          |                     | x                    |
| Actions pour le Développement Intégré au Kivu (ADI-Kivu)                       | ICCO Alliance         | ICCO                         | Food security: Support to rice and cassava sectors  |                          |                     | x                    |
| Caritas Développement Kindu (Bureau CDJP)                                      | Communities of Change | Cordaid                      | Civic education for population of Kailo territory, Maniema province                             |                          |                     | x                    |
| Réseau Régional Interconfessionnel des Leaders Religieux pour la Paix (RRILRP) | Freedom from Fear     | IKV Pax Christi (now PAX)    | Financing of a number of networking and lobby activities  |                          |                     | x                    |

<sup>3</sup> During the evaluation, VICO was in the process of changing its name to 'Vision Communautaire'.



## 2 Country background

DR Congo is the second-largest country in Africa, with a wealth of natural resources, and an estimated population of 66-73 million. Approximately a third of the population lives in urban areas, and about half the population is under the age of 15. Both the legacy of Mobutu and the armed conflict have led to tremendous excess mortality, an estimated 2.9 million IDPs in 2014 (UNHCR, 2014), and a continuation of poverty. In their struggle to make a living, people are not only faced with insecurity, but also with an exploitative governance system that continues to act largely in line with the Mobutu-adagio of 'fend for yourself' (*débrouillez-vous*).

According to a 2010 evaluation, the ability of the DRC to achieve the MDGs within the time limit is 'illusionary' (Ministère du Plan 2011, RDC 2010). Keeping track of progress is complicated by instability and the heavily deteriorated infrastructure and transport systems, leading to many difficulties in the collection of reliable and accurate data.

Eastern DRC as a whole is strongly characterised by the legacy of repeated conflict and high levels of insecurity. Pockets of insecurity continue to exist in 2014, predominantly in the Kivus and Ituri. High levels of poverty are coupled with limited access to basic services in a still young democracy with a history of clientelism and rent-seeking. Eastern DRC is reputed for high levels of gender-based violence, including sexual violence against women. At the same time, especially South Kivu has a history of civil society mobilisation, and the eastern DRC has received a great deal of international aid. South Kivu possesses a wealth of natural resources and has a high agricultural potential. The following paragraphs describe these issues in more detail.

### 2.1 MDGs and themes

Data on economic indicators from the Eastern DRC is hard to assemble, and we rely on official sources, which is admittedly not necessarily reliable, and own data to provide a general picture of the situation in the region. As the region is highly diverse across a multitude of dimensions (e.g. urbanization, security, elevation, and forestation), we provide some more location-specific data in the technical reports and the synthesis chapters.

#### 2.1.1 Poverty and agriculture/food security

The majority (just over 60%) of DRC's population live in rural areas according to the latest data available from the National Statistics Institute (World Bank, 2014a). In the province of South Kivu roughly 3 out of 4 people live in rural areas (UN Development Programme, 2009). The country has great potential for agriculture and possesses a wealth of mineral resources. The full potential of all these resources is however far from being exploited. On the 2014 Human Development Index, DRC ranked 186 out of 187 (only followed by Niger). Gross national income per head was noted to be at \$444 in 2013, which was lowest of all countries for which data were available. In the same year, 87.7% of the population lived below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day (UNDP, 2014). In the 2014 Doing Business report of the World Bank, DRC ranks 184<sup>th</sup> (World Bank, 2014b).

With high levels of poverty and little progress in recent years, DRC is unlikely to attain the MDG of halving the number of people living in poverty. The country remains 'chronically food insecure' (OCHA 2011), with the majority of households living on only two meals per day (WFP, 2014). 24% of children under five are underweight (MICS). Based on a 101/12 survey, WFP (2014) estimates that 54 percent of were food insecure. In the province of South Kivu, the share of food insecurity was even higher at 64 percent. More recent data are not available.

A survey carried out by SLRC in South Kivu in 2012 ( $n=1259$ ) showed that around three-quarters of households in the sampled population make a living primarily in agriculture, either in subsistence

agriculture (65%), commercial farming (5%), or by agricultural casual labour (6%) (Miliano, de, Ferf, de Groeniger & Mashanda, 2014). This is also confirmed by a WFP report (2014). Agricultural development is therefore seen as the main opportunity for increasing the living standards of most Congolese. However, most agricultural activity is for subsistence, and the sector suffers from lack of investment (WFP 2008, Vlassenroot et al 2006).

Households within the sample of the SLRC survey on average have access to 2.69 hectares of land, but often not all of this land is held in ownership.<sup>4</sup> Due to various factors, such as insecurity, displacement, and market distortions, agricultural production is low, and up to 30% of food is imported. Food insecurity and poverty remain rife. The exploitative governance system, lack of security and transport are main limitations to livelihoods development. Land issues are often seen as one of the main sources of conflicts in DRC; there is a lack of arable land in densely populated areas; displacements causes competition; regulatory frameworks overlap and statutory law is not considered as matching with rural reality (Vlassenroot, 2012).

Humanitarian and development organisations intervening in the field of agriculture are well represented in eastern DRC. Typically, humanitarian organisations often provide food aid, seeds, or small livestock, whereas development organisations are often more involved in the provision of small loans, in setting up cooperatives, or in organising mutual solidarity groups. The 2012 SLRC survey showed that 21% of all households had received food aid, 12% seeds and tools, 4% material aid (for construction) and 2% financial loans.<sup>5</sup> The survey did not cover participation in cooperatives or saving groups.

During our evaluation we noted three dominant approaches in the field of agriculture. Firstly the introduction of integrated soil fertility management (ISFM, the French acronym that is used in DRC is GIFS). This strategy was first introduced and promoted by IFDC from 2006-2012. IFDC defines ISFM as 'a set of agricultural practices adapted to local conditions to maximize the efficiency of nutrient and water use and improve agricultural productivity' (International Fertilizer Development Centre, 2014). According to IFDC, the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa has the highest negative soil nutrient balance in the world. Three agriculture organisations in our sample (VECO, UPDI, and ADI-Kivu) have obtained experience in the past working with this strategy and many of the farmers we met would refer to 'GIFS' when explaining how they are working towards higher agricultural production.

A second dominant approach consists of setting up cooperatives, which is seen as a vehicle to promote agriculture by many NGOs. Collective commercialisation of agricultural products is supposed to make operations more cost effective. Joint material investments allow for intensification of production. Besides, organising people in cooperatives can be beneficial for community building and for strengthening social bonds. This is also the case with the mutual solidarity groups (MUSOs); a third approach which is recurrent among development organisations. A number of people is brought together in these groups to save money. From the money saved, small loans can be taken that allow for agricultural investments. Besides, small contributions are reserved for supporting members in urgent needs, in case of funerals, illnesses etc. A potential risk of the widespread support for cooperatives, is that subsistence farmers or people without land titles might lose out; they are generally not included in cooperatives because their production is too limited to sell at the market, or because they do not have stable access to land. The rationale is that once the cooperatives are successful, the entire local economy will benefit and thus also the small farmers that were not included. Whether and to what extent such spill over effects exist, depends on the local context and the organisational specifics of the cooperative, with some cooperatives being able to provide benefits to both their members and society as a whole while others may serve as a vehicle to benefit the local elites only.

Recent challenges in agriculture are plant diseases that affect cassava (mosaic virus) and banana trees (banana bacterial wilt). In the fight against the mosaic virus, efforts have been made to introduce a resistant variety of cassava (named *Sawasawa*), but meanwhile the resistance of this variety is already

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

reducing. Given that cassava and bananas are staple foods in DRC, these plant diseases may pose a serious threat to food security.

Because of the above described features, it is not surprising that many of the SPOs in our sample operate in the field of agriculture and rural development. VECO, UPDI, ADI-Kivu are SPOs with a strong focus on agricultural development through cooperatives and/or savings groups. CEPROF and VICO are two women's organisations that also work on agricultural development. KMS has worked mainly on poverty relief through WASH, but started to focus more on food security since late 2012. Réseau CREF and some of its members, such as AGIR also work on livelihoods and agriculture. IFDP works on creating an enabling environment for agriculture (e.g. by lobbying for better land legislation and by mediating in land conflicts).

### 2.1.2 Education

Primary education is compulsory and free for all, according to the constitution. Education is one of the five priority areas of intervention of the central government. The national policy on education has three major objectives: to improve the quality and relevance of teaching and to strengthen sector governance (Ministère du Plan, 2011). In reality, however, government investments are insufficient, and parents pay school fees, estimated to account for over half the total education budget.

Net enrolment has increased since the peace agreement in 2003: 75% for primary education (2010), and 32% for secondary education, comparable with surrounding countries, but with gender and rural-urban differences. The proportion of female students decreases in higher levels of education. Among the students that start primary education, only 44% complete all five years. The literacy rate is 86% among men of age 15 and older, but only 59% among women of the same age (INS 2010). The previously mentioned 2012 survey carried out in South Kivu (n=1259) showed that about 34% of respondents had not received any education, 25% attended some years of primary school, and only 4% went to secondary school for at least some years. 9% of respondents were still frequenting schools (most of the respondents were above 16 years of age). It also appeared that households with no education at all were generally more food insecure (Miliano et al., 2014).

Barriers to reaching the MDG of universal education are poverty, the weak relevance of current school curriculums to the people's living circumstances, and the lack of career perspectives for students. Checks on the quality of education are heavily affected by corruption. Additionally, many schools lack resources to hire qualified personnel, and talented teachers are drawn to urban areas, with better career opportunities. The number of schools has strongly increased, but given the poor oversight, the quality of these cannot be guaranteed.

AdS is the SPO in our sample that works on the provision of education.

### 2.1.3 Health

DRC health indicators generally give rise to concern, as life expectancy and health expenditures are low (Table 2.1)

**Table 2.1 Health indicators for DRC**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Total population (2012)  | 65 705 000 |
| Gross national income per capita (PPP international \$, 2012)                | 390        |
| Life expectancy at birth m/f (years, 2012)                                   | 50/53      |
| Probability of dying under five (per 1 000 live births, 2012)                | 146        |
| Probability of dying between 15 and 60 years m/f (per 1000 population, 2012) | 382/323    |
| Total expenditure on health per capita (international \$, 2012)              | 24         |
| Total expenditure on health as % of GDP (2012)                               | 5.6        |

Source: <http://www.who.int/countries/cod/en/>, retrieved on 8.09.2014

Involvement of non-state actors in the health sector is high; (I)NGOs, churches, and private institutions provide support to state-based health institutions, but also act as service providers themselves. It is estimated that in the whole of the DRC, about 60% of the healthcare is provided by the state, whereas 40% comes from the private sector; with about 35% from non-profit healthcare providers and 5% from commercial providers (CME, 2012). A lot of the non-state actors were founded during or after the war, fueled by international support.

CME is the SPO in our sample that works in the area of health provision. A community-based health insurance scheme is used as a mechanism to increase access to health care.

#### 2.1.4 Gender

Women in DR Congo still face many challenges when it comes to their position in society. In the first national elections in 2006, women made up the majority of voters but comprise only 8 percent of those elected in the National Assembly and 8.6 percent in the Senate (International Alert, 2012). The 2011 elections have not improved this situation, and in traditional institutions representation is even lower. This weak representation of women results in little policy measures being taken in favour of women. The DRC has nevertheless taken some important steps to improve the position of women. The country has recognised United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325, enacted a law on sexual violence in 2006, and the constitution provides the basis and legitimation of political equality and equity. There is a lobby under way to make some important amendments to the Family Law (*Code de la famille*). And President Kabila recently reaffirmed the target of 30 percent representation in decision-making institutions. In the government of South Kivu, for example, 4 out of 10 ministers are women. Yet the major impediment to women's development is the gap between the law and the culturally dominated institutions and practices that render women's position even lower. With some differences between urban and rural situations and despite some recent developments towards women's empowerment, women's low position remains expressed in different domains, including the political, social and economic domains.

The women's movement in DRC (particularly the two Kivus) has a rich history, and has grown in parallel to international development discourses on women and gender. From the 1990s onwards, women's organisations increasingly addressed issues related to the war and insecurity. They were involved in the Sun City negotiations to end the war, and played an important role in drawing international attention to the problem of sexual violence. In recent years the attention to sexual violence has broadened to all kinds of gender-based violence, including for example inheritance issues, and to promoting women leadership and political representation. Women leadership especially is an issue that is now taken up by many SPOs in our sample.<sup>6</sup>

At the same time, sexual violence remains on the agenda. Customs, culture and the widespread presence of armed forces are part of the context that makes it difficult to openly talk about the persistence of sexual violence, let alone to act against it. Victims of sexual violence might be rejected by their families or partners, become pregnant, be infected with HIV/AIDS, and face other medical complications. Internationally, DRC has often drawn attention through stories of massive sexual violence committed by war perpetrators as a strategy to terrorize the population. As a result of this international attention, talking about gender in DRC often implies talking about gender-based violence as well, which has made the discussion about gender somewhat one-sided (E.g. Erikson Baaz and Stern 2010; Douma and Hilhorst 2012).

The various activities of the SPOs in our sample focusing on gender reflect the broader issues that women are facing; AFEM, RFDP, SOFIBEF, and to a lesser extent as well CEPROF and VICO target women and their

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<sup>6</sup> For a more extensive review of the women's movement, see: Hilhorst, Dorothea, and Marie Rose Bashwira, 2015. *The Women's Movement in South Kivu, DRC: a civil society analysis*. Occasional Paper #11, Special Chair Humanitarian Aid and Reconstruction, Wageningen University & Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural de Bukavu. This study was done as part of the civil society strengthening component of the evaluation and is included in annex D.

environment as beneficiaries and try to address the large challenges in the areas of economic empowerment of women, domestic violence, female leadership, female-headed households and women's rights in general.

#### 2.1.5 *Environmental sustainability*

DRC has half of Africa's water and forest resources, and original forests still cover more than a quarter of its area. These resources are under threat for various reasons. Logging titles have been granted to more than a third of all forestlands, without recognition of the customary rights of the indigenous peoples (Greenpeace, 2007). While political instability and World Bank intervention have so far prevented large-scale commercial logging, informal logging does take place. Firewood and charcoal provide 80 percent of the energy needs of DRC's growing population, which results in increasing intensities of tree-cutting, especially in densely populated areas. In addition, mining causes heavy metal pollution and forestland degradation. The Ministry of Environment, Conservation of Nature and Tourism (2010) indicates that developments in the agricultural sector are needed to reduce deforestation. Yet, in the East the intermittent return of refugees complicates such developments.

Many of DRC's forests lie in remote areas with a weak centralized management authority (Du turman and Sturman, 2010). This implies that a protection approach with intensive involvement of the local communities will be most effective. Réseau CREF and IFDP both strive for such participatory approaches of local natural resource management. Successful lobby and advocacy by IFDP contributed to the adoption of a provincial law on environmental protection in South Kivu. This is described in more detail in the organisation report.

#### 2.1.6 *Fragile states*

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 formally marked the end of the war and led to the integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons, some of them with support of foreign forces.<sup>7</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be improving, be it slowly. Insecurity still persists in some areas in South Kivu, and suddenly escalated during the 2012-2013 rise and demise of rebel movement M23. The Fall of Goma in December 2012 and consequent threat to Bukavu led to the evacuation of the majority of international staff, and drew the attention of the military to North Kivu, with other armed groups taking advantage of the situation. The following defeat of M23 and military operations against other armed groups have led to more optimism, though. In March 2013 the UN security council adopted a resolution to extend MONUSCO's mandate to create a specialised "intervention brigade" with the aim of strengthening peacekeeping efforts (United Nations, 2015). In general the security situation in the east was considered as stable, yet unpredictable during the evaluation period, and pockets of violence continue to exist. The decades of insecurity, conflict, and a weak state context continue to pose a lot of challenges to governance in the DRC. Human rights are often violated, both by state and non-state actors such as rebel groups, and impunity is a persistent problem (United Nations Security Council, 2014).

What the government decides in the capital is far removed from what happens 'on the ground'. Decentralisation, including devolution of authority and resources to provinces, is incomplete. Cooperation between different ministries is lacking, and there is little certainty that budgeted resources will actually be allocated.

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<sup>7</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel ([www.christophvogel.net](http://www.christophvogel.net)), and the elucidating analyses by the Rift Valley Institute ([www.riftvalley.net](http://www.riftvalley.net))

Various SPOs in our sample work directly or indirectly on the theme of fragile states. Most notably this is the case for Groupe Jérémie, RHA, RECIC, REMACOB, IFDP, AFEM, and RFDP.

### 2.1.7 Good governance

Governance in DR Congo is characterised by institutional multiplicity, a legacy of neo-patrimonialism, economic collapse, and conflict, with humanitarian interventions and an incomplete decentralisation. In the delivery of basic services, a multitude of organisations are involved. Also in the rule of law, customary, national and rebel jurisdictions overlap. The Mobutu regime encouraged civil servants to use their position to complement their (meagre) salaries. This results in an all-pervasive system of 'taxation', in which civilians continuously face negotiations about taxes, fees and fines (de Herdt et al 2011, Vlassenroot and Ronkema 2007, Putzel et al 2008).

Because of the complexity of the system, combined with the relative novelty of government institutions, the system of checks and balances is not functioning adequately (Transparency International 2011). People's awareness of their rights is limited, and so are their opportunities to go to court. Congolese non-governmental organisations have a mostly local impact. The best example of a 'check' are the elections, through which the people can voice their opinion on their leaders. As part of the ongoing process of decentralisation, local elections are supposed to take place in 2015. Thus far, the country is governed through a centralised system. Already 5 years ago, it was decided to put a more decentralised governance system in place, but elections to make the system effective have not yet taken place.<sup>8</sup> At the local level, governance is shaped at the level of the 'territorial decentralised entities' (*entités territoriales décentralisées*, ETD). Meanwhile, many Congolese NGOs – with or without international donor support- have engaged in promoting participatory planning processes at the level of the ETDs; local community leaders, NGOs, and the population get together to compile a development plan and budget for their community. Engagement of NGOs often brings specific issues to the attention of the plan, depending on the background of the NGO; gender, environment, or human rights for instance. In our sample, RECIC, R-CREF, GJ and IFDP have engaged in development of such plans.<sup>9</sup>

An effort to bring state justice closer to the people as part of the decentralisation process, is the creation of the so-called 'peace tribunals' (*tribunaux de paix*) in the territories of DRC. These courts are supposed to exist in all towns and territories as substitute and complement of the police court and customary authorities (Manzanza Lumingu, 2010). Although their creation has been foreseen already by Legislative Order in 1968, their instalment in many territories is only of recent date (Legislative Order, 1968). In South Kivu province, at least 6 out of 8 territories now have a peace tribunal (Fizi and Shabunda are still lacking). In many cases, it is only the involvement of international organisations that enables the state to install these courts and make them functioning. Civil affairs, and penal affairs with a punishment of 5 years maximum fall under the jurisdiction of the Peace Tribunals. More serious cases have to be transferred to the High Court of Justice (*Tribunal de Grande Instance*) in the provincial capital Bukavu.

The majority of the SPOs in our sample (13 out of 19) works on good governance, either as its primary focus, or in a more indirect way.

## 2.2 Organisational (capacity) development

In the final decades of the Mobutu regime, state institutions crumbled and became de facto privatised (such as the education sector), with churches playing a crucial role. At the same time, civil society

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<sup>8</sup> The Constitution of DRC, adopted on February 18, 2006 opted for decentralisation as mode of governance. It lay down the legal framework for two levels of power; the central power and the provinces. Furthermore, it distinguishes 3 levels of governance; the central power, the provinces, and the ETDs. For more information, see: Cellule Technique d'Appui à la décentralisation, 2010. *La décentralisation au service de la paix, de la démocratie, du développement et de l'unité nationale*.

<sup>9</sup> This was not in all cases with MFS-funding.

organisations became increasingly active: As the state receded, CSOs took over state functions. The civil war and economic collapse took a heavy toll on Congolese society and organisational capacities.

After the formal end of the conflict, international efforts became primarily geared to state building and the strengthening of state capacity. At the same time, Eastern Congo has been characterized by a humanitarian approach towards development (see OCHA 2011), at the detriment of systematic attention to local institutional development. The history of a strong focus on humanitarian aid operations manifests into a neglect of knowledge issues and exchange. Little systematic data collection and dissemination is happening and knowledge produced is very inward-oriented and stays within one particular group or sector.

The relief operations in Eastern DRC have had a large imprint on the capacities of Congolese agencies (Hilhorst and Ferf 2011). A huge number of local NGOs evolved to take part in the relief effort, but they are highly donor-dependent and their role is mainly implementation. The lack of coordination and fragmentation of international aid is reproduced among Congolese agencies. In the course of the evaluation period, several of the donors have been setting up alliances or synergies to promote collaboration between Congolese NGOs, but until now these efforts are only limitedly appropriated. Although there are several synergies (see the synthesis of the result for the civil society strengthening component), the level of joint programming beyond projects and actual collaboration is minimal. In the course of the evaluation period, we noted a tendency among CFAs to seek collaboration mainly with Congolese organisations that have already reached a certain level of capacity. Efforts to develop organisational capacity by CFAs have greatly reduced and are often substituted by a programmatic/thematic approach. Whereas strong NGOs often have various engagements with donors, the large majority of Congolese NGOs continue to struggle to survive with no or only limited funding available.

Apart from the above-mentioned problems, another important factor impeding capacity development, is the large area to be covered, combined with the strongly deteriorated roads and transport system, inhibiting connections among civil society organisations at the national level.

Assets of DR Congo include the fact that education facilities have continued to exist throughout the country, and the increasing enrolment in primary education in recent years, due to the high commitment of Congolese citizens to education. At the same time however, prolonged periods of insecurity, coupled to involuntary displacement of large number of people have been the cause of interrupted education for many. An important asset is the active and vibrant civil society –albeit often fragmented–, the increasing professionalism of Congolese CSOs, and the strong involvement of civil society in the electoral process.

### **2.3 Civil society**

DR Congo has a rich history of civic involvement, with CSOs compensating many state shortcomings (notably the church, in the education and health sectors). Civil society representatives took part in the peace negotiations, and formed one of the parties to sign the global inclusive agreement. During the transition period and the elections in 2006/2007, as well as during 2011 elections, CSOs were highly involved, training civic educators to raise awareness about what was at stake in the elections, democratic principles, citizens' rights, and electoral rules. Additionally, they played a role as election observers. Several of the SPOs in our sample took part in these activities, most notably RECIC, AFEM, Groupe Jérémie, and REMACOB

The political and institutional environment in DR Congo is not conducive to civic involvement, but also among power holders there is awareness that civil society should be considered as a factor to reckon with. This is illustrated for instance by the nationwide consultations organised by president Kabila in 2013 in order to set out the pathway for the country's future. Civil society actors were among the invitees. The current director of SOFIBEF was one of the representatives of South Kivu that participated in the consultations in Kinshasa.

Many international organisations have higher levels of engagement with civil society actors than with the Congolese government. The NGO world is an attractive business sector that attracts many potential beneficiaries; either by the provision of employment or by the provision of project funding. Although international funding provides opportunities, state officials sometimes express their discomfort about all these interventions, as they feel overtaken by civil society actors. Indeed, many international organisations are more involved in working with civil society than with the Congolese state.

It is often argued that Congolese civil society is highly fragmented. At the same time, we also noted numerous networks, synergies or fora that unite different civil society actors. The most prominent example is the Civil Society Coordination Office. This office unites civil society actors along thematic lines and has a presence throughout the country. The Coordination Office is especially used to raise the voice of civil society in terms of lobby and advocacy and of denunciation. It appears to be a major challenge however to keep all actors on board and to act as an inclusive body. The emergence of a 'New Civil Society' in the course of the evaluation period underlines the fragmentation of civil society.

A particular category in Congolese society is constituted by the churches. They are among the most influential actors, particularly the Roman Catholic church, which has a well-established network of churches, including areas that are hard to reach. There is also a strong culture of trade unions, dating back to colonial times. Estimates of their number range from 117 to 380, but since the rate of formal employment is low, the unions represent only a limited number of Congolese. Nevertheless, unions are at the centre of social dialogue.

In the final decades of the Mobutu regime, state institutions crumbled and became de facto privatised (such as the education sector), with churches playing a crucial role. At the same time, civil society organisations became increasingly active: As the state receded, CSOs took over state functions. The civil war and economic collapse took a heavy toll on Congolese society and organisational capacities.



### 3 Methodology

#### 3.1 Overview

As summarized in Table 3.1, we use a wide range of methods. We use a mixed-methods approach and data triangulation as much as possible for each individual evaluation. For all three categories of priority results areas, we have collected information at two points in time: 2012 and 2014. Impact assessment is then based on the differences between the measurements across these two years. For the MDGs, this before/after comparison is augmented with a comparison across beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, resulting in a Difference-in-Differences (DD) comparison. In addition, an interim visit was carried out for the capacity development and civil society strengthening categories in November 2013.

**Table 3.1 Overview of methods used**

|                               | MDGs/themes |           |               |            |              | Capacity development | Civil Society |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------|
|                               | B1<br>AGIR  | B2<br>AdS | B3<br>SOFIBEF | B4<br>VECO | B5<br>CEPROF |                      |               |
| Before/after comparison       |             |           |               |            |              | X                    | x             |
| Case study                    |             |           |               |            |              |                      | X             |
| Difference-in-Differences     | X           | X         | X             | x          | x            |                      |               |
| Focus groups/group interviews | X           | X         | X             | x          | x            | X                    | x             |
| Individual interviews         |             |           |               |            |              | x                    | x             |
| Observation                   |             |           |               |            |              | x                    | x             |
| Propensity Score Matching     |             |           | X             | x          | x            |                      |               |
| Self-reporting methods        |             |           |               |            |              | x                    | x             |
| Behavioural experiments       |             |           | X             | x          | X            |                      |               |
| Workshop                      |             |           |               |            |              | x                    | x             |
| Review of secondary data      |             |           |               |            |              | x                    | x             |

The core of each evaluation in the category MDGs and themes is a survey among beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in which we collect data on indicators for impact and intermediate results. We combine this quantitative approach with individual and group interviews to unravel the underlying mechanisms and to collect additional qualitative information. We initially intended to use local criminal records as an indicator for the theme fragile states, but we have been told that these are unreliable as they are used to obtain funding.

For a comprehensive understanding of the capacity of an organisation and/or its contribution to civil society strengthening, we combine objective and (inter)subjective measurements. Core methods are workshops, stakeholder interviews and self-assessment questionnaires. Project documents and organisational documents are important sources of secondary information.

The remainder of this chapter provides a more detailed description of the methods used per category of priority results areas. Annex C explains the methodology for the capacity development and civil society components in further depth.

#### 3.2 MDGs and themes<sup>10</sup>

As all five projects under evaluation had started before 2012, there were no possibilities to integrate project design and the evaluation study. Program beneficiaries were selected non-randomly. Target communities were selected purposively based on implicit or explicit criteria, and direct beneficiaries were selected in consultation with stakeholders or through a process of self-selection. The end data of projects range from 2012 till 2015. (For more details see section 4)

<sup>10</sup> A more elaborate description of the sampling strategy, methodology, and limitations can be found for each project in annex A.  
Joint MFSII evaluation DR Congo, Synthesis report

For the evaluation, we drew clustered samples from the beneficiaries (See Table 3.2). We used as many clusters as possible: all communities/schools in which the projects is active and that are located in sufficiently safe and accessible areas. Within each cluster, we randomly drew 15/16 beneficiaries from lists provided by the SPO or other (local) organisations. There is one exception: project B1 by AGIR had not yet started implementation in the field, so no lists of beneficiaries were available. We therefore selected our interviewees in consultation with the village chief. Per village, we selected 7 vulnerable women and 8 random household heads from a village census prepared by the village head. The budget prevented the selection of larger intra-cluster samples. Moreover, as people within a single cluster (school/community) are relatively similar, it is not worthwhile (does not add much to the statistical power of the sample) to interview more than about 15 people per cluster that are in our present sample.

**Table 3.2 Sampling frames and sizes of the surveys**

|                    | Sampling frame   |   |  |   | Sample size   |  |           |
|--------------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|-----------|
|                    | Treatment  |   | Control  |   | Treatment (baseline)  | Controls (baseline)  | Attrition |
|                    | Sampling units   | Respondents                             | Sampling units   | Respondents                             |   |  |           |
| B1. AGIR           | Project villages (NB: one village was not selected due to limited accessibility)   | Chief: household list, vulnerable women | List of large villages in Bapere   | Chief: household list, vulnerable women | 60 (7 vulnerable women, and 8 random household heads per village) | 60 (7 vulnerable women, and 8 random interviewees per village) | 40%       |
| B2. Armee du Salut | Supported schools (Schools in Massisi and Ituri excluded due to safety issues)     | School pupil list                       | List of disadvantaged schools in Kabare/Bagira   | School pupil list                       | 80 (16 per school)  | 80 (60 per school)   | 27%       |
| B3. SOFIBEF        | Project villages (For safety reasons, we selected only those outside the red zone) | GSF Membership lists                    | List of villages along the main transportation axes in Fizi and Uvira, not part of preceding project | Village household list                  | 150 (15 per village)  | 165 (15 per village)   | 20%       |
| B4. VEKO           | Villages with COOPA and COOSOPRODA members   | COOPA and COOSOPRODA member list        | List of villages along the main transportation axes in Fizi and Uvira                                | Village household list                  | 128 (16 per village)  | 128 (16 per village)   | 17%       |
| B5. CEPROF         | Project villages (Not only those serviced by CEPROF)                               | ZOA beneficiary lists                   |  | Village household list                  | 192 (16 per village)  | 192 (16 per village)   | 10%       |

We selected our control group in a similar two-stage process. The first step consisted of the selection of communities/schools that were comparable to the treatment clusters in terms of observable characteristics. The second step was the random selection of people from lists of the cluster members, again with the exception of project B1 where controls were selected just like the treatment group. Census lists were obtained through the local authorities, *i.e.* the village chiefs. In most cases, no such list existed, and it had to be created on the spot. While chiefs are very knowledgeable, they may forget people and these are probably more likely to belong to more vulnerable groups such as IDPs and recent returnees. This can cause a bias in the data we collect. However, the goal of the sample is not to provide a representative

sample of the population of the area, but to provide a group that is comparable to the treatment group. The numbers of control clusters and individuals/households equal the numbers of treatment clusters and individuals/households.

Project B3 (SOFIBEF) is a direct spin-off of an earlier project with a somewhat more limited focus. The project continued in a non-randomly selected subset of the initial project communities. Since this means that B3 villages differ from the other villages in the previous project, we selected yet a different set of villages as controls. Consequently, we will measure the impact of the two projects combined.

Two rounds of data collection were conducted: a baseline in June/July 2012 and a follow-up in June/July 2014. For most projects, fieldwork during the follow-up survey was spread over three days per enumeration site to minimize attrition. During the first day, an enumerator visited the site to identify baseline respondents and make sure they would be present when the rest of the team visited the next day. This permitted some time to contact people (e.g. by phone) who were not present. As it was impossible to prevent absentees, enumerators would visit again on a pre-determined third day, attempting to interview as many of the remaining respondents that were not reached on the second day. For the education project of Armée du Salut (B1), each school was visited by a team of six enumerators at the day of the diploma ceremony. This ensured that the maximum number of pupils, parents and teachers were present. The students who were not present (because they had left the school or for other reasons) were sought out if at all possible. In many instances the families moved so far away that it was impossible to find them. Overall, attrition rates were reasonable, 10-27 percent with the education project at the high end. However, for B1, attrition was exceptionally high. For this project only 60 percent of baseline respondent could be re-interviewed, and there are indications that attrition was not random: in some villages, people had left to visit their farms which were located far away, multiple days of walking. They did not even return for church on Sunday, our third interview day.

We used structured questionnaires for the interviews<sup>11</sup>. The questionnaires cover impact indicators as well as indicators for intermediate effects derived from the theories of change and confounding variables related to for example personal characteristics and wealth.

The basic evaluation method involves the comparison of changes in the relevant indicators between treatment and control groups in the period between the first and the second round of data collection (difference-in-differences or DD). Due to selection/program placement bias, our treatment and control groups are not completely identical across characteristics other than project participation. To reduce potential bias, we can rely on the DD approach to correct for time-invariant differences and we use the control variables collected to correct for observed time-variant difference. In addition, we corrected for selection on observable differences between treatment and control households by doing the DD analysis on the common support of a propensity score analysis for those projects with larger sample sizes (B3, B4, and B5).

For none of the projects, project activities were confined to the period between baseline and endline. Project B3 by SOFIBEF ended in 2012. Hence, its impact is determined using the baseline data with the method of propensity score matching (PSM). In this case, the DD analysis measures post-project changes, which are an indication of sustainability. For the other projects, activities had started before our baseline and, in some cases, continued after our endline. Hence, our evaluation measures project impact during the two-year period between our two measurements.

In addition to the survey, we conducted focus group discussions to unravel the mechanisms the projects may have set in motion or the constraints that have prevented the projects from doing so. These discussions also serve to improve insight in changes in less tangible targets, like a 'culture of peace' (B3, SOFIBEF). Moreover, we used behavioural games to assess trust and intra-household bargaining during the endline for projects B3, B4 and B5. For project B3, we also used a list experiment to assess the

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<sup>11</sup> Questionnaires can be found in Annex B.  
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incidence of sexual violence (Blair & Imai, 2012). The experiment involves the enumerator proposing a list of four problems women can face to one of the women in each interviewed household. The respondents are asked to indicate how many of the problems they faced, but not which ones. In one half of the household (randomly determined) the interviewer adds "sexual violence" as a fifth problem. By comparing the number of problems in both groups, we then assessed the incidence of sexual violence.

### 3.3 Capacity development<sup>12</sup>

Our initial sample was a stratified random sample of 6 southern partner organisations (SPOs), drawn by the Royal Tropical Institute from a list of about 90 organisations. Eligible SPOs were SPOs with MFS-II-funding at the start of 2012. One organisation had to be dropped from the sample because the funding relation had ended early 2011, and the organization could not be replaced. The final five SPOs in our capacity development sample (VECO Bukavu, CEPROF, AFEM-SK, RHA, KMS) are also part of the sample for the civil society strengthening component of the evaluation, and 2 out of 5 (VECO and CEPROF) are included in the sample for the MDG component as well.<sup>13</sup>

The terms of reference for the evaluation require the use of the 5 Capabilities Framework for assessing each SPO's capacity development over time (Baser and Morgan 2008; Keyzer et al. 2011; PSO 2011). Together with the Theory of Change, an adapted version of the 5C framework is key to our methodology (Anderson 2006; IPAL 2009). In composing the Theory of Change together with SPO staff during the workshop, we zoomed in especially on organisational capacity.

The methodology was jointly developed for six countries in this evaluation for the baseline phase.<sup>14</sup> In order to develop a comprehensive baseline understanding of each organisation's capacity and its possibilities to improve this, a combination of various methods was used. These methods combine various sources, objective and (inter)subjective measurements, to allow for data triangulation. After a pilot workshop in DR Congo, the list of indicators was slightly modified to better correspond to the local context.

For the endline there was some variation in the choices made by the country teams (especially in regard to the use of process tracing vs. contribution analysis). Similar to the baseline assessment, we made use of a combination of methods to allow for data triangulation. Again we used the 5 Capabilities Framework and assessed changes in capabilities. We referred back to the Theory of Change, discussing it in retrospect, and looking at the actual Practice of Change. To respond to the attribution question, we have made use of contribution analysis (Mayne 2008; 2012a, b). Contribution analysis offers 'a more systematic way to arrive at credible causal claims' (Mayne 2012a:271) and acknowledges that development is driven by multiple actors and factors. Contribution analysis builds on the Theory of Change by comparing theory and practice of change and by analysing the role of different (f) actors involved. In the technical reports we further describe our selection of outcomes for contribution analysis and provide more detailed information about our application of the contribution analysis.

For both baseline and endline assessments, the methodology involved the review of primary and secondary data, a one-day workshop at the SPOs to assess capacity, as well as a self-assessment questionnaire, observations, interviews with staff members, and field visits. The field visits were carried out to see the projects and talk to beneficiaries. Interviews with key stakeholders in civil society in DR Congo, especially in Bukavu, were done to develop a frame of reference for our assessment. Three out of five SPOs in our capacity sample were further assessed during an interim visit in November 2013. During this visit we carried out workshops, interviews and field visits. It allowed us to pilot our end line evaluation approach, including the contribution analysis. The interim evaluation allowed us to make a

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<sup>12</sup> A more elaborate description of the sampling strategy, methodology, indicators used and limitations can be found in annex C.

<sup>13</sup> See also the overview table in the introduction

<sup>14</sup> For Uganda, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Liberia and DR Congo. Cf. Klaver, D. et al. 2012. *Civil society component: MFS II country evaluations. Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia*, Wageningen: CDI, p. 3

well-founded selection of contribution outcomes that were assessed during the endline for the three SPOs visited.

It is important to note that the process for assessing the organisational capacity of these SPOs was combined with the process for investigating their contribution to civil society strengthening (see the third part of this synthesis): this means that many observations and interviews were used as source for both components of the evaluation. For these organisations we constructed and analysed two different Theories of Change.

Our mix of qualitative methods allows for data triangulation. The focus of the endline assessment was obviously more retrospective, with a focus on changes in capacity and how the CFAs have contributed to these changes. During the endline we discussed the 5C framework during the workshop and did not make use of the forms developed during the baseline. Joint discussion allowed for more reflection and critical discussion about what was actually achieved.

**Table 3.3 Methodology and data collected for the 5Cs assessment**

|  | <b>Baseline</b>   | <b>Mid term</b>   | <b>Endline</b>   |
|--|---|---|--|
| Focus groups/group interviews  | Group interviews: 2, with a total of 11 informants<br>Focus groups: 4, with a total of 59 participants    | Focus groups: 6, with a total of 41 participants  | Focus groups: 7, with a total of 53 participants   |
| Individual interviews  | 39, of which 27 with staff members of SPOs in our sample, and 12 representatives of other CSOs/government | 20, of which 17 with staff members of SPOs in our sample, and 3 representatives of other CSO's/government | 27, of which 18 with staff members of SPOs in our sample, and 9 representatives of other CSOs/government |
| Observation  | Continuously during visits  | Continuously during visits  | Continuously during visits   |
| Self-reporting methods: 5C framework   | 30 forms returned   | Discussed during workshop   | Discussed during workshop  |
| Workshop:<br>- Key theme<br>- Historical timeline<br>- Theory of Change<br>- Contribution analysis | 5 workshops, with a total of 43 participants.<br>(no contribution analysis)                               | 3 workshops, with a total of 13 participants  | 5 workshops, with a total of 29 participants   |
| Review of primary and secondary data   | Primarily documentation of the CFAs and SPOs  | Primarily documentation of the CFAs and SPOs  | Primarily documentation of the CFAs and SPOs   |

For data analysis we made use of the qualitative data management software Nvivo.

Early February 2015 we organised a validation/feedback workshop in Bukavu for which all SPOs were invited. Prior to this, SPOs had received the draft reports, translated into French.

### **3.4 Civil society strengthening<sup>15</sup>**

The 19 SPOs were selected to constitute a representative sample of the SPOs supported by the Dutch CFAs under MFS-II financing. Organisations were drawn from a list of 90 organisations that received MFS-II

<sup>15</sup> A more elaborate description of the sampling strategy, methodology, indicators used and limitations can be found in annex D.  
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funding at the start of 2012. Initially we drew a sample of 20 SPOs, but one had to be dropped because the funding relation had ended early 2011. Since it could not be replaced in the 5C sample we decided not to replace it in the CS sample either). Eight SPOs were also included in the MDG and/or 5C components of the evaluation and were selected for that reason.<sup>16</sup> For the other SPOs we focused on geographical clusters for practical reasons, and selected seven. We then drew a proportionate stratified random sample reflecting the frequency of thematic focus at the regional level as much as possible. Pre-selected organisations were treated as part of the relevant strata. Geographically speaking, there is a dominance of SPOs based in the east of DR Congo, which reflects donor presence. The selection is also representative in terms of number of staff, years in existence, and type of organisation. Selected SPOs cover all seven MFS II-funded consortia that are active in DR Congo.

The terms of reference for the evaluation require the application of the CIVICUS analytical framework for assessing each SPO's contribution to civil society (Heinrich 2004; CIVICUS 2011). An adapted version of the Civicus framework is key to our methodology, together with the Theory of Change (Anderson 2006; IPAL 2009). In composing the Theories of Change together with staff of the SPOs, we zoomed in especially on the SPO's contribution to civil society. In order to develop a comprehensive baseline understanding of each organisation's contribution and its context of operation, a combination of various methods was used. These methods combine various sources, objective and (inter)subjective measurements, to allow for data triangulation. The methodology was jointly developed for six countries in this evaluation.<sup>17</sup> For this baseline assessment, the methodology involved the review of primary and secondary data (including documentation of the CFAs and SPOs), a one-day workshop at the SPOs, as well as a self-assessment questionnaire, observations, interviews with staff members, and field visits when possible. Interviews with key stakeholders in civil society in DR Congo, especially in Bukavu, were done to develop a frame of reference on civil society in more general terms.

To gain a more in-depth understanding of changes in civil society, and driving actors and factors, we decided to focus specifically on three themes: women's empowerment/gender, agriculture, and good governance/fragile states. These themes are well represented in the projects carried out by SPOs in our sample and therefore allow for triangulation, comparison and a profound analysis of the civil society actors that are involved. The theme of gender was explored during an interim evaluation carried out in November 2013, and then again to some extent in June-July 2014. The other two themes were explored more in-depth during the endline visit in June-July 2014. Our analysis departed from the Civil Society Index and its dimensions, but with a specific focus on these themes. They are the point of departure of our contribution analyses, based on Mayne (2012a), and as mentioned in the capacity development methodology section above. Based on the selection of themes, we sampled three SPOs under each theme for contribution analysis, and four for agriculture (i.e. 10 out of 19 SPOs), namely: Gender: AFEM, VICO, RFDP; Agriculture: ADI-Kivu, UPDI, VECO, CEPROF; Good governance/fragile states: Groupe Jérémie, IFDP, RHA.

During the endline we also used a mix of qualitative methods, allowing again for data triangulation. The focus of the endline assessment was more retrospective and considered changes in the strength of civil society and the contribution of MFSII funds. We evaluated the changes in the CIVICUS civil society index dimensions. We looked back at the Theory of Change and assessed the actual Practice of Change. For the SPOs selected for contribution analysis, we discussed in great detail an outcome that was selected prior to the workshop. Selection was made based on previous data of outcomes that would be SMART and for which it was clear that the SPO had been working on this. We talked about contributing actors and factors and then sought to obtain additional evidence from a wide range of stakeholders and from documentation.

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<sup>16</sup> See the table in the introduction for an overview

<sup>17</sup> Uganda, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Liberia and DR Congo. Klaver, D. et al. 2012. Civil society component: MFS II country evaluations. Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, Wageningen: CDI, p. 3

**Table 3.4 Methodology and data for civil society development**

|  | <b>Baseline</b>  | <b>Endline</b>  |
|--|--|---|
| Focus groups/group interviews  | Group interviews: 15 with a total of 46 informants<br>Focus groups: 9, with an estimated total of 200 participants | Group interviews: 17 with a total of 44 informants<br>Focus groups: 16, with an estimated total of 287 participants                                 |
| Individual interviews  | 126, of which 90 with staff members of SPOs in our sample, and 36 with representatives of other CSOs/government.   | 165, of which 69 with staff members of SPOs in our sample, 28 with representatives of the CFAs and 68 with representatives of other CSOs/government |
| Observation  | Continuously during visits   | Continuously during visits  |
| Self-reporting methods: Self-Assessment Questionnaire on civil society development | 129 forms returned   | 92 forms returned <sup>18</sup>   |
| Workshop<br>- Key theme<br>- Network analysis<br>- Theory of Change                | 18 workshops, with a total of 164 participants. <sup>19</sup>  | 18 workshops, with a total of 110 participants.   |
| Review of primary and secondary data*  | Primarily documentation of the CFAs and SPOs   | Primarily documentation of CFAs and SPOs. For context description complemented with secondary literature.   |

\*In addition to the data collected from CFAs and SPOs we have followed a number of Congo-based news websites (especially radiokapi.net) on a day-to-day basis throughout the evaluation period in order to trace significant changes in (civil) society.

**Table 3.5 Data collection for civil society during midterm: gender component:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Focus groups</b>   | 7 focus groups with a total of 73 informants   |
| <b>Individual interviews</b>  | 40, of which 10 with staff members of SPOs in our sample, 4 with CFA representatives and 26 with representatives of other CSOs/government. |
| <b>Observation</b>  | Continuously during visit  |
| <b>Self-reporting methods: Self-Assessment Questionnaire on civil society development</b> | No self-reporting methods used   |
| <b>Workshop</b>   | Validation workshop with 11 participants at Cordaid Bukavu office, 27.11.2014  |
| <b>Review of primary and secondary data*</b>  | Primarily documentation of the CFAs and SPOs   |

For data analysis we made use of the qualitative data management software Nvivo.

<sup>18</sup> The number of forms is lower during the endline because we were more selective in distributing the questionnaires. During the baseline we noted a relatively high number of unanswered boxes/non-informative responses, especially from less experienced staff. We decided that being more selective allowed for more reliable data collection..

<sup>19</sup> For one organisation – RRILRP – it was not possible to conduct a workshop since it is a network that is scattered over 4 different countries.

## 4 MDG studies

The projects under evaluation are all located in Eastern DRC. Four out of five are active in South Kivu, more specifically in Fizi, Ulvira, Kabare and Bagira. The fifth project (B1) targets Bapère sector in North Kivu. The projects are very diverse. The size of the projects ranges from € 95,000 (B1) to € 647,927 (B2), and beneficiaries include school children, women, pygmies, and farmers (see Table 4.1). As indicated before, all projects started before our first round of data collection. All but project B1 ended before or around (B2) our second round of data collection.

**Table 4.1 Core information per project**

|                    | <b>Budget (€)</b> | <b>MFSI II</b> | <b>Start</b> | <b>End</b> | <b>(Planned) beneficiaries</b>  | <b>% Women</b>                              | <b>Selection</b>  |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------|------------|---|---|---|
| B1 AGIR            | 95,000            | 92%            | 12-2011      | 5-2015     | Village inhabitants, with a focus on vulnerable women and pygmies           | 100 for material support                    | Headquarter villages. Direct beneficiaries by community stakeholders.         |
| B2. Armée du Salut | 647,927           | 86%            | 2011         | 2014       | School-aged children from disadvantaged families                            | No explicit target                          | Schools in areas with disadvantaged children. Self-selection of children.     |
| B3. SOFIBEF        | 122,000           | 100%           | 1-2010       | 12-2012    | Women who go to the MAs and GSF members. In addition: all community members | Mainly women                                | Subset of communities from previous project. Self-selection into GSFs and MAs |
| B4. VECO           | 384,694           | 100%           | 1-2011       | 12-2013    | Members of COOPA and COOSPRODA  | COOSPRODA has 18% female members, COOPA 37% | Organisations deemed capable of the organisation required.                    |
| B5. CEPROF         | 260,000           | 100%           | 8-2011       | 2-2013     | 12 communities -2 of which serviced by CEPROF                               | No explicit target                          | Selected communities. Direct beneficiaries: stakeholder meetings.             |

The projects cover MDGs 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, and the themes Good governance and Fragile States (see Table 4.2). We generally use a fixed set of indicators per MDG/themes transgressing projects (see Table 4.3). However, the set of indicators for MDG1 was not relevant for all projects. Especially for the projects that have MDG1 as a secondary objective, we therefore use a limited set of indicators. The remainder of this section summarizes the theory of change and the evaluation results for each individual project.



**Table 4.2 MDG(s) or theme(s) per project**

|   | <b>B1<br/>AGIR</b> | <b>B2<br/>AdS</b> | <b>B3<br/>SOFIBEF</b> | <b>B4<br/>VECO</b> | <b>B5<br/>CEPROF</b> |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| MDG 1: Private sector and agriculture                               |                    | (x)               | (x)                   | x                  | x                    |
| MDG 2: Education  |                    | x                 |                       |                    |                      |
| MDG 3: Gender   |                    |                   | x                     |                    |                      |
| MDG 4,5,6: Health   |                    |                   |                       |                    |                      |
| MDG 7a,b: Sustainable living environment & forests and biodiversity | x                  |                   |                       |                    |                      |
| MDG 7c: Drinking water and sanitation                               |                    |                   |                       |                    |                      |
| Theme: Good governance and civil society building                   | x                  |                   |                       |                    | X                    |
| Theme: Fragile states   |                    |                   | x                     | x                  | X                    |

**Table 4.3 Key indicators for achievement of MDGs/themes**

| <b>Category</b> | <b>Indicator</b>   |
|-----------------|--|
| MDG1            | Credit use (yes/no)<br>Non-food expenditure (\$)<br>Revenue from rice/cassava (\$)<br>Rice/cassava yield (Tonne/Ha)<br>Rice/cassava Price (\$/kg)<br>Rice/cassava sold (fraction of total)<br>Fertilizer use (yes/no)<br>Improved seeds use (yes/no)<br>Suffered from hunger in the last year (yes/no)<br>Often suffered from hunger last year (yes/no)<br>Irrigation (yes/no) |
| MDG2            | Cash spent on schooling (\$)<br>Cash spent on schooling (fraction of total)<br>Kids in school (fraction)   |
| MDG3            | Intra household bargaining power (lab-in-the-field experiment)<br>Incidence of sexual violence (list experiment)   |
| MDG7            | Use agroforestry on at least one plot (yes/no)<br>Engages in forestry (yes/no)<br>Engages in mining (yes/no)   |
| Good governance | I Agree/do not agree with the following statement:<br>I respect the Mwami<br>I can go to the Mwami for help<br>The Mwami can act in my interest<br>I respect our chief<br>I can go to our chief for help<br>Our chief can act in my interest<br>I respect politicians<br>I can go to politicians for help<br>Politicians can act in my interest                                |
| Fragile states  | Number (types) of incidents reported<br>Do you go out at night? (yes/no)<br>I talk to members of the community about security (yes/no)<br>I talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)<br>I talk to authorities about security (yes/no)<br>Tokens sent in trust game (lab-in-the-field experiment)   |

#### **4.1 AGIR, Support to participatory and sustainable ecosystem management for the development of Bapère sector (B1)**

AGIR (a member of Réseau CREF) is active in Bapère sector in North-Kivu province. The sector is remote and sparsely populated with very limited NGO presence. It is mostly covered by tropical forests, and the soils contain rich deposits of cassiterite, coltan, gold and tungsten. Mining of these resources is done using artisanal technologies and is generally unregulated. Mining pits have a detrimental effect on the local environment as forests are cleared for them and they pollute water courses. The forest are populated by pygmies who rely on hunting and gathering for their livelihood. In addition, bantu farmers practice shifting cultivation, for which stands of forest are cleared on a yearly basis (AGIR, 2011).

Within this setting, the project of AfIR intends: 1) to promote the participative management of natural resources; 2) to improve and diversify the ecosystem conservation initiatives, particularly for women and pygmies, with the aim to enable these vulnerable groups to access the benefits of sustainable development (IUCN NL - KM 3B- \_Post\_ Conflict- indiv. projects). To achieve its objectives, local development committees were planned to be created in the six groupement headquarter towns of the sector. In reality, only three committees were created, due to the logistical difficulties of operating in this remote area. These development committees were formed in consultation with the chef of the groupement in question and other stakeholders. Besides the chef de groupement, they include representatives of women, youths, elders, and traditional leaders. The committees are trained to assess the needs of the community and to defend their rights with respect to the extraction of natural resources. In order to promote ecosystem conservation, demonstration plots for agro-forestry are created, as adoption of agro-forestry would remove the need to clear patches of bush on a yearly basis. Finally, the forest conservation is promoted through introduction of improved stoves that consume less firewood. The primary targeted beneficiaries of the latter two activities are a selection of vulnerable women from the communities, who receive agro-forestry inputs and improved stoves.

Our evaluation tests the hypothesis that AGIR's intervention has increased the sustainability of land use and improved the quality of governance. The power of the evaluation is limited, as project activities were limited to three small communities. In addition, our treatment and control groups were not completely comparable, as the project explicitly targets the headquarter villages of the groupements of the Bapère sector. There is no nearby sector that is as remote as Bapère, and within Bapère there are no other groupements than the ones were intended to be treated. In consultation with AGIR staff, we selected control villages that were as large as the treatment villages, and as remote. Yet these are not headquarter villages and mining was a bit more prevalent than in the control villages. Moreover, the time-path of our evaluation did not coincide with the project implementation: The project started in December 2011 and will end in May 2015, while our first round of data collection took place in June/July 2012 and the second round in June/July 2014.

As is evident from Table 4.4, we fail to measure significant positive impacts of the intervention on both resource use and good governance. The left panel in Figure 4.1 visualizes the results for the use of agro-forestry, showing that it does not matter whether we look at treatment or control: these practices are unpopular across the board. The right panel of Figure 4.1 visualizes one aspect of good governance ('Politicians can act in my interest (agree/do not agree)'). It appears that people have very little faith in their national politicians. But whereas this is relatively constant over the research period in control villages, the belief in politicians dropped precipitously in the treatment arm of our sample.

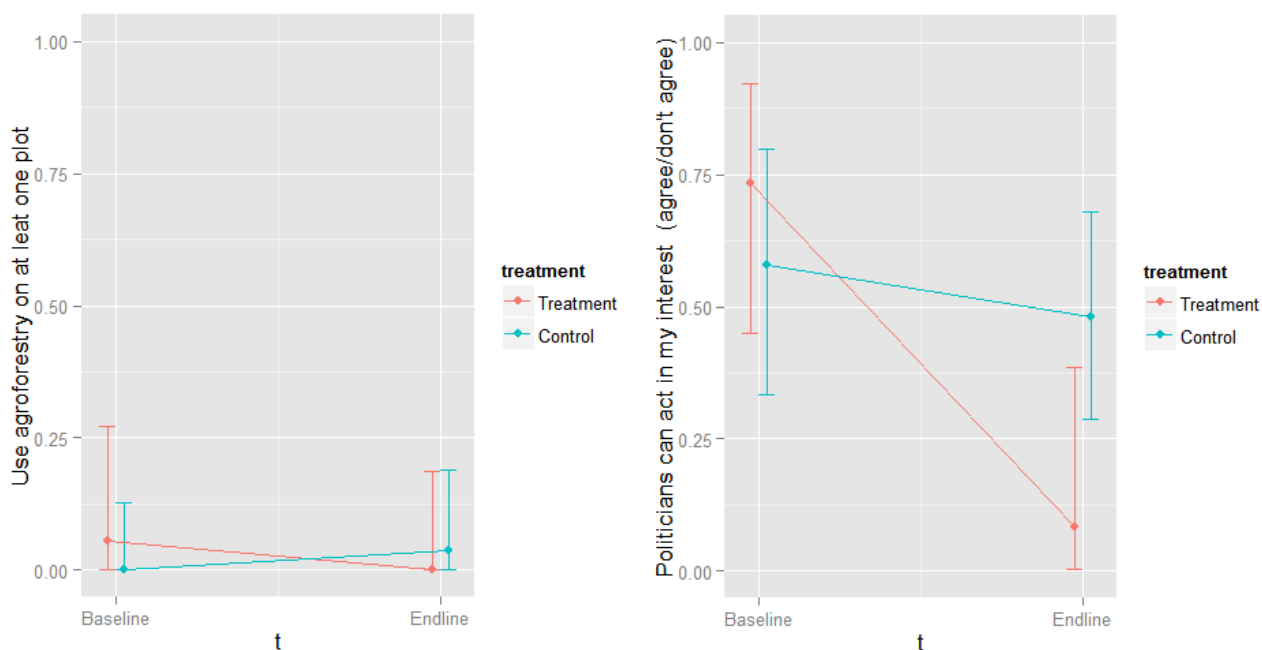
How can we explain these results? Research staff has noted that AGIR is still working on demonstration plots for their agro-forestry activities, which takes time to come to full fruition. Possibly, the time window between 2012 and 2014 is too short for the project to have an impact. Yet the drop in trust in the political process might be related to the way in which AGIR carries out their activities; people have expressed complaints that AGIR – in cooperation with local authorities – has appropriated the plots close to the village for the development of demonstration plots. As a result, farmers have to resorts to fields located further away from the village. This could be construed by residents as a failure of politicians to protect their

interests, which would be attributable to AGIR. However, due to the small and unbalanced sample, the results are highly tentative and may not reflect true project impacts. (See table 4.5 for a summary and grading of the evaluation.)

**Table 4.4 Results from the quantitative analysis on AGIR**

| <b>Indicator</b>  | <b>DD</b>              |
|---|------------------------|
| <b>MDG 7</b>  |                        |
| Engages in Agroforestry (yes/no)                        | -0.093<br>(-1.383)     |
| Engages in forestry (yes/no)                            | 0.022<br>(0.15)        |
| Engages in mining (yes/no)                              | 0.136<br>(1.192)       |
| <b>Good Governance</b>                                  |                        |
| I respect the Mwami (agree/do not agree)                | -0.096<br>(-1.376)     |
| I can go to the Mwami for help (agree/do not agree)     | 0.029<br>(0.254)       |
| The Mwami can act in my interest (agree/do not agree)   | -0.135<br>(-0.762)     |
| I respect our chief (agree/do not agree)                | -0.096<br>(-1.376)     |
| I can go to our chief for help (agree/do not agree)     | -0.123<br>(-1.064)     |
| Our chief can act in my interest (agree/do not agree)   | -0.12<br>(-0.794)      |
| I respect politicians (agree/do not agree)              | -0.048<br>(-0.237)     |
| I can go to politicians for help (agree/do not agree)   | -0.416 **<br>(-2.161)  |
| Politicians can act in my interest (agree/do not agree) | -0.553 ***<br>(-2.907) |

Notes: *t-values in parentheses; Significance levels: \*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; The DD estimate relies on a comparison across years (2012 and 2014) and treatment versus control communities (see Table 3.2).*



**Figure 4.1 Comparison of means of key indicators for AGIR. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval**

**Table 4.5 Summary of the project evaluation for AGIR (1= low, 10 = high)**

|  | <i>Rating</i> | <i>Comments</i>  |
|--|---------------|--|
| The project was well designed                                      | 5             | The location selected for the project proved to be too remote for all of the planned activities to take place. |
| The project was implemented as designed                            | 2             | Not all activities were carried out everywhere. Some villages did not receive any activities.                  |
| The project reached all its objectives                             | 1             | The project has not yet delivered any results.   |
| The observed results are attributable to the project interventions | 2             | Severe power and balancing problems  |
| The observed results are relevant to the project beneficiaries     | 5             | The highly volatile situation in the area limits the relevance of the activities                               |

#### 4.2 Armée du Salut, Construction and support of primary schools (B2)

The AdS project focusses its activities in Bagira and Kabare territories close to Bukavu. The project plans involve Masisi in North Kivu as well, but the M23 rebellion of 2012-2013 severely constrained communication with the area, and the evaluation team was unable to undertake activities in the area. While the M23 rebellion did not reach Bukavu, the past conflicts have left their mark on the town and the surrounding areas. The string of conflicts has resulted in a high incidence of poverty, through varying channels ranging from destruction of infrastructure to forced displacement (IMF 2007). Many destitute families from other areas have come to seek their fortune in and around Bukavu, adding to the number of children not receiving proper education.

The project aims to improve the livelihoods vulnerable children through increased access to quality education; to improve knowledge and behaviour of pupils and teachers regarding HIV-AIDS; to improve access to work and sustainable income of vulnerable parents of pupils; to facilitate involvement of civil society in AdS schools; and to conduct lobbying for improved education systems.

Activities focus on two sets of schools: schools (to be) initiated and supported by AdS and existing schools that get additional support. Initiation includes construction of buildings. Support focusses on training of teaching staff and lobbying. An HIV/AIDS program will be integrated in the curriculum of initiated schools. In addition, school meals have been provided, and parents of pupils have received training to improve their agricultural productivity and income. These activities are aimed at decreasing dropout rates and increase the learning capacity of children.

The evaluation tests the hypothesis that the project has significantly increased access to education and has improved the standard of living of vulnerable children and their families. As the project started before our first round of data collection and ended only after the second round, the evaluation can therefore not pick up the full results. Moreover, the power of the evaluation is limited because the intervention covered only six schools.

We observe few differences between the treatment and control group in terms of education indicators. Both groups sent a lower share of their children to school during the second round of data collection (left panel of Figure 4.2). As households are sampled at baseline through school children, the baseline fraction of children in school was relatively high at 85 percent. However, dropouts have resulted in a much lower fraction in the follow-up survey, i.e. 58 percent. Part of this dropout rate might be explained through graduating from primary school and not attending secondary education. Related to this, the amount of cash that households spent on education decreased somewhat.

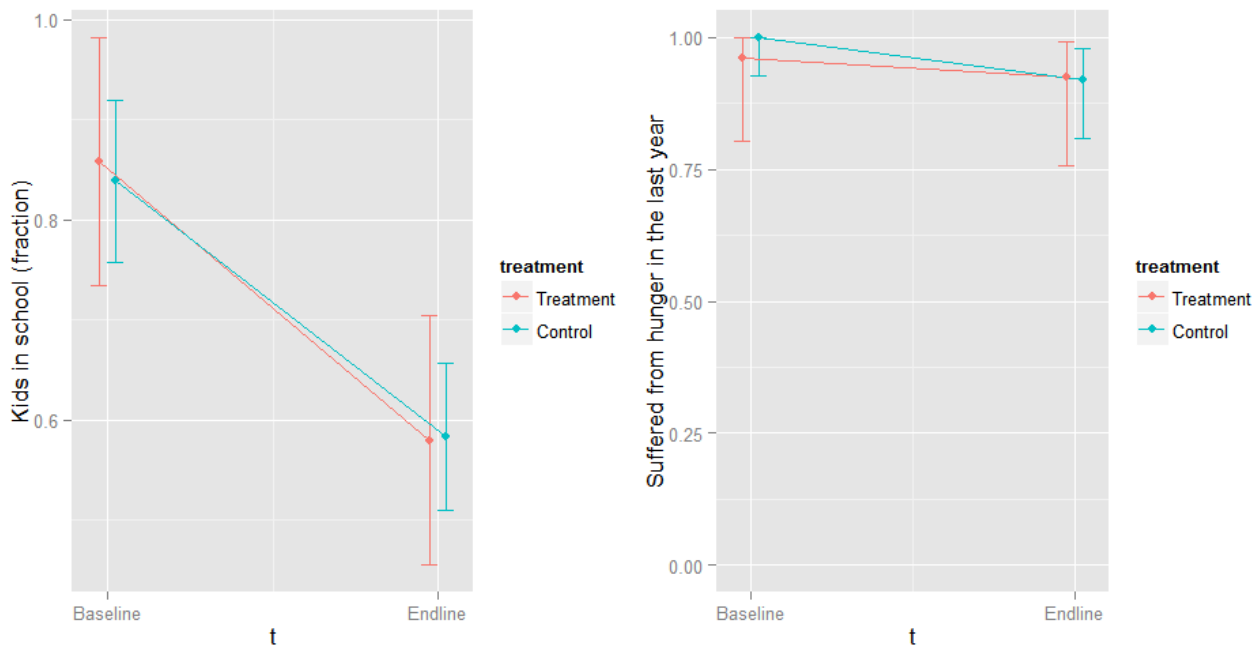
Through the construction of six new schools, one of which was still made of tarpaulin, the project has added capacity to the education system. However, besides the presence of schools, the cost of education is an important constraint to effective access to schooling. In this sense, the evaluation tentatively suggests that the project has had little effect, as can be seen from both Table 4.6 (no impact on costs) and Figure 4.2 (no impact on fraction of children in school). From the quantitative study a picture emerges that it is difficult to send a child to school, and that despite the construction of new schools AdS has not made a dent in this so far. This is a theme that recurs in our focus group discussions, where people report higher school costs in 2014 compared to 2012. The high overall decrease in children going to school in our survey –in both the treatment and control group, may echo this.

AdS has not only focused on schooling. Parents have also received advice and tools to increase their agricultural productivity and children have received school meals. Both activities are potentially highly relevant in the poor and food insecure project area, although agricultural support could possibly be better executed by a specialised organisation. Almost all household reported that they had suffered from hunger in the last year in both the first and the second round of data collection (right panel of Figure 4.2). However, while there seems to be a small decline for both groups, there is no discernible difference between treatment and control. Yet, non-food expenditures seem up slightly for project beneficiaries compared to the control group, although this effect is not statistically significant. Again, the power of the evaluation is limited, so these results may not reflect the true project impact. (See Table 4.7 for a summary of the project evaluation)

**Table 4.6 Results from the quantitative analysis on AdS**

| Indicator                                   | DD                 |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>MDG 2</b>                                |                    |
| Cash spent on schooling (\$)                | 9.849<br>(0.318)   |
| Cash spent on schooling (fraction of total) | 0.007<br>(0.054)   |
| Kids in school (fraction of household)      | -0.024<br>(-0.238) |
| <b>MDG 1</b>                                |                    |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year       | 0.044<br>(0.581)   |
| Non-food expenditure (\$)                   | 7.02<br>(0.792)    |

Notes: *t*-values in parentheses; Significance levels: \*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; Intrahousehold bargaining and trust games were only played in the endline, the coefficient reported is for a *t*-test comparing treatment and control; a triple difference coefficient is reported for the list experiment



**Figure 4.2 Comparison of means of key indicators for AdS. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval**

**Table 4.7 Summary for evaluation results for AdS (1= low, 10 = high)**

|  | <i>Rating</i> | <i>Comments</i>  |
|--|---------------|--|
| The project was well designed                                      | 5             | The project could have benefitted from more focus on core areas of expertise: education  |
| The project was implemented as designed                            | 7             | Some elements were not completed. One school is still constructed of tarpaulin.  |
| The project reached all its objectives                             | 5             | We cannot show an impact on access to education, but new schools have been constructed. Results on MDG1 are uncertain.   |
| The observed results are attributable to the project interventions | 3             | Severe power problems. However, schools have been built.   |
| The observed results are relevant to the project beneficiaries     | 6             | School enrolment rates are low and hunger is very prevalent. Improvements in both are highly relevant for the population. However, there are many alternative drivers of change in the area. |

#### 4.3 SOFIBEF, Support to empowerment of women and girls in difficult situations (PAF, B3)

Women in the DRC can still be considered second-class citizens, even though the law has made progress in putting women on an equal footing to men. Law reforms often take time to translate into transformation of culturally ingrained local practices. Participation of women in public organizations is very low; women are not very likely to hold any positions with decision-making power. Women also often do not inherit the household's assets when their husband (who is the head of the household by default) passes away. Instead it's either the husband's family or the eldest son who receives ownership. Though these practices are changing, especially in the rural areas they are still widespread.

The inferior position that Congolese women occupy in society makes them extra vulnerable to consequences of the conflicts in the area. One particular challenge faced by women is the high incidence of Gender Based Violence (GBV). Though often linked to the conflicts, it is just as much a consequence of the social customs as of the conflict. Victims of GBV are often stigmatized, and rather than getting support from their husband, it is considered legitimate for the spouses of GBV victims to divorce. Victims thus do not receive the support they need to recover from a traumatic experience, but are marginalized further.

In this setting, SOFIBEF aimed to promote the rights of women and to improve their socio-economic situation. They are active in the territories of Fizi and Uvira, which have seen conflict over the last two decades –it was the first place invaded by the AFDL in the first Congo wars (1996-1997); and this area continues to experience low intensity violence today. The project under evaluation ran between January 2010 and December 2012 and had the following specific project objectives related to MDGs and themes:

1. Establishment of a culture of peace, and reintegration of victims of GBV in society;
2. Improvement of the living standards of the female members of Women Solidarity Groups (Groupements de Solidarité Feminin, or GSFs);

To achieve these objectives, SOFIBEF operated two Maisons d'Accueil (MAs or support houses) and supported a third one. These MAs are centres where victims of GBV can receive medical (physical or psychosocial) assistance. Moreover, the project involved sensitization meetings in communities in order to create awareness in the population about the plight of victims of GBV to decrease stigmatization. They trained GSFs and local authorities in gender and leadership, human rights, and management (SOFIBEF, 2011).

The evaluation tests the hypothesis that the intervention of SOFIBEF has resulted in the quite diverse set of targets related to empowerment of women, increased security, and higher living standards. As the

project ended just after our first round of data collection, we use PSM for assessing impact of the GSFs. The sample is relatively small and there may be unobserved differences between treatment and control so that attribution of the evaluation results to the intervention will be difficult. We use the dif-in-dif to assess sustainability of impact. For the assessing impact of the MAs we use FGDs.

**Table 4.8 Results from the quantitative analysis on SOFIBEF**

| Indicator  | DD                  | DD with PSM controls |                  |
|--|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| <b>Fragile States</b>                                      |                     |                      |                  |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                       | -0.392<br>(-1.279)  | -0.462<br>(-1.433)   | 0.22<br>(0.95)   |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                           | -0.134<br>(-1.518)  | -0.117<br>(-1.258)   | 0.03<br>(0.54)   |
| I talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | 0<br>(0)            | -0.002<br>(-0.026)   | 0.04<br>(0.9)    |
| I talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | 0.008<br>(0.208)    | 0.017<br>(0.4)       | -0.05<br>(-1.35) |
| I talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | 0.034<br>(0.571)    | 0.053<br>(0.851)     | 0.03<br>(0.76)   |
| Tokens sent in trust game <sup>a</sup>                     | 0.036<br>(0.291)    | -0.052<br>(-0.444)   |                  |
| <b>MDG 1</b>   |                     |                      |                  |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                                   | -22.941<br>(-1.601) | -21.158*<br>(-1.822) | 9.92<br>(1.4)    |
| Fraction of cassava sold                                   | -0.002<br>(-0.034)  | -0.01<br>(-0.137)    | -0.03<br>(-0.45) |
| Fertilizer use (yes/no)                                    | 0.001<br>(0.037)    | 0.003<br>(0.111)     | 0 (0)            |
| Improved seeds use (yes/no)                                | -0.018<br>(-0.275)  | -0.025<br>(-0.355)   | 0.01<br>(0.15)   |
| <b>MDG 3</b>   |                     |                      |                  |
| Intra household bargaining power <sup>a</sup>              | 0.2<br>(0.658)      | 0.345<br>(0.989)     |                  |
| Incidence of GBV (list experiment) <sup>a</sup>            | 0.005<br>(0.893)    | 0.031<br>(0.078)     |                  |

Notes: *t-values in parentheses; Significance levels: \*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ ;*

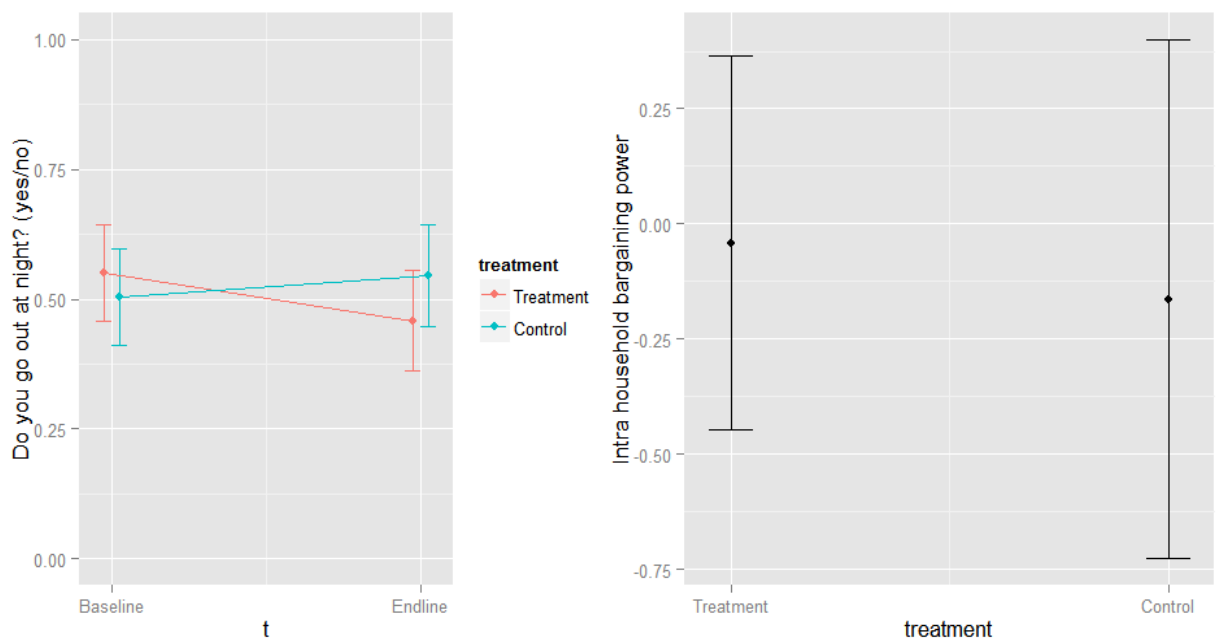
<sup>a</sup> *Intrahousehold bargaining and trust games were only played in the second round of data collection, the coefficients are from OLS regressions*

We find no significant difference between treatment and control groups and hence no evidence on impact for the GSFs (Table 4.8). Also in the second survey round, two years after the project end, the groups remain comparable, and we do not find evidence of higher women's bargaining power, less incidence of GBV or more trust in the project communities (indicators not measured during baseline. See also figure 4.3). Unfortunately, the area remains fragile. Both Fizi and Uvira suffer from the activities from armed groups, though Fizi has been relatively quiet in 2012-2014. Reported incidents have gone up slightly between 2012 and 2014.



Several explanations are possible for the lack of observed impact. First of all, there is a lack of power due to the small sample size so that the evaluation may fail to pick up the real results. A second possible explanation lies in the way in which SOFIBEF has organised their activities: SOFIBEF contacts a focal point in each area, who know the leaders of the women groups, who then contact the members of these groups. This very indirect way of operating makes monitoring of what happens in the GSFs difficult. In fact, enumerators have come back from Fizi reporting difficulties finding the GSFs. In the general focus group discussions, women expressed that their position had improved. They have more decision-making power in the household, and women can now do the same work and have the same positions as men. However, they attributed these changes to NGO activities in general and not just to SOFIBEF's activities. NGOs are very active in the region and both our treatment and control group are exposed to multiple NGOs.

The focus group discussions about the support homes for victims of GBV gave more positive results. The women interviewed generally express that their lives would have been extremely different had they not received the assistance from SOFIBEF. Being the victim of GBV still carries great social stigma and is valid ground for divorce. Though a lot of work is still needed to alleviate these sufferings, the women all expressed that the support that was offered to them helped them to reintegrate into society.



**Figure 4.3 Comparison of means of key indicators for SOFIBEF. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval**

**Table 1.9 Summary of evaluation results for SOFIBEF (1= low, 10 = high)**

|  | <i>Rating</i> | <i>Comments</i>  |
|--|---------------|--|
| The project was well designed                                      | 5             | The project could have benefitted from more focus on core areas of expertise   |
| The project was implemented as designed                            | 4             | Due to the various levels involved in the project – the office in Uvira, different focal points, and finally GSFs at the grassroots, it was not always clear what was implemented. |
| The project reached all its objectives                             | 5.5           | There is (qualitative) evidence of an improved situation for women.<br>No evidence of improved livelihood opportunities was found.   |
| The observed results are attributable to the project interventions | 3             | Limited power. There is a large number of NGOs active, both in the region as in the specific domain of women’s rights.   |
| The observed results are relevant to the project beneficiaries     | 6             | Improvement in the situation of women are highly relevant, but there are many alternative drivers of change in the area.   |

#### **4.4 Vredeseilanden Congo (VECO), Development of value chains in DR Congo (B4)**

While the geographic area of the VECO intervention with Cordaid was planned to be Ituri, South Kivu, and North Kivu, the actual geographic focus is much smaller: the Ruzizi Plain, in the Uvira territory in South Kivu province. Because of its proximity to both Rwanda and Burundi and the volatile ethnic mix of its inhabitants, the wave of conflicts that has swept the DRC in the last two decades has not gone by unnoticed in the plain. In addition, the Ruzizi Plain has been affected by its own local interethnic conflicts between two population groups over the past years.

The violent conflicts have caused a large drop in agricultural productivity (Lecoutere et al. 2005). There is no electricity in the region. For many youths the only alternatives to unemployment are joining armed groups or seeking a fortune in the mines. Rice agriculture, to which the plain is ideally suited, has taken a hit as a consequence. The flat plain is suitable for irrigation, fed by water streams coming from the Itombwe plateau. Irrigation infrastructure has been developed by the Chinese in the 1970s but has suffered from years of neglect and conflict.

Rice farmers are organized in several cooperatives. The main market for the rice is Bukavu (among others the Heineken-owned BRALIMA brewery), though most rice consumed there is currently imported. This market is easily reached by Route National 5, which runs between Uvira and Bukavu through the length of the plain. The road is in good condition, but the branching feeder roads are all unpaved so that access is limited further away from the main route.

The ultimate objective for the VECO project is “To contribute to the process of stabilizing, pacifying and rehabilitating the Eastern DRC by revitalizing the local agricultural pro-poor economy including the necessary financial services, in which women have real economic and political power”. A revitalized agriculture sector supposedly creates an alternative for fighting and mining and would thus promote peace and stability in the region. In practice, the project targets farmer organisations in the Ruzizi Plain in South Kivu to increase food security through the development of local value chains of rice with a strong participation of women. Financial institutions (banks and micro-credit institutions) are induced to promote access to savings and credit for the farmer organizations (VECO, 2010).

VECO targets the only two cooperatives in the region considered to be in good-enough condition to implement a large project: COOPA and COOSOPRODA. These cooperatives attempt to assist their members

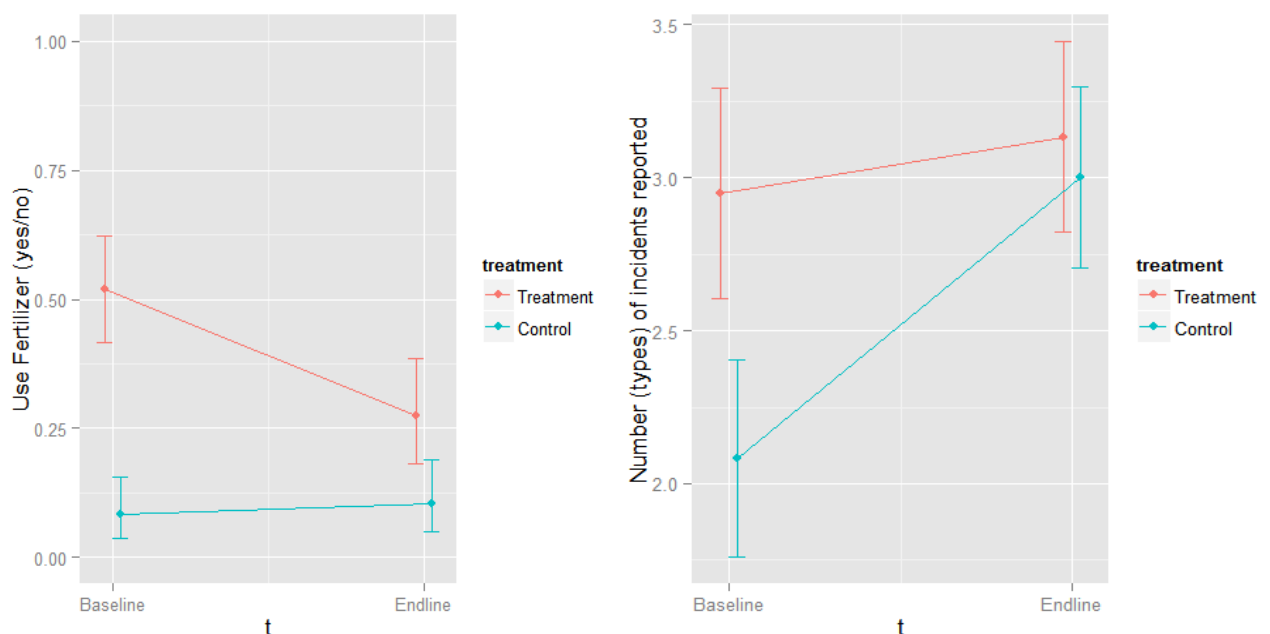
in the diffusion of agricultural knowledge and practices, improved seeds and technologies, and they are in a good position to form a link between the farmers and the market for their products.

Activities are deployed with respect to both inputs and outputs for rice production. On the input side, training sessions and demonstration fields are organized in order for producers to be acquainted with improved techniques and technologies. Seed banks are created to facilitate the provision of improved genetic material. On the output side, links between the farmer organisations and large agro-traders and industry are strengthened. In order for local rice to be competitive with imports, steps are taken to increase quality: training in dehulling and assistance in the purchase of dehulling machines. Other steps pertaining to the final output are the promotion of inventory credit systems and improved storage facilities.

Project implementation was hindered by unexpected difficulties. First, the conflict in the plain flared up during the implementation period. Second, there were irregularities at the COOPEC Imara, a savings and loans association used by VECO to transfer funds to beneficiaries. These irregularities resulted in funds being frozen in the COOPEC accounts, which prevented some activities from being implemented.

The evaluation tests the hypothesis that the project activities have resulted in an improvement of agricultural production, a decrease in poverty, and an increase in stability in the region. Because the project targeted members of the best-functioning cooperatives in the region and possibly because the project started before our evaluation, the treatment and control groups differed at the time of the first round of data collection: controls had higher non-food expenditures and more input use.

Overall, the security situation has worsened sharply in the area during the research period –more incidents were reported. This was associated with an increase in hunger for both treatment and control. This increase seemed smaller for the treatment group, but this effect as not statistically significant (table 4.10).



**Figure 4.4 Comparison of means of key indicators for VECO. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval**

We observe a decrease in the use of fertilizers and improved seeds for the treatment group. Figure 4.4 shows that farmers supported by VECO had higher rates of adoption of these technologies in the first round of data collection, and that these decline to roughly the same level as the control group in the second round, which is about the first-round level of the control farmers for fertilizers and even lower for seed

use. This difference could be the result of early project success, which caused higher external input use during baseline but was not sustained towards the end of the project. Alternatively, the difference during the first round was a sample selection problem that disappeared because the increased insecurity during the second round of data collection inhibited input use of even the more advanced farmers. Surprisingly, credit use increased in the control group while it decreased in the treatment group. We do not have an explanation for this. In terms of fragile states, a smaller increase in number of incidents was reported in treatment villages than in control villages is visible (see also figure 4.4).

**Table 4.10 Results from the quantitative analysis on VECO**

| <b>Indicator</b>   | <b>DD</b>              | <b>DD with controls</b> |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>MDG 1</b>   |                        |                         |
| Credit use (fraction)                                    | -0.21 *<br>(-1.926)    | -0.191 *<br>(-1.659)    |
| Non-food expenditure (\$)                                | -7.351 *<br>(-1.688)   | -6.139<br>(-1.34)       |
| Rice yield (Tonne/Ha)                                    | 114.061<br>(0.723)     | 66.906<br>(0.444)       |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                                 | -0.501<br>(-0.152)     | -0.257<br>(-0.084)      |
| Fraction of rice sold                                    | 0.015<br>(0.095)       | 0.044<br>(0.251)        |
| Fraction of cassava sold                                 | 0.244 **<br>(2.41)     | 0.25 **<br>(2.457)      |
| Fertilizer use (yes/no)                                  | -0.268 ***<br>(-3.64)  | -0.27 ***<br>(-3.375)   |
| Irrigation use (yes/no)                                  | -0.068<br>(-0.866)     | -0.078<br>(-0.966)      |
| Improved seed use (yes/no)                               | -0.193 ***<br>(-2.747) | -0.225 ***<br>(-3.056)  |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year (yes/no)           | -0.052<br>(-0.635)     | -0.049<br>(-0.569)      |
| Often suffered from hunger last year (yes/no)            | -0.111<br>(-1.095)     | -0.102<br>(-0.954)      |
| <b>Fragile States</b>                                    |                        |                         |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | -0.732 **<br>(-2.358)  | -0.736 **<br>(-2.176)   |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | -0.02<br>(-0.205)      | 0.008<br>(0.074)        |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | 0<br>(0)               | -0.023<br>(-0.273)      |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | -0.02<br>(-0.575)      | -0.023<br>(-0.603)      |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | 0.02<br>(0.288)        | 0.005<br>(0.067)        |
| Tokens sent in trust game                                | 0.036<br>(0.291)       | 0.067<br>(0.504)        |

Notes: *t*-values in parentheses; Significance levels: \*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; Controls include age, education, status of migrant, roof quality, household size; The trust game was only played in the endline, so the coefficients reported for this indicator are not of a DD model or DD model with controls, but for a *t*-test comparing treatment and control and OLS with controls respectively;

Despite the lack of evidence of impact from our quantitative study, our focus group participants indicated increased access to markets due to the VECO-supported cooperatives. This could indicate that the lack of observed impact stems from the power and balancing problems of the evaluation. However, we did not have the opportunity to validate the statements made during the FGDs. (See table 4.11 for a summary of the evaluation results.)

**Table 2.11 Summary of evaluation results for VECO (1= low, 10 = high)**

|  | <i>Rating</i> | <i>Comments</i>  |
|--|---------------|--|
| The project was well designed                                      | 8             | The targeted cooperatives were well functioning organizations, in an agriculturally promising area.  |
| The project was implemented as designed                            | 7             | The project was unable to do everything as planned, due to unforeseen consequences, such as violence and problems in the bank.   |
| The project reached all its objectives                             | 4             | Some qualitative evidence exist of a positive impact on markets.   |
| The observed results are attributable to the project interventions | 3             | Limited power and highly unbalanced sample. Some results from FGDs only.   |
| The observed results are relevant to the project beneficiaries     | 5.5           | The violence in the area makes investments less attractive, both for farmers and large traders. The presence of such a large external driver of change diminishes the relevance of the activities of VECO. |

#### **4.5 CEPROF, DCR Pamoja (B5)**

CEPROF is based in Uvira, but the area of their intervention with ZOA support lies further to the south, in the Fizi territory in South Kivu province, Eastern DRC. In recent years, South Kivu has slowly become more secure after suffering from prolonged periods of insecurity. The present situation in South Kivu remains volatile however, and governance is weak. The authorities have only recently started to 'learn' democracy, and corruption and nepotism are endemic. There are various population groups in the area, and care must be taken to stimulate peaceful cohabitation.

Between August 2011 and February 2013, DCR Pamoja operated in twelve communities, only two of which are serviced by CEPROF. As the theory of change and the activities are similar over all twelve communities, the evaluation covers the entire project. The main objective of the project is to support the victims of the recent conflict, such as returnees. Support is provided in four main domains: agriculture; livestock rearing; savings and credit; and governance (Project CEPROF PAMOJA 2012).

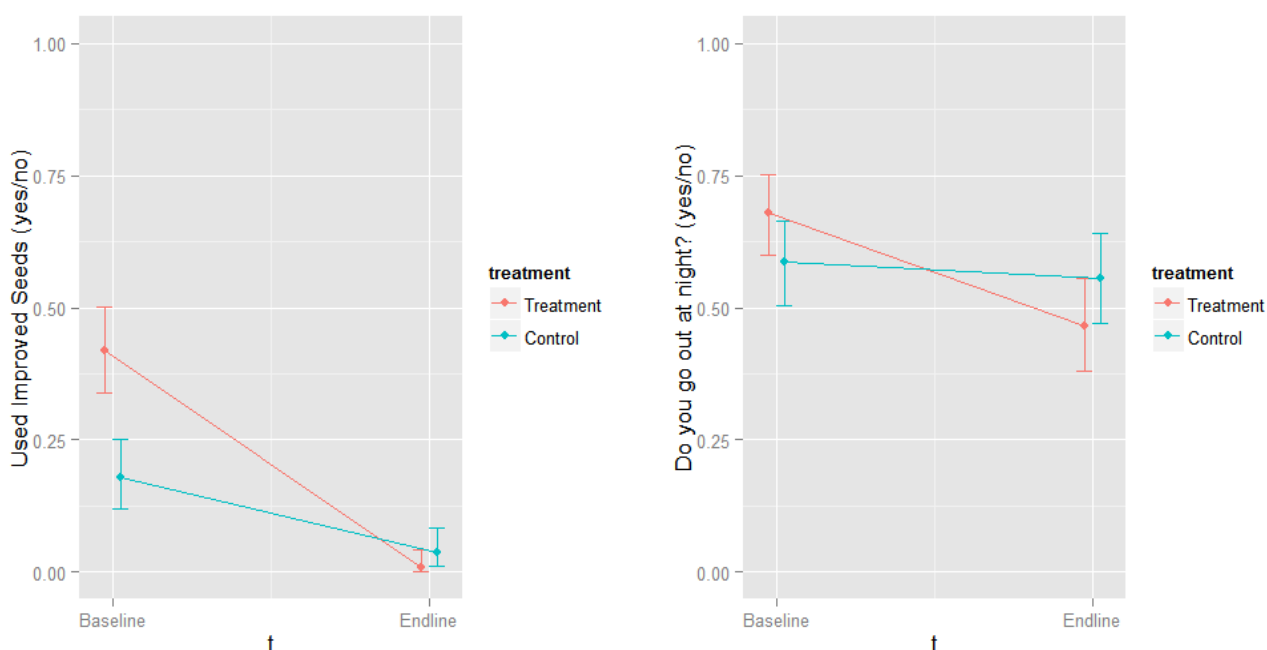
The activities in the domains of agriculture and livestock are similar. Agriculture is supported by the establishment of seed banks. Improved seeds are important for higher yields and in the case of cassava also for their resistance to the mosaic virus –though this resistance is said to have been decreasing. Before the start of each growing season, seed recipients are selected in a joint meeting of ZOA and village representatives. At the end of the growing season, the recipients are required to return the amount of seeds they received. A local committee is responsible for the storage of the seeds between growing seasons. Livestock activities involve the distribution of goats, from which recipients have to return the firstborn. The first seed distribution has taken place between October 2011 and January 2012; and the first livestock distribution between November and December 2011. These interventions presume that at the basis of the perceived insecure livelihoods of the beneficiaries lies a shortage and/or poor quality of starting material. If this shortage is overcome for the time of one growing season, a lasting impact can be achieved. Project management committees (French abbreviation: CGPs) are set up. These are responsible for implementing development programs within villages.

In the savings domain, savings groups of 15 to 20 people are set up. Members of these groups contribute a monthly amount to a common pot from which they can obtain credit. The interventions aim at improving the willingness and capacity to save by pooling resources. The rationale is that no culture of saving exists in the target communities, and that by organizing groups, and sensitizing those groups, saving rates can be increased, thereby facilitating productive investments.

The evaluation tests the hypothesis that the intervention has resulted in an improvement of agricultural production, a decrease in poverty and an improvement in overall security. Unfortunately, the sample was small and covered a relatively small number of clusters, limited by the size of the intervention. In addition, the treatment and control group were not comparably on average during the first round of data collection: project farmers had higher non-food expenditures and were more likely to use improved seeds and fertilizers, though the difference in fertilizer use was only one percentage point. The difference in seed use could reflect early project results –our first round of data collection occurred after the project had started and improved seeds had been distributed.

The difference in use of improved seeds did not sustain until the second survey round: Table 4.12 shows a negative and significant coefficient for seed use, and Figure 4.8 reveals that during the second survey round there was no longer a difference in improved seed use between project farmers and controls. All other MDG1 coefficients are also negative, though far from significant. Still in our focus groups, participants do in fact mention ZOA and partners as having a positive influence on MDG 1. However, in the eyes of at least some respondents the stocks of improved cassava supplied by CEPROF were not more resistant this virus than the traditional varieties. We had no opportunity to validate these claims.

Likewise, for fragile states and good governance we find little impact. These are aspects that change slowly, and two years is a short time to expect to see results. What impact we see is actually negative. From figure 4.8 it is clear that people in treatment communities are less likely to go out at night. It is difficult to imagine a mechanism through which CEPROF and their partners can be held responsible for this. Our focus group participants in fact mention an overall improvement in security, though this is mostly attributed to increased government efforts. (See table 4.13 for a summary of the evaluation.)



**Figure 4.8 Comparison of means of key indicators for CEPROF. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval**

**Table 4.12 Results from the quantitative analysis on CEPROF**

| <b>Indicator</b>   | <b>DD</b>              | <b>DD with controls</b> |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>MDG 1</b>   |                        |                         |
| Credit use (yes/no)                                      | -0.05<br>(-0.602)      | -0.045<br>(-0.524)      |
| Non-food expenditure (\$)                                | -1.413<br>(-0.532)     | -2.131<br>(-0.76)       |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                                 | -14.448<br>(-1.296)    | -15.354<br>(-1.409)     |
| Fraction of cassava sold                                 | -0.029<br>(-0.501)     | -0.016<br>(-0.26)       |
| Fertilizer use (yes/no)                                  | 0.001<br>(0.071)       | -0.003<br>(-0.141)      |
| Improved seeds use (yes/no)                              | -0.269 ***<br>(-4.902) | -0.248 ***<br>(-4.364)  |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year                    | -0.009<br>(-0.216)     | -0.035<br>(-0.786)      |
| Often suffered from hunger last year                     | 0.004<br>(0.05)        | -0.013<br>(-0.164)      |
| <b>Good Governance</b>                                   |                        |                         |
| I respect the Mwami (agree/do not agree)                 | -0.009<br>(-0.18)      | -0.003<br>(-0.05)       |
| I can go to the Mwami for help (agree/do not agree)      | 0.002<br>(0.024)       | 0.004<br>(0.049)        |
| The Mwami can act in my interest (agree/do not agree)    | -0.098<br>(-1.166)     | -0.096<br>(-1.092)      |
| I respect our chief (agree/do not agree)                 | -0.01<br>(-0.291)      | -0.005<br>(-0.133)      |
| I can go to our chief for help (agree/do not agree)      | 0.087<br>(1.32)        | 0.096<br>(1.417)        |
| Our chief can act in my interest (agree/do not agree)    | -0.06<br>(-0.757)      | -0.062<br>(-0.754)      |
| I respect politicians (agree/do not agree)               | -0.126<br>(-1.585)     | -0.177 **<br>(-2.15)    |
| I can go to politicians for help (agree/do not agree)    | 0.138 *<br>(1.681)     | 0.135<br>(1.555)        |
| Politicians can act in my interest (agree/do not agree)  | 0.048<br>(0.622)       | 0.047<br>(0.568)        |
| <b>Fragile States</b>                                    |                        |                         |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | 0.609 **<br>(2.192)    | 0.526 *<br>(1.83)       |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | -0.184 **<br>(-2.293)  | -0.173 **<br>(-2.063)   |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | -0.059<br>(-0.864)     | -0.042<br>(-0.586)      |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | 0.013<br>(0.346)       | 0.01<br>(0.237)         |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | -0.039<br>(-0.643)     | -0.033<br>(-0.515)      |
| Tokens sent in trust game                                | 0.036<br>(0.291)       | -0.079<br>(-0.712)      |

Notes: *t*-values in parentheses; Significance levels: \*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; The trust game was only played in the endline, the coefficients for a *t*-test comparing treatment and control and OLS with controls are reported; Controls include age, education, status of migrant, roof quality, household size.

**Table 3.13 Summary of evaluation results for CEPROF. 1= low, 10 = high**

|  | <i>Rating</i> | <i>Comments</i>   |
|--|---------------|---|
| The project was well designed                                      | 5             | The project was highly fragmented   |
| The project was implemented as designed                            | 7             | Due to the fragmentation, it is very hard to assess whether every detail of the project was implemented as planned, but it seems the case.  |
| The project reached all its objectives                             | 5.5           | Though no impact was shown through quantitative analysis, focus groups showed potential impact.   |
| The observed results are attributable to the project interventions | 3             | Limited power and balancing problems. FGD results not verified.   |
| The observed results are relevant to the project beneficiaries     | 5             | The region needs an increase in governance and a decrease in violence before serious rehabilitation can take place. In addition, the mosaic virus destroys crops and is so far difficult to combat. |

#### 4.6 Concluding remarks

Overall, we find limited quantitative evidence of project impact, even at the start of the causal chain: most impact coefficients are not significant, and those that are quite often point at negative impact instead of positive (See Table 4.14). Both agricultural projects seem to suffer from lack of sustainability: high external input use in the baseline was not sustained in the endline. Does this lack of proven results imply that the projects failed? In the sections above, we have tried to interpret our finding using qualitative information, but due to numerous flaws in the evaluation process, we cannot be sure if the lack of evaluation results reflects a real lack of impact or just the limited power of our evaluation. The interventions were simply not set up in a way that allowed robust evaluation, as we will further discuss in Chapter 7.

What we can conclude is that none of the projects resulted in a major transformation of people's livelihoods or wellbeing, which is in some cases suggested in the project objectives. However, given the generally small budgets and fragmented activities this would not have been a realistic expectation.

**Table 4.14 Overview of impact per MDG or theme per project**

|   | <b>B1<br/>RCREF</b> | <b>B2<br/>AdS</b> | <b>B3<br/>SOFIBEF</b> | <b>B4<br/>VECO</b>   | <b>B5<br/>CEPROF</b> |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| MDG 1: Private sector and agriculture                               |                     | ●●                | ●●●●                  | ●●●●●●●●<br>●●●●●●●● | ●●●●●●●●<br>●●●●●●●● |
| MDG 2: Education  |                     | ●●●               |                       |                      |                      |
| MDG 3: Gender   |                     |                   | ●●                    |                      |                      |
| MDG 7a,b: Sustainable living environment & forests and biodiversity | ●●●                 |                   |                       |                      |                      |
| Theme: Good governance and civil society building                   | ●●●●●●●●<br>●●●●    |                   |                       |                      | ●●●●●●●●<br>●●●●●●●● |
| Theme: Fragile states   |                     |                   | ●●●●●●●●              | ●●●●●●●●             | ●●●●●●●●<br>●●●●●●●● |

● Indicator with insignificant impact; ● Indicator with significant negative impact; ● Indicator with significant positive impact;



## 5 Capacity development

In this section, we present and analyse the findings for the capacity development component of the evaluation. We focus on the three evaluation questions that are relevant to this component:

1. What are the changes in partner organisations' capacity during the 2012-2014 period?
2. To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia?
3. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

We start with an overview of the 5 SPOs that were investigated, with reference to their historical contexts. We then discuss the organisational development goals of the SPOs, their Theories of Change. Next, we answer the first evaluation question, describing the changes in partner organisations' capacity for each of the five capabilities, and to what extent the practice of change has developed along the lines of the Theory of Change. We then discuss evaluation question two: the way international partner organisations contribute to capacity development of the SPOs, and SPOs' own efforts in this area. We describe the main findings for the different contribution stories which we have assembled. These stories allow us to further analyse the role of the international partners, most notably of MFS II-funding but without dismissing the role of other actors and factors of influence. Finally, answering the third question, we describe what are the main factors explaining our findings for the first two evaluation questions. More elaborate technical reports per SPO are available in Annex A.

### 5.1 A short description of the SPOs and their context

The five SPOs investigated for this component of the evaluation are quite different in terms of the way they have been established and have developed over time. We will provide a short overview here, which is complemented by the table with main themes and interventions in the section on the civil society component of the evaluation.

**VECO Bukavu** is the Bukavu office of the international organisation *Vredeseilanden*, and falls under the regional VECO RDC office. For the capacity development and civil society components of the evaluation, when we speak of VECO, we refer to VECO Bukavu. VECO Bukavu was set up in 2010, though VECO Congo was established in 2001 (in Butembo). Since 2011, VECO Congo has become a regional office on its own, with a direct line to the head office in Belgium. VECO Bukavu had two projects at the baseline, one on rice value chains supported by Cordaid, and another on reforestation with support from IFDC. In 2014, a new project started with CFC. Staff in 2012: 6, 2013: 2 and in 2014: 3.

**CEPROF** stems from SOCODEFI, an organisation established in 1984, which played a prominent role in civil society in Uvira in the 80s and 90s. CEPROF was the women's branch of this organisation, and received its first donor (Novib) funding in 1990. Operations stalled during the conflict. After the conflict, CEPROF resumed operations providing relief aid, and became formally independent in 2007. CEPROF has worked with ZOA since 2009, and currently has one project on food security. Staff in 2012: 11, staff in 2014: 23.

**AFEM-SK** (AFEM in short) was established in 2003 by a group of female journalists. It has worked with a variety of donors over the years, in the areas of journalism, women's rights and gender-based violence. It started the partnership with Cordaid in 2008. AFEM is an organisation with a high public profile which has been able to attract donor funding with relative ease over the years. During the evaluation period, it had numerous projects, with Diakonia, ECI, NED, FEI, NCA, DVF, and Kvinna til Kvinna, Free Press Unlimited and Cordaid (women's rights). Staff in 2012: 12, staff in 2014: 14.

**RHA** was established in 2004, with close involvement of the donor, IKV Pax Christi (now PAX). Over the years Cordaid has joined as donor, as well as some other international actors. RHA has been involved in peace-building and conflict transformation through local community groups. During our baseline visit security concerns were less pressing, and beneficiaries suggested projects to improve socio-economic

conditions. Subsequent visits showed again a strong orientation towards peacebuilding and pertinent concerns about security. Organisationally, RHA is struggling to find a well-functioning structure; local 'axes' (composed of member organisations) vary in terms of capacity development, autonomy, and funding availability, which makes the network difficult to steer. The member organisations delegate staff to the secretariat, but not on a permanent basis. Projects are primarily executed by member organisations. RHA executes several multi-annual projects with funding of Cordaid/PAX, the Trust Fund for Victims, and Trocaire. Staff varies per member organisation.

**KMS** was officially founded in 2002 and developed out of local committees for the maintenance of drinking water structures. KMS started as an organisation working on rehabilitating and maintaining existing water taps, then started to set up new water systems themselves and at present is involved in the fields of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), food security and health. KMS has had various donors in the past, such as Tearfund, ZOA, USAID, IRC and ICCO. For most of the evaluation period, ICCO was the only donor. Part of the time, KMS did not have any funding at all. Reduced donor funding is reflected in the number of staff at KMS. Office staff 2012: 8, supported by a number of field workers. Office staff 2012: 9, in 2014: 5, supported by field workers.

The above shows that these organisations stem from very different backgrounds. CEPROF is a daughter organisation to an NGO established in 1984, but little memory and traces of this organisation remain. AFEM was established in 2003 by a group of female journalists (strong ownership of members). VECO Bukavu is a real exception as it is the local office of an international organisation, which reports to the regional office in Butembo (North Kivu), which in turn reports to the head office in Leuven (Belgium). KMS started as a local community initiative that developed to a larger scale. And finally, RHA is a network consisting of 7 member organisations, and the CFA PAX was closely involved in setting up the network.

Another important factor is the local context of the five SPOs: two organisations are based in Bukavu (AFEM and VECO), two in Uvira/Fizi (CEPROF and KMS), and one in Bunia/Ituri (RHA). This is all in the eastern part of DRC, but the donor context differs notably between these three areas. Bukavu is the provincial capital of South Kivu, has the highest concentration of donor offices, and a large number of the SPOs in the civil society development sample is based there. Uvira/Fizi are reasonably well reachable by car, from Bukavu, and are also relatively well-served by donor organisations. After a number of years of many humanitarian interventions, humanitarian organisations are now ending their operations. Ituri is less accessible, and in terms of donor presence is a less developed area. Civil society in Ituri is little developed, and mutual capacity building of CSOs hardly takes place. Besides, as a network organisation, RHA is spread over a vast area, and it can be a challenge to bring staff together.

## **5.2 Theory of Change for organisational capacity development**

At the outset of the evaluation, none of the SPOs had an explicit, written Theory of Change (ToC) for developing their organisational capacity. During the baseline workshops, we developed a ToC dedicated to organisational capacity development with each SPO (see table 5.1). These ToCs were developed separately of the ToCs for civil society strengthening, but can be seen in conjunction, as the development of organisational capacity will contribute to attaining the civil society ToC goal. Development of the Theory of Change gave us insight into the felt needs of the SPOs in terms of capacity, but also their vision for the future, and how they expected to develop. The ToCs guided the intermediate and final data gathering phases of the evaluation, and provided input to explaining the progress (or lack thereof) in terms of organisational capacity of the 5 SPOs. During the endline visit we connected progress in terms of Theory of Change to the indicators of the 5 Capabilities framework. It should be emphasised however that Theories of Change were usually not fully internalised by SPO staff on the basis of our workshop; as evaluators we mainly mapped what was going on but did not explicitly push for change. During the endline workshops we provided summaries (in narratives and schematically) of the ToCs to start our conversation with participants again. In the next section, we describe organisational development in terms of the 5 Capabilities, and conclude by connecting this back to the ToCs. Now, we give a short overview of the five Theories of Change in table 5.1, followed by some general remarks.

**Table 5.1 Organizational capacity development goals of the five SPOs**

| <b>SPO</b> | <b>Ultimate Goal</b>   | <b>Anticipated process of change &amp; assumptions</b>   |
|------------|--|--|
| VECO       | <i>To be an organisation capable of supporting the development of a strong and sustainable rural entrepreneurship, at the service of organised smallholder farmers</i>                                   | Three parallel processes: acquisition of additional funds and expanding activities, developing staff capacity and internal organisation, and increasing embeddedness in Bukavu civil society and with authorities.<br><u>Assumptions:</u> new financing will be available, security situation will remain relatively stable.   |
| CEPROF     | <i>To be a reliable organisation for the advancement of women in terms of livelihoods and good governance in the territory of Fizi</i>   | CEPROF has to broaden the financial resource base, extra training for staff members responsible for donor relations. Transparent management of funds and human resources, clear division of labour, regular meetings. Need plan for capacity development, and training for members of GA and Board to improve internal accountability.<br><u>Assumptions:</u> it will be possible to further involve the members, financing will continue, and the security situation will remain relatively stable.   |
| AFEM-SK    | <i>To become a centre of reference for media professionals in the DRC (and in the Great Lakes Region)</i>  | Professionalising the studio, establishment of a database and a library, provision of education for female journalists. Establish offices in other provinces, and buy a building in Bukavu. Train staff in the provinces, and conduct feasibility studies before expanding. Internally, a strategic plan needs to be developed, and elections have to be organised for the Board and Audit Committee.<br><u>Assumptions:</u> there will be donors that share the vision, the security situation will remain relatively stable, and AFEM leadership will be capable of leading an expanding organisation.   |
| RHA        | <i>To have a general direction in Bunia (coordination) and to constitute 5 axes, 1 in each territory. The axis of each territory will be constituted by a network (integrating other organisations).</i> | To have a presence in each territory, it is necessary to expand activities, raise awareness and organise community meetings. In order to improve the functioning of the organisation, the structure of the network has to be changed. For this, it is necessary to hold a General Assembly, to elect a Board which can oversee the process of change and lead the organisation. Staff capacity has to be increased, through training on identified needs.<br><u>Assumptions:</u> the donors will continue to support the organisation during the process, the security situation will remain relatively stable, and the network has the necessary capacity to make these organisational changes. |
| KMS        | <i>To systematically increase the presence of KMS in the field</i>   | Develop organisational capacity and staff capacity, a well-equipped office, adequate logistics. For this, more institutional funding is needed. Working in synergy with other organisations can be beneficial. It is necessary to have more transparent management, interaction between staff, and improved management of projects.<br><u>Assumptions:</u> continued donor support and relative stability of security situation, KMS has the potential to develop further if it receives the necessary support.  |

We further describe overall change in terms of the 5 Capabilities for organisational capacity below. First, we describe some general trends based on the Theories of Change developed with the 5 SPOs:

- As mentioned above, none of the SPOs had developed a ToC for organisational capacity development at the start of the evaluation, and the focus on internal organisational capacity was not a natural one for the investigated SPOs: the tendency was to focus on reaching a certain societal impact, to the benefit of the target group.
- There seems to be an implicit awareness of a generalised theory of change (shared by CFAs), with a number of general elements: training of individual staff, improving internal management, donor support in developing capacity, the involvement of the members through the General Assembly,

Board and Audit Committee. All SPOs consider these – in varying degrees- to be central elements in improving their organisational capacity.

- Generally, we find that SPOs assigned an important role to donor organisations in their ToC. Financing by an external organisation forms the basis for their organisational development, both in terms of institutional funding (including salaries) and in terms of training sessions for capacity development.
- All organisations expressed the need for the development of their capacity, in order to reach the ToC goals, and a willingness to learn – though in different degrees. VECO indicated it had sufficient capacity, but in case of additional projects, capacity would have to be increased. CEPROF indicated it was still lacking capacity, and that staff needed to be trained in order to reach the ToC goal. CEPROF was the only SPO in our sample that received substantial capacity training in the course of the evaluation period. KMS also indicated that its staff needed training (preferably on an individual basis), for example in project cycle management. Most AFEM staff had already benefited from significant training over the years.
- All organisations set high goals, with AFEM the most obvious. Goals reflect the ambitions of SPOs, to grow and be able to satisfy the needs of a larger group of beneficiaries. When looking at the analysis for each capability below, it becomes apparent that there still remains a lot to do for the SPOs, and that it is questionable whether the ToC goals will be attained in five years.
- AFEM, CEPROF and RHA refer to the functioning of their General Assembly, Board of Directors and Audit Committee in their ToC. They indicate that improvement of their functioning will contribute to the organisational capacity of the executive part of the SPO. For RHA, reorganisation was considered crucial to be able to start progressing along the pathway of change.
- Cooperation with other organisations is mentioned by both AFEM and CEPROF. AFEM indicates this is necessary in order to expand, and incorporate related organisations in other areas. CEPROF strives for cooperation in order to jointly work on proposals in order to get funding.
- Two important assumptions are the continuation of a certain level of security and stability, and the continuation of donor support. Both of these are mentioned by all SPOs, and considered vital for the development of organisational capacity. Another important assumption (but not often mentioned) is that SPOs will be able to maintain their current staff.
- For each organisation, indicators have been established to measure progress. These indicators have been used for measuring a change in organisational capacity in the two years covered by the evaluation. Indicators can be grouped: procedural indicators (organisational policy, internal communications,..), financial (number of donors, total budget, number of projects, level of salaries), capacity (number of trainings staff has participated in, existence of a plan for capacity development, number of years of experience of staff). We address these indicators under the narrative descriptions of the different capabilities of the 5C framework.

### **5.3 Research Question 1: What are the changes in partner organisations' capacity during the 2012-2014 period?**

In this section we describe the changes in organisational capacity for the five selected SPOs during the evaluation period (2012-2014). We order this section along the five capabilities that form the framework for this part of the evaluation. At the end of this section, we conclude what are the main changes for the five SPOs, relating this back to their Theories of Change.

Table 5.2 presents the scores per capability for each organisation that we assessed, both during baseline ( $T_0$ ) end during endline ( $T_1$ ). The scoring is based on our judgement, on the basis of the data we collected, including the self-assessment questionnaires filled in by SPO staff. We will discuss each of the five capabilities below. For an analysis of each individual organisation, please see the technical reports in Annex A. For scoring we developed a scale, taking into consideration the Congolese context.

**Table 5.2 SPO scores per capability**

| SPO (in order of overall capacity) | Act and commit       |                      | Deliver on dev't objectives |                      | Adapt and self-renew |                      | Relate to external stakeholders |                      | Achieve coherence    |                      | Overall capacity     |                      |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
|                                    | <i>T<sub>0</sub></i> | <i>T<sub>1</sub></i> | <i>T<sub>0</sub></i>        | <i>T<sub>1</sub></i> | <i>T<sub>0</sub></i> | <i>T<sub>1</sub></i> | <i>T<sub>0</sub></i>            | <i>T<sub>1</sub></i> | <i>T<sub>0</sub></i> | <i>T<sub>1</sub></i> | <i>T<sub>0</sub></i> | <i>T<sub>1</sub></i> |
| VECO                               | 4.5                  | 4.5                  | 4                           | 4                    | 3.5                  | 3.5                  | 3                               | 3.5                  | 4.5                  | 5                    | <b>4</b>             | <b>4</b>             |
| AFEM-SK                            | 3.5                  | 3.5                  | 4                           | 4                    | 3                    | 3.5                  | 4                               | 4                    | 3                    | 3                    | <b>3.5</b>           | <b>3.5</b>           |
| CEPROF                             | 3                    | 3                    | 3                           | 3.5                  | 2                    | 2                    | 2.5                             | 2.5                  | 2.5                  | 2                    | <b>2.5</b>           | <b>2.5</b>           |
| KMS                                | 3                    | 2.5                  | 3                           | 2.5                  | 3                    | 2                    | 2.5                             | 2                    | 2.5                  | 2                    | <b>3</b>             | <b>2</b>             |
| RHA                                | 3                    | 2                    | 2.5                         | 2                    | 2.5                  | 2                    | 3                               | 2                    | 2                    | 3                    | <b>2.5</b>           | <b>2</b>             |
| <b>Average</b>                     | <b>3.3</b>           | <b>3</b>             | <b>3.2</b>                  | <b>3.1</b>           | <b>2.6</b>           | <b>2.4</b>           | <b>2.8</b>                      | <b>2.7</b>           | <b>2.8</b>           | <b>2.8</b>           | <b>2.9</b>           | <b>2.7</b>           |

### 5.3.1 Capability to act and commit

A general observation about the 5 SPOs is that the leaders of the organisations<sup>20</sup> often dominate the discussions during the workshops. Leaders were often among the founders of the organisation, and embody the vision. In some cases (notably CEPROF and RHA), it is likely that the organisation would not have existed without the leader's presence. In other cases responsibilities are more divided, and there are other members of staff that can take over when the leader is absent (VECO, AFEM). In the case of KMS, two founding members were still active in the organisation (the coordinator and the assistant coordinator). They were clearly the ones setting the direction. The coordinator of RHA is a strong character, but each visit staff's dissatisfaction about his functioning came stronger to the surface and we have strong doubts about his capability to take all members on board.

The organisational structure of organisations is not always clear. In CEPROF for example staff indicate the division of responsibilities is unclear, and it is hard to imagine this organisation engaging in more projects than the one it currently implements. ZOA encouraged CEPROF to hire an Administration and Finances officer who should make CEPROF a more efficient and effective organisation that is able to act and commit. This means structuring the organisation along more formal lines, setting up clear job descriptions, organising regular staff meetings to plan and evaluate activities, etc.

For most organisations a strategic plan or multi-annual plan either exists (VECO, KMS, and RHA) or is in the making or re-making (AFEM, CEPROF). Activities are based on both the plans and the availability of funding. Some organisations make detailed activity plans (VECO, KMS), Others (CEPROF), based on project plans. The direction is often driven by funding opportunities. Delays in release of funding can greatly impact the implementation of projects, also because certain activities have cyclical calendars. The capacity to plan further ahead is not very well-developed, which has to do with the insecurity about funding. VECO is an exception in that it is part of an international organisation, with the regional office in Butembo taking care of the national strategy, in consultation with local staff and with representatives of the grassroots structures.

Several organisations have a relatively young staff (CEPROF, KMS, AFEM), and this has consequences for the professional capacity of the staff. In case of AFEM this is a deliberate choice, in order to allow youth to develop themselves professionally. It also has to do with the lack of resources to employ more experienced personnel, however. At two organisations (KMS, CEPROF) the level of remuneration was frequently cited as a major issue, with staff not working on formal contracts, but receiving a fee instead. Remuneration is always linked to motivation (in DRC, in fact, the word 'motivation' is often understood to refer to remuneration); however, even though remuneration is low, staff do indicate they are motivated to do their jobs. The low salaries increase the risk of staff turnover, though, and the loss of capacity once people have

<sup>20</sup> In DRC, the function title usually is 'coordinateur', but sometimes also 'secrétaire exécutif', 'secrétaire général', 'abbé' or 'président', depending on the nature and history of the organisation.

received a number of trainings. Nevertheless, we found relatively little staff turnover during the evaluation period. Only KMS staff changed considerably as projects ended, and a new project with a different thematic focus started.

SPOs strongly depend on the donor organisations for training their staff (see the section on capacity building by international partners below). Until 2012, organisations with multiple donors (AFEM, VECO, and RHA) had more access to training opportunities for their staff. This is combined with the fact that AFEM had some funds available for capacity development (Cordaid provided some dedicated funding). Capacity development for RHA is often provided in a direct way and not visible in RHA's budget. In the course of the evaluation period however we noted a clear shift in donor policy, with generally less attention (and less budget available) for capacity development. ZOA is an exception. As a partner of CEPROF, this was the only donor that continued to provide close capacity support.

In terms of financial resource security, the image presented by these 5 organisations is diverse. Some have managed to develop new partnerships (AFEM, VECO, and RHA), others have a relatively stable contract with one donor (CEPROF), or several short-term contracts over time (KMS). VECO again is exceptional in the sense that it belongs to a larger organisation which aims to solidify its presence in Bukavu, which also gives it a certain degree of stability. SPOs are encountering difficulties in securing new projects, before already running projects have terminated. This leads to gaps in financing (KMS, RHA, VECO), which in turn makes it difficult to retain staff. SPOs have no set procedures for acquiring new funding, though as part of an international organisation VECO does have access to an extended network for acquiring projects. Many SPOs strongly depend on one (KMS, CEPROF) or two donors (VECO). RHA is strongly oriented towards obtaining more donor funding and the coordinator invests a lot of efforts in this, but it is increasingly becoming a challenge to find donors that are willing to invest not only in project support but also in organisational (capacity) development.

Overall, we conclude that the SPOs have dominant and ambitious leaders. This combination results in strategic plans and Theories of Change that are very aspiring, but that will often need much more efforts and resources than what is currently realistic. Often, consultants are hired who navigate SPOs through a process of planning and who then elaborate the plan on paper. A clear strategy helps organisations to not be too much influenced by donor priorities – at the same time, SPOs remain very dependent on international financing, for their interventions as well as development of their organisational capacity.

### 5.3.2 *Capability to deliver on development objectives*

Project documentation indicates that the five SPOs are more or less successful in delivering the planned outputs. Only RHA seems to be far from meeting its objectives, but lack of transparency in reporting makes it difficult to assess the seeming lack of realisations. Beneficiaries clearly expressed dissatisfaction about the reduced number of activities. KMS indicated it managed to complete a previous project in less time than originally was planned for, but this might be related more to weak planning than to high levels of efficiency. There is large variation in terms of the availability of operational plans, and especially the awareness of staff of these plans, and the extent at which plans are realistic. Available office facilities such as computers, electricity, and internet have a significant impact on the way in which organisations are able to function.

Activities are diverse. They range from the organisation of community meetings and monitoring conflicts (RHA), to producing radio broadcasts and supporting local listening clubs (AFEM), equipping and training local cooperatives (VECO), training local committees and supplying agricultural inputs (CEPROF and KMS), and providing potable water (KMS).<sup>21</sup> In the cases of RHA, AFEM and VECO, the activities can be considered near the core area of expertise of the organisation; in the case of CEPROF this link is not so clear. KMS is

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<sup>21</sup> See for more information the description of SPOs and their interventions in the section describing the civil society component of this baseline study.

a special case: at first ICCO funding was given for a WASH project, which was in line with KMS' expertise. The second project - which started after our baseline visit and which ended more than a year before the endline visit - focused on food security, which was a new field for KMS. Only limited training was provided on this by ICCO and ICCO partners. KMS hired staff with a background in agronomy. With a short project term of 8 months, certain objectives were realised, which can be considered a good achievement given the limited experience, lack of support, and short duration of the project.

Some organizations operate in fields that are very specific and distinctive. RHA is an example of this, in its non-judgemental approach to conflict mediation. CEPROF and KMS on the other hand engage in more conventional development activities, and thus have to take more care not to duplicate the activities of other organisations operating in the same area. Both organisations are aware of this, and know which organisations engage in the same activities. However, it is not a major concern for them, and they do not structurally engage with these organisations to prevent duplication - or, turning it around, to increase synergy between their activities.

In terms of sustainability, all organisations have the aim of independence for the local structures they support. Currently, the local committees/clubs supported by CEPROF and AFEM, and similarly the cooperatives supported by VECO, depend to a large extent on the SPOs. VECO is most concerned with the independence and sustainability of its beneficiary organisations, and is consciously working towards that goal. Other SPOs also invest in building capacity of groups they support, but it is less clear how these will become independent. CEPROF indicates that a problematic point is the culture of seeing all aid as a free gift (result of years of humanitarian relief), while CEPROF is expecting beneficiaries to pay back the inputs they receive. Within RHA there is an ongoing discussion on the level of autonomy of the axes (member organisations) in relation to the secretariat. The strength of its member organisations varies greatly. Grassroots structures strongly depend on these member organisations. Some of these local structures continue to function when RHA's activities are interrupted, but we also noted a lot of complaints about the lack of activities, leading to local members abandoning the structures. It shows that autonomy of these groups is not yet achieved. In the case of KMS we found little interest among staff in sustaining project interventions; local committees are supposed to maintain and repair the water points themselves, but not all committees are able to solve all the technical problems they face. This results in non-functioning water points.

Generally, the SPOs are well-connected to the local communities, and beneficiaries have access to them to voice their needs. The organisations describe regular visits to the field, and this is confirmed by most beneficiaries. In the case of RHA, beneficiaries expressed a dissatisfaction about the limited number of interventions and visits by RHA. Staff confirmed that field activities have been gradually reduced over time. Interruption/reduction of activities urges RHA to work on re-establishing good contacts. In the case of CEPROF, there is some doubt whether beneficiaries actually understand what the project is about. The same goes for the village committee, which sees itself more as an implementation team, and has different expectations (notably in terms of remuneration) than CEPROF. CEPROF and VECO organise regular (yearly or per semester) evaluation meetings with the target group. KMS seems to have less contact with beneficiaries of its water projects, but contacts with members of the cooperative are still maintained, despite the end of the project funding. Contacts with these beneficiaries are easier to maintain, as they are based in Swima, which is also the site of the head office of KMS.

There was little reflection on the efficiency of work by the studied SPOs, with perhaps VECO as an exception. It seems that organisations rely on the donors for this: when they approve of the project, the SPO can implement the activities. SPOs do not have guidelines for the amount of time staff should spend per project or activity. Many SPOs do seek synergy between different projects, in the form of using a field visit for one project, to also visit another project. At the same time, SPOs often employ more people than is covered by the budget, which seems inefficient. Related to this, four SPOs - AFEM, CEPROF, KMS and RHA - indicate that remuneration of staff is a problem, since the budget does not sufficiently cover salaries. During the evaluation period, we did not note any significant improvement in terms of efficiency, except

for the case of CEPROF, where ZOA is pushing to introduce a number of measures to make the organisation more efficient.

Concluding, we find that SPOs are generally able to carry out the foreseen activities, but frequently struggle to do so within the planned timeframe. It is less clear to what extent the activities have the intended impact, as this was often beyond the scope of this evaluation. For two of the organisations, VECO and CEPROF, we have more information, as they were also part of the sample for MDGs and themes. CEPROF seemed to have carried out project activities according to plan, though this was difficult to check because of the fragmented nature of the project. VECO did not manage to fully execute the project due to unforeseen circumstances outside the control of the organisation: the conflict intensified and their bank experience problems, which resulted in a freezing of funds. For neither organisation, our econometric analysis found any impact. Yet beneficiaries generally expressed positive views on the SPOs in focus group interviews. So while the SPO's were able to reach out to the communities, the impact was not large enough to be picked up by quantitative analysis.

SPOs work with well-developed grassroots structures, and are thinking about how to ensure the sustainability of these. This often involves the development of methods to generate revenue. We find some examples of efficient use of resources by SPOs, but this is not much reflected upon.

### 5.3.3 *Capability to adapt and self-renew*

All organisations under evaluation collected data in order to report on the output of their projects. However, not all organisations have the necessary competency to deal with this process, and to analyse the data (RHA, CEPROF). CEPROF collects data on the execution of the project, and it is ZOA which analyses this. RHA has collected large amounts of data while monitoring conflicts and human rights abuses, but does not have a procedure in place to make use of the data for e.g. advocacy. Since 2013, RHA's coordination office provides consolidated reports to the donors. This provides some insight to the coordinator on the different axes, but no aggregate analysis is carried out and no joint reflection takes place. In 2012, AFEM designated one person for M&E of all projects. In 2013 this person, left the organisation and a new officer was appointed, who had received no training. At VECO, on the other hand, the staff member dedicated to M&E left the organisation when one of the two projects ended, and M&E is the responsibility of the project officer.

Project implementation is usually evaluated at fixed points in time. Systems for continuous data collection exist, but it is not always clear how these data are treated. Data are often collected through forms that are filled in by field workers in the field, for example by CEPROF. Some organisations have little computer facilities, and thus lack capacity to digitise and analyse the data (CEPROF). Additionally, this process is susceptible to errors; there is no system for backup or verification. On the other hand, the SPOs' well-developed connections with the target groups presumably allow for the identification of grave errors, if necessary.

Monitoring is often based on outputs, in terms of materials supplied, or activities organised. None of the studied SPOs has a system in place to measure results at the outcome level. KMS is an exception, as it expresses the intention to measure the impact of its interventions, following a training by the donor in 2012. In 2014 we did not find this idea put in practice.

There is room for improvement in terms of making strategic use of M&E. Data are still primarily collected to meet donor demands. SPOs express willingness to learn (RHA for example), but there are no systems in place for a more systematic discussion of results, and critical reflection on the functioning of the organisation, and the way projects are being implemented. With donors becoming scarcer, SPOs put more efforts in finding out in which type of projects donors are interested, rather than in finding out in which type of projects beneficiaries are interested. M&E seem to be used primarily for justification purposes.



SPOs differ in terms of room for reflection. Most have regular management meetings, and also meetings in which the whole staff is involved. Additionally, depending on the infrastructure of the organisation, some have frequent communication through email (AFEM, VECO). Mobile phones are another important means of communication, though network coverage is not assured in the field. RHA has difficulties in staying connected on all levels, as infrastructure (roads, mobile phones, and internet) is generally weak in Ituri and because the coordination office is overburdened and not managing to provide the coordination that would be needed to keep members together and informed about each other's activities.

Knowledge management is an aspect that does not get much attention. Frequently, knowledge is concentrated in a number of people, with leaders of the SPOs at the centre (CEPROF, KMS). VECO and AFEM have a higher proportion of staff with knowledge on the various projects. No organisations have systems in place for systematic sharing and collection of knowledge. In general, there exist relatively strong hierarchies, which may impede more junior staff members in giving their opinion or in asking for information. Indicatively, new KMS staff explained to us how our workshop helped them to better understand their own organisation. CEPROF provides few opportunities for staff input, as staff indicate there is a lack of communication, in the form of meetings and exchange of information, and few staff have regular access to email. This may change, because at the end of the evaluation period a new Administrative Officer was employed, who started organising regular coordination meetings.

In terms of sharing knowledge, learning and capacity development, the international partners (and in the case of VECO, the regional and international offices of the organisation) often play an important role. Cordaid supplied a limited budget for organisational capacity development to AFEM, and the regional office of VECO has some budget for training as well. Until 2012 all Dutch donors specifically invested in building the capacities of their SPOs (see the section on this below). Nevertheless, some SPOs indicate they organise their own trainings, in order to develop the competency of staff: for example KMS, which organised a basic computer course for the whole organisation. AFEM trains its employees in journalism skills. CEPROF, on the other hand, wholly depends on the donor organisation for the development of staff competency. Some SPOs mention the need to develop a staff capacity development plan, but only CEPROF has a plan in existence, developed with ZOA. The Board and Audit Committee could have a role to play here, in seeking to maintain a certain level of organisational competence, but for none of the SPOs studied do these take up this role.

Generally, we noted little to no improvement in terms of the capability to adapt and self-renew. M&E data are usually collected, but not systematically analysed. Data collection primarily serves donor purposes, and is hardly used for critical reflection. Project proposals are often compiled by making reference to descriptions that have been used in earlier proposals as well, but do not necessarily reflect more recent contextual changes. Some SPOs find it difficult to organise regular staff meetings, and they generally strongly depend on donor organisations for learning and capacity development.

#### 5.3.4 *Capability to relate to external stakeholders*

The five SPOs are generally aware of other CSOs that are intervening in the same area. In some cases the interventions of other organisations negatively influence an SPO's interventions. However, collaboration is limited to making agreements on which geographical area each organisation targets. CEPROF made an attempt to set up a consultation framework for all organisations intervening in the area, but specific action was undertaken when another CSO was handing out goats for free, whereas CEPROF was giving out goats on the basis of beneficiaries returning the first-borns.

There is cooperation with other CSOs that are supported by the same Dutch partner organisations: for example, ICCO has stimulated the formation of thematic clusters among its partners. Also Cordaid and ZOA/DCR have taken such an approach. These clusters are stimulated to exchange information and experience, work together, and come with joint proposals. Also trainings facilitated by donor organisations may be based on these clusters, or '*synergies*'. Although activities of these synergies have generally

increased, they still seem to be strongly donor-driven, with little ownership by the SPOs. The relations have yet to develop to the level of for example joint development and implementation of projects. Until now it mostly comes down to organisations carrying out similar projects, but all with their own specific background and without exchange beyond the meetings organised within the synergy. As of yet there is little sustainability in relationships that have been built. KMS for example was hardly considered a partner by other participants of the ICCO Food Security synergy, although KMS representatives continue to attend meetings, also after the end of the contract period. Geographical distance to other partners in the cluster (they are based mainly in Bukavu, but some also in North Kivu) probably plays a role here. Generally, there is little support of each other in terms of joint learning, and providing feedback on each other's way of working. International donors are the established partners for giving feedback on SPO policy and strategy development.

SPOs differ in terms of their connection to and participation in relevant networks. This has to do with context (Bukavu being more of a donor-hub than Uvira or Bunia), but also with the nature and history of the SPOs. AFEM has a well-developed network and regularly seeks collaboration with others; to obtain training, or to be able to provide desired services to beneficiaries. CEPROF and KMS (both dependent on one donor) are less involved in contacts with others. VECO is working on its network in Bukavu. RHA is a network organisation, and as such has a great deal of connections, but mainly at the local level and not so much with other CSOs outside its network. Strategy development of RHA is mainly done at the level of the coordination, and members are only incidentally consulted and given a voice.<sup>22</sup>

As described above, the studied SPOs frequently engage their target groups. Some have field-based staff (CEPROF and KMS), while others (AFEM, VECO) make regular field trips, sometimes complicated by security circumstances and road conditions. RHA is a network organisation and reaches beneficiaries through its members, allowing it to reach a large constituency regardless of religion, ethnicity, or region, but its field presence has been reducing since a number of years. Beneficiaries also travel to the SPO offices, if need be (VECO, AFEM). Various SPOs have been working with their target group for several years now, and their presence in an area has become quite established (RHA, CEPROF, AFEM, VECO).

The internal organisational culture of the SPOs is hierarchical, with decision-making powers focused in the leaders and several key persons (one or two per SPO). As described under the capability to adapt and self-renew, most organisations have regular staff meetings, and decisions are usually discussed at the level of the management team (normally including the coordinator, the financial officer, and the person responsible for projects). Some organisations (notably CEPROF and RHA) are finding it difficult to find the means to meet at the head office, and staff indicate this complicates internal communications and transparency. Leaders of SPOs are quite dominant, which also affects internal room for discussion. This was observed especially at CEPROF and KMS, but also seems to be the case for RHA where staff had difficulties in formulating the view of the organisation during the baseline workshop in the absence of the coordinator.

For this Capability, we noted a lot of interest from the side of donors to promote exchange with others in networks, alliances, or joint programmes. Nevertheless, we were not able to find convincing evidence that this is leading to an overall improved capability to relate to others. Especially given the reduction in donor funding that is available, SPOs actually consider their colleague organisations more as competitors than as potential collaborators. Engagement with the target groups is frequent. In terms of internal communication, we find mixed results with some SPOs having regular meetings, while others do not manage this.

### 5.3.5 *Capability to achieve coherence*

Various mechanisms for achieving coherence between organisational activities are in place in the five SPOs investigated. All either have a strategic plan (VECO, KMS, RHA), or are in the process of developing this

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<sup>22</sup> See also our description of the 5 Civil Society Index dimensions in the civil society strengthening part of this synthesis.

(AFEM, CEPROF). All organisations have a vision about the change they want to contribute to. Usually, SPOs also have one person dedicated to overseeing the projects. SPOs also have operational guidelines in place. However, the extent to which all of these mechanisms are in fact functional and contributing to coherence, varies widely across the SPOs that we have studied. This continues to be the case after the two years of our evaluation have passed.

In terms of a strategic plan and vision, it is unclear to what extent these are leading in the development of new projects. VECO staff and the KMS coordinator used the strategic plan during various elements of the workshop. VECO's plan has a relatively narrow focus on value chains, and this strongly guides the development of new projects. Also at AFEM, staff members were able to clearly articulate the vision and strategy. Nevertheless, there does seem to be a discrepancy between the ToC goal (to become a centre of reference for journalists) and the major current activities (supporting local listening clubs). At CEPROF, there is a discrepancy between the vision and activities: the vision focuses explicitly on empowerment of women (this is also reflected in the Theory of Change for the civil society component of the evaluation), but in the current project women are not specifically targeted. KMS, on the other hand, employs such a broad vision, that it encompasses almost any type of project, but with little funding available only small parts of its mission are put in practice and different projects do not have coherence (different themes, different beneficiaries). With a previous history in rehabilitating water sources, the current focus on food security is directed by the priorities of the donor.

RHA is a distinct case, for this capability: it consists of member organisations, which have to deal with different contextual circumstances, as well as different project budgets. Some members of the network are better developed than others, which leads to an imbalance between the various areas in which RHA is active, and it remains difficult to assess to what extent the members act in a coherent way. The different projects however are closely related in terms of themes, objectives etc. and are even difficult to disentangle in the field. Since a number of years the organisation is involved in a slow process of restructuring, to ensure more autonomy for the members, as well as better central coordination. This is supposed to lead to more coherence, but this is not yet visible.

The staff members responsible for overseeing projects are primarily concerned with the implementation of the projects according to the plans agreed upon with the donors. SPOs are creative in seeking complementarities in terms of logistics for different projects. However, two of the SPOs with multiple projects (VECO and AFEM) do not actively seek synergies between these different projects.

There is a great deal of difference in terms of the use of operational policies and guidelines. CEPROF was the last of the SPOs to develop a procedures manual and clear job descriptions, and it remains to be seen whether this will succeed in improving the functioning of the organisation. For VECO, on the other hand, the regional office has completed a process of establishing an organisational policy in 2012. The staff is well-aware of the guidelines and procedures. For VECO this is easier to realise since there is a strong national office and an international organisation supporting the development of these processes. KMS has an elaborate manual for efficient functioning of administration and finances, but only core staff are aware of these procedures. For RHA, procedures vary per member organisation and the restructuring should bring more clarity. AFEM finalised a manual for administrative, financial and accounting procedures in 2012.

Generally, we have the impression that SPOs are eager to show to external visitors (in this case: the evaluators) their adherence to operational guidelines, but we are less convinced that this is also used in day-to-day activities of the organisation. For organisations with a very clear and stable focus (RHA) it is easier to achieve coherence between different projects than it is for more holistic organisations that are interested in a wide range of themes such as KMS. All SPOs carry out projects that are in line with their mission and vision, but in some cases (CEPROF, KMS) only part of mission and vision is covered by the projects that are currently carried out. It underlines the difficulty organisations can have to set up a realistic strategic plan.

### 5.3.6 Summary: main changes in SPO capacity

Overall, none of the SPOs has made significant progress in terms of organisational capacity during the evaluation period. In fact, in terms of their overall capacity (table 5.2), three SPOs have remained constant, and two SPOs (KMS and RHA) have made a step backwards, moving back for virtually each capability. Nevertheless, in terms of the Theories of Change, some steps have been taken towards the organisational capacity development goals.

- VECO overall was able to maintain its level of organisational capacity, though it had a serious reduction in financing in 2013. Important developments include the development of a new strategic plan by the Regional Office which provides clear orientation, and the start of a partnership with a new donor in 2014.
- CEPROF has shown limited development during the evaluation period, even though there was special attention for developing its administrative and financial capacity. It remains strongly dependent on CFA ZOA, and has limited ownership of its capacity development. There have been improvements in terms of the development of a capacity strengthening plan, the new Administration and Finances officer has updated organisational procedures and job descriptions, and has also started organising regular organisational meetings.
- AFEM-SK has extended its activities to North Kivu, and developed its contacts with similar organisations in other provinces. Internally, the Board of Directors and Audit Committee have been renewed. The strategic plan remains work in progress, and there have been some developments in terms of M&E capacity.
- RHA has not been able to surmount the coordination challenges during the evaluation period. It set up a general direction in Bunia, but this is understaffed: RHA has not been able to find someone to support the coordinator. The 5 axes are functional to varying degrees, Exchanges and collaboration between member organisations is limited. Reorganisation continues to be seen as a crucial factor for RHA to progress. A General Assembly has been held, and a Board elected: but as the Board is composed of the leaders of the member organisations, and the coordination remains the same, it is unlikely this change will have much effect.
- KMS has suffered a lack of funding, and this has led to a decreased presence in the field. It has received some occasional support, but not enough to develop sustained activities and sustain organisational capacity.

## 5.4 Research Question 2: To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia?

In this section we answer research question 2 for the capacity development component. We first describe the approach to capacity development by the Dutch CFAs, the capacity development support by other organisations, and the activities undertaken by SPOs themselves to develop their organisational capacity. Then we present the results of our contribution analyses, and some general conclusions.

### 5.4.1 Approach of Co-Financing Agenciess

Until roughly the end of 2012, CFAs invested significantly in capacity development in the form of various trainings, on e.g. the project cycle, or financial administration, HRM, results-based management, the development of a strategic plan. Additionally, the projects they supported also contained elements that strengthened certain capabilities. In the case of AFEM for example the project covered costs for capacity building of field staff, part of the costs for M&E, development of informal channels of dialogue between local communities and authorities, and the purchase of a vehicle. In general, CFAs limited the amount of direct institutional support (salaries of staff, office costs) to 20-30% of the project budget. However, during the evaluation period from 2012 to 2014, we found much less evidence of concrete capacity development

support. Both Cordaid and ICCO (AFEM, RHA, VECO, and KMS) decided to focus much stronger on building synergies and partnerships between SPOs. This can be seen as contributing to the Capability to relate to external stakeholders, but thus far collaboration between partners still seems to be largely donor-driven and not yet appropriated by SPOs. This means that these efforts do not yet have a big contribution to overall capacity improvement.

The specific approaches of the CFAs varied. Cordaid, ZOA, IKV Pax Christi/PAX and ICCO explicitly aimed to build the capacity of their SPOs. Several used tools to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the SPOs: for Cordaid this is the Organisation Scan, ICCO uses another organisational diagnostic scan, and ZOA uses the 5Cs framework to analyse and monitor their SPOs. IKV Pax Christi/PAX monitored RHA closely through regular field visits and intensive contact. Based on the outcomes, CFAs developed capacity development plans: e.g. ZOA developed a tailored organisational development plan, in collaboration with CEPROF. Over the years, ZOA's partners gained more responsibility over the project budget. Cordaid dedicated a limited amount (3000 USD for AFEM) in some project budgets to organisational capacity development, and also offered various trainings to the SPOs it worked with – but for the partners in our sample, this was discontinued after 2012. ICCO focused on good governance themes in its capacity development (such as transparency and accountability), offered trainings, and encouraged exchange of experience among its southern partners by forming issue-based 'synergies' (e.g. the PASAK alliance on food security, for KMS). PAX has supported RHA with training to develop its organisational capacity, and has been of important help in identifying potential other donors. Finally, VECO is a special case: because it is a local office of an international organisation, the Dutch CFA Cordaid did not invest in building its capacity.

Staff were generally positive on the trainings they received. At some SPOs, staff strongly expressed the desire for more trainings. Other SPOs expressed discontent with the focus on funding project activities, versus covering institutional costs such as salaries and office rent.

#### *5.4.2 Contribution to capacity development by other international partners*

Besides the CFAs, other international partners of SPOs also invest in building their capacity (or have done so in the past). These efforts have happened in an uncoordinated manner, which sometimes resulted in duplication of trainings. SPO staff do not see this as a problem, and indicate the trainings often are complementary. In 2012 Cordaid initiated an effort to come to a more coordinated capacity building approach, but we have seen no effects of this. Some SPOs (RHA, AFEM) argued that donors had actually chosen to work with them because they were already well-developed and would not no longer need significant capacity development support. This is in line with the approach that is increasingly advocated by Dutch donors.

SPOs differed in terms of their access to training opportunities, which can be related to their positioning in civil society (capability to relate) and the amount of international partners they have. AFEM for example has benefited in the past of capacity development by a variety of organisations: Diakonia and the Eastern Congo Initiative (ECI) have financed and worked on capacity development by providing training on project planning, monitoring and evaluation, methods of data collection; other organisations have supported AFEM in journalism, good governance, human rights, democracy, gender-based violence (Norwegian Church Aid, Institut Panos Paris, Jewish World Watch). VECO, on the other hand, as part of the international organisation Vredeseilanden, has to operate according to the standards set by the international organisation. It is closely monitored by the regional office, which also provides trainings – but none during the evaluation period. IFDC also invested in capacity development of VECO.

KMS, RHA and CEPROF have had less access to capacity development by other organisations, and strongly depend on their current donors. CEPROF has also received training of Oxfam Novib prior to 2011 on e.g. management and accounting. KMS has received organisational and technical training from Tearfund, also prior to the evaluation period. RHA is currently not receiving any capacity support from other donors.

Capacity development support by PAX/Cordaid is generally provided in kind and is not included in RHA's budget. In addition, individual staff members have often also received trainings at other CSOs they worked for in the past.

Generally, we feel that SPOs that have a relatively strong capability to relate were able to obtain funding for capacity development. In 2014 this was much less the case, but the SPOs with a strong capability to relate are at least still able to get access to project funding.

#### 5.4.3 SPOs' own contribution to capacity development

Though all staff indicate they are eager to learn, there is a large variety in terms of the initiatives taken by SPOs to invest in the development of their own capacity. KMS staff for example take additional courses on a personal title, sometimes supported through grants, and KMS has the policy that staff have to share what they have learnt with their colleagues afterwards. In 2014 this was still maintained as much as possible. AFEM consciously takes in young employees, to allow them to develop their journalism skills. Several staff have shown considerable development during their work for AFEM, moving from the position of radio programme producer, to M&E officer and Programme Officer.

RHA, on the other hand, undertakes little capacity strengthening at the level of coordination or supervision of field staff, and there is no system in place to transfer information to new staff members. Mutual learning does not play a significant role, unless at the local level, where new field staff is trained by its peers, but in a less profound manner than the initial training. It reduces the capacity of the field staff/trainers, and several of them indicated the need for additional training. In 2012 RHA still focused attention on strengthening the capacities of its field trainers, but in 2014 this was less the case. CEPROF depends on ZOA for its capacity development. There is no own plan for organisational development, little internal space for critical reflection, and CEPROF has no budget line for capacity development. Nevertheless, the organisation indicates it is open to learning, and willing to put new ideas into practice.

All organisations work on training their field staff, and members of the grassroots organisations they work with. No organisations have a specified policy or plan for internal capacity development, however. Only one organisation had a specific budget line for capacity development (AFEM), but this is because of donor policy, and the budget was only partially used. For the other organisations, organisational capacity strengthening is not separately mentioned in the budget, meaning they have not dedicated funds to this.

#### 5.4.4 Outcomes of contribution analyses

To establish our contribution stories and assess the extent to which MFS II funding has contributed to changes in SPO capacity, we carried out contribution analyses. The following table presents an overview of the capabilities and outcome domains on which we focused our analyses. Elaborate descriptions are provided in the technical reports in Annex A.

**Table 5.3 Overview of Capabilities and Outcome domains for Contribution Analysis**

| <b>Organisation</b> | <b>Capability</b>                               | <b>Outcome domain</b>  |
|---------------------|---|--|
| VECO                | Capability to act and commit                    | Financial resource security  |
| CEPROF              | Capability to act and commit                    | Strategic planning   |
| AFEM-SK             | Capability to adapt and self-renew              | Level of effective and strategic use of M&E                            |
| RHA                 | Capability to achieve coherence                 | Existence of mechanisms for coherence                                  |
| KMS                 | Capability to deliver on development objectives | Extent to which organisation delivers on planned products and services |

VECO: We have found no evidence that Cordaid has contributed to an improvement in organisational capacity – but this was also explicitly not the aim of Cordaid in this partnership. However, through the institutional support, we can conclude that Cordaid and MFS II financing have contributed significantly to the continuity of VECO Bukavu, and thus to maintaining its organisational capacity. MFS II financing has allowed VECO Bukavu to bridge the year 2013, while negotiating with new donors. As such, it has contributed to VECO's financial resource stability.

CEPROF: we find limited improvement in the organisational capacity of CEPROF, and it is highly plausible that these changes are related to MFS II funding, since ZOA is the only organisation involved in developing capacity of CEPROF. The close involvement of ZOA makes it hard to isolate the organisational capacity of CEPROF – especially in terms of activities towards the beneficiaries, we are unable to say whether CEPROF would have been able to execute these activities on its own or with less involvement of ZOA. The majority of changes that we have identified have to do with the Capability to act and commit. An important and tangible effect in this respect is the new Administration and Finances Officer, who may pave the way for further professionalising the organisation.

AFEM: it is plausible that MFS II funding, through the capacity development support by Cordaid, has contributed to the development of M&E capacity of AFEM, but this support has not been crucial for the development of AFEM during the evaluation period. Cordaid is a long-term donor of AFEM, and has invested significantly in the organisational development of AFEM in the first years. M&E was addressed in this process. During the evaluation period, AFEM has developed its M&E capacity. Cordaid however was clearly not the only actor involved in this process, as several other funding organisations have provided support to M&E development. Additionally, support to capacity development by Cordaid greatly diminished after 2012.

RHA: MFS II support (both technical and financial) has played an important role in the process of restructuring, as both PAX and Cordaid have encouraged RHA to reflect critically on its functioning and provided support to the restructuring process. Nevertheless, given the large budget available for the network, we are concerned about the lack of progress. The process of restructuring has started more than 3 years ago, some steps have been taken, but others have not been taken at all, with numerous deadlines not met. In this sense, the organisational difficulties remain, and the MFS II financing has failed to contribute to a sustainable improvement in organisational capacity of RHA.

KMS: Through capacity development activities by ICCO, MFS II funding contributed to KMS' organisational capacity in the year preceding the evaluation period. During the evaluation period, the ICCO contribution was more directly focused on technical support, to deliver on objectives. However, with the discontinuation of funding after 2013, we do not expect the contribution to be sustainable as the capacity of KMS and of the project beneficiaries is not yet developed enough to continue autonomously.

#### 5.4.5 *General conclusions on CFAs' contribution to capacity development*

The outcomes of our contribution analyses and the changes in organisational capacity present a mixed image, with three cases of (limited) positive change, and two cases of negative change. The most valuable support to organisations' capacity has actually been the financial support that enables SPOs to keep on going. Capacity development activities are generally highly valued by SPO staff, but CFAs are making less funds available for this and providing less training opportunities. We found only limited evidence of capacity development activities during the evaluation period, and limited effect. An exception to this is the partnership of ZOA with CEPROF. This partnership is strongly directed towards capacity development, but also here we found limited influence. It should be noted for this case that ZOA has consciously opted for rather weak partners. In cases of negative development, there are compounding factors. It is here that the importance of institutional support becomes very pertinent and seems to be more decisive than training. In general, the contribution of MFS II funding to the development of the organisational capacity

of the SPOs during the evaluation period, has been limited, with perhaps institutional support as the most important -and undervalued- contribution.

Donors seem to increasingly opt for strong partners to ensure impact on the level of beneficiaries, but with less attention to capacity development. Obviously, donors run less risks in this way; it is more likely that strong, autonomous SPOs are able to meet their targets, which reduces time and energy CFAs need to invest. It puts the more established Congolese civil society organisations at a strong advantage and makes it more difficult for 'weak' or new organisations to develop and grow. Most of the organisations that continue to obtain significant amounts of funding are SPOs that have benefitted in the past from capacity development support of international donors; they know how to write project proposals, are aware of the importance of reporting, and are able to provide the financial proof that is required to pass the test of auditors. On the longer term however, there is a risk of impoverishment of the civil society landscape in DRC, as organisations depend to a large extent on external funding to be able to carry out projects.

## **5.5 Research Question 3: What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?**

In this section we provide explanatory factors for the main findings for the previous research questions. These factors further explain why it has proven difficult to answer questions 1 and 2 with adequate confidence. They underline the complexity of the topic of study.

None of the projects had a separate budget for organisational capacity development. This has complicated the evaluation, as there was no clear evaluandum.

Attention for organisational capacity development has decreased during the evaluated period (2012-2014). There are several reasons for this:

- Partnerships often preceded the current project, and a number of organisations have various donors. That means that in the past, INGOs have already invested in capacity development to help their partner organisations develop into 'good partners', in particular regarding the Capability to Act and Commit and the Capability to Deliver, and the administrative capacity to execute the projects.
- With the exception of ZOA, the CFAs did not have an explicit objective for organisational capacity development throughout the evaluation period. In 2012, Cordaid still worked on capacity development of AFEM, based on the recommendations that followed from the initial Organisation Scan. It is claimed that an important element in capacity development works is the often informal and everyday interactions between staff of the CFAs and SPOs. As this happens implicitly, we have not been able to trace this in the evaluation. We do notice that the sampled SPOs did not mention this exchange in the workshops or interviews.
- There is an assumption among the CFAs and SPOs that investing in personal capacity development of SPO staff is risky because of high staff turnover. Our findings indicate that this may not be warranted, as we have found organisations to be stable with regards to their core staff, during the evaluation period. It seems that challenges in terms of staff turnover are especially felt at the grassroots level where field staff often receive only a small remuneration and are inclined to look for greener pastures.

There is a shift in focus from capacity development of SPOs to strengthening collaboration among SPOs. With the changing donor context in the Netherlands, CFAs are increasingly focusing on the delivery of results vis-à-vis the beneficiaries, aiming at interventions that can be clearly related to CFAs' interventions. This leads to a tendency to partner only with stronger SPOs. Several CFAs have reduced resources for capacity development, and focused on setting up *synergies*. The synergies are intended to increase the impact and efficiency of the interventions, and CFAs are taking an increasingly active role in this. These synergies are top-down and appear little sustainable. They have not yet led to more sustained collaboration. Factors related to this are:



- The focus on synergies has followed from sustained observations that civil society in South Kivu tends to be fragmented which hampers the effectiveness of interventions. In addition, the CFAs are aware that MFS II funding will end and hope that synergies will make the SPOs stronger towards the future. Another reason why synergies are not very effective, appears to be that the CFAs do not coordinate effectively among themselves. Other INGOs also organise their partners, while they tend not to coordinate their efforts, not even when they finance the same SPOs. ALOCES is the only synergy that is driven by various Dutch donors – and these are part of the same CFA-alliance in the Netherlands. Similarly, the alliance DCR is encouraging collaboration between its SPOs in North Kivu.
- It is not always clear what the ground for collaboration is in synergies. For this reason, CFAs and SPOs are now more often embarking on collaboration around campaigns, rather than forming networks that are more static.

Capacity development is often associated with training. Nevertheless, we find that the funding directed at the institutional costs in projects strongly outstrips the funds for these training activities. The SPOs also emphasize that funding, and specifically core funding, is key to their capacity. In this sense, the capabilities of SPOs are increasingly jeopardized. Among the CFAs, the duration of funded programmes has considerably shortened in the past two years. While 3 year contracts were not uncommon during our baseline visit, currently most contracts do not last more than one year and do not run beyond the MFS-II period.

- The funding cycles have shortened because the Dutch CFAs were anticipating the end of MFS II and have been unsure for the past years about the possible extension of the MFS programme. None of the CFAs in our capacity development sample have committed funding beyond the MFS II cycle.
- At the same time, the general budget cuts at the beginning of the MFS II period have led CFAs to change contracts and reduce amounts of funding, which has led to a great deal of insecurity for the SPOs.

CFAs are aiming for SPOs that are autonomous. However, the majority of workshops and training sessions (often preceding the evaluated period, in 2011-2012) has focused on the improvement of administration and project execution (Capability to Act and Commit, and Capability to Deliver). This ignores the Capability to Relate, which is important for the SPO's ability to access new sources of financing. During our feedback workshop, several SPO staff members expressed the need to be more supported and capacitated in this regard.

The effects of the shortened funding cycles are not yet felt among the SPOs in the sample; three of which have varied donor bases, and in one case the CFA has made a long-term commitment for the complete MFS II period. But as funding is reducing more generally, insecurity may increase in the future. Realisations of many objectives in the projects we have looked at (including civil society strengthening in itself) require long-time interventions, especially in the fragile context of DRC. Lobby and advocacy to influence policy is an example of an activity that requires a strong capability to relate to others. It can take time to achieve an impact when setting up lobby and advocacy. This might be jeopardised if projects do not exceed a period of 1-2 years.

## 6 Civil society strengthening

This section presents a synthesis of the results and analysis for the civil society component of the evaluation. We focus on the four evaluation questions that are relevant to this component:

1. What are the changes in the relevant priority result areas during the 2012–2014 period?
2. To what degree are these changes due to the development interventions of Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?
3. What is the relevance of these changes?
4. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

Our understanding of the concept of civil society is based on the definition developed by CIVICUS: *The arena, outside of the family, the state, and the market – which is created by individual and collective actions, organisations and institutions to advance shared interests*. This definition captures a wide array of actors. In our evaluation, we distinguish activity at two broad and interrelated levels: the grassroots level of community-based organisations (CBOs), and the intermediate level of SPOs and other CSOs. CBOs include local associations, but also livelihoods-related organisations such as cooperatives, and the local structures set up by the CSOs operating at the intermediate level. Importantly, this means we take into account civil society strengthening activities at these two levels, including policy influencing, advocacy, networking, and developing local associational life. Some of the SPOs in our sample consider these CBOs as part of their organisation. Other SPOs consider the CBOs as external and autonomous partners at the grassroots level. This raises the question whether progress of CBOs should be seen as internal capacity development or as civil society strengthening by the SPOs. In our synthesis report we analyse efforts at the level of CBOs as civil society strengthening.

We start with an overview of the 19 SPOs that were investigated, and their approach to civil society development, based on their Theories of Change for civil society strengthening. We will briefly discuss to what extent the Theories of Change are still applicable and some general observations about the progress that has been made. Next, we answer the first evaluation question, in a synthesis of the information gathered for each of the five dimensions of the Civicus framework. We then deal with the second evaluation question, through four contribution stories synthesised from our analyses at SPO level, in relation to the three themes that we studied in more detail: 1) gender/women empowerment, 2) agriculture, 3) human rights and good governance. We will discuss the role of the SPOs in our sample and the contribution of the MFS II support. Next, we go into the third evaluation question, and describe the relevance of the observed changes. Finally, answering the fourth question, we describe what are the main factors explaining our findings for the previous evaluation questions. More elaborate technical reports per SPO are available in Annex A.

### 6.1 Thematic focus and project aspects of the organisations evaluated

Table 6.1 presents an overview of the 19 SPOs studied, their year of founding, thematic focus and key interventions, related to the projects we investigated. Additional information on the SPOs, their Dutch partners and projects can be found in the general introduction to this country synthesis.

**Table 6.1 Thematic focus, objective and key interventions of sampled SPOs**

| SPO         | Start Year | Thematic focus & overall objective                    | Key interventions  |
|-------------|------------|---|--|
| Réseau CREF | 2003       | Sustainable forestry management, reduction of poverty | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representation of member organisations (28)</li> <li>• Capacity development of member organisations, through monitoring, audits and training</li> <li>• Facilitation of stakeholder (government, civil society, private sector) meetings at territory/city level</li> <li>• Lobby for enactment &amp; implementation of the provincial forestry code</li> </ul> |

|                         |                    |   |   |
|-------------------------|--------------------|---|---|
| Armée du Salut          | 1934 <sup>23</sup> | Improve level of education  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of primary schools</li> <li>• Supporting parents' committees in setting up income-generating activities</li> <li>• Providing agricultural tools &amp; beekeeping equipment to parents to increase income</li> </ul>   |
| SOFIBEF                 | 1997               | Women empowerment and promotion of female leadership  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training of women's solidarity groups (GSFs) to empower women on leadership &amp; economic activities, such as savings</li> <li>• Teaching local authorities about women's rights</li> <li>• Democracy, good governance, gender-based violence etc.</li> <li>• Training of social leaders on female leadership &amp; conflict management</li> <li>• Support to women who are (potential) leaders to take up their role</li> </ul>                  |
| VECO Bukavu             | 2010 <sup>24</sup> | Food security and poverty reduction through the development of value chains   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting two cooperatives in terms of agricultural inputs, building organisational capacity</li> <li>• Facilitating exchange of experiences between cooperatives</li> <li>• Connecting the actors in the rice value chain</li> <li>• Lobby for new agricultural law at national and provincial levels (with regional VECO office)</li> </ul>   |
| CEPROF                  | 2007 <sup>25</sup> | Empowerment of women in Fizi territory  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting up and supporting 2 local project management committees, 2 solidarity groups &amp; various women's groups</li> <li>• Preparing the ground for setting up a local cooperative</li> <li>• Provision of agricultural inputs in the form of goats and seeds (on the condition of reimbursement), and providing input in terms of agricultural knowledge</li> </ul>   |
| AFEM-SK (AFEM in short) | 2003               | Women empowerment, Fight against sexual and gender-based violence   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radio listening clubs in rural areas to open up discussion and to get informed on issues at stake</li> <li>• Radio broadcasts on women's rights and related issues</li> <li>• Facilitate meetings between rural women &amp; local authorities</li> <li>• Lobby and advocacy on the provincial level and beyond</li> </ul>  |
| KMS                     | 2002               | Sustainably improve living conditions of rural people, especially in field of WASH and food security                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of drinking water constructions</li> <li>• Support to maintenance committees of water constructions</li> <li>• Set up of agricultural cooperatives and savings groups to improve food security</li> </ul>  |
| RHA                     | 2004               | Promotion of peace, security and good governance in Ituri   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training of local committees working for peace and conflict transformation</li> <li>• Community meetings (barza) to discuss issues of concern to the population and find solutions</li> <li>• Mobilise local leaders to raise awareness on good governance</li> <li>• Monitor conflicts, security incidents, and human rights violations, and use this as basis for lobby and advocacy</li> </ul>  |
| IFDP                    | 2002               | Improve local capacities for transformation of conflict, reduce poverty and social inequality, improve local governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion of socio-therapy as a means to transform conflicts</li> <li>• Set up of reflection groups (GRFs) working on land rights</li> <li>• Transform land tenure practices through AGRIPAX</li> <li>• Lobby and advocacy in relation to land access, and local governance on provincial level and beyond</li> </ul>  |
| VICO                    | 1996               | Women empowerment, assistance of cases of SGBV  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• socio-economic support (credit groups) to 300 women and 50 men</li> <li>• training groups on women's rights, HIV/Aids, sexual and gender-based violence, entrepreneurship-related themes</li> <li>• training management committees of these groups on democratic management principles</li> <li>• psycho-social assistance to SGBV cases</li> </ul>  |
| Groupe Jérémie          | 1993               | Promotion of human rights, peace and justice. Focus of MMM-funded project is on improving prison conditions             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training of local activists' groups on human rights</li> <li>• Raise awareness among local authorities on human rights, and rights of detainees.</li> <li>• Training of police, prison staff and judicial officers on rights of detainees and penal code</li> <li>• Monitor prison conditions in collaboration with the attorney and denounce arbitrary arrest and irregular detention</li> <li>• Advocacy to improve prison conditions</li> </ul> |
| RECIC                   | 1994               | Civic education and dialogue between  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The setting up and leading of 'synergies' in various communes, bringing together stakeholders</li> </ul>   |

<sup>23</sup> Involvement of Salvation Army NL dates back to 1930s, when the Dutch branch was still closely connected to the Belgium branch.

<sup>24</sup> VECO Bukavu is part of the Belgian NGO Vredeseilanden, founded in 1958. It established a presence in DRC in 2001 (Butembo).

<sup>25</sup> Prior to 2007, CEPROF formally was a branch of SOOCODEFI (est. 1984), though it operated independently since 2001/2002.

|               |                              |   |   |
|---------------|------------------------------|---|---|
|               |                              | government and citizens   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tribunes for popular expression, to initiate dialogue between population and authorities</li> <li>• Contributing to participatory development of commune development plans</li> <li>• Supporting the 26 member organisations in terms of capacity development, project development, and monitoring and evaluation</li> </ul>                       |
| CME           | 1965                         | Improve level and access of basic health care                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health insurance provision through MUSACA</li> <li>• Set up local health communities</li> <li>• Free health care for most vulnerable</li> </ul>  |
| REMACOB       | 2004                         | Support community radios and media-civil society-government relations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening capacity of member community radios</li> <li>• Technical equipment for member radios</li> <li>• Developing broadcasts on issues having to do with elections, good governance, etc., and training staff of member radios on these issues</li> <li>• Lobby for national law on community radios</li> </ul>                             |
| UPDI          | 1994                         | Improve food security and agricultural production                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up and support agricultural cooperatives (mainly potatoes) to intensify agriculture by providing training, fertilizers, improved seed varieties, loans</li> <li>• Together with other agricultural organisations carry out lobby and advocacy to improve marketing conditions (e.g. infrastructure, access to land, taxing climate)</li> </ul> |
| RFDP          | 1999                         | Women empowerment, support to victims of sexual violence              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forming coalition for lobby on the law on sexual violence</li> <li>• Educating women on their rights</li> <li>• Dialogue between local committees and authorities</li> <li>• Advocacy on cases of sexual violence and providing juridical assistance to women victims of SGBV</li> <li>• Training women on participation in elections</li> </ul>   |
| ADI-Kivu      | 1987                         | Improve food security and agricultural production                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up and support of mutual solidarity groups (MUSOs) to enable saving</li> <li>• Set up and support of rice and cassava cooperatives</li> <li>• Provide skills training to farmers to increase production</li> </ul>   |
| Caritas Kindu | 2006 <sup>26</sup><br>(1959) | Improve living conditions in the communities of the Diocese           | <p><i>For the Commission Diocesane Justice et Paix:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set up &amp; support 7 local committees for participatory governance</li> <li>• Training citizens, authorities and teachers on decentralisation and citizen participation in governance</li> <li>• Organisation of 'tribunes d'expression populaire'</li> </ul>                        |
| RRILRP        | 2010                         | Restoration of peace and stability in the region affected by the LRA  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network meetings for exchange of experiences and analysing the current status of affairs</li> <li>• Local working group activities in each country</li> <li>• Lobby and advocacy through personal connections</li> </ul>   |

## 6.2 Contribution to civil society development

Table 6.2 recapitulates the ultimate goal established in the Theory of Change (ToC) exercises carried out during the workshops. The goal was defined by the staff of the 19 CSOs involved in the evaluation. The table shows a diverse image when it comes to SPOs' contributions to civil society development. Please consult the technical reports in Annex A for more detail on the Practice of Change. In the following, we provide some general observations.

Looking at the suggested ultimate goals, there is a clear variation in terms of topics as well as in levels on which change is sought. To a large extent variations in themes are inherent to the focal themes chosen by the Dutch CFAs. Reflecting on the pathway of change, some organisations limit themselves strictly to the narrow context of their current Dutch-funded project (what they currently are doing and how this will affect change/results). Other organisations appear to think big and their ToC includes quite a number of sub-conditions that might not necessarily be situated within the sphere of influence of the SPO and thus require a process in which wider conditions/actors are involved.

Generally speaking, it makes quite a difference at what stage an organisation is with the development of a strategic plan; organisations that have a (recently updated) strategic plan in place are usually better

<sup>26</sup> The organisation was actually established in 1959, and functioned within the Diocese of Kindu.

able to reflect on their future, whereas for organisations with an outdated plan, or without a plan, the exercise really served as a preliminary brainstorming.

Looking at the goals, it becomes clear that some organisations have more ambitious goals than others. It should be pointed out here that the more ambitiously defined goals are not necessarily formulated by the organisations that are most likely to develop at a rapid speed in the coming years. The level of critical reflection within an organisation is certainly an element that should not be overlooked when assessing the likelihood that a goal will indeed be achieved. Being overly ambitious leads to the risk of having to face difficulties in keeping focus.

Related to the focus of organisations, it can be noted that some SPOs have worked on a variety of different themes over the past few years. These range from for example agricultural training, to WASH, alphabetisation and human rights training (in the case of ADI-Kivu), or from the construction of water wells, and latrines to agricultural cooperatives and saving groups (in the case of KMS). Even though in some cases the underlying approach remained similar, topics these organisations work on vary in line with donor opportunities and the belief in a holistic approach to development. As a draw-back, expert knowledge needs to be developed again and again or new staff needs to be hired to bring in the required expertise. When defining the pathway of change, organisations with a wide range of activities often find it harder to come up with a coherent line of reasoning; a holistic approach comes across as a coherent whole only at the moment enough funding is available to cover a wide range of themes and seek connections. This has often not been the case over the last years. For organisations with a very clear focus which is predominantly led by strong personal commitments, it is easier to set out a pathway of change, but these organisations can often not change their focus as quickly as donor agendas and priorities can change. To be able to have an impact on civil society and good governance, a long-term commitment to a specific goal might be more effective as processes of lobby, advocacy and monitoring require a long breath that reaches beyond project-based attention spans. This is something which is clearly visible in the successful lobby and advocacy carried out by IFDP to change legislation on environmental protection. First steps were taken in 2009, the decree was adopted in 2013, but publication was still pending in 2014. Lobby and advocacy for improved land legislation had started in the same period, but was still ongoing.

**Table 6.2 Ultimate (5-year) goals of the sampled SPOs**

| <b>CSO</b>     | <b>Ultimate Goal</b>  |
|----------------|---|
| Réseau CREF    | Improve the well-being of the local community and autochthonous peoples through good governance of natural resources and the promotion of the green economy.              |
| Armée du Salut | Fight against poverty in order to improve the quality of the integral education of youth in Kasha/Bagira in particular and in Kivu in general.                            |
| SOFIBEF        | Contribute to the emergence of a balanced leadership by women, which is inclined to improve the political and socio-economic living conditions within the communities.    |
| VECO           | The development of a strong and sustainable rural entrepreneurship, at the service of organised family farmers.   |
| CEPROF         | An improved position of women in the Fizi territory, equal to men.  |
| AFEM-SK        | Arrive at a fair society, where men and women enjoy their rights.   |
| KMS            | Contribute to the improvement of life and dignity of people in the weakest position.  |
| RHA            | Organise a civil society which plays fully its role in relation to pacification, reconciliation, good governance, human rights and the exploitation of natural resources. |
| IFDP           | Contribute to improved governance of land and natural resources for equitable social justice in the DRC.  |
| VICO           | Arrive at a society where the socioeconomic and health rights of women and children are respected.  |
| Groupe Jérémie | Improved and humanised prison conditions.   |
| RECIC          | Populations participate in a responsible way in the local governance of their ETDs (decentralised territorial entities) for the improvement of their living conditions.   |

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| CME           | Improve access to primary and secondary health care for at least 80% of the population, especially women, and children in the age of 0-5.   |
| REMACOB       | The needs of local communities to be served, and REMACOB wants to make this happen through effective media and civil society organisations. |
| UPDI          | A peasant union constituted by professional agricultural cooperatives which are capable to radiate throughout the province of South-Kivu.   |
| RFDP          | Women as well as men participate in management of public affairs and the construction of peace, in an equitable manner.                     |
| ADI-Kivu      | Improve the living conditions of farmers in South Kivu for their sustainable development and self-support/self-care.                        |
| Caritas Kindu | Improve socio-economic and health conditions, as well as the management of natural resources, in the Diocese of Kindu.                      |
| RRILRP        | A restoration of peace and stability in the region affected by the LRA.   |

Looking at actual realisations, we found that all SPOs are still working towards the same ultimate goal as formulated two years ago, but some of them have shifted their focus a bit on how to reach this goal, or have stalled some of their ambitions for the time being. Most of the organisations have met at least some of the intermediate indicators, or are busy working towards their realisation. We generally encountered satisfaction among SPO staff about the progress that was made, although in the field it was often more difficult to find concrete evidence. Partly this is related to the complexity of the interventions and the Congolese context. Illustrative in this regard is the example of ADI-Kivu: early 2012 the organisation's office was confiscated by the Congolese state. After a tedious proceeding in court, it was decided early 2014 that the confiscation was unlawful and that property had to be returned, but when we visited ADI-Kivu in 2014, the building was still occupied by a high-ranking army officer, who did not want to leave unless he would be provided other premises.

Looking at the pathway of change, it is striking that a large part of the realisations of the SPOs are actually carried out by their grassroots structures: SPOs train people locally who can then be the agents of change in their communities. The grassroots level is the level that is strongest targeted by efforts of our SPOs to strengthen civil society. Several of the SPOs in our sample have provided/provide training or other capacity strengthening to other NGOs in their surroundings, but most of this is not done in a structured way. Examples of these SPOs are: GJ, AFEM, ADI-Kivu, and UPDI. An example of an SPO that is more active in strengthening capacity of others is SOFIBEF. Part of this is engrained in the female leadership programme that is funded by ICCO, but the organisation does so in other ways outside the programme as well. Generally, we feel that efforts of mutual capacity strengthening are rarely undertaken, unless encouraged by donors.

During the baseline, two major impediments for the successful implementation of the pathway came up during almost all the exercises: 1) availability of donor funding, and 2) stable security situation. Donor funding is critical as hardly any of the organisations have substantial own income-generating activities (apart from CME). This continues to be the case, and has become even more urgent with the gradual withdrawal of many donors. We noted an increased awareness among SPOs to think about income-generating activities. An example of this is VICO. This SPO has not had any funding since the end of 2012 but has purchased plots of land and is now engaging in agriculture with the aim of making some money to finance project implementation. Others are becoming stricter in imposing membership fees. Yet all these models of auto-financing still need to prove themselves and are clearly very challenging in a context where close to 9 out of 10 people live of less than \$1.25 a day (UNDP, 2014).

Insecurity remains a critical factor as well; though many of the organisations we visited have their offices in urban areas that are less prone to insecurity, project sites are usually outside these urban areas. Rebel movements and incidents of violence often have a very immediate impact on the possibilities to travel to certain areas, which has strong implications for the implementation and monitoring of projects. Overall and at least in South Kivu -where most of the SPOs execute their projects- the security context has slightly improved and project activities are less often interrupted for security reasons.

### 6.3 Research Question 1: What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?

In this section, we describe the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period. The general contextual changes have been described under the Country Background in chapter 2. We focused on three themes in particular: women's empowerment/gender, agriculture, good governance/fragile states. Here, we structure our analysis along the 5 dimensions of the Civicus Civil Society Index.

Table 6.3 represents the scores for the 19 SPOs studied against the five dimensions of civil society development, scored on a scale from 0-3, at baseline (T<sub>0</sub>) and endline (T<sub>1</sub>). The variations in scoring give an indication of variations in strengths and weaknesses. The scale is ordinal, and thus indicates difference, but not exactly how far one organisation is removed from the other. The Methodology in Annex C gives an indication of what each score represents to us, given the Congolese context and the overall level of civil society. Since the evaluation team remained the same during the evaluation period, it is possible to compare developments for an organisation along these dimensions over time. Comparing scores across organisations is more complicated. Each organisation has its own thematic focus which is set in an enabling or disabling institutional and societal environment and thus each organisation faces other challenges in working towards realisation of a certain dimension.

**Table 6.3 Changes for civil society indicators**

|  | Civic engagement |                | Level of organisation |                | Practice of values |                | Perception of impact |                | Environment    |                | Average change |
|--|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|  | T <sub>0</sub>   | T <sub>1</sub> | T <sub>0</sub>        | T <sub>1</sub> | T <sub>0</sub>     | T <sub>1</sub> | T <sub>0</sub>       | T <sub>1</sub> | T <sub>0</sub> | T <sub>1</sub> |                |
| <i>Generally positive change</i>         |                  |                |                       |                |                    |                |                      |                |                |                |                |
| IFDP                                     | 2.5              | 2.5            | 2                     | 2.5            | 2                  | 2              | 2.5                  | 2.5            | 2              | 3              | 0.3            |
| Armée du Salut                           | 1.5              | 1.5            | 1                     | 1.5            | 0                  | 0.5            | 1                    | 1.5            | 1              | 1              | 0.3            |
| VECO                                     | 2.5              | 2.5            | 1.5                   | 2              | 2                  | 2              | 2                    | 2.5            | 2.5            | 2.5            | 0.2            |
| RFDP                                     | 2                | 2.5            | 2                     | 2              | 1.5                | 1.5            | 2                    | 2.5            | 2              | 2              | 0.2            |
| CEPROF                                   | 1.5              | 1.5            | 1                     | 1              | 1                  | 1              | 1                    | 1.5            | 0.5            | 1              | 0.2            |
| <i>Some positive and negative change</i> |                  |                |                       |                |                    |                |                      |                |                |                |                |
| Réseau CREF                              | 2.5              | 2.5            | 2.5                   | 2.5            | 3                  | 3              | 2                    | 2.5            | 2              | 2              | 0.1            |
| AFEM-SK                                  | 2                | 2              | 2                     | 2              | 1.5                | 2              | 2                    | 2              | 1.5            | 1.5            | 0.1            |
| CME                                      | 1.5              | 2              | 2                     | 2              | 1.5                | 1.5            | 2                    | 2              | 1.5            | 1.5            | 0.1            |
| UPDI                                     | 2                | 1.5            | 2                     | 2              | 2.5                | 2              | 2                    | 2.5            | 2              | 2.5            | 0              |
| Caritas Kindu                            | 2                | 1.5            | 2                     | 2              | 1.5                | 1.5            | 1.5                  | 2              | 1.5            | 1.5            | 0              |
| Groupe Jérémie                           | 3                | 3              | 2                     | 2              | 2.5                | 2              | 2                    | 2.5            | 2.5            | 2              | -0.1           |
| RRILRP                                   | 1.5              | 1              | 2                     | 2              | 1.5                | 1.5            | 1.5                  | 2              | 2              | 1.5            | -0.1           |
| <i>Generally negative change</i>         |                  |                |                       |                |                    |                |                      |                |                |                |                |
| ADI-Kivu                                 | 2                | 1.5            | 1.5                   | 1              | 1.5                | 1.5            | 1.5                  | 1.5            | 1              | 1              | -0.2           |
| SOFIBEF                                  | 2.5              | 2              | 2                     | 2              | 2                  | 1              | 2                    | 2              | 1.5            | 2              | -0.2           |
| KMS                                      | 1                | 0.5            | 1.5                   | 1              | 2                  | 1.5            | 1                    | 1.5            | 1              | 1              | -0.2           |
| REMACOB                                  | 2                | 1.5            | 1.5                   | 1              | 2                  | 1.5            | 1.5                  | 1.5            | 1.5            | 1.5            | -0.3           |
| RHA                                      | 2.5              | 1.5            | 2                     | 1.5            | 1                  | 1              | 2                    | 1.5            | 2              | 2              | -0.4           |
| VICO                                     | 2                | 1              | 1.5                   | 1              | 0.5                | 0              | 1                    | 0.5            | 1              | 1              | -0.5           |
| RECIC                                    | 2.5              | 2              | 2.5                   | 1.5            | 2.5                | 2              | 2                    | 1.5            | 2              | 1.5            | -0.6           |

This table shows the change over the evaluation period, and thus the position of the SPOs does not relate to their average score. Overall change has been limited, and negative and positive change correct each other. Changes generally are rather small (most SPOs fall in the range of +0.2 to -0.2), and many SPOs have mixed results, with some indicators showing signs of improvement, and others remaining stable or decreasing. Organisations that have realised lower scores on 3 or more elements, are often SPOs that have received very limited funding in the course of the evaluation period (KMS, VICO, RECIC, REMACOB).

One additional observation: generally speaking scores tend to be slightly higher for organisations that have strong member organisations at the local level supporting them to implement projects and to monitor what is happening on the ground; these CBOs can be seen as part of civil society as well and hence interventions directed at beneficiaries through the SPOs often have an impact on capacity building of these CBOs.

### 6.3.1 *Civic engagement*

Needs of beneficiaries are generally well taken into account in the different stages of a project, from planning, to implementation and follow-up. Most organisations show a clear awareness of the importance of involving beneficiaries in planning projects. This is often done through the CBOs with which the SPOs cooperate. Changes in activities can be indicated by the CBOs or by the field staff as they have easy access to information and are well in place to assess the needs, as a SOFIBEF field officer explained. Overall, we have the impression that most SPOs have reduced their number of field visits and leave activities increasingly to their field staff or grassroots structures.

UPDI for instance invites 3 representatives of each cooperative to attend planning sessions and discuss activities to be carried out. During our endline visit we noted the attendance of the president of one of UPDI's cooperatives at a workshop organised for partners in the food security synergy of ICCO. VECO beneficiaries testified that some of them had attended a strategic planning workshop of VECO.

Special attention to specific vulnerable target groups is common. Women are the main targets of AFEM, CEPROF, SOFIBEF, RFDP, and VICO. Several other organisations mention gender at least as a transversal theme, but this does not necessarily imply a place attributed to gender in actual project execution. CME pays special attention to the most vulnerable such as handicapped or people with HIV/AIDS; they get basic health care for free. Groupe Jérémie's MFS-funded project has a focus on detainees and their environment, many of the pupils of the AdS schools come from IDP families. UPDI is moving away from working with the most vulnerable, in transitioning from working with collectives to working with cooperatives. These cooperatives, just like the cooperatives of VECO primarily target farmers who are able to produce for the market. Also KMS selected only the bigger producers for its food security project. RHA has reduced the number of participants in its community meetings, but while maintaining representation of the various authorities. It is unclear to what extent this reduces possibilities for more marginalised to be heard.

A recurrent concern that was raised in relation to SPOs' abilities to respond to needs and expectations of beneficiaries, is the mentality of 'attentisme' (wait-and-see) that has developed over time with the prolonged presence of humanitarian aid organisations providing goods and services for free. This seemed to be especially strong in the Kivus, most notably in the territories of Fizi and Uvira where KMS, CEPROF and SOFIBEF operate. In these areas it is a challenge to establish more sustainable project activities and set up credit groups in which people are expected to return their loans. Besides, insecurity causes populations to be on the move and to have low levels of trust, which is not beneficial in for instance setting up grassroots committees to maintain water constructions. Since 2012 the number of humanitarian organisations in this area is reducing, but a shift in mentality still needs to be made.

At the grassroots level, there are many examples of contacts with the local authorities. Generally, it is the grassroots organisations that the SPOs work with, who approach the authorities to claim their rights, or denounce a violation of rights. A number of SPOs have worked on developing regular, constructive dialogue between representatives of the CBOs and the local authorities, with a degree of success. Some grassroots



organisations have managed to get access to the local security councils. Frameworks have been set up to bring together civil society, authorities and private sector actors at the local level. These activities are often hampered by the lack of capacity of the local authorities, both in terms of resources as well as in terms of education.

Concluding for this dimension: all SPOs target marginalised groups in some way. There are differences in how the beneficiaries are involved, but all organisations aim to actively involve beneficiaries in their projects. The attitude of *attentisme*, dependency, is a complicating factor in this. There is much engagement with the local authorities, by the local grassroots structures, with quite some success in influencing the practice of policy.

### 6.3.2 Level of organisation

REMACOB, Réseau CREF, RECIC, and RHA are network organisations that – almost by nature – have close connections to their members. RRILRP is a network organisation with bases in four different countries and is well-embedded in and connected to churches (DRC, Uganda, and CAR) and Muslim communities (Uganda). Most Bukavu-based SPOs have close contacts to many other CSOs in town. Generally speaking, the CSO landscape in Bukavu is vibrant and many CSO representatives proudly told that South Kivu, and especially Bukavu is at the roots of civil society in DRC. It is here that the umbrella organisation of the 'Bureau de Coordination de la Société Civile' was first founded (Bureau de coordination, 2012). Groupe Jérémie has been among the driving forces of this movement. Meanwhile coordination offices exist throughout the country, down to the local community level, grouping organisations along thematic lines for joint lobby and advocacy, and agenda-setting. Many people however feel that the office is not as dynamic as it was in the past. Nevertheless, most SPOs are member of this 'Civil Society', and it does serve as a platform to stay in touch. Since 2012 a second civil society umbrella structure has been created, next to the 'bureau'; the 'new civil society'. It is indicative for the lack of agreement and the fragmentation of civil society. The most visible realisations of the 'civil society' are press statements that are released every now and then when an urgent issues needs attention. It is a relatively anonymous way for specific organisations to make statements about sensitive issues, leading to claims in media outlets such as "the civil society of Bukavu says that..."

The Communities of Change (CoC) Alliance and the ICCO Alliance are represented in our sample with 8, respectively 6 organisations. Until 2012 the Cordaid partners in the CoC Alliance generally had some contacts with each other, as Cordaid organised joint trainings for organisations that are at the same stage in the capacity strengthening program. This became much less. Instead, Cordaid increasingly sets up programmes that focus around a particular theme, for instance Resolution 1325. Each of the partners involved in this programme took up part of the programme as its specific project. The ICCO Alliance is applying a programmatic approach since 2010-2011. This means organisations working on the same theme are clustered, and thus for instance ADI-Kivu, KMS and UPDI are joint partners – with some other ICCO-funded organisations – within a food security alliance, SOFIBEF is taking the lead in the female leadership alliance, and AdS and CME are members of the Education and Health Alliance. Remarkable of the latter synergy is that it unites different donors as well. Most other alliances do not show such examples from the funding side. Within these synergies, working complementarily is strongly encouraged; creating interdependency, harmonising work, supporting each other with problems, and imitating strategies that appear to be effective, but in reality we find limited effects of this. Levels of engagement within these clusters vary. ZOA applies a similar programmatic approach within the DCR Pamoja program of which CEPROF is part, but currently there is little exchange between CEPROF and other ZOA partners. Partners within the ICCO Education and Health Alliance show a large variety in geographical distribution, which makes exchange more difficult than for some of the other alliances. In 2013 its donors jointly decided to fund the position of a consultant within this alliance to encourage interaction, to improve joint programming and lobby and advocacy. No clear examples of success were available on this. Projects in the food security cluster and women leadership show more overlap and interaction between partners is more frequent. SOFIBEF, together with the two other partners in the women leadership synergy carried out a joint research

to assess the position of women in the Kivu provinces. We consider this to be a great realisation in terms of peer-to-peer communication and exchange between SPOs

In 2012, one of the ICCO officers questioned the willingness and mentality to cooperate among civil society actors: "There is a lack of communication. [...] A true understanding of what is civil society is also often lacking [...] there is a lot of reactivity, and dependency on donors. While many things can be done with good connections and little money!" In 2014 we did not note any major changes in this regard, although civil society organisations seem to become more aware that funding is not eternal and increasingly see the importance of seeking alternative income sources.

Donor dependency generally is high (up to 100% for most SPOs), because hardly any of the SPOs has substantial means of independent income-generation, apart from CME (through the provision of health care), and to some extent ADI-Kivu (through renting out premises purchased with donor support in the past). VICO has obtained tractors and developed agricultural activities to generate an income for the organisation during the evaluation period, and RECIC has purchased a plot of land, but it remains to be seen whether this will generate a substantial income. In the case of the network organisations Réseau CREF, RHA and RECIC the member organisations to a large extent depend on the donor funding generated by the network. Through the regional office and international organisation, VECO Bukavu has a relatively secure funding base, though it needed to secure additional donors. AdS Bukavu is not well aware of its donor base as funding comes in (and is generated) at the national AdS level in Kinshasa. As a member organisation with a very large constituency, UPDI is concerned with collecting membership fees, but payment levels are weak. It could help to make the organisation less dependent.

For this dimension, we find that there is an active civil society, though more diverse in the East. Civil society is fragmented, and there is strong competition. There is collaboration between SPOs, but often when this does not involve financial means or many human resources: in the form of networking, exchange of information, denouncing violations of rights. There is no collaboration in terms of development and execution of projects together. Partly in response to these weaknesses, CFAs are focusing more on synergy between their SPOs, but without sustainable results so far. In terms of financing, there is an almost complete dependency on international donors.

### 6.3.3 *Practice of values*

All SPOs have the legally required internal organisational structure, with a General Assembly, a Board of Directors and an Audit Committee in place. In the case of VECO the general council functions at the international level. Yet, it was also admitted by most SPOs that the Board and committees are often not fully functional. Delays in scheduling meetings, outdated statutes, or pending elections for new board members are not uncommon, and board members are generally not strongly involved in setting out the internal and external strategy of an organisation. ADI-Kivu is an exception, where the board seemingly has a remarkably strong impact on the way the organisation positions itself. This might be related to certain internal issues that have been at stake in the recent past. UPDI is another organisation with a more involved – and functional- board. The structure of CME is rather complicated because the organisation functions at three different locations, with the board being spread over these locations as well. This poses extra challenges to the management of the organisation. CME staff is aware of this and reflecting on restructuring. The organisation of meetings such as General Assembly and Board meetings usually requires some funding; board members that are highly solicited by various parties sometimes receive fees to attend meetings, transport costs need to be reimbursed, food and drinks have to be provided. There is little interest from the side of donors to fund these types of activities. The frequency of meetings of the Board and committees is usually prescribed by the statutes of an organisation, but generally not a requirement of donors. The incentive to stick to the statutory prescribed frequency is very low.

Downward accountability is ensured generally by involving members at the local level, either through direct connections with the executive office, or through intermediate field staff that are connected to both levels.

For the implementation of projects, most organisations work with local groups at the community level, either through cooperatives or savings groups (VECO, UPDI, ADI-Kivu, CEPROF), through local conflict mediation and human rights groups (RHA, IFDP, Groupe Jérémie, Caritas Kindu), women's groups (AFEM, SOFIBEF, RFDP, SOFIBEF, VICO), or other grassroots groups (KMS: water maintenance groups, AdS: parents' groups, CME: health committees). These structures ensure a connection to the local level. The network organisations Réseau CREF, REMACOB, RECIC, and RRILRP work through partner organisations that in their turn work with grassroots groups. Grassroots structures usually do not have a clear idea on the amount of funding that is available to them or to the SPO within a project. We did not observe any changes in this regard. It is clear however that perceptions about good governance, transparency, etc. are very much reproduced at the grassroots level; local members are proud to show the minutes of their General Assembly, some of them even have a steering committee in place.

External financial auditing is carried out regularly in most cases, but generally only at donor request and per project rather than institutionally. This has to do with high costs of external auditing. Several donors and civil society actors mentioned a so-called 'Operation Retour', referring to the practice of receiving funding and then having to return part of the funding to the person or institution responsible for successful mediation to ensure the funding. This practice relates to wide-spread practices of unlawful diversion of funding within Congolese institutions, and endangers the outputs that can be achieved. CSOs end up with less funds, but are still expected to reach the contractual goals, pressuring organisations to submit reports of successful completion of projects. These concerns increase the importance of establishing systems to ensure financial transparency, and have been picked up by Réseau CREF: this SPO has established that 90% of its members now have mechanisms for yearly audits in place. In case an audit finds that things are not in order, member organisations may be expelled (this has happened three times during the evaluation period). In terms of financial transparency, we have serious concerns about the lack of aggregate budgets/financial reports. Only very few SPOs in our sample compile aggregate financial reports, whereas this could greatly increase transparency, as it could indicate for instance the total salary of each individual staff member. Overall, we did not note any improvements in this regard during the evaluation period.

Concluding for the dimension of Practice of values: all organisations studied have the legally required internal organisational structure. The General Assembly, Board and committees encounter difficulties in holding the required meetings, and their role is often not entirely clear for the members. At the same time, SPOs indicate that this organisational structure is important for the functioning of the organisation. Downward accountability has not been formalised, but beneficiaries are actively involved in projects, and organised in grassroots structures. External audits are done, but often based on donor requirements; some organisations execute yearly institutional audits. Only a few SPOs provide consolidated reports. Overall, this dimension has remained constant.

#### 6.3.4 Perception of impact

Generally, SPO staff indicated that beneficiaries are satisfied about their interventions, but that needs are always bigger than what the SPOs are able to offer. This view is shared by most of the beneficiaries we talked to during the evaluation period. It should be pointed out here that in some areas it is more difficult to have an impact because of the lack of infrastructure. This goes especially for the SPOs active in the more remote areas such as RHA, CEPROF, SOFIBEF, KMS, and Caritas Kindu. Donor activity in the south of South Kivu is still quite high, with many international agencies implementing humanitarian aid projects. In the east of Province Orientale, where RHA and CME operate, donor activity is much lower than in the Kivus and although there are restraining factors, interventions of SPOs are noted by beneficiaries. In areas with high CSO activity (such as the Kivus) it can also be more difficult for organisations to attribute an impact to their specific interventions. Beneficiaries we talked to in the Kivus usually had experience with several aid and development projects.

To have an impact on civil society in general, being based in Bukavu is an advantage because it facilitated easy access to other organisations for exchange, training, networking, and collaboration. A number of SPOs have played a role in the formation of networks in years preceding this evaluation (RFDP, Groupe Jérémie). There are also SPOs that are involved in building capacity of other CSOs. One of the networks in our sample, Réseau CREF, has the clearly stated objective to improve the capacity of its member organisations. Apart from the networks, SPOs do not explicitly aim to influence the development of civil society at a higher level than that of the local level of CBOs.

SPO staff are generally critical towards the public sector. Organisations try to strike a balance in their contacts with the public sector: on the one hand contacts are needed to have an impact, whereas on the other hand they want to remain independent and function as a counterforce to the government. A frequently heard complaint among civil society actors is that many people enter into the realm of CSOs to obtain training contacts and a constituency, only with the final aim to get access to politics. Most of these people are strongly criticized for this choice, as it is felt that they forget their origin and no longer act in the interest of civil society. Groupe Jérémie is an organisation that has found a balance between engaging with the authorities and its function as watchdog: the organisation openly denounces human rights violations, also from the side of the government, but has ensured backing through its long-standing contacts with some politicians and through its role in the public debate. Speaking out in radio broadcasts is an important means to get the message spread and find popular support. This is not to say however, that Groupe Jérémie staff do not suffer from threats from actors who do not agree on them speaking out. Radio broadcasts serve as a powerful tool to denounce abuses, trace public awareness, or to spread information. 12 of the SPOs in our sample make use of radio stations from time to time or on a regular basis. In the case of AFEM, radio programs are at the basis of the project intervention.

Concrete examples of policy influencing exist. One is the environmental provincial law that has been proposed by IFDP, in collaboration with one of the delegates of the provincial assembly in South Kivu. At national level, VECO is involved in the network AgriCongo that has been involved in the drafting of the new Agricultural Law, and VECO is now lobbying at the provincial level for its implementation. Similarly, AFEM has lobbied with national delegates for amending the articles that disadvantage women in the Family Law. RFDP is one of the organisations that set up the 30-50% campaign, focusing on equal representation of women in decision-making institutions.

Contacts with the private sector are less established. For organisations working on management of natural resources this becomes an increasingly important sector, as government legislation obliges extraction companies to provide compensation to affected communities. Although negotiations about this take place between government and the private companies, communities need to be made aware so that they can state their demands. RHA, IFDP, and Réseau CREF are involved in such processes. SPOs oriented towards agriculture generally aspire to have stronger relations with the private sector, but we have noted limited progress in this regard. The cooperative that is supported by VECO has managed to get an order from the Bukavu-based brewery Bralima. The multi-actor meetings that were organised as part of the synergy in which both ADI-Kivu and UPDI take part (with UPDI in a leading role) have not yet managed to engage private actors on a more permanent basis. Engagement there with both state and private actors is usually ad hoc.

In general, for this dimension, we find some improvement during the evaluation period. This may have to do with the execution of the projects, because beneficiaries are generally positive, though not all of their needs are covered. We find some impact on other CSOs, through networking and trainings, and the network organisations we evaluated have a mixed effect on their member organisations. There is also impact on policy at provincial/national level, a number of activities are carried out, but there has not been much change during the evaluation period. The impact on private sector policy is limited, and also in most cases not relevant.

### 6.3.5 Context and environment

The unstable security context plays a significant role in many of the projects carried out. Most organisations which are based in the east of the country have various project sites, with varying levels of security over time. During the evaluation period especially the organisations active in the southern part of South Kivu (KMS, CEPROF, and SOFIBEF), in North Kivu (Réseau CREF, but also the Beni location of CME, and school projects of AdS in North Kivu) and to some extent Ituri (RHA and CME) were affected by ongoing insecurity and activities of various rebel movements. In response to this insecurity, office work of KMS, CEPROF and SOFIBEF is taking place in Uvira, and Réseau CREF has adapted the set-up of its Board meetings and the start of the MFS-funded project. In terms of contingency planning, most organisations have not developed worst-case scenarios; when access to a project area is hampered, implementation either depends on the presence of grassroots groups, or is postponed until safety levels become acceptable again. Monitoring the security context is also important because changes here also result in changing needs of beneficiaries. This was clearly expressed by staff members of RHA, operating in Province Orientale where some areas have known relative stability in recent times: with beneficiaries becoming used to a situation of peace, peace-building organisations are expected to shift their intervention focus and approach as well.

SPOs use various methods to analyse the context, but the majority of the organisations do not apply these methods in a structured and regular way. As part its strategic planning process, VECO RD Congo for instance organised meetings in which members of the cooperatives participated, to analyse the socio-economic context and political-security developments, and to discuss the opportunities and challenges presented by these developments. IFDP is an organisation that has been involved in various research projects on land conflicts, and RFDP has conducted research on gender-based violence.

Most SPOs clearly display awareness of the political context. Six SPOs (AFEM, Groupe Jérémie, RECIC, REMACOB, RFDP, and CEPROF) carried out project activities before and during the 2011 presidential elections.

Overall, for this dimension, we see little change during the evaluation period. The security context has remained relatively stable, but still unpredictable. SPOs adapt to the security circumstances, and the grassroots structures play an important role as relay network in this respect. The political context is also stable, with still a high degree of bad governance. The economic context is strongly affected by this, making it difficult to realise sustainable economic development. The monitoring of changes by SPOs is not structural, but SPOs are generally well-aware of developments in their context.

### 6.3.6 Conclusion: main changes in civil society dimensions

Overall, we find limited changes in scoring of SPOs for the 5 dimensions of the Civil Society Index. In fact, average change for the 19 SPOs across 5 dimensions equals zero. 5 out of 7 organisations with lower scores in 2014 than in 2012 have had a serious reduction in funding. Zooming in on the various indicators of specific dimensions, some observations can be made:

#### *Civic engagement:*

- Most SPOs are well aware of the special needs of marginalised groups
- There is large variation among SPOs regarding involvement of target groups in project planning, execution and evaluation
- Dependency syndrome (*esprit d'attentisme*) is seen by many SPOs as an impediment to development
- Relations with local authorities are generally amicable

#### *Level of organisation*

- There is an active civil society in DRC, especially in the east of the country (Kivu provinces)
- There is a general feeling among SPOs that civil society is fragmented and that there is a lot of competition. With reductions of funding this competition is likely to increase.
- CFAs are increasingly concerned with the promotion of synergies at the detriment of direct capacity development of SPOs. Synergies remain largely donor-driven

- Collaboration with other NGOs often takes shape through networking, exchange of information, or the denunciation of violation of rights, but much less through the joint execution of projects directed towards beneficiaries
- There is an almost total dependence on international funding for survival.

#### *Practice of values*

- SPOs usually attribute great importance in establishing organisational bodies such as General Assembly, Board of Directors, and in obtaining the legally required documents such as government recognition, statutes and regulations.
- There is limited downward accountability. Beneficiaries are mostly involved at the level of project execution
- External audits are carried out, but usually only on the basis of projects, and not organisationally. The general inexistence of consolidated budgets limits transparency.

#### *Perception of impact*

- Beneficiaries are generally positive, even though they agree that needs remain large and that more could be done.
- SPOs have limited impact on other NGOs. Impact is more visible at the level of CBOs.
- There is some impact on provincial and national policies, often through the participation of SPOs in networks or alliances
- Impact on the public sector is almost non-existing.

#### *Context/environment*

- The security situation has been relatively stable, but remains unpredictable in many areas in the east. SPOs and CBOs adapt to these challenges
- SPOs are generally well aware of contextual changes that are of relevance for their work. Grassroots contacts help to provide information. Data gathering and analysis is usually not done in a very structured way.

### **6.4 Research Question 2: To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia?**

In this section we investigate the contribution of the interventions by the SPOs to the changes in civil society. We do this in the form of four contribution stories, in which we synthesise information from the contribution analyses per organisation.

#### *6.4.1 Contribution stories: the role of SPOs in changes in civil society in relation to MDG and themes*

To establish the contribution of a selected number of SPOs in our sample, we have carried out contribution analyses. Findings per organisation are provided in the organisational reports. We carried out contribution analyses for 10 out of 19 organisations in our sample. Below is an overview of the outcome domains that were selected for contribution analysis, followed by a description of our findings on changes in civil society in relation to the selected themes and the contribution of the SPOs in our contribution sample. Generally, we formulated a tailor-made indicator for each organisation and traced this back to either one of the priority result areas of the CIVICUS index or to civil society development at the grassroots level. The latter can usually cover various priority result areas. Below, we provide brief summaries of 4 contribution stories. The first one gives an impression of the contribution of SPOs to civil society strengthening at the grassroots level. This is a common element in the project interventions of almost all SPOs in our sample. We then proceed with three thematic contribution stories, looking at changes in the field of gender, agriculture, and good governance/fragile states.

**Table 6.4 Overview of Contribution Analyses per SPO**

| Organisation                                | Priority result area  | Indicator   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Women's empowerment/Gender</b>           |   |   |
| AFEM  | Civil society development at grassroots level: civic engagement, perception of impact, practice of values | strengthening of the <i>Noyaux Clubs d'Écoute</i>                     |
| RFDP  | Civil society development at grassroots level: civic engagement, practice of values                       | Strengthening of <i>Comités d'Alerte pour la Paix</i>                 |
| VICO  | Civil society development at grassroots level: civic engagement, perception of impact                     | the improvement of the societal position of victims of armed conflict |
| <b>Agriculture</b>                          |   |   |
| ADI-Kivu                                    | Civil society development at grassroots level: civic engagement, perception of impact, practice of values | Setting up a cooperative  |
| UPDI  | Civil society development at grassroots level: civic engagement, perception of impact, practice of values | Strengthening a cooperative   |
|   | Level of organisation   | Synergy COS-PASAK   |
| VECO  | Civil society development at grassroots level: civic engagement, perception of impact, practice of values | Strengthening the cooperative COOSOPRODA                              |
| CEPROF                                      | Civil society development at grassroots level: civic engagement, perception of impact, practice of values | Setting up and strengthening MUSOs and local governance committees    |
| <b>Good governance &amp; fragile states</b> |   |   |
| GJ  | Perception of impact: policy impact/social impact   | Improving prison conditions and relations between state and citizens  |
| IFDP  | Perception of impact: policy impact   | Adoption of environmental law by provincial assembly of South Kivu    |
| RHA   | Perception of impact: policy impact/social impact   | Organisation and impact of community meetings ( <i>barza</i> )        |

#### 6.4.2 Civil society at the grassroots level: a contribution story

Civil society in DRC is generally active and vibrant. To increase their impact and presence at the local level, most SPOs work through grassroots structures: the CBOs. In the following paragraphs we discuss the extent at which SPOs are able to create or strengthen the CBOs with which they are partnering. We look at some of the mechanisms that are used by the SPOs in our sample, and how MFS-funding contributes to these mechanisms. Our findings are especially representative for the province of South Kivu where 12 out of 19 SPOs in our sample carry out their projects. This province (together with North Kivu) has a high density of NGOs in comparison to other provinces.

##### *Theory of Change*

The SPOs in our sample generally work through community-based structures, called base groups, antennae, nodes, cooperatives, collectives, local committees, etc. SPOs engage CBOs to be able to have strong entry points in the communities, and actual implementation of the project activities is often to a large extent done by these CBOs. To ensure engagement from these CBO members, SPOs invest in their capacity strengthening, support infrastructural development, and facilitate contacts with authorities. To ensure participation in meetings, incentives are provided by way of sitting allowances or contributions to transport costs. By strengthening the CBOs, project results should improve, and local beneficiaries should take more ownership of the project. CBO members are well placed to carry out local lobby and advocacy.

On the longer term, CBOs are generally supposed to become less dependent on the SPOs and function more autonomously.

#### *Practice of Change*

As part of our evaluation, we talked to a high number of beneficiaries of projects set up by SPOs in this sample. Some of this was done through focus groups, with other beneficiaries we carried out individual interviews. Some of the conversations had a relatively formal character, whereas other exchanges were more informal. The level of involvement of SPOs with their CBOs varies. Geographical distance to the head office of the SPOs is an important determinant for the frequency of contact. Contacts are maintained by SPO staff visiting the field sites, by CBO members visiting the main office, or through mobile phone. Some SPOs have paid field trainers who have a sustained presence in the field. Some CBOs have achieved a certain level of autonomy. They consider themselves first and foremost as independent structures, and refer primarily to their own structure when talking about project realisations. They consider themselves as local antennae of the SPOs only in the second place. We found this to be especially the case for the cooperatives supported by VECO (COOSOPRODA), UPDI (COOPASA), and the GRFs supported by IFDP. It reveals to what extent the SPOs are able to create independent structures, or to support already existing structures. For the network organisations in our sample it is more difficult to establish the level of autonomy as there is usually variation between member organisations.

Most beneficiaries were satisfied about the interventions of the SPO. Certain critical remarks however were recurring; members often felt frequency of activities was too low, and that not enough funding was provided to cover their needs. The majority of the SPOs in our sample does not engage in the provision of material support. A lot of the projects are about raising awareness on various themes, about promoting dialogue between various groups (between communities, between men and women, or between state officials and citizens for instance), but much less projects provided concrete and material investments in the communities, whereas many beneficiaries expressed a need to receive this kind of support.

Looking at the functioning of the CBOs, we noted a strong awareness amongst most of them about the importance of being transparent and of adhering to principles of good governance and democratic decision-making. SPOs for instance usually expect the CBOs to appoint a (rotating) board of directors, and a control commission, to organise General Assemblies, and to keep track of project realisations by providing regular reports. Such mechanisms to ensure accountability however do not always sit comfortably with local practices of accountability. A limited number of beneficiaries that has a certain level of literacy for instance greatly limits eligibility of members to occupy a position in one of the organisational bodies.

#### *Conclusion: Contribution of SPOs, contribution of MFS-funding*

SPOs strongly depend on donor funding to be able to stay connected to their grassroots structures. With less funding available, most of them have reduced their presence in the field. SPOs with several donors try to combine field visits and divide costs of visiting projects over different budgets. Dependency of SPOs on MFS-funding varies greatly and no uniform answer can be given about their contribution. It is clear that SPOs that have only one donor usually depend completely on this funding for the execution of project activities. There is awareness among SPOs of the importance of seeking additional funding/own sources, but this appears difficult to materialise.

In assessing the contribution of SPOs, we should be well aware that DRC has a strong tradition of associational life in the communities (Hilhorst & Bashwira, 2015). This goes back to Mobutu times when users of services such as health and education were organised in committees to increase their participation in decision-making and provision of services. It is not uncommon for beneficiaries to be active members of several CBOs. Not all of the realisations of the CBOs should be attributed to interventions of the SPOs. Some associations for instance already existed prior to the SPOs engagement. Nevertheless we consider donor funding a crucial factor in maintaining relationships between SPOs and CBOs and thus of ensuring a connection between the grassroots level and the intermediate level.



### 6.4.3 Theme: women's empowerment/gender in South Kivu

The women's movement in South Kivu has grown in parallel to international development discourses on women and gender. Around ten years ago, the issue of sexual violence started drawing all attention. In recent years the attention to violence has broadened to all kinds of gender-based violence, including for example inheritance issues, and to promoting women's leadership and political representation. Women in DRC are greatly underrepresented in the decision-making sphere, and still face many challenges. In the following paragraphs we describe the contribution by SPOs RFDP, AFEM and VICO towards improving the position of women at the grassroots level.

#### *Theory of Change*

Women are viewed as a marginalised group, politically, culturally, and economically. The SPOs in our sample work to improve their position. In order to do this, women have to be made aware of their rights and able to claim these, and women should become more autonomous economically. Local grassroots structures form a pivotal element in the approach, both as beneficiaries and as the local support structures for women that need assistance. These structures need training on internal governance, on women's rights and the related national and international legal documents, on how to provide assistance to SGBV victims, on how to document cases of rights violations, and on how to approach the local authorities to claim their rights or bring cases of rights violations to their attention. Additionally, in order to become more independent economically, members of these groups need to get access to credit, to be able to develop small income-generating activities.

#### *Practice of Change*

All three SPOs have developed large networks of grassroots structures. These are supported through trainings, through different methods: central meetings at the office (VICO), field workers based in the field that regularly visit the local groups (RFDP), regular radio programmes that are based on the experiences of the local groups (AFEM). These training sessions are on a number of topics, focus on getting access to justice (RFDP), rights (AFEM), and development of income-generating activities (VICO). All train the structures on good governance. The groups are also actively involved in the SPOs' interventions, and provide the SPOs with information on the local situation. Members of RFDP's groups are trained to document SGBV cases and to provide juridical support to victims. AFEM has members of its groups collect information for radio programmes, and also share what they have learnt with other women.

The majority of the members of the local groups are women. In the case of RFDP, many of these women have been SGBV victim. The women describe how the support they have received has increased their self-confidence, changed the way they view themselves, and has allowed them to change the way they are treated. Numerous examples of how the grassroots groups are approached by someone with a problem, related to inheritance for example, or an accusation of witchcraft, or theft, and how the groups then bring this to the attention of the local authorities, explaining the victim's rights, leading to an intervention by the authorities.

Some activities have been developed to improve the economic position of women. VICO has set up a microcredit project to support beneficiaries (including men) in the development of small business. VICO had little expertise in terms of microcredit and an unexperienced staff, the microcredit groups were not monitored well, and there were large problems with reimbursement of credit. RFDP has trained its grassroots groups to set up Mutuelles de Solidarité (MUSOs), savings and loans groups. These require no outside financing, as they depend on the regular contribution of the members. AFEM has developed plans to secure access to farmland for the members of its local groups, so they can develop joint agricultural activities. However, AFEM has not yet managed to find donor support for this.

The local groups receive some material support from the SPOs. AFEM pays a small fee to the mobilisers of the local structures, and pays the rent for a small office and some office materials. RFDP provides the grassroots structures with a place to meet in one of its two centres in Walungu Territory.

Overall, the different SPOs each intervene along their own area of expertise. This means a lot of their work is complementary, and in the Territory of Walungu we found beneficiaries that were receiving support by multiple organisations. This increases the coverage of the needs of beneficiaries. At the same time, it often also means that needs of beneficiaries are only partly met (in areas that are targeted by less SPOs).

#### *Conclusion: Contribution of SPOs, contribution of MFS-funding*

Our analysis presents a mixed image. We find it is plausible that the MFS II-funded SPOs contribute to the development of local civil society in form of the grassroots structures. We also find plausible contribution to the improvement of the position of women, increasing self-confidence, access to authorities, justice. However, we find no convincing evidence of improvement of economic conditions, it is more likely that interventions in this area have had only a limited temporary effect. There is a plurality of interventions in the target areas, and there is a general rights-based discourse in Eastern DRC. This means the sampled SPOs are not the only actors contributing to the improvement of the position of women, and that we can thus not attribute the improvements in local civil society and the position of women to the MFS II funding.

#### *6.4.4 Theme agriculture: cooperatives as civil society strengthening*

The agricultural sector in DRC faces a lot of challenges; poor infrastructure coupled to high transport costs and limited market access; high burdens of taxation that render agricultural investment little profitable. Several of the SPOs in our sample worked towards improving the agricultural value chain, by organising farmers in cooperatives, by setting up saving groups, and by promoting dialogue between the various stakeholders involved in the agricultural value chain. In the following, we provide a brief description of the way in which 3 of the SPOs in our sample (ADI-Kivu, UDI and VECO) were involved in this at the grassroots level. Some of the efforts directed towards cooperatives can clearly be seen as civil society strengthening, other efforts are more directed towards technical skills training/agricultural production. In our analysis we focus on the elements that contribute to civil society strengthening.

#### *Theory of Change: Developing and supporting a cooperative*

A Large part of farmers in Eastern DRC are subsistence farmers, with production at subsistence level. Low levels of profitability limit attractiveness of agricultural markets. Many of the Congolese NGOs active in the agricultural sector focus on improving conditions for this sector. This is done in various ways: by promoting Integrated Soil Fertility Management, and by setting up and supporting farmers' cooperatives and mutual solidarity groups (savings groups). The latter two elements are especially relevant in the light of our evaluation as they contribute to civil society strengthening at the grassroots level. Cooperatives can help farmers to get joint access to markets. Saving groups allow them to save for bigger investments that they otherwise often would not be able to make.

#### *Practice of Change: Leading cooperatives towards maturity*

The cooperatives that were supported by the SPOs in our sample show great variation in terms of maturity. All three SPOs promote both cooperatives and saving groups among their beneficiaries, with UPDI and VECO having a stronger focus on the cooperative element, and ADI-Kivu being more experienced and driven towards setting up saving groups. Cooperatives are generally more relevant for farmers that already manage to reach a certain level of agricultural production, whereas the savings group can make a difference especially for subsistence farmers. With different levels of funding available over the last three years, levels of maturity of the cooperatives vary as well.

It is remarkable to note that all three cooperatives were functioning with organisational bodies such as General Assembly, Board of Directors and Audit Committee. They were able to show us examples of the way in which books were kept, a register of the production of their members etc. The SPOs had clearly managed to transfer principles of transparency and accountability. It is unclear to what extent these examples were biased by our presence as evaluators and to what extent principles were really adhered to in day-to-day practice. Nevertheless, we feel it further underlines our argument made above that people

in DRC are well familiar with associational life and willing to invest their time and energy in this. Obtaining legal recognition was another element that was attributed great importance. It highlights the importance that is given to formalising any arrangement in DRC, and although an external party might attach less weight to this, it should be understood that ensuring that legal requirements are met at least makes the CBO not vulnerable for taxations or fines that are based on not meeting these requirements.

*Conclusion: contribution of SPOs, contribution of MFS-funding*

In general some progress has been made in developing the cooperatives, but much more needs to be done before they become autonomous structures. Although SPOs express their interest in developing the whole agricultural value chain, there is not yet a lot of interaction with potential buyers of the produce for instance.

The funding of COOPASA, through ADI-Kivu was of short duration only. Nevertheless we find some contribution by the support of ADI-Kivu. COOPABU, the cooperative that was supported by UPDI received technical and financial support from ASOP as well. Since objectives of both NGOs were quite similar, it follows that both have contributed to the development of this cooperative. In the case of the cooperatives supported by VECO and ADI-Kivu this was more straightforward, as they had not received other funding. It is hence plausible that results are directly related to the contribution by the SPOs. Yet it should also be noted that both cooperatives are located in an area with a high presence of NGOs, and allegedly good potential for developing a stronger agricultural value chain. This makes it likely that in case the targeted beneficiaries had not been selected for the MFS-funded projects, they would have received support at some point from another NGO.

*6.4.5 Theme good governance and fragile states: a contribution story*

Governance in DRC is generally considered as weak and facing a lot of challenges. Among the population there is limited trust in the government. This is underlined for instance by the recent demonstrations that took place when the national assembly adopted the new electoral legislation. The social contract between the state and its citizens needs to be strengthened to increase legitimacy. Several SPOs in our sample work towards improving the social contract between the state and its citizens. In the following we provide a very brief description of some of our key findings in this regard. They illustrate the policy impact of the SPOs concerned. For a full overview, please refer to the organisational reports, most notably of GJ, IFDP and RHA.

*Theory of Change: promoting good governance and the social contract between state and citizens.*

Strengthening the social contract between the state and its citizens is supposed to contribute to a reduction of the fragility in the country. Making citizens more aware of their rights, helps them to stand up for their rights and to demand for justice. Training state officials on how to respect human rights is another way to make their work more in the interest of the population. The promotion of dialogue between the two parties – state and citizens- can increase transparency and lead to better governance. Lobby and advocacy for putting in place more favourable legislation is another mechanism to improve governance.

*Practice of change*

Based on evidence gathered specifically as part of the contribution analyses for GJ, IFDP and RHA, we are able to describe some of the changes that take place in relation to the specific theme good governance/fragile states. The promulgation of the environmental protection code is a very clear example of how successful lobby and advocacy efforts of an NGO – in this case IFDP- contributes to the promulgation of legislation. IFDP was able to raise interest from the side of one of the provincial parliamentarians to promote the law. The parliamentarian was eager to put in place legislation in his name, and interested in collaboration. This appeared to be a very instrumental contact to help setting policy change into motion, but much time was needed, with the process starting off in 2009, leading to adoption of the law in 2013. In 2014 the official publication of the law was still pending

GJ takes a different approach and focuses especially on changing policy implementation. By training both citizens and police and justice officials at the same time about human rights, GJ not only increases knowledge among both groups but also promotes dialogue. We talked to several state officials and citizens who were positive about the impact of GJ's project and the impact it had on functioning of police and justice officials and the relationship with the public.

The third organisation on which we focused for this contribution analysis is RHA. In order to improve policy implementation and governing in practice, RHA organises large community meetings for which both the general population and a wide range of authorities are invited. During these meetings, people are invited to express their concerns. Recurrent concerns are about the functioning of state officials such as the police and military. In cases in which these officials (or their superiors) are attending the meeting, a discussion can follow about steps to take to overcome the complaints. Otherwise, follow-up meetings are organised. This is generally seen as a helpful approach in overcoming tensions in the communities between power holders and subjects. But although both beneficiaries, authorities, and RHA staff members agreed on the great potential and contribution of this approach to improving governance and reducing fragility, they also all expressed their concerns about the number of community meetings RHA has been able to organise in the period under evaluation. The number and size of community meetings has been reduced gradually in the course of some years now and several people explained that the impact of RHA in the communities was reducing.

#### *Conclusion: contribution of SPOs, contribution of MFS-funding*

Our contribution story about the process towards adoption and implementation of a law on environmental protection shows that IFDP undertook a successful lobby and advocacy. MFS-support was limited in financial terms, but the technical support that was provided by especially IUCN was considered as very important in achieving objectives.

GJ has a long history and strong reputation in working with human rights activists at the grassroots level. Staff members show to be able to strike a delicate balance between defending human rights and being critical on the one hand and maintaining good and constructive relationships with state officials on the other hand. Stakeholders we met were all positive about GJ's contribution in this area. At the start of the evaluation period, MMM was not the only donor of GJ in general, but it was the only donor providing funds to improve prison conditions. In 2014, GJ got involved in a small project with RCN-Justice et Démocratie which had a similar focus. From that time onwards it is more difficult to establish whether realisations can be attributed to MMM-funding or other funding.

Overall, we were not able to get full clarity about size, extent and impact of the community meetings that were organised by RHA and its members in the last years. We believe there is some impact, but found little evidence. There were too many impeding factors, ranging from weak coordination, to funding delays, insecurity, and lack of actual monitoring & evaluation carried out at the central level. As a result, less meetings have taken place than initially foreseen, and the meetings that took place were not always followed by a next round of meetings to discuss the problems that had arisen.

MFS-funding was provided by two donors, but did not always come on time. This resulted in delays in execution of projects. Besides, project funding has been reducing since a number of years, which is further impeding actual realisations.

#### *6.4.6 Conclusion*

SPOs strongly depend on donor funding to be able to stay connected to their grassroots structures. It is at this level that SPOs have most impact. Dependency of SPOs on MFS-funding varies greatly and no uniform answer can be given about their contribution. In assessing the contribution of SPOs to civil society at the grassroots, we should be well aware that DRC has a strong tradition of associational life in the communities. Not all of the realisations of the CBOs can be attributed to interventions of the SPOs. Nevertheless, we can

conclude that donor funding is a crucial factor in maintaining relationships between SPOs and CBOs and thus of ensuring a connection between the grassroots level and the intermediate level.

In terms of the contribution of MFS II funding to the improvement of the position of women, our conclusion is mixed. As stated above, we find it plausible that the MFS II-funded SPOs contribute to the development of local civil society in form of the grassroots structures. We also find plausible contribution to the improvement of the position of women, increasing self-confidence, access to authorities, and justice. However, we find no convincing evidence in terms of durable improvement of economic conditions. There is a plurality of interventions in the target areas, and there is a general rights-based discourse in Eastern DRC. This means the sampled SPOs are not the only actors contributing to the improvement of the position of women, and that we can thus not attribute the improvements in local civil society and the position of women to the MFS II funding.

For the development of cooperatives, we find that it is plausible that results are related to the contribution by the SPOs. In one case, a cooperative also received support by another organisation. Other cooperatives were located in areas with a high presence of NGOs, and good potential for developing a stronger agricultural value chain. It is likely that had these cooperatives not been supported through MFS II-funding, they would have received support at some point from another NGO.

Under the theme of good governance and fragile states, we find that MFS II funding has had an important contribution in the process towards adoption and implementation of a law on environmental protection. We also find that it is plausible that MFS II funding has contributed to improving the human rights situation at the grassroots level, in relation to prison conditions. Contrarily, we have not been able to establish the contribution of MFS II funding to local security and conflict resolution in Ituri.

### **6.5 Research Question 3: What is the relevance of these changes?**

Here we describe the relevance of several of the changes described above and in the context section. We focus on the changes that we present as main findings in the next section.

In general, in the context of continuing instability and fragility, the support to civil society organisations remains highly relevant for improving the conditions of living of the Congolese people on one hand, and supporting a counter-power to the government on the other. Congolese SPOs have little alternative sources of income, and thus depend strongly on international donors for their activities. In the context of poverty and fragility in DRC, this is understandable, and this makes it relevant to support these SPOs.

*The relevance of women's empowerment and the shift to women leadership:* Even though sexual and gender-based violence still constitutes a serious issue in DRC, a more general issue is that women continue to be marginalised, both economically, culturally and socially. The changes we find contribute to improving the position of women, empowering them to take their own decisions and become economically independent. In rural areas, the number of women in decision-making positions is still very low; making women aware of their rights and their ability to take decisions, increasing their economic independence, is part of the way to change this. At the same time, much remains to be done in terms of governance and also cultural changes, for women to truly gain access to positions of leadership. The involvement of mostly women in mutual solidarity groups provides them with a space to develop their leadership skills. This is all the more relevant with the local elections planned for August 2015.

*The relevance of the focus on cooperatives and commercialisation, the market approach in agricultural interventions:* Cooperatives are helpful in increasing production, in getting access to markets, and in producing more professionally; people become aware of commercialisation, on how to set up a business plan etc. By doing this jointly, social cohesion within a community can increase. Cooperatives are mostly relevant for people who already have a certain standard of living/income and who are able to produce a

surplus. These changes are thus less relevant for the most marginalised part of the population: they are excluded from becoming cooperative members, as they are not able to produce beyond subsistence level. Generally, beneficiaries were positive about the changes. By enabling people to increase their agricultural production, household incomes can increase and improve their living conditions. Beneficiaries we interviewed were generally optimistic about the potential provided by professionalization of their production. Given the figures presented in the context description at the beginning of this report, with 87.7% of the Congolese living below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day, the relevance of this change for the poorest remains to be seen - expectations of a trickledown effect are not well-founded, and can only become visible on the longer run.

*Regarding the changes for the theme of governance & fragile states:* In the fragile context of eastern DRC conflicts are rife, often in relation to land or other natural resources. It is certainly relevant to engage in projects that promote peace, seek ways to address conflicts, and that contribute to better management of natural resources. The provision of justice and security is often considered as the most elementary function of the state, and a large number of people do not feel safe South Kivu<sup>27</sup>, with other parts of the East also remaining fragile. Human rights violations continue to be reported in DRC. It continues to be relevant to work on the promotion of human rights and on strengthening the social contract between the state and its citizens.

*In terms of the introduction of elements of good governance and democracy:* in a context of years of corruption and mismanagement of public affairs, where citizens have little reason to trust the authorities, cooperatives and other forms of local grassroots groups are an important social context for experiencing democracy, and the workings of mechanisms of transparency and accountability. The support of these local grassroots groups, working towards increasing their independence, can be considered a relevant activity for achieving long term changes.

## **6.6 Research Question 4: What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?**

In this section, we describe our main findings with the influencing factors for the civil society strengthening component of the evaluation.

All 19 organisations in the sample for civil society strengthening have received funding from Dutch CFAs. There is a large variation in project budgets, ranging from EUR 50,000 (two years) to EUR 700,000 for the whole MFS II period. There is a similar variation in project duration and the issues that are addressed. All in all, the Dutch CFAs have a strong presence in Eastern DRC and a strong reputation for supporting civil society. Civil society strengthening was rarely an explicit objective of the funded interventions. This meant the potential contribution of an intervention to civil society was not made explicit. For our analysis, we have focused on the elements of projects that had the potential to contribute to strengthening civil society.

On average, the level of civil society in our sample has remained constant, in terms of the five dimensions of the Civil Society Index. At the level of individual SPOs, there has been development, both positive and negative, and generally these changes are not very large. There has been an overall improvement for the dimension 'Perception of Impact'. On this dimension, we see a positive change for most of the organisations, which means that beneficiaries and other stakeholders see positive impact of the interventions.

- An important factor here is the timeframe of the evaluation, and the nature of changes in the civil society dimensions: development in terms of these dimensions is often a long-term process.
- Challenging context, in terms of governance, poverty

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<sup>27</sup> A survey carried out in 2012 in South Kivu province as part of a large DFID-funded project noted that about half of the respondents ( $n=1259$ ) felt rather unsafe or not at all safe while staying in their villages, whereas 58% felt rather unsafe or not at all safe while travelling. De Milliano, C.W.J., A. Ferf. J. Oude Groeniger and M. Mashanda. 2014 (draft) *Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study*. Wageningen/London: Wageningen University/ODI.

- The positive change for the Perception of Impact dimension can be related to the fact that on the whole, most SPOs have delivered the projected results and these were appreciated by beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders.
- For 4 of the 7 SPOs that had an overall negative development for the five dimensions, the financing by the CFAs ended at the beginning of the evaluation period, and for 1 SPO financing was interrupted. This has strongly affected their ability to engage with their target groups.

Civil society strengthening and policy influencing has mainly taken place at the grassroots level, in the *territoires* and *chefferies* and villages where SPOs intervene. There is vibrant associational life at the grassroots level, and CBOs increasingly manage to advocate for rights of people in their community, opening up dialogue with local authorities. This type of policy influencing is in the domain of 'change of practice', rather than 'agenda setting' or 'changes in policy'.

- CFAs and SPOs alike have a restricted understanding of these terms: civil society strengthening as the strengthening of urban civil society organisations that operate as intermediary organisations between international organisations and the grassroots; and policy influencing as lobby activities to influence policy at the provincial or national level. As a result, certain results in this respect remain hidden, especially in relation to civil society strengthening and policy influencing at the grassroots level.
- The fragility of state institutions complicates policy influencing interventions by SPOs or the associated grassroots groups: often authorities and government services lack the necessary resources and capacity to respond.

A number of SPOs are involved in influencing policy at the provincial or even national level, with some impact during the evaluation period. This is mainly geared to state and traditional authorities, not towards the private sector. Most project proposals do not contain specific objectives for policy influencing.

- Several SPOs are well-connected to the provincial government. Through national networks they are involved in lobby at the national level, but this is in a more indirect manner. There are a number of examples in which the SPOs were the ones taking the initiative to set up a lobby. Connections at the international level generally run through international partner organisations.
- The lack of focus on the private sector may partly be the result of the selection of the sample, with few SPOs active in mining areas where increasing interaction takes place between NGOs and mining companies in the framework of corporate responsibility.
- Many SPOs have never considered specifically targeting the private sector. For SPOs engaging in the agricultural sector there might be some opportunities to seek engagement with the private sector, but it should be noted here that the private agricultural sector in DRC is not very well developed, which limits possibilities.

The main effort of CFAs towards civil society strengthening concerns the formation of synergies of their SPOs, and strengthening organisational capacity of their SPOs (discussed under the capacity development component). CFAs do not invest much in deliberate improvement of strategies of local civil society strengthening and policy influencing. The efforts towards formation of synergies have not resulted in stronger collaboration among civil society so far.

- This is partly due to the lack of coordination among CFAs and other INGOs. Though the CFAs in South Kivu have regular coordination meetings, CFAs are rarely aware of the interventions of other INGOs with the SPOs. We have seen a changing strategy towards the organisation of ad hoc collaborations and short campaigns, initiated by SPOs themselves or CFAs. This is generally viewed as positive.
- Though there are attempts to coordinate CSOs through the *Bureau de la coordination de la société civile*, these have mixed success. There is strong competition in civil society, and competing coordinating mechanisms have emerged. CFAs have not made efforts to support these own coordination initiatives.
- Lack of coordination and concerted efforts between international and Congolese NGOs is even more strongly visible when it comes to international humanitarian agencies. We noted very limited awareness among humanitarian actors about the NGO field in DRC. Interventions by humanitarians

are often counterproductive for development interventions and induce the often deplored spirit of '*attentisme*' and dependency.

There is a continuing trend of divergence in civil society, which already started before this evaluation. A number of civil society organisations has steadily grown in capacity, has had stable funding and hence was able to maintain close working relations with the CBOs at the grassroots. As a result, they are attractive partners for CFAs, and the continued funding allows them to sustain or improve their capabilities. On the other hand, there is a growing group of SPOs that have had unstable funding, at the expense of their organisational capabilities and local connections. They increasingly lose their credibility. This trend is related to several factors, including:

- Reduction in available funding for supporting civil society organisations. There is less overall funding available and more funding is directed towards the support of state actors.
- Donors have become more selective in their selection of partners, compared to the period immediately after the war, when donors were more indiscriminately looking for partners.

SPOs remain highly dependent on foreign donors and there is little prospect for more financial autonomy in the short term. Only two SPOs in our sample have a significant local source of funding, through renting out property and providing medical services.

- CFAs tend to focus on making a difference for the target group, vis-à-vis investing in infrastructure that will allow SPOs more independence. At the same time, SPOs themselves also often prioritise the needs of beneficiaries versus their own organizational development. SPOs with a past of long term donor relations often possess more infrastructural assets which makes them less vulnerable at the moment funding is interrupted or limited.
- There is hardly any government funding for SPOs. Where such funding appears, it is derived from funds that the government agency obtained from foreign donors.
- Given the dire poverty in the country, it is unlikely that SPOs can develop business models that are based on cost-recovery or payment by their constituency.

A number of SPOs maintains a broad profile and mandate, because they aspire a holistic approach to the needs of the target group, and in order to bid for a wide variety of funding. Nonetheless, we find that SPOs with a more specialised mandate and a specific profile seem more successful in finding a stable funding base.

For the theme of women's empowerment/gender, we see a shift from approaching women as victims to approaching women as potential leaders. There has also been a strong inflation of the concept of gender-based violence: it is now being used to refer to a wide variety of topics, and therefore risks losing value as an explanatory concept. At the same time, gender is still very much understood as referring to women, and the position of women, and we have come across little reference to for example issues of masculinity.

Interventions in the agricultural sector take a modernisation approach and target small farmers that have the capacity to generate a surplus for commercialisation. We see a strong focus on setting up cooperatives and Mutuelles de Solidarité (MUSOs, savings and loans groups). The cooperatives approach involves a conscious choice to pick the 'winners'. The implicit expectation is that the increased revenues of these farmers will trickle down to the poorer parts of the population. At best this is a long-term effect, and the most vulnerable people are thus not targeted in these interventions. These people are able to join MUSOs, but as these depend on the contributions of members, they will only be able to access small amounts of credit in this way. We also see a varying focus on developing agricultural value chains, in line with the synergy/programmatic approach taken by some of the CFAs. Attempts to bring together the actors in the value chain have had some success. It remains difficult to sustainably involve the private sector and government agencies.

Within the theme of governance & fragile states, much attention has gone to governance at the local level, in the *Entités territoriales décentralisées* (the lowest level of government). There is a focus among SPOs on changing the practice of governance versus changing legislation, as there still is a gap between existing



legislation and its actual implementation. Realisations of SPOs in this field however are not always claimed/explained in terms of successful policy influencing.

## **7 Reflections and discussion**

### **7.1 Safety**

Security has been a major issue for the execution of this evaluation. While the seat of many organisations is in Bukavu, which is a relatively safe place, project sites are usually in other, often less safe, areas. For our evaluation, the lack of security implied that we were not able to visit all sites of the MDG projects, even when SPOs indicated some activities were undertaken. There were also consequences for the capacity development and civil society studies; although we were less dependent on beneficiaries for collecting our information we have tried as much as possible to visit project sites and to meet with beneficiaries. Choices, however, were often limited and based on suggestions of organisation's staff members who were better able to assess security situations. Of course this may have introduced some bias in the evaluation. Although security in some areas had improved in 2014, we decided to focus on the same groups of beneficiaries to the extent possible as this would allow for a stronger comparison ("panel data").

The highly volatile and insecure context of the Kivus was of course not just a constraining factor for our evaluation, but also formed the day-to-day reality of the SPOs under evaluation. The lack of security formed a major impediment for realising planned activities, and undoubtedly limited potential impact.

### **7.2 Project duration**

Most projects last up to a maximum of four years. The realisation of many objectives (including civil society development) requires long-time or sustained interventions, especially in the fragile state context of DRC. Lobby and advocacy to influence policy requires building relationships which takes time. Similarly, efforts to induce behavioural changes, like promoting women empowerment, may take a long time before any success can be measured. The time frame of this evaluation did not allow for such long-term effects to materialize. With the end of MFS-II glooming, most organisations have now projects of only limited duration. Only one CFA has already committed funding beyond the MFS-II period.

### **7.3 Proving impact**

Lack of security was not the only challenge for this evaluation. We faced the following severe challenges for (mostly) the project evaluations:

1. Most interventions had started – and some cases were already/almost completed, before the start of the evaluation (i.e. the baseline is not a proper baseline);
2. Other projects were not completed at the time of the endline (so the endline was not a proper endline);
3. There was no exogenous variation in treatment intensity (e.g. via random assignment to treatment) that we could leverage for identification purposes;
4. Many interventions were "small-scale," serving only a small number of clusters. The outcome is low statistical power, which introduces the risk of so-called type II errors (i.e. we may fail to document impact whereas some impact in reality did occur);
5. In some cases there is uncertainty and confusion around what the treatment really constituted, and around the proper measurement of impact;
6. We document high levels of non-compliance with the treatment, and high levels of attrition (which is not surprising in a volatile "post-conflict" setting);
7. For the capacity development and civil society strengthening component, it is often difficult to discern contributions made by different donors/actors. In case impact is observed, it cannot be claimed with certainty by a particular intervention, especially when an organisation carries out similar projects with different sources of funding.

We used the best available methods to detect impact – difference-in-difference estimators for the larger projects, combined with PSM, and beefed up with some qualitative information – we realise that doubts will remain about our ability to draw conclusions about the success of the interventions.

#### **7.4 Finance and efficiency**

It proved to be difficult to obtain detailed and complete information about the budgets of the SPOs. For most NGOs it was impossible to produce detailed budget information because they do not have aggregate budgets/financial reports. Projects often have different timelines, which made it difficult for us to aggregate these data. Variation in the level of detail in SPO budgets complicates inter-organisation comparisons. No SPOs were able to produce separate budgets for capacity development, and determining the budget for civil society development would require a "reading between the lines" of budgets, as advocacy and policy influencing activities are rarely mentioned as such. Therefore the evaluation aimed at an efficiency analysis for the MDG/Theme component only. Yet, even this proved to be problematic. We only obtained detailed budgets for two projects, and did not get reliable/usable benchmarks for any.

Some of the SPOs in our sample had only one donor (the Dutch CFA). Examples include VICO, CEPROF. In these cases, changes – if any – can likely be attributed to Dutch MFS-II support. Other SPOs, such as Réseau CREF, had multiple donors so that the Dutch contribution amounts to a (possibly small) share of the budget. For Réseau CREF, Dutch support amounts to less than 10% of the total organisational budget (calculated for a two year period, 2011-2012).

#### **7.5 Limited presence in the field**

It is difficult to gauge the interaction between SPOs and CFAs. We are aware of regular exchanges between SPOs and the responsible programme officers at donor level – either in Bukavu/Goma or in the Netherlands. Indeed, for some of the SPOs we were provided with quite comprehensive project documentation, including parts of the correspondence between donor and SPO. However, even then it proved difficult to get a grasp of the oral and direct communication that took place during phone calls, field visits etc. Our view on capacity strengthening of SPOs goes not very far beyond what is reflected in the more formal project documentation, unless SPO or donor staff members referred to this in a more explicit way during the contacts we have had with them. This could have been overcome by a longer-term presence at the various SPO offices, but was not feasible within the given framework of the evaluation.

#### **7.6 Other issues**

As the end of MFS-funding is drawing near, CFAs increasingly stimulate synergies between SPOs, *i.e.*, setting up joint programming and seeking thematic collaboration. Despite this top-down pressure to cooperate, there is little coordination across donors. Donors are hardly aware of projects carried out by 'their' SPOs supported via funding by other donors. In addition, there appears to be quite limited exchange of information about partners.

During fieldwork, French was the language used in all communications, except for the survey interviews. Meetings with beneficiaries were usually conducted in the local language (and translated by our Congolese team members). For this document, we have translated relevant information to English as best as we can. Yet concepts do not always have perfect equivalents in both languages.

Most NGOs we consulted when mapping networks/contribution analysis have/have had donor relations with Dutch CFAs. We do not know whether this is indicative for the omnipresence of Dutch funding in the Eastern part of the DRC, or whether this simply reflects a strong bias in the selection of our respondents.

Connected to the new positioning of CFAs, we noted a trend among donors to mostly select partner organisations which have proven themselves already. This implies less attention for capacity building, but could also mean survival and strengthening of the best SPOs.

## 8 Conclusion and recommendations

### 8.1 Conclusion

The report summarizes the background, methodology and findings from the study of the Joint MFSII evaluation for DRC. For the MDG part, we have done surveys among stratified random samples of beneficiaries and randomly selected non-beneficiaries from carefully selected control communities. With the exception of one project (which ended in 2012), project impact is determined by a difference-in-differences approach, measuring the change in indicators between the 2012 "baseline" and the 2014 "endline". Yet, this change does not capture the full range of impacts: Most activities had started before we collected our baseline data and some continue after our endline. Moreover, our analyses are underpowered due to the small scale of the individual projects. To improve our understanding of the impact of interventions, we complemented the quantitative data with qualitative data from focus group discussions. For the evaluations on capacity development we used a mix of qualitative methods, allowing for data triangulation. Monitoring of capacity development interventions between baseline and endline (especially during an interim visit in 2013) allowed us to gain insight in the development of organisational capacity based on the 5C framework, including the attribution of these developments to interventions by the Dutch partners. We have applied the CIVICUS framework to assess the contribution of 19 SPOs to civil society strengthening using a wide range of qualitative methods. To allow for triangulation, these methods combine various sources, objective and (inter)objective measurements. During the endline, we carried out a more retrospective analysis to assess changes and to what extent MFSII has contributed to these.

Overall the study found little evidence of impact of the MDG interventions. The first intervention (Réseau CREF) focuses on natural resource management, and our evaluation finds few or no results, with many estimated effects pointing in the wrong direction. The second intervention (AdS), focused mainly on education, and the main result is that some (but not all) schools that were promised to be built were actually built. Otherwise there is not much evidence for impact. The third intervention (SOFIBEF) established safe houses to help reduce violence against women and supported women's groups to improve the overall situation of women. While we measured some appreciation from beneficiaries for this intervention, we found little or no evidence of impact. The fourth intervention (VECO), which targeted agricultural production, produced confusing results. Production was up and hunger down, but neither effect was significant; there were possible drops in inputs but these do not imply an adverse effect since baseline is post treatment. The final project (CEPROF) covered a range of activities in agriculture; livestock rearing; savings and credit; and governance, some of which (governance) have not yet started. Again there was little evidence of effect, but beneficiaries indicated they were happy with the intervention.

Also in terms of capacity development and civil society, we find few if any gains. There was no general strategy for capacity building and interventions were uneven and uncoordinated. Moreover, capacity development and civil society efforts were implemented in an uncertain environment: Many organizations are largely dependent on Dutch funding, of which the continuation is highly uncertain. This may not be conducive to building organisations and networks. More locally, the volatile security situation may have had the same effect. Among CFAs we found a shift from capacity development efforts towards the promotion of synergies between SPOs. Thus far however, we find these synergies to be limitedly appropriated by the SPOs and they usually do not go beyond civil society actors. Donors themselves generally do not set the good example as they are often not aware of the full spectrum of donor relations of their Congolese partners.

Talking about capacity development, people are generally inclined to think in terms of training, but throughout our evaluation we found that institutional support is considered to be more key to the functioning of an organisation and its capability to deliver on objectives. One of the issues that came up very clearly during our feedback workshop in Bukavu was the perceived need among SPOs to be capacitated in how to generate sources of funding. With donor shares becoming more limited available SPOs are increasingly aware of the importance of either mobilising donor resources or of setting up income-

generating strategies themselves. The latter is in practice hardly feasible in the DRC context where the majority of the population lives below subsistence level.

In terms of civil society strengthening we observed a lot of efforts undertaken by the SPOs to develop capacity of their grassroots structures. These structures can be seen as both beneficiaries and as vehicle for project intervention. The grassroots structures play a role in promoting social cohesion among participants. They also serve as laboratories to experiment with good governance practices such as accountability and transparency.

Within the women's movement, especially in South Kivu we observe a shift from victimisation to a more inclusive approach of empowering women socially, economically and culturally. Gender-based violence is a concept that is used in very general terms.

The agricultural sector shows a strong focus on the promotion of cooperatives and mutual solidarity groups (savings and loan associations). Whereas cooperatives target primarily those who already manage to realise a certain level of agricultural production, the savings groups are more inclusive and sometimes include subsistence producers as well. Synergy efforts are made to develop the value chain by taking on board all stakeholders involved but thus far it appears to be difficult to engage non-civil society actors in this.

In terms of good governance and democracy, we note that many organisations engage in influencing policy practices, especially at the local community level. Yet, most SPOs are only limitedly aware of their influence in this field and often do not capitalise on these results in project reporting. Through participation in networks or joint lobby activities, many SPOs aim to have an influence on provincial and national policy levels. For the national level, this usually takes place in an indirect manner.

Given the various challenges implied by the design of the evaluation study (baseline, sample size, timeline), we are somewhat reluctant to conclude that the interventions did not produce impact. Absence of evidence of impact does not necessarily imply evidence of the absence of impact. Nevertheless, we observe that the environment in which the SPOs had to work was very challenging: a large share of the projects failed to fully implement their planned set of activities for security reasons. Even when an organization was able to reach out to all intended communities, the threat of conflict affected development outcomes to such an extent that the NGO interventions were likely of secondary importance. Moreover, projects were small and activities scattered, both limiting the scope for impact

## **8.2 Recommendations and lessons learned**

### ***Related to our methodology***

With hindsight, we feel that the conditions for a proper evaluation of the impact of the MFS II system were not in place. Major challenges in the domain of measurement and attribution remain. For robust project evaluation, the timelines of the evaluation and the intervention should coincide. Moreover, it is advisable to involve evaluators in the implementation design stage of the interventions, so that the intervention suits not only the intervention logic but also the evaluation requirements (i.e. some exogenous variation in intervention intensity or timing).

When starting our field research, we had some doubts about using the ToC twice during a workshop, as an instrument to obtain information on organisational capacity and on civil society building. We wondered whether it would be possible to distinguish the two clearly. In practice, it appeared no problem to carry out the ToC twice for the five organisations that were in both samples. Nevertheless, it required very clear guidance to encourage workshop participants to think about the future in these two distinct ways. In the end however, we concluded that the two complement each other and often provide extra information. Hence, we feel it has increased efficiency in data collection for these organisations. A challenge in using the ToC was that most SPOs did not have very clear and set targets in regards to their capacity

development or contribution to civil society. Constructed Theories were hence somewhat artificial and the intended pathway of change was not necessarily taken into consideration in project planning.

While the civil society index has been developed to analyse civil society in general terms, this evaluation required use of the index to analyse achievements of individual SPOs and their impact on civil society. Subsequently, we have aggregated some of these findings again to synthesise our findings. As this had to be done in a very cautious manner, we decided to aggregate findings only at thematic level. Based on the themes selected for in-depth analysis we are able to make some general statements, but we are aware that our approach does not allow for a full analysis of civil society. In fact, in using the CSI in this way, there is a great deal of overlap with the 5C framework, specifically focusing on the capability to relate to others.

A major challenge for carrying out a contribution analysis as suggested by Mayne (2012a) was to find sufficient evidence to accept or reject claims that are made. This will generally be a challenge for applying contribution analysis in the context of developing countries where information is not always well-documented and where, especially at the grassroots level many of the achievements go unrecorded.

### ***Related to our findings***

During the feedback workshop organised for the civil society and capacity development components of the evaluation, participants formulated a number of recommendations, directed towards 1) the donor community; 2) the Congolese government; 3) the Congolese civil society; and 4) the grassroots structures (CBOs). These recommendations are provided in Annex D. In addition, we provide some of our own observations below.

*Working with stronger partners:* We observe a tendency among CFAs to increasingly target only the SPOs that already have a certain level of capacity. We understand that this is related to a general reduction in funding and increasing requirements for upward accountability. At the same time, it should also be taken into consideration that civil society needs a certain mass and momentum to be able to set changes in motion and to be a powerful contra-weight and critical voice in society. With a one-sided focus on strong partners, weaker partners will not be able to develop their potential. Most SPOs will disappear if they do not manage to mobilise international funding. On the longer run, there is a risk of impoverishing civil society.

*Promotion of synergies and alliances:* Instead of strengthening organisation's capacity, CFAs tend to work more towards the promotion of synergies between civil society actors. Impact is still limited. A critical remark to make here is that CFAs could do much more themselves to credibly convey the importance of synergies; international donors are hardly aware of the involvement of other donors with projects of 'their partners'; there is no exchange among donors about 'who pays what part of the costs of SPOs; in terms of office space, staff salaries, etc. nor about the content of actual projects. We are convinced that better dialogue between donors about the SPOs they are funding could help to increase efficiency of allocated resources.

*Importance of staying connected to the grassroots level:* Most important changes taking place within civil society take place at the grassroots level. It is crucial to maintain strong connections with this level; both to have an impact, but also to obtain information that can feed into project development and into lobby and advocacy at the provincial or national level. At the moment funding is reduced it becomes more difficult for SPOs to closely monitor the local level; field visits are substituted by phone calls for instance. This reduces levels of engagement but can also harm impact. We recommend ensuring that contacts are maintained as much as possible.

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# ANNEXES MSF II Evaluation DR Congo

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Annex A : Technical Reports

Annex B: Questionnaires

Annex C : Methodology

Annex D : Other

# ANNEX A

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TECHNICAL PAPERS

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Technical Paper ADI-Kivu

Technical Paper Armée du Salut

Technical Paper AFEM

Technical Paper AGIR

Technical Paper Caritas Kindu

Technical Paper Comité pour l'Éducation et la Promotion de la Femme de FIZI

Technical Paper Centre Médical Évangélique de Nyankunde

Technical Paper Groupe Jérémie

Technical Paper IFDP

Technical Paper KMS

Technical Paper Réseau Régional et Interconfessionnel des Leaders Religieux pour la Paix

Technical Paper Réseau d'Éducation Civique au Congo-Kinshasa

Technical Paper Réseau des Médias Associatives et Communautaires du Bas-Congo

Technical Paper Réseau pour la Conservation et la Réhabilitations des Écosystèmes  
Forestiers

Technical Paper Réseau de Femmes pour les Droits et la Paix

Technical Paper RÉSEAU HAKI NA AMANI

Technical Paper SOFIBEF

Technical Paper UPDI

Technical Paper Vredeseilanden Congo

Technical Paper Villages Cobaye

# Civil Society Strengthening Report ADI-Kivu

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs and Bart Weijs

Wageningen University

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## List of Acronyms

ACDI- Action Communautaire pour le Développement Intégra I  
ADI-Kivu - Actions pour le Développement Intégré au Kivu  
ASED- Action pour la Santé, l'Environnement et le Développement  
CCFD- Comité catholique contre la faim et pour le développement  
CSI- Civil Society Index  
COOPASA- Cooperative de Sange  
COOSOPRODA  
COS-PASAK – Consortium de la Sécurité Alimentaire  
CRONGD- Regional Council of Development NGOs  
DRC- Democratic Republic of Congo  
FARDC – Armed Forces of the DRC  
FSRDC – Social Funds of the DRC  
GIFS – Integrated Soil Fertility Management  
ICCO – Interchurch Cooperative for Development Cooperation  
IFDC- International Fertilizer Development Center  
ISDR - Institut Supérieur pour le Développement Rural  
MDG- Millenium Development Goals  
MFS II – Programme au développement du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères des Pays-Bas  
MONUSCO - Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo  
MUSO –Mutual Solidarity Groups (Savings and Loan Groups)  
ONG – Non-governmental Organisation  
PASAK- Programme of Food Security Support in South Kivu  
SARCAF - Service d'accompagnement, renforcement des capacités et d'autopromotion féminine  
SLRC – Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (programme de recherche sur les moyens de subsistance)  
SPO- Southern Partner Organisation  
UEA - Université Evangélique en Afrique  
UPDI - Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral  
VECO- Vredeseilanden Congo

## 1. Introduction

This report is part of a large evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of Southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society development.

As part of the civil society component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society in the evaluation period and the extent in which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing



have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and end line study and focuses on a large sample of 19 partnerships. The report is based on observations, workshops, field visits, questionnaires, and interviews conducted during visits in 2012 and 2014, unless otherwise indicated. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup>

Core elements of our evaluation approach for ADI-Kivu are the Theory of Change, contribution analysis and the Civic Civil Society Index.<sup>2</sup> Dimensions of this index are: Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the external dimension Environment.<sup>3</sup>

In the following report we look specifically at the contribution of ADI-Kivu to civil society strengthening. ADI-Kivu is a partner of ICCO, and as such part of the ICCO Alliance. ADI-Kivu is a member of the ICCO Food Security Consortium COS-PASAK. This synergy was initially set up by ICCO and is gradually becoming more autonomous.

ADI-Kivu is an organisation that is especially active in the field of agriculture, working with cooperatives and mutual solidarity groups. The organisation was founded in 1987. This makes ADI-Kivu one of the oldest civil society organisations in South Kivu province. For a long time, ADI-Kivu had various donors and carried out big projects. In recent times, funding has been much more limited. Large part of 2013 and the first months of 2014 were even without any funding. The relationship with ICCO dates back to 2006. In the course of the evaluation period, two projects were carried out with MFS-II funding: the first one from October 2010-December 2012 at €240 000, and the second project from March 2014-July 2015 at €35 000. There is no specific civil society strengthening element defined in the project proposals. We distilled these elements ourselves and decided to look mainly at the work with cooperatives and mutual solidarity groups as civil society strengthening at the grassroots level.

For composing the contribution story, we looked at the way in which cooperatives are set up and the elements that are needed for this and then distilled the role of ADI-Kivu in this process for a specific cooperative. We show that an important role can be attributed to ADI-Kivu in organising this cooperative, but that more time and investment would be needed to make the cooperative stronger and more autonomous.

## 2. Context

Briefly describe the country/local context as far as it is relevant for the evaluated project.

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by Louis Guemou Togba (ICCO), Albert Ntawigena and Placide Iragi (ADI-Kivu) We thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> *CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012*

<sup>3</sup> Please note: In the methodology annex we provide more information about our sampling strategy and about the methodology we used.

a variety of reasons.<sup>4</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas in South Kivu, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013). At present, pockets of insecurity continue to exist and waves of violence continue to bring havoc to the east of the country. In their struggle to make a living, people are not only faced with this insecurity, but also with an exploitative governance system that continues to act largely in line with the Mobutu-adagio of 'make for yourself' (*débrouillez-vous*).

The majority (just over 60%) of DRC's population live in rural areas according to the latest data available from the National Statistics Institute.<sup>5</sup> In the province of South Kivu roughly 3 out of 4 people live in rural areas.<sup>6</sup> The country has great potential for agriculture and possesses a wealth of mineral resources. The potential of all these resources however is far from being exploited. On the 2014 Human Development Index, DRC ranked 186 out of 187 (only followed by Niger). Gross national income per head was noted to be at \$444 in 2013, which was lowest of all countries for which data were available. In the same year, 87.7% of the population lived below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>7</sup> A survey carried out by SLRC in South Kivu in 2012 ( $n=1259$ ) showed that around three-quarters of households in the sampled population make a living primarily in agriculture, either in subsistence agriculture (65%), commercial farming (5%), or by agricultural casual labour (6%).<sup>8</sup> Households within the same sample have access to 2.69 hectares of land, but often not all of this land is held in ownership.<sup>9</sup> Due to various factors, such as insecurity, displacement, and market distortions, agricultural production is low. Food insecurity and poverty remain rife. Land issues are often seen as one of the main sources of conflicts in DRC; there is a lack of arable land in densely populated areas; displacements causes competition; regulatory frameworks overlap and state law does not adequately capture rural reality.<sup>10</sup>

Humanitarian and development organisations intervening in the field of agriculture are well represented in eastern DRC. Typically, humanitarian organisations often provide food aid, seeds, or small livestock, whereas development organisations are often more involved in the provision of small loans, in setting up cooperatives, or in organising mutual solidarity groups. The SLRC survey carried out in 2012, showed that 21% of all households had received food aid, 12% seeds and tools, 4% material aid (for construction) and 2% financial loans.<sup>11</sup> The survey did not cover participation in cooperatives or saving groups.

As part of our evaluation, we visited several NGOs working in the field of agriculture. We noted three dominant approaches in this regard. Firstly the introduction of integrated soil fertility management (ISFM, the French acronym that is used in DRC is GIFS). This strategy was first introduced and promoted by IFDC from 2006-2012. IFDC defines ISFM as 'a set of agricultural practices adapted to local conditions to

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<sup>4</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel ([christophvogel.net](http://christophvogel.net)), and the elucidating analyses by the Rift Valley Institute ([www.riftvalley.net](http://www.riftvalley.net))

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/drc/overview>, viewed on 06.10.2014

<sup>6</sup> UNDP (UN Development Programme) (2009) 'Profil Résumé Pauvreté de Sud Kivu 2009'. Kinshasa: UNDP.

<sup>7</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014

<sup>8</sup> Miliano, C.W.J, de, A. Ferf, J. Oude Groeniger, and M. Mashanda. 2014. Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study, SLRC.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Vlassenroot, K. (ed). 2012. *Dealing with land issues and conflict in eastern Congo: Towards an integrated and participatory approach*, Ghent: CRG. Van Leeuwen, M., and G. van der Haar. 2014. *Land governance as an avenue for local state building in eastern DRC*, IS Academy Occasional Paper, Wageningen University.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

maximize the efficiency of nutrient and water use and improve agricultural productivity'.<sup>12</sup> According to IFDC, the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa has the highest negative soil nutrient balance in the world. All three agriculture organisations in our sample (VECO, UPDI, and ADI-Kivu) have obtained experience in the past working with this strategy and many of the farmers we met would refer to 'GIFS' when explaining how they are working towards higher agricultural production.

A second dominant approach consists of setting up cooperatives, which is seen as a vehicle to promote agriculture by many NGOs. Collective commercialisation of agricultural products is supposed to make operations more cost effective. Joint material investments allow for intensification of production. Besides, organising people in cooperatives can be beneficial for community building and for strengthening social bonds. This is also the case with the mutual solidarity groups (MUSOs) that are set up by many development organisations. A number of people is brought together in these groups to save money. With the money saved, small loans can be taken that allow for agricultural investments. Besides, small contributions are reserved for supporting members in urgent needs, in case of funerals, illnesses etc. A potential risk of the popularity of the support for cooperatives, is that subsistence farmers or people without land titles might lose out; they are generally not included in cooperatives because their production is too limited to sell at the market, or because they do not have stable access to land. The rationale is that once the cooperatives are successful, the whole local economy will benefit and thus also the small farmers that were not included though there is debate about whether this trickledown effect really exists, and to what extent.

Particular challenges in agriculture since a couple of years are plant diseases that affect cassava (mosaic virus) and banana trees (banana bacterial wilt). In the fight against the mosaic virus, efforts have been made to introduce a resistant variety of cassava (named Sawasawa), but meanwhile the resistance of this variety is already reducing. Given that cassava and bananas are staple foods in DRC, these plant diseases are a serious source of concern for the agricultural sector.

### **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

ADI-Kivu (*Actions pour le Développement Intégré au Kivu*) was founded in 1987 and is widely known in South Kivu for being one of the oldest civil society organisations in the province. One respondent told us that during his studies in the '90s, ADI-Kivu was an organisation all students aspired to work for. Over the course of time, ADI-Kivu has been able to obtain ownership of several plots of land and buildings. This is a clear asset of the organisation, in comparison to most other organisations which have monthly rent to pay, but in recent years, ADI-Kivu has been rather unfortunate. Because of insecurity, the main plot of land (and the head office of the organisation) had to be abandoned. This area, close to the border of the Kahuzi-Biega National Park, is now rented out to MONUSCO but payments are coming in on an irregular basis. In May 2012, ADI-Kivu's main building in Bukavu was confiscated by the government. Although the confiscation was eventually judged to be unlawful, ADI-Kivu was still awaiting retrieval of its property

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<sup>12</sup> From: <http://www.ifdc.org/Expertise/ISFM/About-ISFM/>, viewed on 06.10.2014

during our end line visit; meanwhile a high-ranking army officer is occupying the building. The organisation is therefore now residing in a building that had originally been purchased to provide office space to the MUSOs. These developments have negatively impacted the organisation, both in terms of finances, but also in terms of motivation; staff are clearly upset and disturbed. It is illustrative for the challenges that can be faced when setting up interventions in fragile settings. Over the last years, ADI-Kivu has been struggling; due to reductions in funding, staff in permanent positions had to be fired. Within the Congolese legal context this is a costly affair and money had to be borrowed for this. Other staff members were sent on 'technical leave' for prolonged periods of time. At present, ADI-Kivu has 8 staff members, including office and field staff. At its height, 22 people were employed.

At the time of our end line visit, a General Assembly had recently taken place during which a new board of directors was appointed. The new president of the board seemed to be eager to set in motion a number of changes that could help the organisation to become more effective again. Staff was optimistic that finally things would turn for the better again.

ADI-Kivu has always propagated a holistic approach towards development; covering different fields of intervention, such as agriculture, human rights, water and sanitation, and education. In recent years however, with limited funding available, projects have mostly been in the field of agriculture. The organisation continues to seek funding from other channels to also cover other fields. Last year for instance, ADI-Kivu submitted a detailed proposal to the state-funded *Fonds Social de la RDC* (FSRDC) to improve the water construction in Birava, Kabare. Next to constructing the water system, the project also foresees in training people on water and sanitation. It shows that ADI-Kivu has not yet abandoned its vision of a holistic approach towards development.

The funding relation with ICCO dates back to 2006 but has been considerably reduced over the last years, as have other funding opportunities. At its height, the organisation had 9 different donors. The strategic plan 2011-2016 foresaw a budget of close to 200 000\$ for the year 2011/2012, but during our last visit, ICCO was the only donor left.

#### 4. Project description

| Project   | Donor      | Major objective   | Period                            | Amount of funding |         |      |      |      |
|---|------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------|------|------|------|
|   |            |   |                                   | 2011              | 2012    | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| Support of food security in Kivu (nr. 75-02-13-005) | ICCO (MFS) | Support to rice and cassava sectors by organising farmers and connecting them to the market | Oct. 2010-Dec. 2012 <sup>13</sup> | €241 468          |         |      |      |      |
| Mutual solidarity groups support project            | CCFD       | Support to community-based saving groups  | Jan.2011 -Dec 2012                | €20 000           | € 20000 |      |      |      |

<sup>13</sup> Initially, the total amount allocated was €241 468 for this period, with € 61468 for Oct-Dec.2010 (and thus not covering the MFS-II period). A combination of various factors (general budget cuts of ICCO HQ, mismanagement of funds by ADI-Kivu under previous project PROCOVISE) led to the decision to reduce the 2012 funding with € 20 000. For the evaluation, it was not possible to distinguish the first two months of the project from the rest. We therefore included the whole project in our evaluation, as largest part of it is within the MFS-II period.

|   |                    |  |                                  |                     |         |                       |          |          |
|---|--------------------|--|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------|-----------------------|----------|----------|
| Emergency Aid Response (nr.75-02-15-018)                      | ICCO-KIA (not MFS) | Joint project with LOFEPACO, SOSAME and Santé Mentale. ADI-Kivu responsible for coordination and socio-economic support to 150 IDPs through credit schemes and seed distribution | May 2013- Nov2013                |                     |         | €16 500 <sup>14</sup> |          |          |
| Emergency program   | Oxfam Novib        | Setting up humanitarian action plan  | Nov 2013- Aug. 2014              |                     |         | -                     | -        |          |
| DRC Food security-consortium ADI-Kivu- ASED (nr.75-02-13-032) | ICCO (MFS)         | Strengthening capacity of rice producers on Ruzizi plan, organising them in cooperatives and solidarity groups   | Mar.2014-July 2015 <sup>15</sup> |                     |         |                       | €200 00  | €150 00  |
| N2AFRICA  | IITA               | Seed support to 70 households  |                                  |                     |         |                       | -        |          |
| Construction of market of Luvungi                             | FSRDC              |  |                                  |                     |         |                       |          | \$83 672 |
| Extension of Bangu Institute                                  | FSRDC              | Construction of six school classes, office building and six latrines   |                                  |                     |         |                       |          | \$809 48 |
| Own revenues  |                    |  |                                  | \$92242             | \$65193 | \$88492               | \$645 96 |          |
| Total amount of pledged funding 2011-2015                     |                    |  |                                  | € 332968+ \$475 143 |         |                       |          |          |

### MFS-funded projects

In the period 2011-2015, ADI-Kivu has had two projects that were funded through MFS-financing; in 2011-2012, and from March 2014 onwards. Both projects were oriented towards providing support to farmers by helping them to organise themselves in mutual solidarity groups and in cooperatives. According to the contracts, for the largest part, these projects aim at providing technical support geared towards poverty alleviation (70%) and smaller parts towards civil society development (20%) and lobby and advocacy (10%).

Specific objectives of the project 'Support to rice and cassava sectors' (2011-2012) were:

- To support and organise rice and cassava farmers and facilitate the link with other actors in the value chain.

<sup>14</sup> Total project budget amounted to € 60 000. Other parts for other consortium partners.

<sup>15</sup> Total project budget amounts to € 60 000. Other part for consortium partner ASED.

- To assist the beneficiaries through technical capacity building on rice and cassava to increase their production: this is done for instance by promoting Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM, or in French: GIFS), and by introducing improved seed varieties.
- Connect farmers to the market to increase their income.

Progress was noted most in the rice sector on the Ruzizi Plain (Sange, Kiliba, Luberizi, Luvungi), and the current project only provides funding for this sector. Staff explained that with the funding available, activities have been rather limited, as they had been used to higher amounts of funding in the past. Disruption of funding in 2013 caused a disruption of activities as well. Apart from carrying out some monitoring visits, not so much could be done. Activities were resumed in 2014 on the Plain. For the manioc sector in Kabare (Katana, Kabamba) and Idjwi (Idjwi Nord), activities remain limited to monitoring, carried out with own means of ADI-Kivu. In Kabamba a start had been made to set up a cooperative, but this was still premature and not structured well enough to be able to develop further independently. Progress of the mutual solidarity groups in contrast is more advanced in Kabare than in Ruzizi; in Kabare ADI-Kivu introduced the groups already a longer time ago and groups have meanwhile become strong enough, whereas the MUSOs in Ruzizi need more support than ADI-Kivu is able to give at the moment due to a lack of funding.

In March 2014, ICCO resumed funding of ADI-Kivu, this time with a focus only on the rice sector in the Ruzizi Plain. The specific objective for ADI-Kivu within the consortium contract with ASED and ICCO is:

- To accompany 100 rice producers in the Ruzizi Plain by strengthening capacity of producers and other actors involved in the value chain.

#### **Civil society elements**

The projects carried out by ADI-Kivu with MFS-funding do not have a specific civil society strengthening component, but have some elements which are geared towards civil society strengthening. These efforts take place at the grassroots level and are mostly instrumental for the achievement of the project objectives.

- Creating, structuring and training local groups to organise themselves as Mutual Solidarity Groups (*MUSOs*) or cooperatives is a way to build/strengthen community-based organisations. ADI-Kivu has structured a large number of *MUSOs* and has a lot of experience in this. In 2014, 82 are being accompanied by ADI-Kivu. In 2012 this was mostly funded through CCFD. More recently, setting up cooperatives has become part of the organisation's agenda as well (and part of the ICCO contract). For proper functioning of both *MUSOs* and cooperatives, a certain level of trust is needed among the members. The element of community building is stronger visible within mutual solidarity groups than within cooperatives. The cooperatives are mainly focused on increasing agricultural production and development of the value chain. In the end, this also revolves around individual interests of farmers. Within the *MUSOs* people gather, and contribute small amounts of money to a 'social' cash deposit. Savings collected in this deposit are used to provide mutual support to members who are in urgent need of money because of personal circumstances such as illness.

- Advocacy was carried out at the local level to raise awareness among local chiefs about the food security programme. Some of them were included as beneficiaries as well.
- As part of the Food Security Consortium (COS-PASAK) of ICCO, ADI-Kivu has been a resource to other consortium members and provided training on how to set up MUSOs.

Some other civil society/policy advocacy elements were mentioned in the narrative report of 2012, in addition to the support provided to the Mutual Solidarity Groups with funding of CCFD, and the support to setting up cooperatives with funding of ICCO:

- Supervision of students from Evangelical University in Africa (UEA) and the Superior Institute for Rural Development (ISDR); these students will be part of the next generation of civil society/policy makers.
- Active participation in meetings of the Protection cluster.
- Radio emissions on Radio Maendeleo about: women's access to justice; testamentary inheritance; rights and duties of children; and empowerment of rural women
- Active participation in various seminars/workshops/meetings organised by partners, with different objectives; capacity strengthening, exchange of information, setting up advocacy strategy.
- Organisation of a training for producers and beneficiaries in PASAK programme about gender and agricultural exploitation.
- Informing people about agricultural law and land law.<sup>16</sup>

An interim evaluation of COS-PASAK carried out by an external consultant stressed that the mutual solidarity groups are not only a mechanisms for mutual support, but also to solve conflicts.<sup>17</sup>

### **Theory of Change**

Through its various projects, ADI-Kivu aims at improving the living conditions of farmers in South Kivu by making them more self-sufficient and autonomous. As part of the ICCO project, focus has been on rice and manioc farmers. At present, funding is only for rice farmers. Various mechanisms are used to support small scale farmers. In very concrete terms, this means technical training on Integrated Soil Fertility Management, on how to plant in lines etc. Improved seeds varieties are also introduced. To strengthen the farmers' autonomy, ADI-Kivu organises farmers in mutual solidarity groups. This helps farmers to save money and to have access to small loans. Another organisational structure that is set up is the cooperative. ADI-Kivu provides support to people to set up these structures in a proper way; with a functioning General Assembly, Board, statutes, obtaining formal recognition etc. Setting up a functional cooperative demands various steps that are usually not taken at the same time (and not always in the same order). Constructing a place for collective storage, or processing of crops is also such a step.

ADI-Kivu takes a holistic approach towards development and aspires not only to provide the support described above, but would also like to cover other areas that can contribute to improved living

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<sup>16</sup> Based on ADI-Kivu, Jan.2013. *Rapport narratif des activités réalisées au sein de ADI-Kivu, exercice 2012.*

<sup>17</sup> Murhambo, D.C. and A.G. Karume, October 2013. *Rapport d'évaluation externe de la COSPASAK*, commissioned by ICCO

conditions, such as water systems, alphabetisation, training about gender, human rights, and HIV/AIDS, advocacy about land access etc. Lack of funding limits their activities in this respect.

By ICCO, ADI-Kivu is primarily seen as a partner in the field of food security, but both ICCO and ADI-Kivu expressed a lot of doubts about the possibility that funding will continue after the end of this project's term.

### **Other support and potential support**

- Within the PASAK project 2010-2012, technical training and consultancy was provided by Louvain Cooperation.
- End 2013/early 2014 (6 months), ADI-Kivu staff received training from Oxfam Novib on emergency interventions. A Humanitarian Action Plan is now in place.
- A proposal submitted to the *Fonds Social de la RDC* (FSRDC) for funding of a water project was rejected and will now be revised and submitted in smaller projects. The amount of funding requested appeared to be too high.
- Participation in workshops of Protection International (2012 and 2013). Not yet invited for 2014. ADI-Kivu has developed a security plan for the organisation together with PI.

Although funding has been relatively limited for ADI-Kivu in comparison to the past, the organisation was nevertheless able to continue some of its activities that were not funded, mostly by way of its own sources of funding.

## **5. Data collection and analytical approach**

Describe the baseline and follow-up assessment. If there is one general methodology, that can be described in an Annex. Please present particular choices and data collection problems in the main text. Sampling method and sample sizes; workshop participants and other informants (in Annex). *Which key outcome(s) was/were selected for process tracing, based on which criteria?*

We were able to follow the general methodology that we developed (see annex). For our contribution analysis (see below for a description on selection of key outcomes), we carried out a field visit to one of the cooperatives of ADI-Kivu: COOPASA in Sange. We took this decision because the beneficiaries consulted in 2012 were no longer included in the present project, so they would be more difficult to trace. Hence we did not talk to the same beneficiaries as we did during the baseline visit. The present project targets some of the individual COOPASA members but does not fund activities of COOPASA at large. In addition to the visit to Sange, and as part of our evaluation of VECO, we carried out a field visit to COOSOPRODA. This cooperative, which is based in Luberizi, is at present a partner of VECO, but was initially set up by ADI-Kivu (although before the MFS-II period). Some of the data about COOSOPRODA helped us to better understand the work of ADI-Kivu in its context.



The interruption of (MFS) funding by ICCO for ADI-Kivu posed a challenge. During the end line visit in May/July 2014, staff members did not very vividly recall realisations of the 2012 project, whereas the new project had only started in March 2014 and was still in the process of starting up.<sup>18</sup> A relatively large portion of the MFS-funded activities is hence taking place after the end line evaluation visit.

*Contribution story: a case study of a cooperative*

In our contribution story, we look at the way in which ADI-Kivu is involved in setting up and functioning of the cooperative in Sange. This is the outcome of ADI-Kivu’s intervention. It tells us more about civil society development at the grassroots level. We use the cooperative of Sange as a case study that provides more insight into the satisfaction of beneficiaries (perception of impact) and to what extent the cooperative provided for the needs of the beneficiaries (civic engagement). In addition, it helps us to understand how and to what extent ADI-Kivu is able to organise people in a well-structured organisation in which norms of governance, democracy and transparency are adhered to (practice of values). We talked about the contribution of ADI-Kivu and other actors in the functioning of the cooperative during the workshop, during interviews with other stakeholders, and zoomed in further during our field visit to Sange.

It would have been interesting to learn more about the mutual solidarity groups, as ADI-Kivu is often seen by others in the food security consortium as an expert on this. However, we decided not to look at these, but instead focused on the cooperative, as this was more a key part of the ICCO-funded project.

## 6. Results

Research Question 1: Provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions. If available, provide description of individual indicators in an Annex.

|                       | Baseline<br>(0-3) | Endline |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------|
| Civic engagement      | 2                 | 1.5     |
| Level of organisation | 1.5               | 1       |
| Practice of values    | 1.5               | 1.5     |
| Perception of impact  | 1.5               | 1.5     |
| Environment           | 1                 | 1       |

**Civic engagement:** *diversity of socially based engagement/diversity of political engagement*

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<sup>18</sup> Our endline visit to the office staff, as well as our consultations with other stakeholders, took place in May 2014. For logistical reasons, the visit to the field in Sange took place only in July 2014.

ADI-Kivu staff indicate that they feel it is important to consult beneficiaries about their needs before setting up a project. Yet in practice the broad content of a project is often prescribed by a donor. Donors for instance invite applications for projects that focus on a certain topic. With limited funds available, ADI-Kivu then decides on following the suggestions of the donor, while still taking into account needs of beneficiaries as much as possible. Since ADI-Kivu has its own revenues, the organisation has been able to carry out some monitoring in the field in 2013 despite a lack of funding. Members of the cooperative in Sange for instance testified that they had received agricultural inputs in the course of 2013. ADI-Kivu carried out monitoring and evaluation to assess the progress of the cooperative. Interruption of the project – due to a lack of funding - has impact on the way in which beneficiaries feel their needs are taken into account. We noted this with other organisations as well of which funding had been interrupted. As soon as activities are paused, beneficiaries feel abandoned and lose trust in the organisation. At the moment activities are taken up again, efforts need to be made to restore levels of trust and to regain motivation of beneficiaries to participate and engage in the project.

Generally, staff acknowledged that not enough progress has been made in the last years to satisfy the needs of beneficiaries. No problem analysis was carried out in the last years, as no new project was started. As part of the pilot emergency project in 2013 (funded by ICCO-KIA, none-MFS) no problem analysis was required, simply because the emergency presented itself. A less comprehensive needs assessment however was carried out once the beneficiaries were identified. There was no joint analysis by ADI-Kivu and beneficiaries of what was actually needed, whereas ADI-Kivu would have preferred to do this. Among staff there is knowledge about the importance of carrying out proper analysis before setting up a project and willingness exists to engage different stakeholders in this. Lack of funding is an important impediment which staff is not able to easily overcome.

Local authorities are generally engaged when setting up a project, especially at the moment the project is launched locally. Apart from that, engagement seems to be limited.

Civic engagement of ADI-Kivu has regressed during the evaluation period, mainly because of lack of funding. Staff remains aware of importance and desirability to involve target groups in planning and analysis and is eager to take this up again.

**Level of organisation:** *organisational level of civil society (infrastructure)/peer to peer communication/financial and human resources*

ADI-Kivu has a longstanding reputation within civil society in South Kivu, which helps to open ways for collaboration. Meanwhile however, it is also well-known that the organisation is struggling. Although these others do not know exactly the reason for this (and refrain from giving their judgment about ADI-Kivu), it reduces some of the authority the organisation used to have. Nevertheless collaboration with others exists. The most important vehicle for this is the consortium of ICCO partners working on food security; COS-PASAK. ADI-Kivu is proud to be among the first members of this consortium (together with UPDI, SARCAF and ACDI). Collaboration is now getting the shape of a platform, no longer only including ICCO partners but also state actors. During our end line visit, we noted that activities undertaken within the 'platform' are still instigated a lot by ICCO officers. The role of ADI-Kivu did not seem to be very

proactive. Other contacts with ICCO officers aim at organisational capacity development and take place primarily through bilateral exchanges at the ICCO office. For us as evaluation team it was difficult to get a clear impression of these exchanges as they take place in an informal setting and are not necessarily documented.

The new MFS-funded contract to work on food security in the Ruzizi Plain is a contract provided by ICCO to ADI-Kivu and ASED together. This was a suggestion made by ICCO, mainly with the idea to promote mutual learning between partners. To get funding, no joint proposal was submitted by ADI-Kivu and ASED: “It was only when we were called [by ICCO] to discuss the terms [of the contract] that we realised we were together” as one of the staff members pointed out during the end line workshop. It shows that no clear communication took place in the process leading to this joint contract and the idea was not fully appropriated.

Generally, staff were appreciative of exchange with other partners in COS-PASAK (including contract partner ASED) but would talk about this in rather general terms, without being able to provide concrete examples of achievements of the synergy. One of the staff members expressed this as follows during the end line workshop: “Through exchanges, like in a joint workshop, you cannot leave without having exchanged some ideas, hear how things are going with others. We are not working with the same beneficiaries and we can always aim at harmonising our efforts.” Although the words do not give a lot of insight in concrete realisations, they importantly do reveal that partners in COS-PASAK do not merely see each other as competitors but talk about harmonising efforts. This can be seen as an important step in strengthening civil society to work together towards a common aim. At the same time, we did not get the impression that staff saw a lot of added value in cooperation. The synergy was still largely seen as something imposed from above.

Next to COS-PASAK, ADI-Kivu participates in meetings of other platforms, such as the Civil Society Coordination Office, CRONGD and the *Plate-forme legumineuse du Congo*, which is set up by N2Africa.

Lack of financial resources has had a great impact on the organisation; staff numbers have reduced, some people had to be fired (which also involved extra costs), others were sent on ‘technical leave’ for prolonged periods of time. An example is the agronomist whom we met during the workshop and who accompanied us during our field visit. He had formally kept his contract, but did not work for ADI-Kivu in 2012 and 2013. In 2014, he took up work again. Payment of his salary is covered by the project. Next to the limited external financial resources, ADI-Kivu has several sources of internal funding:

- Buildings (in Bukavu and in Kavumu), purchased with support of various donors in the past
- A concession of 75 ha of land in Lushasha (Kavumu), purchased in the past with EU funding
- A goat farm
- Incidentally, ADI-Kivu staff provide training to other organisations and receive payment for this.

These sources have good potential to contribute to more viability of the organisation and certainly put ADI-Kivu at an advantage in comparison to many other organisations. Yet, exploitation does not seem to be optimal. The concession for instance is made available for agriculture. Farmers are supposed to pay monthly fees to ADI-Kivu to cultivate cassava, but most producers do not manage to pay timely. In 2013

for instance, out of 232 producers, only 83 paid for the full period. The others are supposed to pay in the course of this year. Similarly, MONUSCO is renting the premises in Kavumu at an amount of \$2250/month, but payment is often delayed. The goat farm does not provide a stable income, and is not exploited commercially. At present, salaries of 7 out of 8 staff members are covered by ADI-Kivu's own sources. Nevertheless, also these staff members experience delays in payment of salaries.

Generally, ADI-Kivu shows openness to other civil society actors, which we consider to be positive. Financial resource base of ADI-Kivu has seriously weakened which reduces the level of organisation.

**Practice of values:** *internal governance (democratic decision-making and governance), transparency*

Social bodies of ADI-Kivu are in place and functioning. The General Assembly consists of 31 members with different status: 'normal' members, honorary members, and founding members. According to the statutes, at least 1 out of 6 members of the GA should be a farmer representative. Normally, the GA meets once per year. In addition, extraordinary assemblies can take place. The last General Assembly took place in December 2013.

During the baseline visit, we found that the Board of Directors of ADI-Kivu, and especially the president had a great influence on the functioning of the organisation. Executive staff did not feel fully comfortable during the workshop to express their own points of view, and the coordinator was still relatively new and did not yet seem to be fully comfortable to propose drastic changes in this regard (he took up the position in December 2011). At that point however there was already awareness that it would be preferable to have more distance between the board and the executive staff. ADI-Kivu has been working on changing this. It would take until April 2014 before an elective General Assembly would take place and a new board was elected. Apart from the vice-president, all members of the board have now changed. The vice-president had not yet ended her mandate and was therefore re-appointed. Another change that took place is that the statutes and the regulations have been adjusted.

In addition to changes that have taken place already, the new president of the board intends to work on updating the strategic plan. The plan which is in place at present covers the period 2011-2016, but many elements that are mentioned in the current plan are far from being realised. Therefore, the president aims to draft a new plan. The president has a background in rural development and should be able to promote this process. It remains to be seen whether he will have sufficient time available to devote to ADI-Kivu next to his regular occupations.

Limited funding also has an impact on the way of working of the remaining staff. An example of this is that ADI-Kivu, encouraged by ICCO, used to work with SAGE for bookkeeping, but meanwhile the license has expired and Excel is being used again. There is awareness about the desirability to purchase a new SAGE license, this was not made a priority. In terms of finances, ADI-Kivu tries to ensure transparency. Budgets and financial reports for instance need to be approved by the General Assembly and Board of Directors before they are made available to other parties. The present ICCO-funded project requires an audit, but this is not covered within the budget. Since the project is in a consortium with ASSED, financial reports will need to be compiled together.

A reason given by staff for the lack of funding at present is that ADI-Kivu refuses to be ‘flexible’ and does not want to engage in practices such as *Opération Retour*. This practice is said to be widespread among donors and partners and entails the diversion of funds for unlawful purposes.

Generally, we feel that ADI-Kivu has made some progress in terms of practice of values, taking steps towards changing its governance structure. Since the new board had been appointed only one month before our visit, it remains to be seen to what extent these changes will really have an impact on the functioning of the organisation.

### **Perception of impact:** *responsiveness/social impact/policy impact*

Despite the limited amount of project activities over the last two years, ADI-Kivu staff feels that the majority of their beneficiaries are equally or even a bit more satisfied than two years ago. At the same time, staff regret not being able to continue with the same number of beneficiaries as before and experience discontent from the side of the beneficiaries that are no longer included in projects. It is felt that the cooperatives that were set up within the 2011-2012 project still need accompaniment to be able to professionalise further and get more sense of entrepreneurship. This impression was also supported by the members of the cooperative we visited. Although they had achieved several things (as will be set out in the contribution story below), other things remained to be learnt, and the beneficiaries repeatedly stressed that they still needed support, stating that they were still ‘at birth’. With the new project still in a start-up phase at the time of our visit, people felt abandoned because of the lack of activities in 2013; “We thought ADI-Kivu was like a father to us, we were born in their family and thought they would help us to build a storehouse, an office, meals to support us [...]. We feel they abandon us, thought we did wrong things. It is their duty to support us as a child,” as a member of COOPASA explained during our field visit. In response to this, the agronomist of ADI-Kivu later explained to us that indeed in the course of 2013 no activities took place. Since the onset of the new PASAK project, support is provided to a total of 100 households, spread over 4 different locations. Compared to supporting a cooperative, these activities are not as all-encompassing and therefore people feel not really assisted. The remaining part of PASAK however will continue to focus on these 100 households in the first place. Training of the cooperative is often done through the cooperative’s own agronomist (who is one of the members). He is among the beneficiaries of the current project and then asked to pass on the information to the other members. The role of ADI-Kivu in this is less visible to the ultimate beneficiaries. Overall, ADI-Kivu notes improvements in terms of revenues of farmers, but also in terms of their living conditions. The interim COS-PASAK evaluation gives the example of a beneficiary in Sange who has increased production from 400 kg of rice to 1000 kg on the same area of land thanks to the use of improved farming techniques.<sup>19</sup>

Organisationally, the grassroots organisations of ADI-Kivu (i.e. the cooperatives and the mutual solidarity groups) are well set up, although still at an early stage. Beneficiaries of the cooperative explained how ADI-Kivu had helped them to structure their organisation; to get statutes and regulations that are formally recognised by the government, to set up a board and appoint members to various roles in this board.

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<sup>19</sup> Murhambo, D.C. and A.G. Karume, October 2013. *Rapport d'évaluation externe de la COSPASAK*, commissioned by ICCO, p.23

Interestingly, COOPASA in Sange is a cooperative with a female president. She explained to us that she was elected because she was the only woman that ran for the position of president, and the female members of the cooperative all wanted to have a woman as president. It underlines the impact of ADI-Kivu on local civil society development.

Next to organisational support, ADI-Kivu has also helped the members of the cooperative to obtain more technical skills about the rice production and commercialisation process; on how to plant seeds in a row, how to apply measures of Integrated Soil Fertility Management, and some basic marketing skills. More needs to be done to orient people further towards the market.

There is not much direct impact on the public sector; in recent years, ADI-Kivu has not engaged very actively in lobby and advocacy efforts to change policy. Contact with authorities (provincial administration, various government bodies) is limited to administrative and organisational needs. Some relations are tense because of the confiscation of the office building. It was pointed out as well that one of the objectives of COS-PASAK is to promote integration and collaboration among all stakeholders involved in food security, including government actors. This collaboration is at present still at an early stage. Within COS-PASAK the role of ADI-Kivu has not been in the forefront, also because of their lack of funding last year. Within this consortium, contacts with the private sector should also become more frequent. Thus far, however, this is not yet happening a lot. Beer brewing company Bralima is in touch with rice producers on the Ruzizi Plain, but the different producers are not yet organising themselves strategically enough to bargain a very good joint deal with Bralima. When ADI-Kivu organised workshops in Ruzizi and North-Kabare in 2012 on the organisation of the value chains of rice and cassava respectively, some retailers of agricultural inputs, as well as representatives of buyers' associations attended, next to the producers. They were all trained about their role in the value chain.

### **Environment/context**

ADI-Kivu tries to base its interventions as much as possible on an analysis of the context, but this is not always easy to realise. Partly this is due to orientations provided by donors (which limit the directions an SPO can take). Another difficulty is that it can be difficult to get reliable data. To promote agricultural production and improve the functioning of the whole value chain, it is for instance important to find out how much farmers actually produce, how much costs are involved in this production, etc. This is not necessarily information that is easily available. Over the years, ADI-Kivu has trained farmers to become real producers. "Before PASAK, we took agriculture as something negligible. A farmer who cultivated, did so only to eat, and he would sell at the market at a low price. Through PASAK, we have been shown how to cultivate, produce, sell, pay other things. [...]. With PASAK and the training given, we were shown that to be a producer, we first need to do an analysis, make a business plan, and have to note down everything", as one of the local field trainers set out during the baseline visit.<sup>20</sup> As a result of this, ADI-Kivu is able to obtain more information on a number of background data. It will enable them to target interventions more specifically. In recent years, this potential has not been exploited. Cooperatives that

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<sup>20</sup> 5.10.2012

become more mature, should be able to carry out their own analysis of the market, and of opportunities for selling. ADI-Kivu is well aware of its limitations in this regard; it is felt that cooperatives will take at least 5 years before maturity and autonomy is achieved.

An example of another need that is noted, but which remains unanswered thus far, is the need for better irrigation structures in the Ruzizi Plain. The existing irrigation structures date back to the 1970s and are not well functioning anymore. With recurrent droughts, cultivation of rice is a risky business. Although we have observed several NGOs working with farmers in cooperatives or saving groups in the Plain, none of them seems to be taking up this issue, probably because the investment is too high to be taken up by one organisation.

Security concerns that arise out of ADI-Kivu's context analysis are usually shared with other civil society actors to discuss possibilities to formulate responses.

## **7. Contribution story: case study of a cooperative**

*Research Question 2 and 5: Which plausible causal mechanisms were identified, what evidence was needed to overturn or substantiate these mechanisms? Provide the results; Succinctly describe the major results; Did the SPO interventions reach their objectives? Can the results be attributed to the interventions? If not, why not? Did other factors/causal mechanisms play a role?*

*Research Question 3: How relevant are the results?*

*Attribution question: Setting up a functional cooperative*

A main objective of both MFS-funded projects is to set up, structure and strengthen cooperatives as a way to support the agricultural sector. Efforts directed towards the cooperatives can be seen as strengthening civil society at the grassroots level. ADI-Kivu would prefer to work holistically and take a more all-encompassing approach towards beneficiaries, but lack of funding has made this unrealistic in recent years. In this section, we first look in more general terms at ADI-Kivu's approach towards working with cooperatives, and at what is arguably needed to set up a well-functioning cooperative. We analyse the functioning of the cooperative as outcome for our contribution story. A cooperative brings certain benefits to its members, and operates according to a number of good governance principles. We zoom in on the case of the cooperative of Sange (COOPASA). This cooperative was set up with help of ADI-Kivu. We analyse actors and factors that contributed positively or negatively to the cooperative (evidence) and pay particular attention to ADI-Kivu's contribution, based on project documents, workshops, and interviews with various stakeholders. This case sheds light on different dimensions of the civil society index. Firstly, it shows us the impact the cooperative has on the beneficiaries, and to what extent this coincides with their needs (relevance). Secondly, it tells us more about how ADI-Kivu helps in strengthening civil society at the grassroots level, as we look at the strength of the cooperative as an organisation and to what extent certain values are put into practice.

*Theory of Change: How ADI-Kivu envisions to set up a cooperative*

Setting up a cooperative is a process that requires a number of elements to be put in place. The following is an overview of the elements that ADI-Kivu staff consider essential:

- Organisational structure: Cooperatives need to organise themselves; members have to elect a management committee and board that are responsible for taking certain decisions and performing other actions. The functioning of a cooperative involves financial matters, for which members need to trust each other. ADI-Kivu staff feel that cooperatives should have at least about 12–20 members.
- Legal recognition: Official permission is needed from the provincial Ministry of Agriculture to function as a cooperative. In many cases, such recognition is at first provided provisionally, for the period of one year, after which the final recognition can be provided. In the context of DRC, it is important to obtain this recognition. As long as a cooperative does not have this, members are, for instance, more prone to informal taxation. Before being able to obtain formal recognition, cooperatives need to ensure that they have the required legal bodies in place, as well as statutes, internal regulations, etc.
- Agricultural production: The major aim of a cooperative is to organise the joint processing and commercialisation of crops. This means that members need to be able to produce more than their subsistence needs.
- Trained members: People need to obtain skills and knowledge on how to increase their agricultural production, but also their skills and knowledge about entrepreneurship and what it means to be part of a cooperative. Integrated Soil Fertility Management is seen as a very important way to increase production.
- Management tools and committee: A mature cooperative stores agricultural produce of its members. Storage allows farmers to sell production at a later point, when prices can be higher. It is important to keep track of exact amounts, who owns what, money that is being paid, money that is lent, etc. This all requires meticulous bookkeeping, which has to be done by a management committee that is well trusted by its members. A certain level of literacy is needed to be able to fulfil the task.
- Storage building: As soon as production grows, members need to be able to put products in storage. This will enable them to wait until prices have increased, which is more beneficial than selling right after harvesting. It means a secure place is needed for storage, without running the risk of crops being stolen, being eaten by animals, or getting wet and rotting.
- Tools to process agricultural produce: Farmers who sell crops right after harvest without further processing usually get a relatively low price. As soon as people are able to process their products a bit further—for instance by shelling the rice, proper drying and sorting out good and bad quality—price levels can increase considerably.
- Financial resources: To start up a cooperative, training is needed, and sometimes material input as well. Members can contribute to this themselves, but in the start-up phase of a cooperative, there is usually not enough capital available internally to cover all costs. In practice, most cooperatives are connected to the international donor community through Congolese NGOs.



*Practice of Change: How far is COOPASA in becoming a mature cooperative and what has ADI-Kivu contributed to this with MFS funding?*

COOPASA, the *Cooperative Agricole de Sange* is a cooperative located in the Ruzizi highlands. COOPASA members are rice producers. ADI-Kivu started working with a number of beneficiaries already in 2010 with the aim of setting up a cooperative. Most members of COOPASA come from one of three associations that got together to form a cooperative. In 2012, activities really took off at the level of the cooperative. In 2014, ADI-Kivu took some activities back up, this time targeting individual household members instead of the cooperative as a whole. Through training sessions, these individuals receive further knowledge about the functioning of the cooperative. ADI-Kivu's agronomist explained to us that the cooperative's agronomist is usually also among the beneficiaries of the training sessions, and he is supposed to disseminate the information further. Since 2013, interventions directed at COOPASA have been limited. Below we go back to the elements considered essential for a cooperative, we show to what extent they are in place and analyse the role of ADI-Kivu in realisations (evidence):

- Organisational structure: A structure is in place, with a management committee. During our visit we met the president, treasurer, manager and an agronomist. When ADI-Kivu starts working with people to set up a cooperative, the first step is to set up an organisational structure. Members had to decide through elections who was going to be part of the management committee. It is important that the power positions of others are accepted. The early members of the 3 associations were 160 in number, but soon other people wanted to join as well, and when the cooperative really took off, 700 members had registered. This is quite a big group that needs a clear management structure. General Assemblies take place annually. The last was in December 2013. During the meetings, reports are presented of what has been achieved during the year, what has not been achieved and why not and whether new members have joined. The planning for the coming year is also discussed. From a gender perspective, it is interesting to note that the elected president is a woman; female members had agreed among themselves to vote for the female candidate. ADI-Kivu played a role in setting up the structure, but the eventual functioning is largely dependent on members' engagement, capacity, and on mutual trust.
- Legal recognition: Was obtained in 2012. ADI-Kivu staff attributed a lot of value to organising all of the paperwork. This seemed to be less important for COOPASA members. They explained that ADI-Kivu helped them to get the right documents and to legalise their cooperative, but they felt it took a lot of time and that they were already operating as a cooperative before. Given the limited interest of members in obtaining legal recognition, we conclude that this process was highly driven by ADI-Kivu.
- Agricultural production: An evaluation of COS-PASAK carried out by an external consultant looked at changes in production and gathered testimonies of several people, showing that agricultural production indeed increased since people were involved in the PASAK project. An example is a woman who used to produce about 400 kg of rice. Thanks to PASAK she increased production to 1000 kg of rice. As to the cause of changes, she mentioned sowing in line (instead of in bulk), using improved seed varieties and using fertilizer.<sup>21</sup> These changes have been introduced by ADI-Kivu

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<sup>21</sup> Murhambo, D.C. and A.G. Karume, October 2013. *Rapport d'évaluation externe de la COSPASAK*, commissioned by ICCO, p.23

as part of ICCO funding, but it should be noted here that, under previous projects funded by IFDC, ADI-Kivu obtained a great deal of knowledge about these farming methods. This knowledge is still being used in PASAK.

- Trained members: Cooperative members we talked to were positive about the training they had received from ADI-Kivu. Highlighted especially were the training on Integrated Soil Fertility Management (previously with IFDC, but also integrated in the 2011–2012 PASAK project and in the current project) and training on what a cooperative actually means and how it should function. The latter is clearly part of the ICCO-funded project. People testified that the training made them realise that they would be able to sell rice at the market. This shows quite a shift in mentality.
- Management tools and committee: There is awareness among members about the importance of keeping track of numbers. Efforts are made to do this, but improvements could be made. To prevent fraud, bags of rice are registered at the shelling machine and then again when they are placed into the storage room. Yet, specific bags are not marked or labelled, although the quality might vary between bags. We were not able to trace the contribution of ADI-Kivu in this.
- Storage building: ADI-Kivu has not been able to support the construction of a storage depot, but members manage to collect enough money to pay a monthly rent of \$50 for a depot.
- Tools to process agricultural production: COOPASA was able to buy a small shelling machine for the rice, but would prefer to buy a larger and better one because the present machine does not always function well and does not have enough capacity to serve all members. An area for drying the rice is still lacking. At present, the rice is dried outside on plastic sheets, but the ambition is to have a more professional drying room. ADI-Kivu has not been able to provide financial support to this.
- Financial resources: Financial support by ADI-Kivu was very much welcomed and people were disappointed that they were no longer receiving support. Nevertheless, the cooperative manages to get some money from its members. It is agreed for instance that, for each 50 kg bag, the cooperative keeps 1 kg.

*Other contributing (f)actors:*

Next to the elements presented as essential by ADI-Kivu staff we noted a number of other actors/factors that are decisive in making a success of a cooperative, based on the data collected. For some of these we were able to gather convincing evidence about contribution, for others not. ADI-Kivu was generally not involved in realising these elements. We present these elements here:

*Positive influence:*

- Willingness of local leaders to engage: Can help to convince people to adhere to the cooperative, and to facilitate things locally. We were not able to gather detailed information about this for the case of COOPASA.
- Determination of members: Members of the cooperative need to adhere to the idea of a cooperative and need to be willing to put the knowledge and skills obtained through training into practice. In the case of COOPASA, this determination seems to exist. Although people are

disappointed about the lack of support, they nevertheless continue to organise meetings for members.

- Payment of membership fee: To become a member of COOPASA, individuals have to pay \$20. Additionally, there is an annual contribution of \$20 for the aid fund. Thus far, however, only 250 out of the 700 members have paid the membership fee, totalling \$5000 collected in membership fees. If all other members would pay as well, it would become more feasible to make investments to purchase, for instance, an improved shelling machine or their own storage room.
- Positive examples of other cooperatives in the surroundings: It is easier to convince people to adhere to the rules and regulations of a cooperative once they have observed positive examples in their surroundings. Sometimes this will lead to an increased number of people wanting to join that particular cooperative, but it can also lead to a willingness to engage in setting up one's own cooperative. During our visits, we encountered a large number of other cooperatives that have been set up in the Ruzizi Plain. One example that was often mentioned is the cooperative in Luberizi: COOSOPRODA. Interestingly, this cooperative was at first set up and supported for some years by ADI-Kivu (since 2006). Meanwhile, VECO has become the major donor of COOSOPRODA (see also our evaluation report on VECO). ADI-Kivu staff emphasised that it would be good if cooperatives would not see each other as competitors, but as 'loyal competition'.

*Negative influence:*

- A spirit of wait-and-see (*attentisme*): The presence of humanitarian organisations is often blamed by NGOs for inactivity of people and their unwillingness to engage in agricultural projects. As long as humanitarian organisations continue to provide material goods, such as seeds or food, for free, it is difficult to change this attitude. In eastern DRC, humanitarians have had a prolonged presence, and some people have started counting on their continued presence. In the case of COOPASA, this does not seem to be a major problem: Despite lack of external funding, members get together and manage to keep the core functions of a cooperative up and running.
- Insecurity: A number of violent acts have taken place in the Ruzizi Plain in recent years. Because members of the cooperative do not all live in the same place, it is difficult to assess to what extent this has really affected the cooperative. We did not hear of theft of stored rice, for instance.
- Lack of infrastructure: In addition to soil fertility, producers need to have access to water for irrigation. In the case of COOPASA, water is a big concern. Irrigation channels are old and broken, and a dam needs to be repaired. It is not within the capacity of COOPASA to do this on its own. They have tried to do this in the past, but the repairs are not strong enough and are easily washed away by heavy rains. Road access is not a major issue for people living relatively close to the main road. Sange is located along National Highway N.5, connecting Bukavu and Uvira. This is not the same for all members. For those who own fields at a greater distance from the main road, it can be difficult to transport rice to the shelling machine and storage room.
- Lack of funding: As we set out above, COOPASA is able to survive despite lack of funding. Yet, it is also clear that COOPASA is not as strong and does not develop as rapidly as some other cooperatives we visited that had received more continuous funding. Funding can certainly speed

up the process towards maturity, and investments in machinery and storage infrastructure are necessary to become competitive

- Quality of rice and lack of access to a good market: On the Ruzizi Plain, people all seem to want to sell their rice to Bralima, the Congolese beer brewing company that uses the rice as source of starch for its beer. However, the price offered by Bralima is not very high, because the company does not have an interest in high quality long grains, for instance. If quality would increase, it would be easier to attract local customers as well. At present, people in Bukavu prefer imported rice, either from Tanzania or Pakistan. People consider Ruzizi rice to be of lower quality. This makes it difficult for farmers to find good markets.

#### *What do others say and do about it?*

Generally, we found that ADI-Kivu is widely known in South Kivu, but this is often more based on realisations from the past than on the present situation. ADI-Kivu is certainly not the only organisation that promotes cooperatives as a way to strengthen the agricultural sector. Several of the partners in the food security consortium of ICCO are also active in the Ruzizi Plain. Here, we provide a brief overview of some other organisations we encountered and explain the role they have.

ASED (*Action pour la Santé, l'Environnement et le Développement*) works in the same area as ADI-Kivu. The current project is a joint contract between ICCO, ADI-Kivu and ASED. The core activity of ASED is normally the chlorination of water. Within PASAK, the organisation works on the promotion of chicken breeding and the cultivation of sweet potatoes as source of income. The idea of the ICCO project, according to the project proposal, is that beneficiaries of the two organisations are ultimately brought together and gain an understanding that chicken produce organic fertiliser which can be used in cultivating the fields to increase production. In that way, there should be a synergy between the two organisations/projects at grassroots level. At the time of our visit, this synergy did not yet exist, and staff members of ADI-Kivu were little aware of this objective.

VECO (*Vredeseilanden Country Office-DRC*) is another organisation in our evaluation that works with cooperatives in the Ruzizi Plain. Usually, Congolese NGOs do not work simultaneously with the same grassroots partners, unless it is clear that focus of the interventions differs. What happens more often is that a cooperative is taken over by another partner at the moment a funding relation ceases to exist. For an existing organisational structure, it is easier to find a new donor. In this way, VECO has continued supporting COOSOPRODA after ADI-Kivu was no longer able to do so. As mentioned, COOSOPRODA is often seen by others as example of a successful cooperative that can motivate others to achieve the same. It should be noted here that VECO is a semi-international organisation and thus not fully comparable with Congolese NGOs such as ADI-Kivu.

UPDI (*Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégré*) works with cooperatives in the Ruzizi Plain. First, this was done with financial support from Oxfam Novib. Since July 2013 UPDI has started setting up two rice cooperatives in the area. UPDI is the lead organisation in COS-PASAK and has a lot of experience in working with cooperatives. UPDI staff acknowledged especially the experience and knowledge of ADI-Kivu in working with mutual solidarity groups.

Among Congolese NGOs working in the field of agriculture, cooperatives seem to be in vogue, just like mutual solidarity groups. Many organisations combine these two approaches. ASOP and SARCAF are examples of other organisations we encountered that work in similar ways. An organisation that has a different approach is IFDC (International Fertilizer Development Center). This is an international research organisation that promotes agricultural intensification. The Integrated Soil Fertility Management approach, which was widely taken up by NGOs and producers we met, was introduced by them. Additionally, COOPASA members testified that this approach helped them to increase production. Usually IFDC works through Congolese partners like ADI-Kivu to reach beneficiaries. Other international organisations we talked to such as FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) and CRS (Catholic Relief Services) showed remarkably little knowledge about the work of Congolese NGOs.

To sum up, we noted quite a number of initiatives of other NGOs which set up cooperatives in the same region. If this trend continues, rice producers in Sange might have been enabled to set up a cooperative with the support of another NGO at some point. Sange is located along a main road and therefore a relatively easily accessible project site. This makes it more likely for a community to receive support.<sup>22</sup> Rice is a much promoted crop in the Ruzizi Plain and it would therefore be an obvious choice to select rice producers as target group.

#### *Conclusion: the role of ADI-Kivu in building a cooperative*

ADI-Kivu has been able to set up an early-stage cooperative in Sange, building on three existing local associations from October 2010 onwards. Members manage to meet, store and sell together. It is unlikely that the three associations would have been able to organise themselves into a cooperative without the support of ADI-Kivu, and we clearly noted their contribution. At the same time, much more still needs to be done for COOPASA to develop into a more mature cooperative, with or without the support of ADI-Kivu.

By supporting the set-up of a cooperative ADI-Kivu has contributed to civil society development at the grassroots level. In terms of civic engagement, we feel that the project was relevant for its beneficiaries: It responded to their needs, although they might not all have realised that these needs existed beforehand. People testified that they were not even aware that they would be able themselves to produce beyond subsistence level and sell their rice in the market. One of them pointed out that they now felt much more respected in the community as farmers. It is telling in this regard that one of the beneficiaries said: "We see ADI-Kivu as our father".<sup>23</sup>

The perception of impact of the cooperative was visible: the cooperative manages to find private sector buyers for their rice, which shows that buyers have trust in the product that is offered by the cooperative. Other community members express their interest in joining the cooperative, which demonstrates that the cooperative is relevant to the community. The cooperative helps to increase production and profit. Rice that is cultivated by individual members is stored collectively in a storage room. Members see the benefit

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<sup>22</sup> See also Milabyo, P.K, 2014 for more about ways in which project sites are selected.

<sup>23</sup> Sange, field visit COOPASA, 11.07.2014

of joint processing, drying, storing and selling, showing that there is confidence that the cooperative will deal with these procedures in a way that is good for them.

Practice of values: ADI-Kivu has put effort in setting up an organisational structure that would help the cooperative to adhere to the principles of good governance. This was one of the priorities of the project during its first years and seems to work; an example of this is the General Assembly that was organised despite lack of support from ADI-Kivu. This example underlines that the cooperative is growing towards maturity. Collective storage underlines the trust people put in the cooperative's management.

Generally, we are positive about the contribution made by ADI-Kivu, given the modest means that were available, but our overview of other NGOs active in the area shows as well that it is quite likely that Sange would have become an intervention target for another NGO if ADI-Kivu had not intervened.

## **8. Discussion**

Given your findings, do you think this project (as in: SPO interventions towards civil society strengthening) was well-designed, suitable for the environment in which it was implemented? Would you advice to fund a similar project in the future (or to continue funding this one)? What changes would you recommend, if any?

The project itself was well-designed. ADI-Kivu staff showed ability to explain the rationale of the project and was determined to achieve the objectives. Beneficiaries were still relatively positive about ADI-Kivu despite not having received a lot of support recently. Major drawbacks of the interventions and the project design were the rupture in funding and the time frame. We can understand that there can be many reasons for withholding funding at some point (both at the level of the donor organisation, and at the level of the SPO). Continuing funding at a later point in time usually sets back organisations and beneficiaries quite a bit; contacts need to be revived, levels of trust and credibility need to be restored. Especially if the grassroots organisations are still in a stage of growth the project quite likely has to start from a lower level than the level at which the previous project ended. It would be more desirable to carry out close monitoring of a project to be able to assess viability and to ensure timely reporting takes place. It might be more effective for a donor to provide small amounts of funding continuously than to provide bigger amounts of funding with interruption.

Without a substantial financial contribution, we nevertheless encountered a group of motivated beneficiaries in Sange that had been able to set up an early-stage cooperative with potential for growth.

### **How could the impact evaluation itself be improved?**

A disadvantage of the way we set up our field visit is that we did not talk to the same beneficiaries as during the baseline. For comparative reasons this might have provided better insights. Since funding for these beneficiaries had ended already in December 2012, ADI-Kivu was obviously more keen on

presenting us the beneficiaries of the rice cooperative where a bit more activity took place. Unfortunately it was not feasible to consult beneficiaries at the two different locations.

***Which causal mechanisms do you consider to be valid beyond this case?***

In terms of causal mechanisms, we note that the approach of working with grassroots groups is common among SPOs. Members of cooperatives generally need a certain level of income security that goes beyond subsistence level. This makes the approach of cooperatives not suitable and reproducible everywhere. A challenge which cooperatives in DRC face is that of the institutional context; high tax burdens, high transport costs and difficult market access are some of the conditions that hamper the development of the agricultural sector. A cooperative is not a miracle product that can solve this complex of challenges and expectations of what can be realised should therefore be rather modest.

## **9. Conclusion**

Provide an answer to the evaluation questions.

- 1) What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?

A lot of initiatives are taken to strengthen civil society. At the local level, NGOs (including the SPOs in our sample) work with grassroots structures. These structures are often well-trained on good governance principles; they have functional boards, organise meetings in which members can democratically raise their voice etc., but the majority of these structures does not function without support from an NGO, often with international funding.

As set out in the context description, we have noted two major trends in civil society in the field of agriculture: Farmers' cooperatives and Mutual Solidarity Groups. Many NGOs have initiatives to set up or promote cooperatives and/or mutual solidarity groups. This is done with varying levels of success and impact. Especially the MUSOs can be seen as contributing to civil society development at the grassroots level. Most of the initiatives are not yet in a stage of maturity. This makes it difficult to assess to what extent they will make a sustainable contribution to civil society and the realisation of a more viable agriculture.

In terms of civil society development, we observe a tendency among donors to promote synergies/collaboration between civil society actors. This is often limited to collaboration between organisations that are funded by the same donor, although ambitions exist to promote more encompassing synergies, including not only civil society but also other actors in the agricultural value chain. Limited collaboration between donors themselves does not set a good example for SPOs.

- 2) *To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*

ADI-Kivu has been active in the promotion of both cooperatives and mutual solidarity groups, but at a limited scale and with interruption. ADI-Kivu's contribution to the setting up of mutual solidarity groups goes beyond only its own beneficiaries. ADI-Kivu has a longer experience in working with these groups than many other NGOs, and as a result, the organisation is seen as point of reference on this. In our contribution story we show that ADI-Kivu played a clear role in setting up the cooperative in Sangue, but we also argue that it is likely that the community would have received support by another NGO if ADI-Kivu had not intervened, given the strong presence of NGOs in the area.

Within the COS-PASAK synergy, ADI-Kivu has provided training to others on how to work with the groups. A manual was developed and is available for consultation by others. In this regard, ADI-Kivu thus contributes to the effectiveness of other civil society actors working with mutual solidarity groups.

### 3) What is the relevance of these changes?

Cooperatives are helpful in increasing production, in getting access to markets, and in producing more professionally; people become aware of commercialisation, setting up a business plan etc. By doing this jointly, social cohesion within a community can increase. Cooperatives are mostly relevant for people who already have a certain standard of living/income and who are able to produce a market surplus. The changes are less relevant for the most marginalised part of the population: they are excluded from becoming cooperative members, as they are not able to produce beyond subsistence level. Mutual solidarity groups help people further to save money. The groups constitute social safety nets to people, which increases security. Generally, beneficiaries were positive about the changes. By increasing agricultural production beyond subsistence level, people can increase their household income and improve their living conditions. This is certainly relevant, given the figures presented in the context description at the beginning of this report: 87.7% of Congolese people live below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>24</sup> Most of them make a living out of agriculture. This makes interventions aimed at strengthening the agricultural sector relevant for a very large part of the population.

ADI-Kivu wants to improve the living conditions of farmers in South-Kivu by making them more self-sufficient and autonomous. The changes described here play an important role in achieving this.

### 4) *What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

Many civil society actors in the field of agriculture work towards realising the changes mentioned above, and there seems to be a momentum to achieve things. People see examples of success in neighbouring communities and become motivated to join initiatives themselves. Roughly, the elements mentioned in the contribution story can all be seen as actors and factors that explain the findings. Main ingredients needed to set up a cooperative are: involvement of an NGO with access to international donor funding; beneficiaries that are engaged, determined and with certain agricultural skills. Working together in a cooperative and/or especially a MUSO helps people to experience social cohesion, and to increase mutual trust. To make cooperatives successful, beneficiaries have to adhere to principles of good governance.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014



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ICCO, April 2013. *Interoffice memorandum*

Murhambo, D.C. and A.G. Karume, Oct. 2013. *Rapport d'évaluation externe de la COSPASAK, commissioned by ICCO.*

Next to these documents, we made use of other narrative and financial reports, progress reports, correspondence between donor and SPO etc. We collected documents from both ICCO and ADI-Kivu. A full list of documents is available on request.

## About data collection

| Name                           | Position                                      | Workshop<br>15.05.2014 | CS questions | Individual<br>interview | Group<br>interview/<br>Focus group |
|--------------------------------|---|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Albert Ntawigena               | ADI-Kivu, coordinator                         | X                      | X            | 16.5.2014               |                                    |
| Salvator Casinga               | ADI-Kivu, finance officer                     | X                      | X            | 16.5.2014               |                                    |
| Placide Iragi                  | ADI-Kivu, agronomist                          | X                      | X            | 16.5.2014               |                                    |
| Claire Zawadi                  | ADI-Kivu, secretary/cashier                   | X                      | X            |                         |                                    |
| Emmanuel Bisimwa<br>Ciregereza | ADI-Kivu, president of<br>board/consultant    |                        |              | 15.5.2014               |                                    |
| 7 beneficiaries                | COOPASA members                               |                        |              |                         | 11.7.2014                          |
| Willy Mulimbi<br>Byamungu      | Catholic Relief Services (CRS),<br>agronomist |                        |              | 21.5.2014               |                                    |
| Felicien Zozo                  | ASOP, coordinator                             |                        |              |                         | 16.6.2014                          |
| Jean Marie                     | ASOP, programme officer                       |                        |              |                         |                                    |
| Delphine Mapendu               | ASOP, field trainer                           |                        |              |                         |                                    |
| Solomon Kilongo                | ACDI, coordinator                             |                        |              | 13.5.2014               |                                    |
| Emmanuel                       | AVUDS, coordinator                            |                        |              | 13.5.2014               |                                    |
| Laurent Ikundji                | FAO, M&E officer                              |                        |              | 16.5.2014               |                                    |
| Moussa Mahamane                | IFDC, DRC representative                      |                        |              | 20.5.2014               |                                    |
| Gaspard Zamu Haizuru           | IFDC, economist                               |                        |              | 21.5.2014               |                                    |
| Nono Mwavita                   | SARCAF, coordinator                           |                        |              | 24.5.2014               |                                    |
| Mireille Mihigo Nabintu        | FOPAC, lobby and advocacy<br>officer          |                        |              | 13.5.2014               |                                    |
| Dieudonné Bakulikira<br>Nguma  | UPACO, vice-president                         |                        |              | 23.5.2014               |                                    |

|   |   |  |  |           |           |
|---|---|--|--|-----------|-----------|
| 7 staff members, incl. provincial inspector | IPAPEL (provincial inspection for agriculture, fisheries and livestock) |  |  |           | 21.5.2014 |
| Netlyn Bernard<br>Moïse Foki                | ICCO Bukavu   |  |  |           | 14.5.2014 |
| Thierry Kalimira                            | ICCO Bukavu, agronomist   |  |  | 14.5.2014 |           |
| Bilubi Meschac                              | ISDR lecturer, consultant   |  |  | 21.5.2014 |           |

7 COOPASA members (incl. president) were met during a field visit to Sange on 11.07.2014. Descending in the field allowed us not only to talk to them, but also to observe realisations in the field and to see the interaction between them and with the agronomist of ADI-Kivu.

With some of the people listed above we talked directly about ADI-Kivu. Others on this list were consulted to provide us deeper insight into what is going on in the food security sector in South Kivu, which enriched our contribution story.

Next to the people listed above, we obviously also talked to UPDI and VECO staff members (as part of their evaluation). These organisations are working in the same field and some of the information gathered from them fed into our understanding of ADI-Kivu. For a complete list of people consulted at these organisations, please see organisation reports. Besides, we attended one day of a workshop organised as part of the ICCO synergy COS-PASAK. Participants in this workshop were representatives of the food security partners of ICCO (and some former partners), as well as some other NGO representatives, and representatives of state institutions such as IPAPEL (provincial inspection of agriculture, fisheries and livestock), INERA (national institute for agronomic study and research), SENASEM (national seed service), and the ministerial divisions of planning and environment.

# Civil Society Strengthening Report

## Armee du Salut

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs, Patrick Milabyo, Bart Weijs, Koen Leuveld and Marrit van den Berg

Wageningen University

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## **List of acronyms**

ADED- Appui au développement de l'enfant en détresse  
AdS- Armée du Salut  
ALOCES- Alliance des Organisations Chrétiennes pour l'Éducation et la Santé  
CECA 20- Communauté Evangélique au Centre de l'Afrique  
CMEN-Centre Médical Evangélique de Nyankunde  
ECDPM- European Centre for Development Policy Management  
EPSP- Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel  
FARDC- Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo  
IDPs- Internally Displaced People  
NGO-Non-governmental organisation  
MFS II- Medefinancieringsstelsel 2011-2015  
PPSSP- Programme de promotion des soins de santé primaires  
SA-NL- Salvation Army the Netherlands  
SPO- Southern Partner Organisation  
TLM- The Leprosy Mission International-Congo  
WTF- War Trauma Foundation

# 1. Introduction

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The country study consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of southern partner organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening.

In this report we look specifically at the contribution of Salvation Army (in French: *Armée du Salut* (AdS) to the achievement of MDGs & Themes and to its contribution to civil society strengthening. AdS is a partner of Salvation Army NL (SANL), and as such partner of the ICCO Alliance. The report is based on observations, workshops, field visits, questionnaires, and interviews conducted during visits in 2012 and 2014, unless otherwise indicated. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup>

In the MDGs & Themes component of the evaluation, we examine the one project in terms of impact on selected MDGs and themes. To this end, we implemented two rounds of data collection (in 2012 and 2014) in the project's intervention area – both in intervention villages and treatment villages. This allows us to estimate a difference-in-difference model to measure the impact of the project.

As part of the civil society component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society in the evaluation period and the extent in which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and end line study. Core elements of our evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the Civicus Civil Society Index.<sup>2</sup> Dimensions of this index are:

- Civic engagement
- Level of organisation
- Practice of values
- Perception of impact
- Environment<sup>3</sup>

Armée du Salut has a long history in DRC, going back to the 1930s. AdS traditionally offers a wide range of services worldwide. The project that is funded by SANL focuses especially on health care and education. As part of the MFS-evaluation, we have looked especially at the East DR Congo Integrated Education Programme. What was especially relevant for our evaluation were two elements of the programme:

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by Jan Janssen (Salvation Army NL), and Major Pierre Masunda and Mathieu Makelele Mitima (AdS- eastern DRC). We thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> CDI, *Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012*

<sup>3</sup> Please note: In annex XX we provide more information about our sampling strategy and about the methodology we used.

Parents Committees and School Management Committees. These can be seen as contributing to civil society strengthening as their members are supposed to be trained and empowered to influence the local education system. In the course of the evaluation period we found only limited progress; committees were set up, but not much training was provided to ensure that parents would take up an active role in terms of decision-making, implementation and planning of the programme.

In the following, we first describe the country and relevant local context. Then we give a short description of SOFIBEF and the project and civil society strengthening/policy influencing elements. Next, we shortly discuss the methodology. We then first discuss the MDGs & Themes component, where we present our data, results and analysis followed by a discussion and conclusion. We then discuss the capacity development component, we present the results and contribution analysis for this component, which is followed by a discussion and conclusion. Finally, we discuss our findings for the civil society strengthening component, including the contribution analysis, and again a discussion and conclusion.

## 2. Context

Eastern DRC is strongly characterised by the legacy of repeated conflict and high levels of insecurity. High levels of poverty are coupled with limited access to basic services, in a still young democracy with a history of clientelism and rent-seeking. Eastern DRC is reputed for high levels of gender-based violence, including sexual violence against women. At the same time, especially South Kivu has a history of civil society mobilisation, and the eastern DRC has received a great deal of international aid. South Kivu possesses a wealth of natural resources and has a high agricultural potential. In the following section we zoom in on some issues that are of most relevance for the evaluated project.

### Conflict, insecurity and poverty

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons.<sup>4</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas in South Kivu, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013). The Fall of Goma in December 2012 and consequent threat to Bukavu led to the evacuation of the majority of international staff, and drew the attention of the military to North Kivu. The following defeat of M23 and military moves against other armed groups have led to more optimism, though.

DRC has great potential for agriculture and possesses a wealth of mineral resources. The potential of all these resources however is far from being exploited. On the 2014 Human Development Index, DRC ranked 186 out of 187 (followed only by Niger). Gross national income per head was noted to be at \$444 in 2013, which was lowest of all countries for which data were available. In the same year, 87.7% of the population lived below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>5</sup> In South Kivu, which used to be the granary of DRC, roughly

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<sup>4</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel, and the analyses by the Rift Valley Institute

<sup>5</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014



3 out of 4 people live in rural areas (UNDP 2009). A survey carried out in South Kivu in 2012 showed that around three-quarters of households in the sampled population make a living primarily in agriculture, either in subsistence agriculture (65%), commercial farming (5%), or by agricultural casual labour (6%) (Miliano et al. 2014).

## Education

In the DRC, the central government has prioritized five areas of intervention (*cinq chantiers*) including education and health. The national policy on education has three major objectives: to improve the quality and relevance of teaching and to strengthen sector governance (Ministère du Plan 2011). Nevertheless, enrollment remains low. One of the limiting factors that is often mentioned is costs, despite the government's strategy to promote free and compulsory primary education (Weijs et al. 2012). In reality, parents are often supposed to contribute something to cover the teachers' salaries, as government payment of salaries is not always available. The SLRC survey mentioned above contains some relevant findings about the level of education. About 34% of respondents had not received any education, 25% attended some years of primary school, and only 4% went to secondary school for at least some years. 9% of respondents were still frequenting schools (most of the respondents were above 16 years of age). It also appeared that households with no education at all were generally more food insecure.

## Civil society

Civil society in South Kivu is relatively well-developed. There is a large number of local NGOs, organised in thematic groups and networks, and they are not afraid to speak out against the government. There is also a strong presence of international organisations willing to partner with local NGOs. After many years of a strong humanitarian presence, many organisations are now engaging in development aid. However, a side-effect of the long-time presence of humanitarian aid is an attitude of dependency among parts of the population, which people describe as *attentisme* (wait and see). This is a challenge for organisations attempting to set up development projects, as their beneficiaries are used to free distribution of materials, and changing this attitude is not a short-term process.

The dependency of civil society on foreign aid is high, and almost complete. NGOs derive their funding almost exclusively from foreign funding. Their own initiatives are indirectly derived from this funding, which does allow them a certain institutional leeway. Local grassroots associations are not directly funded, but depend for their operations, seminars, transport and accompaniment on funded NGOs. For the near future, the continuation of the women's movement requires that the international community continues to recognise and support the role of NGOs in promoting women's rights.

### **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

The Salvation Army has a long history in DRC, going back to the 1930s. In the first place, AdS is a religious institute, concerned with sharing the gospel. The number of members is growing rapidly; In 2011 AdS-DRC counted 41.103 members, in 2015: 50 023. But next to this, AdS traditionally offers a wide range of services worldwide. The head office of AdS DRC is based in Kinshasa, international HQ is in London. A national education coordinator is appointed at Kinshasa level, responsible for overseeing the ca. 470 AdS schools in DRC, spread over all provinces of DRC, except Kasai Orientale. The Bukavu-based section is in charge of the whole of eastern DRC; North and South Kivu, Orientale, but security limitations and poor infrastructure make it difficult to cover the whole area and poses challenges to the major in terms of management. Therefore SANL decided to fund the position of a programme manager. This suggestion was made by SANL already in the beginning of the programme but materialised in 2013 only. The programme manager is based in Bukavu.

Generally, AdS rotates staff frequently; usually people are transferred to a different geographical location after 5 years, but these periods can also be much shorter and take only 2 or 3 years. It is the conviction of AdS that this can help to prevent patronage, and corruption as attachment to the local context does not become too strong. For the SANL-project however, SANL set as a condition at the beginning that officers involved should not be transferred during the project period to ensure continuity. This is working relatively well. At the project site in Ciriri which we visited we only found a new officer in charge of the agricultural component of the project. He was appointed in August 2013.

AdS is member of the ICCO alliance of partners working in the education and health sector: ALOCES (*Alliance des Organisations Chrétiennes pour l'Éducation et la Santé*). Other members of this alliance are: TLM-RDC, CMEN, PPSSP, ADED, and CECA-20. Within this network, joint lobby and advocacy activities are supposed to be carried out, and two capacity building workshops are organized annually. SANL contributes resources to ALOCES directly. The national project coordinator of AdS has the lead in ALOCES but this is mostly an administrative role. Because donors felt not enough progress was made within ALOCES to ensure continuation of efforts after 2015 (when projects generally end), the donors suggested the alliance to hire somebody –either as employer or as consultant – to provide advice on strategy and content. This was materialized from October 2013 onwards through the recruitment of a Goma-based consultant. Initially, his contract ran until May 2014, but this was extended. During the time of visit, ALOCES partners were in a process of reflection about the possibility to register the alliance as a formal organisation.

## 4. Project description

| Project   | Donor                                | Major objective  | Period    | Amount of funding in EUR            |                   |                   |                   |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|-----------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|   |                                      |  |           | 2011                                | 2012 <sup>6</sup> | 2013 <sup>7</sup> | 2014 <sup>8</sup> |
| E-DRC Integrated Education Programme            | SANL                                 | Improve livelihoods of vulnerable children through increased access to quality education | 2011-2015 | 138906 (MFS-II: 91532, SANL: 47374) | 171930            | 255952            | 279354            |
| Own contribution AdS-DRC                        | Own contribution AdS-DRC             |  |           |                                     | 10131             | 8500              | 8500              |
|   | Remaining balance from previous year |  |           |                                     |                   | 87107             |                   |
| Total budget available (excl.remaining balance) |                                      |  |           |                                     | 182061            | 264452            | 287854            |
| <b>Grand total</b> (excl.remaining balance)     |                                      |  |           |                                     |                   |                   |                   |

\*Please note: Other funding is available (from SANL and the Global Fund through SANRU) for a project on health in the visited project area. No data were made available on the amount of funding.

AdS is a very big organisation that carries out a lot of projects throughout the country. For this evaluation, we have only focused on the education programme. At the level of Bukavu, only very limited insight is available on overall funding of the organisation. Administration is largely done at Kinshasa level.

<sup>6</sup> CP0129 Budget 2012

<sup>7</sup> CP0129 Budget 2013 revised in April 2013

<sup>8</sup> CP0129 Budget 2014

## General Information

The E-DRC integrated education programme has a number of objectives. The project aims at improving primary education for vulnerable groups. Dropout rates in primary education are high in the Eastern DRC, as many parents struggle to pay the school fees for their children. This leaves the children of vulnerable households with low education. The AdS in Eastern Congo aims to improve this situation by interventions in existing schools and by building new schools (AdS schools). Other elements in the programme aim at improving knowledge and behaviour of pupils and teachers regarding HIV/AIDS; improving access to work and sustainable income of vulnerable parents of pupils (which will then help to pay school fees and thus improve salary of teachers). To this end, the programme foresees the construction of 5 schools and capacity strengthening of 5 already existing schools. In addition, parents committees (COPA: *comités des parents*) and management committees (COGE: *comités de gestion*) are set up.

In the AdS schools more activities are undertaken than in the existing school. Activities that are undertaken in both types of schools:

1. Strengthening of teaching capacities
2. Sensitization with respect to HIV/AIDS
3. Lobbying

In addition, the following activities are undertaken in AdS schools

1. Construction of school buildings
2. Setting up of parent-teacher associations (COPA: *comités des parents* and COGE: *comités de gestion*)
3. Provision of school meals
4. Training of parents in apiculture
5. Provision of agricultural inputs to parents.

In May 2014, three schools were already constructed, the fourth school construction was said to start in July 2014, while the fifth one was planned to start in 2015.<sup>9</sup> It was admitted by the SANL project officer that start of the project was slow with only little realisations in 2011 and 2012. From then on, things started to speed up. Parents committees were installed everywhere and functioned to varying degrees.

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<sup>9</sup> Interview with major Tshilulu, Project coordinator AdS-DRC, Kinshasa, 30 May 2014.

## Objectives and outputs

The overall objective, to improve the livelihoods of vulnerable children, is split up into 5 specific objectives.

| Objective   | Outputs  |
|---|--|
| 1. Increase the educational performance, in terms of quality and access, of Salvation Army (SA) and SA school in the intervention area (IA) within 5 years. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500 teachers have received a three day training.</li> <li>• 5 schools have been constructed in IAs</li> <li>• 1000 pupils/teachers have received supplementary food rations.</li> <li>• 2000 children (especially girls, those with a disability) enrol in 10 schools.</li> <li>• 1200 children finish school with a diploma (increase of 60%)</li> </ul> |
| 2. To improve knowledge and behaviour of pupils and teachers regarding HIV/AIDS in SA schools in selected intervention areas within 5 years.                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In at least 5 school an HIV/AIDS programme is integrated in the curriculum.</li> </ul>  |
| 3. To improve access to work and sustainable income of vulnerable parents of pupils increasing their income by 50%.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 250 parents have received training in agriculture and bee-keeping.</li> <li>• 25 farmer parent committees installed.</li> </ul>   |
| 4. To facilitate the involvement of civil society in decision making, planning and implementation (OT) within SA schools in the IA within 5 years.          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70 members of SMC/PTA have been trained.</li> </ul>   |
| 5. To conduct lobbying in improved education systems  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An L&amp;A campaign has been organized towards the Government to increase involvement for providing services to rural education.</li> </ul>   |

Of these specific objectives the fifth lies outside of the scope of the MDG & themes evaluations.

The final objective, to improve the livelihoods of the children, will be met through interventions in two domains:

1. At school level, buildings are constructed and teachers are trained.
2. At household level, parents are trained in apiculture and agricultural inputs are supplied.

## Other funding and projects

AdS E-DRC carries out a health project in the same area of intervention near Bukavu, the health zone of Bagira and Kabare. Part of the funding is from the Global Fund through SANRU, other part comes from SANL. The SANL-funded project aims to improve access and quality of primary health care for vulnerable groups. The SANRU project intervention consists of distribution of mosquito nets, medicines, and bicycles in the Bagira and Kabare health zones, and thus partly targets the same beneficiaries as the education programme.

## Civil society/policy advocacy elements

At the local level, civil society strengthening elements can be found in the set-up of the parents committees; they serve as checks and balances for the schools and are supposed to contribute to decision-making, planning and implementation within AdS schools within 5 years after the start of the project. The COPA receive capacity training from AdS. The 2013 report mentioned 13 members of COPA were trained.<sup>10</sup> Advocacy is carried out by schoolmasters and the local AdS staff through contacts with the subdivision of the education ministry and with inspectors of the Ministry of education. Aim of this is to show that AdS is delivering quality education which deserves formal recognition. Furthermore, pleas are made to create a more enabling environment to improve education.

At the higher (provincial, national) levels, policy advocacy is supposed to be done within ALOCES. We have obtained some information of this, but for ALOCES realisations it is difficult to establish the role of each partner, as all members are usually represented during meetings etc. ALOCES therefore does not have a prominent place in this evaluation.

A realisation that is worth mentioning here is that an AdS representative took part in the national consultations that were set up by president Kabila in 2013. A wide range of stakeholders and organisations nationwide were invited to give their input on policy reform and to draw the pathway for the country's future. Invitations to participate were sent to actors that were acknowledged as key stakeholders in society.

## Theory of Change

The 5-year-objective of AdS staff in Bukavu/Ciriri is to fight poverty by improving the quality of education, especially for marginalized and vulnerable people, who have difficulty to afford school fees.<sup>11</sup> Some conditions need to be met: parents need to be able to cover the school fees of their children. For this, AdS is setting up an agricultural project (beekeeping) as a means of income generation. Before this can be set up, parents need to be made aware of the importance of sending their children to school. To improve the level of education, teachers need to get training, and parents committees have to be set up to ensure accountability of the school leaders. On the longer run, the schools to be established should get formal recognition by the government and this will enable teachers to receive a government salary, but this is a

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<sup>10</sup> CP0129 Report on outputs per objective\_Educ DRC 2013

<sup>11</sup> TdC scheme AdS.

process that takes a lot of time. Until then, the contribution of parents and of the donor is essential in keeping the school running.

## 5. Methodology

Here we describe the methodologies used for baseline and follow-up assessment, from all three components of the research. More detailed information such as a list of documents employed, workshop participants and other informants can be found in the Annex to this report.

### MDGs & Themes

The objective of this report is to describe changes in access to education that could be attributed to participation in the schools supported or built by AdS. To do this, we cannot simply measure the difference in terms of outcome for the beneficiaries of the project between 2012 and 2014. Many factors affect the outcomes, and there would be no way to isolate the causal effect of project participation from this multitude of other factors. The first step we take is to include a control group to our analysis. However, this still leaves two potential errors in our design: firstly, we can suffer from selection bias. The design of the project might mean that people with certain characteristics are more likely to enroll in the program. Beneficiaries could for instance have been wealthier than non-beneficiaries when the program started or vice versa. Besides self-selection bias, program placement bias is also frequently observed in evaluation studies. NGOs target their projects purposely at specific, often disadvantaged, areas. If the control group's physical, economic and social environment does not match that of the beneficiaries, this will result in differences not caused by the intervention and thus in biased estimates of impact.

To overcome these issues, we ideally would conduct a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) and thus randomize the assignment of the project. Thanks to the law of large number we would then have no a priori reason to think that the groups are different, if the project were large enough. This would allow us to make a comparison between both groups in order to find the impact of the project.

There are two major constraints that prevent us from adopting this approach: the project had started at the time of the baseline, so there was no way to randomize treatment assignment; and the size of the project is very small, only five schools. Even if we were to select all at random, five is not a large enough number to guarantee balance between the two groups. We therefore opted to carefully select schools that were comparable to the schools built and supported by AdS. For this, we used the same criteria AdS itself used to select their intervention sites: schools were disadvantaged (so designated by the ministry of education), and located in the same area: one in the urban fringe of Bukavu and four in the territory of Kabare. Furthermore, rather than assuming these two groups were completely equal, we assume both are subject to the same trends. This allows us to use a double difference (DD) model. Rather than measuring a difference ex-post, we measure the difference in the differences of the groups.

Econometrically speaking the double difference estimator is given by the following expression:

$$Y_{ijt} = \alpha + \beta_1 Post_t + \beta_2 D_j^T + \beta_3 Post_t D_j^T + \varepsilon_{ijt}$$

Where  $Y_{ijt}$  denotes an outcome variable for respondent  $i$  in group  $j$  at time  $t$ ,  $D_j^T$  is a dummy variable equal to one if the respondent belonged to the treatment group,  $Post_t$  is a binary variable that takes the value one if the observation corresponds to the post-treatment time period, and  $\varepsilon_{ijt}$  denotes the error term. Then,  $\beta_3$  in the equation above is the treatment estimate of the intervention's impact on outcome  $Y$ . That is,  $\beta_3$  measures the difference between the treatment and control group in the growth of outcome  $Y$ , and is an unbiased estimate of the average impact on the dependent variable  $Y$  of being assigned to the treatment group provided there is only selection on the observed variables.

In addition to the quantitative analysis, we compare all coefficients with the results of focus group discussions. In this discussions participants are invited to identify the main changes in the central themes for this study. Then, the main drivers of change will be identified. These questions are left as open as possible, to prevent strategic answers since we expect people will provide positive responses to questions on specific NGOs in order not to risk future projects.

### Civil Society

See annex for the general methodology and a specific list of people we consulted for this report. We were able to follow this general methodology. Both in 2012 and in 2014 we visited the same research location. We are aware that there might be some bias in terms of achievements as this school is relatively close to the regional office, which might imply more efforts in terms of support and monitoring. In 2012 however this was the location that was most secure to visit. For reasons of comparability we decided to visit the same school again.

AdS was not selected for contribution analysis, as there was no other organisation in our sample focusing on education, which would limit our possibilities to obtain a more comprehensive picture.



## MDGs and themes component

This section presents the evaluations of AdS's impact on selected MDGs & themes. The focus of the project is on MDG 2 - achieving universal primary education. We answer the following questions:

1. What are the changes in terms of access to education during the 2012 – 2014 period?
2. To what degree are these changes at target group level attributable to the development interventions of AdS and its partners?
3. What is the relevance of these changes?
4. Were the development interventions of AdS and its partners efficient?
5. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

This section is structured as follows. First we introduce our data, and the way in which it has been collected. We then present the results from our analyses. We then discuss our findings, and provide concluding remarks.

### Data Collection

Baseline data collection took place in June/July 2012 by trained Congolese enumerators in 114 households. Of these households, 70 were selected using lists of students provided by control schools, while 44 were selected using lists of treatment schools.

The follow-up was carried out in July 2014, and targeted the same households. To do so, each school was visited by a team of six enumerators at the day the ceremony took place in which the report cards and diplomas were awarded. This ensured that the maximum number of pupils, parents and teachers were present. The students who were not present (because they left the school or for other reasons) were sought out if at all possible, by asking other pupils and teachers for their houses. In many instances the families moved so far away that it was impossible to find them. Our enumerators were able to find 83 of the households. This corresponds to an attrition level of around 27%.

In addition, a general round of focus groups was done in targeted schools. In all schools, representatives for the parents and teachers were invited for a discussion on the state of affairs of the region, and the drivers for any change identified.

In terms of education outcome, initially the goal was to collect data from the local ministry of primary education on the yearly compulsory school exams. These are standardized across the country and so provide a good way to measure the outcome in this domain. Thus far, however, efforts to collect this data have not been successful.

Descriptive statistics for our main outcome indicators from the baseline and the endline can be found in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively. The last column in Table 1 presents the results from a simple t-test for the difference in means between the treatment and control groups. Though there are differences between the groups, these are not statistically significant.

Table 1: Baseline descriptive statistics

| Statistic  | Control |        |          |       |        | Treatment |       |          |      |        | Diff    |
|--|---------|--------|----------|-------|--------|-----------|-------|----------|------|--------|---------|
|  | N       | Mean   | St. Dev. | Min   | Max    | N         | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min  | Max    |         |
| Cash spent on schooling (\$ per?)                | 26      | 106.48 | 56.83    | 25.67 | 260    | 16        | 71.27 | 100.63   | 2.22 | 410.22 | -35.212 |
| Cash spent on schooling (fraction of total)      | 26      | 0.80   | 0.14     | 0.58  | 0.98   | 13        | 0.73  | 0.25     | 0.24 | 0.99   | -0.073  |
| Kids in school (fraction)                        | 46      | 0.84   | 0.28     | 0     | 1      | 20        | 0.86  | 0.28     | 0    | 1      | 0.02    |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year (fraction) | 49      | 1      | 0        | 1     | 1      | 26        | 0.96  | 0.2      | 0    | 1      | -0.038  |
| Non-food expenditure (\$, last two weeks)        | 43      | 30.8   | 30.57    | 1.45  | 118.33 | 22        | 23.38 | 25.2     | 0.22 | 80.33  | -7.427  |

Table 2: Endline descriptive statistics

| Statistic                                   | Control |       |          |     |        | Treatment |       |          |     |       |
|---|---------|-------|----------|-----|--------|-----------|-------|----------|-----|-------|
|   | N       | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max    | N         | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max   |
| Cash spent on schooling (\$)                | 49      | 78.4  | 100.19   | 0   | 360    | 27        | 53.04 | 77.72    | 0   | 325   |
| Cash spent on schooling (fraction of total) | 46      | 0.49  | 0.42     | 0   | 0.99   | 25        | 0.42  | 0.4      | 0   | 0.98  |
| Kids in school (fraction)                   | 50      | 0.58  | 0.27     | 0   | 1      | 27        | 0.58  | 0.33     | 0   | 1     |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year       | 50      | 0.92  | 0.27     | 0   | 1      | 27        | 0.93  | 0.27     | 0   | 1     |
| Non-food expenditure (\$, last two weeks)   | 47      | 27.44 | 31.28    | 0.8 | 138.17 | 25        | 27.04 | 26.94    | 0.3 | 95.63 |

## 6. Analyses and results

This section presents the main findings for the MDGs & Themes component. We first discuss the findings from our survey and their relevance. Where possible the results from our focus groups will be included in this section to give context to the findings. We then discuss the efficiency of the project.

### Findings

The main findings from our quantitative analysis are presented in Table 3. Results will be discussed by MDG and Theme. The results from our focus groups will be included in this section to give context to the findings. After the discussion of the results, we will focus on our second research question: has the project reached its objectives. After this, the relevance of our findings will be discussed.

*Table 3: Results from the survey*

| <b>Indicator</b>                            | <b>DD</b>          |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>MDG 2</b>                                |                    |
| Cash spent on schooling (\$)                | 9.849<br>(0.318)   |
| Cash spent on schooling (fraction of total) | 0.007<br>(0.054)   |
| Kids in school (fraction of household)      | -0.024<br>(-0.238) |
| <b>MDG 1</b>                                |                    |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year       | 0.044<br>(0.581)   |
| Non food expenditure (\$)                   | 7.02<br>(0.792)    |

Notes: *t-values in parentheses; Significance levels: \*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; Intrahousehold bargaining and trust games were only played in the endline, the coefficient reported is for a *t*-test comparing treatment and control; a triple difference coefficient is reported for the list experiment*

As can be seen from Table 3, very little impact is discernible. People do not spend less on education, both absolutely or relative to their cash expenditures. Figure 1 shows the trends over time. Treatment

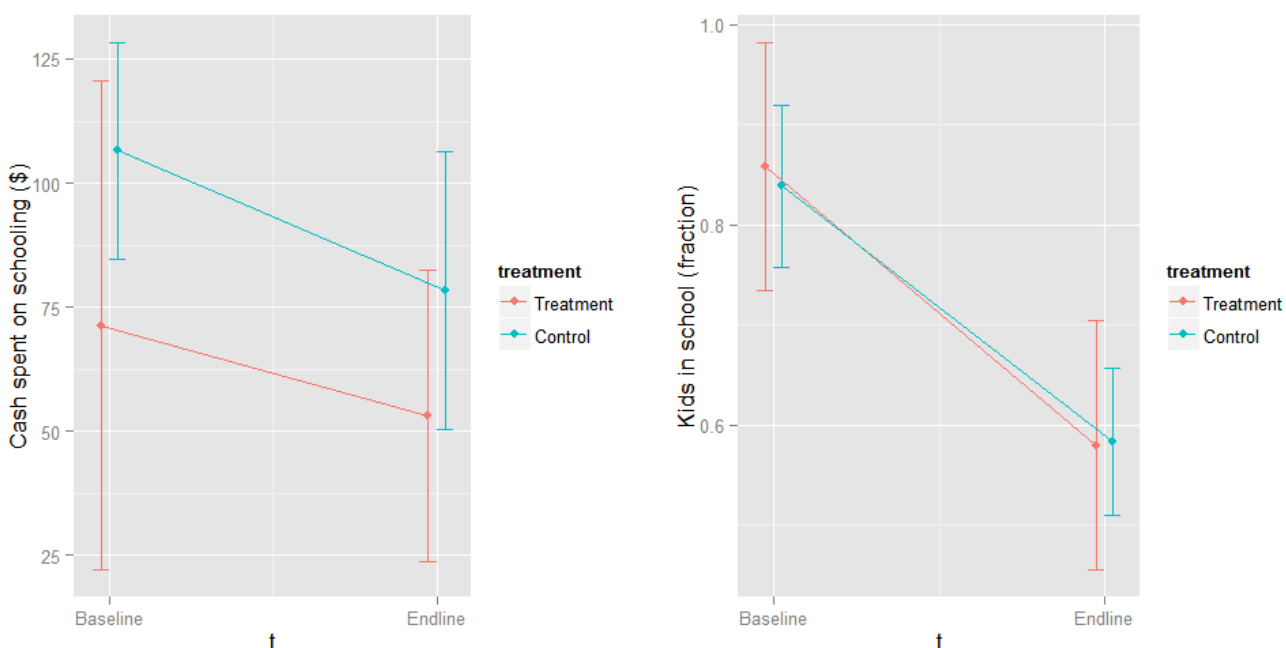


Figure 1: Comparison of means of selected indicators MDG 2. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval

households spend on average a lot less per year on school fees and other school-related costs than their peers in the control group. However, these differences are not statistically significant, quite possibly because of our small sample size. In terms of the fraction of children sent to school, this is a lot lower in 2014 than in 2012, but trends are perfectly equal between treatment and control group. As our sample was selected through schools during baseline, this reflects high dropout rates. All in all, a picture emerges that it is difficult to keep a child in school, and that AdS so far has not made a dent in this. This is a theme that recurs in our focus group discussions. People report higher school costs. This is not immediately evident from Figure 1, but it is clear that the fraction of kids sent to school drops more steeply than the total costs. Per child it is thus more expensive.

AdS has not only focused on schooling outcomes. Parents have also received advice and tools to increase their agricultural productivity. We don't see any impact on the incidence of hunger, but non-food expenditures seem up slightly. Though this increase is not significant statistically, Figure 2 suggest that the situation in treatment schools has improved somewhat. The right panel demonstrates how extremely food insecure the region is: nearly all of the households in our sample reported having suffered from hunger in the past year. Again, these are themes that resonated with our focus group participants. They indicated that food production is not high, mostly due to the mosaic virus. Where positive changes were

reported in treatment schools, these were attributed to the actions of other NGOs. This is the risk of such a small sample: it is easily contaminated by the action of one other project.

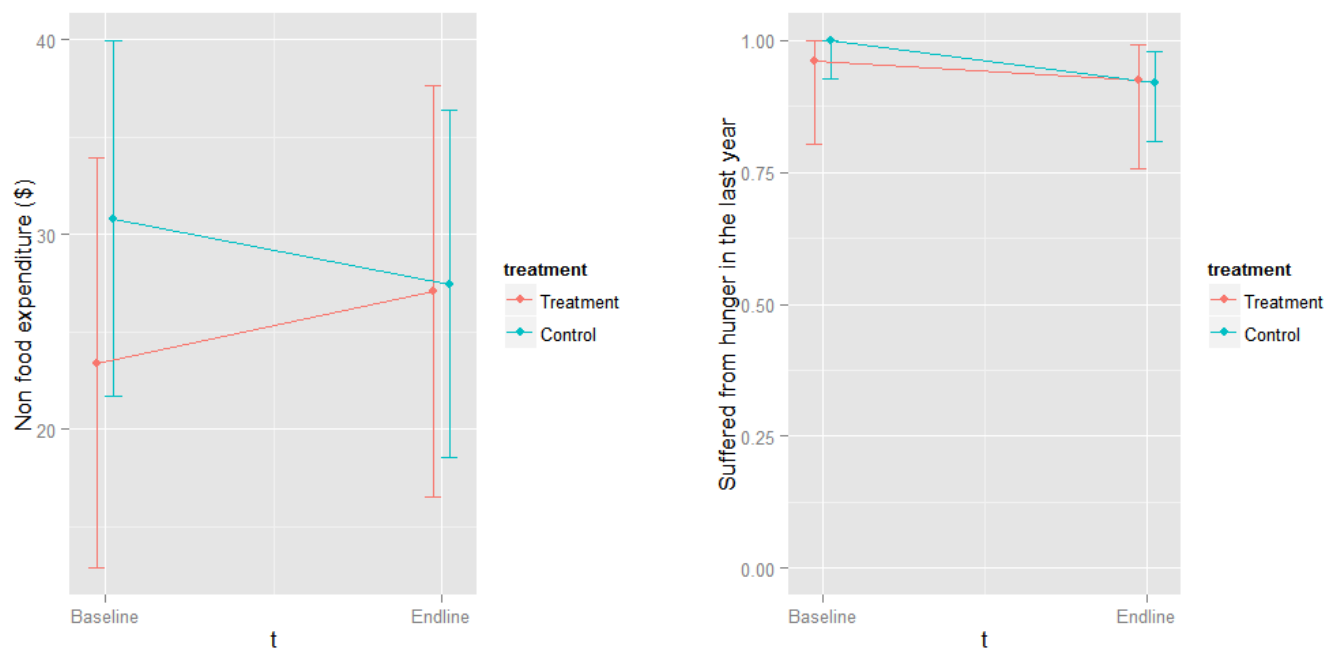


Figure 2: Comparison of means of selected indicators.  
Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval

Though we see little improvement over the selected indicators when compared with other schools, we did find two new school buildings, of a good build quality. Unfortunately, work on a third school still has to start. Students are still housed under a tarpaulin, which offers only the most basic protection from the elements.

While it is hard to say whether or not the pupils in the newly-built schools would have attended another school if the AdS schools had not been built, it is clear the ground occupied by the new schools would not have been schools otherwise. Schooling capacity has thus been increased, which is highly needed in the region.

However, capacity is not the only constraint to education. The cost of schooling can be highly prohibitive to the people in the region. We were not able to show a positive outcome in this regard. The problem is that it is not just the cost itself that is the problem, but the limited capacity of the people to actually earn that money. The mosaic virus might thus be a more important driver of educational outcomes in the region than any NGO.

### Efficiency

When considering the efficiency of the project, we are limited by the fact that not all activities can be compared across settings. Most project expenses are inherently incomparable: building a small village school in a remote area is significantly different from building a larger one next to a major road. The costs of labor and transport of raw materials and the amount of all inputs used will differ to such an extent that

any comparison would be next to meaningless. We present the costs of construction for three schools in differing settings, and we add the costs of training sessions. We feel that these costs can be compared across projects in the DRC and abroad. All information was readily available from the project documents, supplied to us by Armée du Salut.

From Table 4 we see that figures for training sessions are on the high end of what can be budgeted for in the DRC. The trainers in these sessions generally have to be flown in, which can add \$900 to the cost of a training session, even for a domestic flight. If the attendees require accommodation, food and transport, the training can become expensive. It is questionable why all three should be required. When visiting the parents, enumeration staff for the evaluation did not need accommodation as all schools are reachable from Bukavu within an hour.

*Table 4: Efficiency for selected budget items*

|                     | Total cost    | Units | Unit description | Cost per unit |
|---------------------|---------------|-------|------------------|---------------|
| Teacher training    | \$ 105,039.00 | 440   | Attendees        | \$ 238.73     |
| PTA Training        | \$ 9,720.00   | 70    | Attendees        | \$ 138.86     |
| School construction | \$ 281,807.00 | 3     | Schools          | \$ 93,935.67  |
| School feeding      | \$ 37,705.00  | ???   | Children         | ???           |

*Note: It is unclear as of yet how many days children have benefitted from school lunches, since not all pupils in every school received lunches throughout the intervention period. Though at any given time it appears lunches were provided to 150.*

As for school construction, as described above, these figures are hard to obtain for different project, and when it is possible, comparing them would be of little use. They're presented here for reference purposes.

## 7. Discussion

We consider an intervention aimed at increasing access to education useful for the region. The percentage of children who enter school when they are six years old (the required age in the DRC) is only 50% (Ministère de l'enseignement primaire secondaire et professionnel, 2010). Armée du Salut aims to address this by building new schools and providing school meals. Whether or not either of these strategies is effective in improving access depends on the relevant constraint. If capacity is the binding constraint, this means that parents want to send more of their children to school, but there simply is not enough room for them. This is not what we find from the results and analyses described above. We find that parents cite the high costs of sending children to school as the largest hurdle to overcome. The annual school fee, and costs for uniforms etc. all add up to a significant amount in an area where people lack the money to feed themselves. This fact is reflected in the literature on the subject. For example, Deininger (2003) reports drastic increases in access to education following the abolishment of school fees in neighbouring Uganda, albeit at the expense of quality. In this respect we expect school meals to ease the constraint, as it decreases the cost to households for feeding their children. Our results were inconclusive whether or not this helped, but the literature suggests they are an effective way to minimize the effects of food insecurity on children (see Alderman and Bundy 2011 for a review of the evidence on school lunches).

One problem here is that AdS cannot realistically abolish school fees. It would be expensive, and only shift the problem elsewhere, as their schools would fill up with children who might have or might not have received an education otherwise. A focus on building new schools of good quality is therefore understandable. And even though this does not solve the main constraint to education, it might contribute to increasing the *quality* of education. However, our evaluation does not address quality, s unfortunately it has proven to be more difficult than anticipated to obtain the required exam results from the ministry.

Training parents to grow the food for this seems a sensible idea to increase food security, which unfortunately did not work out. One of the possible reasons why the agricultural arm of the project failed to provide the lunches for the children is because it is simply too much to ask from one organisation to both coordinate education and agriculture. These are different fields of expertise, and it might not be cost-effective for a project of this small scale to have all the expertise required.

There is considerable scope for improvement in terms of impact assessment. The main factor hampering the evaluation team was the small size of the program. Whatever the methodology, conclusions based on the experiences of just five schools do not carry a lot of weight, as there is too much potential for a limited number of exceptional cases to skew the results one way or the other. Furthermore, in planning research activities, the general calendar set for the MFS II evaluations was followed. This calendar did not take into account the fact that Congolese primary schools have vacations in June, July and August. Baseline data collection was therefore unnecessarily rushed, which might have hampered data quality.

## **8. Conclusion**

This paper has evaluated the efforts by AdS in the areas of Bagira and Kabare in Education and to a lesser extent agriculture. The overall of the project was to improve the livelihoods of vulnerable children, mainly through improving access and quality of education. Schools have been built, other schools have been supported and parents have received agricultural training in order to provide lunch for the students of the schools.

In terms of access to education, we have seen no improvement. Costs of schooling have not dropped, and parents of children in the treatment schools have not sent more children to school when compared to parents of children in other schools. The area is extremely poor, and the cost of sending children to school can be highly prohibitive. Both in the control group and in the treatment group, parents send less of their children to school.

In terms of quality of education, our data does not permit us to make clear statements. Observations by research staff confirms that several buildings have been built by AdS. However, we were not able to get data on exams from the local ministry of primary education to compare the results on standardized exams, so whether or not this has had an impact on academic performance is impossible to say.

The project also aimed to improve the living standards of the children and their parents. We find little evidence that this has worked.. However, the fact that no impact was detected does not mean no effect

was present; the sample size of the evaluations is fairly small, which does not permit the detection of small effects. When we see the extremely high incidence of hunger that people in the area experience, every school meal helps. We thus conclude that we have no evidence of AdS having been responsible for any changes observed. Furthermore, while some doubts exist as to the relevance of the project, overall the program does aim to address problems that are very pertinent to the population in the intervention area. The lack of detectable impact reflects poorly on the efficiency, as the project has a fairly high budget.

We cannot conclude that the project has reached all of its objectives, though this is partly due to flaws in the research design and data collection, such as the inability to collect data from the ministry of education. However, well-functioning schools have been created in the area, where children have been fed school lunches. So the project did contribute to the strengthening of education to vulnerable households in the area.

*Table 5: Project evaluation 1= low, 10 = high*

|  | <i>Rating</i> | <i>Comments</i>   |
|--|---------------|---|
| The project was well designed                                      | 5             | The project could have benefitted from more focus on core areas of expertise: education                       |
| The project was implemented as designed                            | 7             | Some elements were not completed. One school is still constructed of tarpaulin.                               |
| The project reached all its objectives                             | 5             | We see very little impact on the access to education.   |
| The observed results are attributable to the project interventions | 7             | The main gain is that schools have been built by AdS.   |
| The observed results are relevant to the project beneficiaries     | 8             | Hunger is still very prevalent. School meals are thus very relevant. Education has a more long-term relevance |
| The project was implemented efficiently                            | ?             | No good benchmarks for comparison.  |



## Civil Society Component

In this section, we describe our findings for the Civil Society Component. We first provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the s (Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment). This is followed by a contribution story assembling the evidence for the contribution of MFS II funding to a strengthening of civil society, through the development interventions of AdS. We then discuss our findings, and conclude by providing an answer to the evaluation questions for this component of the evaluation.

### Results

|                       | Baseline 0-3   | End line 0-3 |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Civic engagement      | 1.5            | 1.5          |
| Level of organization | 1              | 1.5          |
| Practice of values    | 0 (partly n/a) | 0.5          |
| Perception of impact  | 1              | 1.5          |
| Environment           | 1              | 1            |

### Civic engagement

The design of the education programme was largely made by AdS Kinshasa, but not before consulting the local AdS officers and a number of key actors in the area. Poor learning conditions and difficulties in paying school fees were considered pivotal hindrances to education, and therefore it was decided to include some income generating activities in the programme. This shows that needs of the beneficiaries are taken into account. In the first year after the foundation of a school, the programme also foresees in the provision of a meal to the pupils of this school, but this element is dropped after one year of functioning. In 2014 it was still recalled by parents and AdS officers as a very valid and good investment. Although local officers are well aware of the local context and the specific needs of the target group, final decision about submission of a project is made at the level of Kinshasa.

The school of Ciriri, which we visited, is located in an area that is known for having received high numbers of IDPs. This is a marginalised group that receives special attention within the programme. The 2013 report on outputs shows that of a total number of 4017 pupils, 820 were classified as IDPs, 69 as disabled.<sup>12</sup>

Through the parents committees, beneficiaries have a voice in the functioning of the school, as they participate in the General Assemblies, but there is little awareness among parents about decisions taken in terms of programme management.

Generally, we are positive about the approach of the programme to target communities with high number of IDPs. The idea of including income-generating activities in the programme is a way to address further needs of beneficiaries, but given the limited percentage of parents that is targeted for this, we are not

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<sup>12</sup> CP0129 Report on outputs per objective\_Educ DRC 2013

convinced that this element makes a difference. The agronomist of the programme for instance explained to us that about 45 parents were included in the beekeeping project in Ciriri, whereas the school counts about 300 pupils, most of who would be in need of additional income.

### Level of organisation

At the level of Ciriri/Bagira, AdS is in close contacts with the civil society coordination office (*bureau de la coordination*), which is underlined by the attendance of a representative of the office during both 2012 and 2014 workshop. There is limited exchange with other organisations that are active in the area. Since 2013 the programme officer takes part in the meetings of the humanitarian cluster working on education. These monthly meetings are led by UNICEF. Attendance of these meetings helps AdS to raise its voice. We consider this a positive development. The programme manager has more time available to undertake such activities as the head of the programme. This allows hence for a more active participation of AdS.

Another form of networking is through engagement of AdS in ALOCES, but a lot of this takes place through the national coordinator. The head of the E-DRC education programme, Major Masunda, and the programme manager have taken part in joint ALOCES activities, but local staff members show limited awareness about ALOCES. It is a positive development that participation in ALOCES from the side of AdS is at present ensured through the national coordinator, the programme head and the programme manager. This makes AdS' contribution more stable.

In terms of funding, it can be noted that AdS receives substantial donor support from SANL. A second donor provides additional support to the health programme. Since this is partly in the same area there is some mutual strengthening between projects. Generally however, the financial position of AdS in the east of DRC is not very strong, and there is a dependency on the national office to seek funding. In 2012 for instance, AdS members expressed their desire to obtain funding for additional food support for the schools, but this has not been materialised; the desire continues to exist, but funding has not been secured. Some funding is provided through AdS Kinshasa office. Parents are supposed to contribute to the teachers' salaries and to equipment for the school. It is unclear to what extent this happens as these contributions are not reflected in the budget. We were told that payments by parents are usually spent directly to buy school material etc.

### Practice of values

Practice of values remains a challenge for AdS, as the organisation does not have a constituency in the same way as other organisations. This is inherent to the organisational structure. AdS has a lot of members, but social organs such as the board of directors or the General Assembly function only at the national level. This makes it difficult to ensure principles of transparency and accountability at the local level. Staff members we talked to in eastern DRC did not have a clear idea of the amount of funding that was channelled to their section, let alone of the total amount of funding available for AdS-DRC. Internal and external financial audits take place, but were not made available to the evaluation team. At the local level, efforts are made to improve accountability by setting up parents committees. We talked to 3 parents who were part of such a committee, but found little critical reflection about their role; they did not refer to norms about internal governance (which we found to be quite common among other grassroots structures in DRC). All 3 of the members of the committee were also church members. This might have an

impact on their assessment, but leaves the question open to what extent their opinion is representative for 'average' parents, as being a member of the AdS church community is not a condition to be admitted to the education programme. Nevertheless, we take the existence of the parents committees as a first step towards progression in terms of internal governance. More certainly needs to be done for them to fulfil their function as critical quality organ. If meetings take place for parents, it was estimated by staff that less than 20% of the parents are attending.

### Perception of impact

With regard to satisfaction of beneficiaries needs, some AdS staff acknowledge that this satisfaction is at half (50%) as there are still unanswered needs because of limited funding; other staff, especially the one in charge of beekeeping and agriculture for vulnerable parents, acknowledges that beneficiaries, in the vast majority of cases, are satisfied. This was supported by the views of beneficiaries (parents and their children) we came across. One of the residents of Ciriri (not connected to AdS) pointed out that the 'pastors' of AdS give a good example to the community through their social behaviour. But although perceptions are positive, other data show that the quality of education still needs improvement (see also MDG section of this report).

In terms of AdS' influence on policies and practices of public sector actors, we noted that there are some contacts that can be of help, for instance with the division provincial de l'EPSP, but the impact is admittedly still negligible.<sup>13</sup> There is no AdS influence on policies and practices of private sector actors; no activities are undertaken in this regard. A change that was noted at the level of the parents was that more parents are able and willing to contribute to the school fees.

### Environment

Before setting up the project, an analysis of the socio-economic context was carried out by consulting the communities. One of the outcomes was that lack of financial means constituted a major impediment for parents to send their children to school. As a result, the education program included some activities to support people in setting up income-generating activities such as beekeeping or small agriculture. Another observation in the analysis concerned the high levels of malnutrition. This led to the provision of meals in the first year schools are set up. We felt these were good examples of a context analysis that fed into programming. Another example of context awareness is that in 2012 an assessment was carried out. One of the findings was that a high number of pupils/teachers were traumatised. As a response, a further assessment was carried out in February 2014 by the War Trauma Foundation (WTF) Netherlands to assess levels of trauma in more depth. This resulted in joint programming by SA-NL, AdS and the WTF. Aim of the programme is to help teachers to address trauma among students. It is our impression however that AdS E-DRC leans heavily on the national office and international partner for carrying out assessments, which makes the local section more vulnerable and less autonomous. This might be engrained in the organisational set-up, but since local contexts vary throughout the country, more context analysis could help to shed light on these differences and make programmes even more tailor-made.

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<sup>13</sup> *Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel* (EPSP) is the formal name of the Ministry in charge of primary, secondary and professional education that differentiates it from the Ministry in charge of Universities, colleges and research institutes/centres.

## Discussion

The project intervention was very modest in terms of civil society strengthening; the main aim that can be distinguished was the set-up of parents committees. This objective was largely achieved, but we are not fully convinced that the committees have completely taken up their role.

As part of lobby and advocacy activities, the programme manager takes part in meetings of the humanitarian education cluster, but we did not find any evidence of concrete examples of success that resulted from this. An example of success can be distilled from the fact that the ministry of education has provided books to some of the AdS schools. This is taken as a sign of recognition. Other lobby and advocacy activities are carried out within ALOCES, but this has not been included in our evaluation.

Generally, we feel design of the project was modest in its ambitions towards civil society strengthening. Nevertheless, it appeared to be difficult to meet the objectives. Parents committees have been set up but they are not yet taking a very active role in decision-making, planning and implementation. Partly, this seems to be related to the general structure of AdS; also local staff members do not take the full lead in decision-making and planning of the programmes they are carrying out but instead depend to a large extent on plans that are developed in Kinshasa. This seems to be duplicated on the local level. Parents expressed their satisfaction, but did not seek to obtain transparency about funding; staff officers were also not aware of this.

If a similar project would be funded in the future, we would advise to take more efforts to strengthen the capacity of parents to take up their role as members of parents committees. The number of trained parents is very low and one can hardly expect that they can make a difference.

In terms of civil society strengthening and/or lobby and advocacy, it would have been interesting to have focused more on achievements of ALOCES, but because of the geographical spread of ALOCES partners and because of the limited frequency of ALOCES meetings, this was not feasible within the framework of our evaluation.

## Conclusion

- 1) What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?

Basic services such as education are to a large extent provided by non-state actors. This continues to be the case in DRC. There is a long tradition of engaging users of these services in planning, decision-making and implementation; ranging from water management committees to health users, and parents committees. People are thus generally familiar to expressing their opinion about the services that are delivered to them and we did not note any major changes in this regard. The promotion of the parents committees at the schools of AdS can be understood in this light as well. Low levels of education make it difficult to engage parents and to convey an understanding of processes of good governance, transparency and democratic decision-making.

In terms of civil society development, we observe a tendency among donors to promote synergies/collaboration between civil society actors. This is often limited to collaboration between organisations that are funded by the same donor, although ambitions exist to promote more encompassing synergies, including not only civil society but also other actors active in a certain sector. Limited collaboration between donors themselves does not set a good example for SPOs. ALOCES is an example of a collaboration that engages not only several Congolese NGOs but also requires certain levels of collaboration between different donors. Contrary to other synergies we have observed, ALOCES is the only synergy that is driven by more than one donor. Clear examples of success achieved by ALOCES are not yet available.

## 2) What is the relevance of these changes?

The ongoing engagement of users in efforts to improve basic services is relevant as it helps to increase downward accountability. In a context in which especially state institutions face a crisis of legitimacy, and in which unlawful appropriation of funds is a challenge for many projects and programmes, it is desirable to help increasing accountability.

The promotion of synergies is meant both to increase the impact of joint lobby and advocacy efforts, but also to promote collaboration between different NGOs as a way to make them more autonomous vis-à-vis donors. On the longer term, this should make organisations more sustainable and independent. This is a relevant change given the likelihood of further budget reductions in the years to come.

## **Concluding remarks**

In this section we briefly summarize the findings of the three components of this evaluation: impact on MDGs & themes and civil society strengthening. We then discuss the relationship between these components.

In terms of MDGs & Themes we find limited impact. The region around Bukavu is extremely poor, and the majority of our sample faced food insecurity. This poverty appears to form a constraint for parents to send their children to school, since they will have to pay for school fees, uniforms and other materials. AdS has some promising interventions to address this – notably school lunches and agricultural trainings – but the quantitative analysis presented in this paper does not demonstrate any impact. This might be due to the very low power of the study.

In terms of civil society strengthening, the project faced difficulties meeting its objectives even though the design of the project was modest in its ambitions in this respect. The role of the parent committees in terms of decision-making, planning and implementation remains limited. We note that to an extent this can be attributed to the top down nature of decision-making in AdS. Local staff members do not take the full lead in decision-making and planning of the programmes, but instead depend to a large extent on plans that are developed in Kinshasa. This seems to be duplicated on the local level. Parents expressed their satisfaction, but did not seek to obtain transparency about funding; staff officers were also not aware of this.

Parent committees potentially create more commitment of parents to the schools, thereby reducing the likelihood that they let their children drop out of schools. It is also plausible that parent oversight increases school quality. However, since the committees do not play a large role in the day-to-day management of the schools, it is not surprising that we see no such effect. Parents do not express dissatisfaction at this state of affairs, and it remains to be seen whether this will change without significantly more effort by AdS.

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- World Food Program. (2014). *Democratic Republic of Congo Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis*. Rome, Italy.

## List of key documents

Full project documentation was provided by Jan Janssen, SANL. The following is an overview of some key documents to which we have referred. A full list of documents is available on request.

Ads, rapport narratif sur l'Education dans l'Est de la RDC, Janvier-Mars, Bukavu, Mars 2014.

ALOCES, rapport final de la consultance 2013-2014

Annex c, O-Scan filled in by SA-DRC Nov'10

CP0129 Budget 2012

CP0129 Budget 2013 revised in April 2013

CP0129 Budget 2014

CP0129 Report on outputs per objective\_Educ DRC 2013

DRC Education Country Plan 2012 (2011-2015)

East DR Congo Integrated Education Programme, June 2011.

Miliano, C.W.J, de, A. Ferf, J. Oude Groeniger, and M. Mashanda. 2014. Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study, SLRC.

Ministère du Plan, 2011. 'Document de Stratégie de Croissance et de Réduction de la Pauvreté (DSCR) 2'. Draft 3. Kinshasa: Ministère du Plan

Rôles et responsabilités ALOCES 2012

Weijs, B. D. Hilhorst and A. Ferf, 2012. 'Livelihoods, Basic Services and Social Protection in the Democratic Republic of the Congo - Country Evidence Paper'. London: SLRC

## List of informants

| Name                           | Position   | Workshop<br>13.06.2014 | CS questions | Individual<br>interview | Group<br>interview |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Major Tsilulu                  | Coordinator of AdS projects in the DRC                       |                        |              | 30.5.2014               |                    |
| Major Makala                   | National coordinator of the Ads' education sector in the DRC |                        |              | 29.5.2014               |                    |
| Major Pierre Masunda Nkeko     | Section officer  | X                      | X            | 14.6.2014               |                    |
| Lieutenant Joseph Désiré Musau | Post Officer, Ciriri   | X                      | X            |                         |                    |
| Pascal Ntaboba Burhungiri      | Schoolmaster Ciriri secondary school                         | X                      | X            | 14.6.2014               |                    |



|   |  |   |   |           |           |
|---|--|---|---|-----------|-----------|
| Lieutenant Thierry Manzambi Ndongala                      | Post officer Rununda                                       | X | X |           |           |
| Michel Nshombo Kaliomwisu                                 | Schoolmaster Ciriri primary school                         | X | X | 14.6.2014 |           |
| Major Mateta Jean-Louis                                   | Agronomist AdS   | X | X | 14.6.2014 |           |
| Major Helene Masunda                                      | AdS Ministry of women                                      | X |   |           |           |
| Lieutenant Christelle Musau                               | School feeding programme                                   | X | X |           |           |
| Mathieu Makelele Mitima                                   | Programme Manager, AdS in Kivu and Province Orientale      |   |   | 27.6.2014 |           |
| Tshakupewa M'Tamanzi, Rugomba Banywezi, Nzigire M'Felice, | Parents committee members of the Ciriri AdS primary school |   |   |           | 14.6.2014 |
| Jean-Paul Tingityabo                                      | ALOCES consultant  |   |   | 29.4.2014 |           |
| Sébastien Murhula   | President of the Ciriri civil society                      |   |   | 13.6.2014 |           |
| Laurent Banza   | President of Mulwa civil society                           |   |   | 13.6.2014 |           |
| Jan Janssen   | Salvation Army NL  |   |   | 1.4.2014  |           |

Next to the people mentioned above, we had an informal talk with two young residents of Ciriri. One of them was a university college student, the other a secondary school student. We talked to them to assess whether people of Ciriri were aware of AdS activities especially about the AdS school in Ciriri.

## List of schools visited

| Village                   | Treatment |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| Muderwha                  | 1         |
| EP Imani II               | 1         |
| Miti                      | 1         |
| Cibumbiro (EP<br>Makombe) | 1         |
| Ciriri                    | 1         |
| Bweremata                 | 0         |
| Cirhogole                 | 0         |
| EP Mugerebo I             | 0         |
| EP Cibonabosi             | 0         |
| Ilinjabuhura              | 0         |

## Data sources MDG & Themes

The following table provides additional information on the construction of variables. All data cleaning, construction of variables and analysis was done in R, the scripts for these procedures are available on request.

The questionnaire is attached as a separate document.

| <b>Variable Label</b>                             | <b>Description</b>  |
|---|---|
| <b>MDG 2</b>                                      |   |
| Cash spent on schooling (\$)                      | Module 2.6: Total household expenditures on school fees, material (e.g. uniforms) and other expenditures  |
| Cash spent on schooling (fraction of consumption) | Module 2.6 / Module 4.2: Cash spent on school / non-food expenditures   |
| Kids in school (fraction)                         | Module 2.6: Number of kids per households of schoolgoing age that go to school / total number of kids of schoolgoing age in the household                   |
| <b>AdS Specific</b>                               |   |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year             | Module 4.1 Did you or someone in your household suffer from hunger in the last year? 0 = Never; 1 = just one or two times, multiple times, often, or always |
| Non food expenditure (\$)                         | Module 4.2: Sum of all non-food expenditures in the past fourteen days. (Longer would cause larger imprecision)   |

# Civil society Strengthening Report AFEM

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs and Bart Weijjs

Wageningen University

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## List of acronyms

AFEM-SK - Association des Femmes des Médias du Sud-Kivu  
ASF – Avocats sans Frontières  
CFA – Co-Financing Agency (the Dutch donor organisation)  
CoC - Communities of Change Alliance  
CSO – Civil Society Organisation  
CSI – Civil Society Index  
DRC – Democratic Republic of the Congo  
DVF – Diane von Fürstenberg Foundation (Vital Voices Global Partnership)  
ECI - Eastern Congo Initiative  
FARDC - Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo  
FEI - France Expertise Internationale  
MDG – Millenium Development Goal  
MFS II – Mede-Financierings-Stelsel (the Dutch grant system)  
MONUSCO - Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation du Congo  
MUSO – Mutuelle de Solidarité (Solidarity group for savings and loans)  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
NCA – Norwegian Church Aid  
NCE – Noyau Club d’Ecoute (Listening Club)  
NED - National Endowment for Democracy  
RFDP - Réseau de Femmes pour le Développement et la Paix  
SGBV – sexual and gender based violence  
SPO – Southern Partner Organisation  
VICO – Villages Cobaye / Vision Communautaire

### 1. Introduction

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of southern partner organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening.

In this report, we focus on one SPO, for two parts of the evaluation: the capacity development component, and the civil society strengthening component.

The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in the SPO’s capacity and in civil society during the evaluation period and the extent to which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and endline study and focuses on a broad sample of 19 partnerships, 5 of which are included in the capacity development component. We conducted observations, workshops, field visits and interviews, during three visits in 2012, 2013 (smaller subsample) and 2014. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts

of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup>

In the capacity development component of the evaluation, we looked at the contribution of MFS II funding to strengthening the capacity of SPOs. Core elements of our evaluation approach for the capacity development component are the Theory of Change and the 5 Capabilities framework that has been developed by ECDPM. This framework breaks down organisational capacity into five capabilities: Capability to act and commit, Capability to adapt and self-renew, Capability to deliver on development objectives, Capability to relate, and Capability to achieve coherence.

In the civil society strengthening component, we looked at ways in which development projects have strengthened civil society. For the civil society strengthening component, the core elements of our approach are the Theory of Change and the Civicus Civil Society Index<sup>2</sup>, which distinguishes five dimensions to civil society: Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment. We furthermore used contribution analysis to take an in-depth look at the contribution of Dutch MFS II funding to the development of organisational capacity and strengthening of civil society.

In this report we look specifically at *Association des Femmes des Médias du Sud-Kivu (AFEM-SK, AFEM in short)*. We look at the contribution of Dutch support to the development of organisational capacity of AFEM, and at the contribution of AFEM to strengthening civil society. AFEM is a partner of Cordaid and the Communities of Change (CoC) Alliance. AFEM is an organisation that aims to contribute to the promotion of Congolese women through the media. Founded in 2003, the organisation has been a partner of Cordaid since 2009, focusing on projects to combat gender-based violence and improve the position of women. For this evaluation we focus on the two projects with Cordaid/CoC during the evaluation period: a three-year, EUR 150,000 campaign of raising awareness and advocacy on gender-based violence in South Kivu; and a one-year, EUR 60,000 project to strengthen women leadership for peace and security.

Cordaid started the partnership with the intention to contribute to the development of the organisational capacity of AFEM. In our contribution analysis, we investigate the contribution of MFS II financing to strengthening the organisational capacity of AFEM. With respect to strengthening civil society: this project had no dedicated civil society strengthening component, but includes a number of elements that can contribute to strengthening civil society. We have paid special attention to the local Listening Clubs set up by AFEM. In our contribution analysis, we seek to establish the extent to which MFS II financing has or has not contributed to strengthening civil society at the grassroots. Our analysis of AFEM is contextualised by an analysis of the characteristics and capacities of women's civil society in South Kivu, available as a separate report (see the appendix).<sup>3</sup>

Our analysis reveals that Cordaid has contributed to the development of organisational capacity of AFEM, in certain areas, but also that there are multiple international organisations that offer capacity

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of this report was commented upon by Julienne Baseke (AFEM). We would like to thank her for her comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org); see also CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (internal working document)

<sup>3</sup> Hilhorst, Dorothea, and Marie Rose Bashwira, 2015. *The Women's Movement in South Kivu, DRC: a civil society analysis*. Occasional Paper #11, Special Chair Humanitarian Aid and Reconstruction, Wageningen University & Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural de Bukavu.

development activities to AFEM. Furthermore, we find that civil society at the grassroots is developing in South Kivu, and that AFEM's interventions through the Listening Clubs are contributing to this. AFEM's interventions are part of a larger ensemble of interventions directed at improving the position of women in eastern DRC.

In the following, we first describe the country and relevant local context. Then we give a short description of AFEM and the project with capacity development and civil society strengthening/policy influencing elements. Next, we shortly discuss the methodology. We then first discuss the capacity development component, we present the results and contribution analysis, which is followed by a discussion and conclusion. Finally, we discuss our findings for the civil society strengthening component, including the contribution analysis, and again a discussion and conclusion.

## 2. Context

In this section, we briefly describe the country and local context as far as it is relevant for the project under evaluation.

South Kivu, and eastern DRC as a whole, is strongly characterised by the legacy of repeated conflict and high levels of insecurity. High levels of poverty are coupled with limited access to basic services, in a still young democracy with a history of clientelism and rent-seeking. Eastern DRC is reputed for high levels of gender-based violence, including sexual violence against women. At the same time, especially South Kivu has a history of civil society mobilisation, and the eastern DRC has received a great deal of international aid. South Kivu possesses a wealth of natural resources and has a high agricultural potential. The following paragraphs describe these issues in more detail.

### *Conflict, insecurity and poverty*

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons.<sup>4</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas in South Kivu, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013). The Fall of Goma in December 2012 and consequent threat to Bukavu led to the evacuation of the majority of international staff, and drew the attention of the military to North Kivu, with other armed groups taking advantage of the situation ('the FDLR came out of the forests'<sup>5</sup>). The following defeat of M23 and military moves against other armed groups have led to more optimism, though.

In general the security situation in the province was considered as stable, yet unpredictable during the evaluation period. Nevertheless, many people are concerned about the security situation and lack trust in the police and the military. We heard many examples of people that were accused of witchcraft, as well as the practice of Kabanga (in which people are killed with a cord so that the cord gets magical

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<sup>4</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel, and the analyses by the Rift Valley Institute

<sup>5</sup> RFDP workshop end line



powers). A relatively new trend is the phenomenon of popular justice; dissatisfied with the state of impunity, the absence of the state, and delays of the justice sector, people are increasingly resorting to their own means of justice (often lynching the alleged perpetrators). There is a widespread feeling among the poor that state justice is only for the wealthy: “If you’re rich, you don’t go to prison”.

The decades of insecurity, conflict, and the rent-seeking dictatorship of Mobutu have greatly impoverished the DRC. The country has great potential for agriculture and possesses a wealth of mineral resources. The potential of all these resources however is far from being exploited. On the 2014 Human Development Index, DRC ranked 186 out of 187 (followed only by Niger). Gross national income per head was noted to be at \$444 in 2013, which was lowest of all countries for which data were available. In the same year, 87.7% of the population lived below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>6</sup> In South Kivu, which used to be the granary of DRC, roughly 3 out of 4 people live in rural areas.<sup>7</sup> A survey carried out in South Kivu in 2012 showed that around three-quarters of households in the sampled population make a living primarily in agriculture, either in subsistence agriculture (65%), commercial farming (5%), or by agricultural casual labour (6%).<sup>8</sup> Households within the same sample have access to 2.69 hectares of land, but often not all of this land is held in ownership. Due to various factors, such as insecurity, displacement, and market distortions, agricultural production is low. Food insecurity and poverty remain widespread.

### *Position of women*

Women in DRC are greatly underrepresented in the decision-making sphere<sup>9</sup>, and still face many challenges. Though the DRC has recognised United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325, enacted a law on sexual violence in 2006, and the constitution provides the basis and legitimation of political equality and equity, women continue to be second-rate citizens in several aspects of the law. Yet the major impediment to women’s development is the gap between the law and the culturally dominated institutions and practices that render women’s position even lower. With some differences between urban and rural situations and despite some recent developments towards women’s empowerment, women’s low position remains expressed in different domains, including the political, social and economic domains.

The women’s movement in South Kivu has grown in parallel to international development discourses on women and gender, and has from the 1990s onwards increasingly addressed issues related to the war and insecurity. While the number of women’s organisations and coordination structures in the province grew, the main point of attention was sexual violence. In recent years the attention to violence has broadened to all kinds of gender-based violence, including for example inheritance issues, and to promoting women’s leadership and political representation.

### *Civil society*

Civil society in South Kivu is relatively well-developed, with much variation in terms of organisational capacity. There is a large number of local NGOs, organised in thematic groups and networks, and they

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<sup>6</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014

<sup>7</sup> UNDP (2009) 'Profil Résumé Pauvreté de Sud Kivu 2009'. Kinshasa: UNDP.

<sup>8</sup> n=1259; Miliario, C.W.J, de, A. Ferf, J. Oude Groeniger, and M. Mashanda. 2014. Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study, SLRC.

<sup>9</sup> For example, in the first national elections in 2006, women made up the majority of voters, but only a few managed to get elected: 8 percent in the National Assembly and 8.6 percent in the Senate (International Alert (2012) 'Women’s political participation and economic empowerment in post-conflict countries: Lessons from the Great Lakes region in Africa')

are not afraid to speak out against the government. At the same time, civil society is challenged in terms of fragmentation and weak governance. There is also a strong presence of international organisations willing to partner with local NGOs. After many years of a strong humanitarian presence, many organisations are now engaging in development aid. However, a side-effect of the long-time presence of humanitarian aid is an attitude of dependency among parts of the population, which people describe as *attentisme* (wait and see). This is a challenge for organisations attempting to set up development projects, as their beneficiaries are used to free distribution of materials, and changing this attitude is not a short-term process.

The dependency of civil society on foreign aid is high, and almost complete. NGOs derive their funding almost exclusively from foreign funding. Their own initiatives are indirectly derived from this funding, which does allow them a certain institutional leeway. Local grassroots associations are not directly funded, but depend for their operations, seminars, transport and accompaniment on funded NGOs. For the near future, the continuation of the women's movement requires that the international community continues to recognise and support the role of NGOs in promoting women's rights.

### *Governance and decentralisation*

A history of corruption and bad governance is not easily undone, and the size of DRC is not making the process any easier. Governance in DRC faces many challenges, including formal and informal taxation, policies that are not implemented, and a stalling process of decentralisation. Decentralisation was part of the Constitution adopted in 2006, and the decision to put in place a more decentralised system of governance was taken 5 years ago.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, local elections have yet to be held. At the level of the local 'decentralised territorial entities' (*entité territoriale décentralisée, or ETD*), which corresponds with the level of the territories in North and South Kivu, many organisations have moved ahead to engage in promoting participatory planning processes, each with their specific issues in mind. Local elections are considered an opportunity for people to gain experience with the political process and public management. Women's organisations view these elections as a strategic moment for increasing women's participation at the decision-making level. The national electoral commission CENI has recently proposed to organise local elections in August 2015.<sup>11</sup>

## **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

In this section we briefly describe AFEM: its history, organisational details, main approach and areas of intervention.

The *Association des Femmes des Médias du Sud-Kivu (AFEM-SK, AFEM in short)* was founded in 2003, in response to the large-scale violation of basic rights of women in South Kivu. It was founded by twelve female journalists, among whom the later coordinator<sup>12</sup> Mme. Chouchou Namegabe.

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<sup>10</sup> For more information, see: Cellule Technique d'Appui à la décentralisation, 2010. *La décentralisation au service de la paix, de la démocratie, du développement et de l'unité nationale.*

<sup>11</sup> For more information about the calendar and the latest news about electoral preparations, see the webpage of the national election commission: <http://www.ceni.gouv.cd/>

<sup>12</sup> The French word is '*coordinatrice*', referring to the head of the organisation.

The organisation's general objective is to promote gender equity and the advancement of Congolese women through the media. Together with partner organisations (such as 27 radio stations) AFEM aims at improving the quality of work of female journalists, offering a platform for exchange and learning. AFEM also specialises in the production of rural and urban radio programmes with a focus on women, and has a network of 30-40 local Listening Clubs (*Noyaux Clubs d'Ecoute*) which are its primary target and supply the organisation with news and information on what is going on in the communities. AFEM focuses on the following themes: defence and promotion of human rights, gender, peace-building, democracy, good governance, and promotion of women through the media. The organisation has four basic types of activities: strengthening capacity/training, lobby and advocacy, mass communication, and research.

AFEM is structured as the usual Congolese non-profit organisation, with now over 40 members, all women active in media organisations in South Kivu. The members form a General Assembly, which elects the Board of Directors (8 members), and an Audit Committee. These three structures oversee the executive part of the organisation, 'la coordination', which is composed of the staff of AFEM/SK and which develops and implements projects.

The number of staff increased during the evaluation period, from nine staff in 2012, to fourteen staff members in 2014, of whom three work in the Femme au Fone project at Radio Maedeleo; there are also a number of part-time journalists/correspondents in the different Territories of the province. The organisation targets the whole Province, and has recently expanded to North Kivu where it has some Listening Clubs.

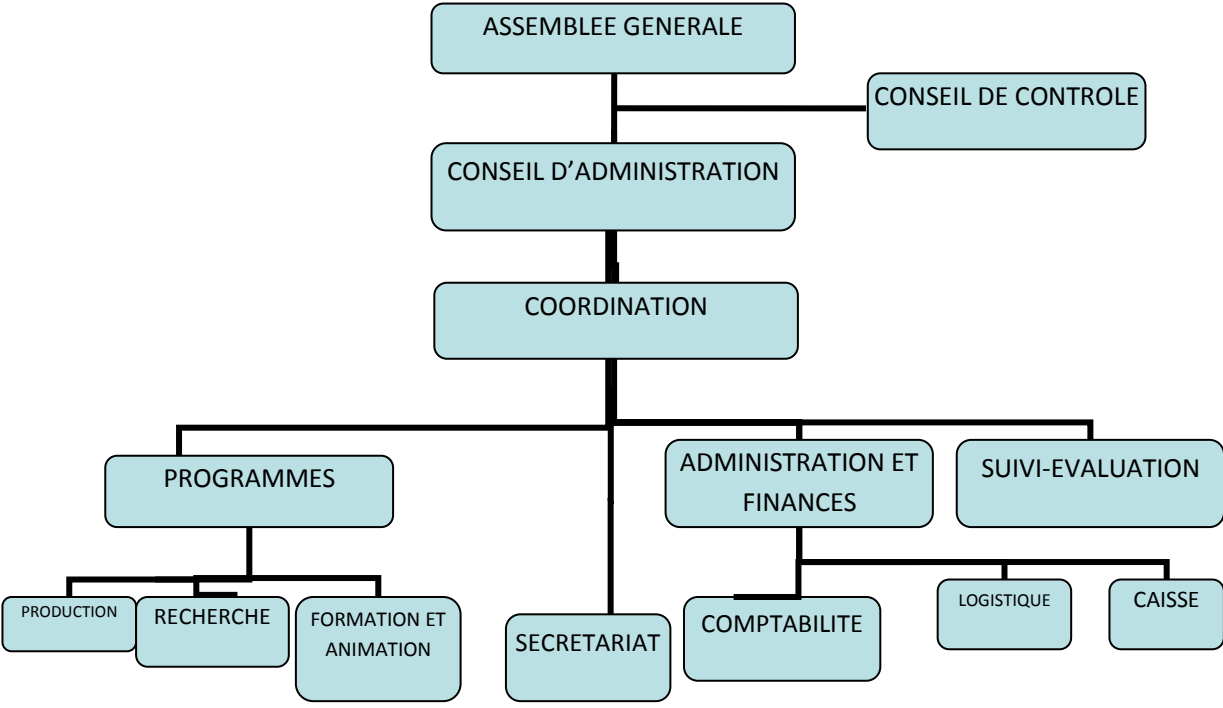
In the beginning, AFEM met with resistance, because of the strong taboo on sexual violence. Meanwhile, the atmosphere has changed, also because of the strong involvement of international actors. In 2007, two AFEM staff members were invited to the ICC in the Hague to testify on the evidence collected by AFEM regarding sexual violence, and there has been a great deal of international media coverage on the topic. As a media organisation AFEM has had good exposure, and the donor context has generally been favourable for AFEM with donors approaching them to express their interest in working with AFEM.

Cordaid is one of the major partners, as the overview below shows, accounting for about 20% of the AFEM budget over the 2011-2014 period with the MFS II projects. The overview also shows AFEM has a strongly diversified financial base, with stable donors, including FEI, ECI, Diakonia, NCA, and Kvinna til Kvinna. Projects with these other donors broadly deal with:

- Training women journalists
- Supporting Listening Clubs
- Participation of women in the electoral process and decision-making
- International women's day and women's rights

There is a strong level of coherence between the projects, with some projects that are similar to the projects with Cordaid, but targeting other geographical areas (Kvinna til Kvinna focuses on the Territory of Shabunda, Diakonia all Territories except Shabunda).

Organisation chart of AFEM, according to the Procedures Manual of 2012



**Table #:** overview of donor-supported projects of AFEM during the MFS II period

| Project   | Donor                    | Period                        | Amount of funding (USD) |                |                |                | Total            |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
|   |                          |                               | 2011                    | 2012           | 2013           | 2014           |                  |
| 103273 - Campagne de sensibilisation et de plaidoyer relative aux violences basées sur le genre au Sud-Kivu   | Cordaid (MFS II)         | October 2010-December 2013    | 101,745                 | 57,060         | 31,525         |                | <b>190,330</b>   |
| 110513 - RENFORCEMENT DU LEADERSHIP DES FEMMES POUR la paix et la sécurité  | Cordaid (MFS II)         | December 2013-December 2014   |                         |                |                | 81,556         | <b>81,556</b>    |
| Professionnalisation des femmes journalistes et production sur la bonne gouvernance et la démocratie  | FEI                      | October 2011 - March 2012     | 23,680                  | 20,575         |                |                | <b>44,255</b>    |
| Projet monitoring, renforcement des capacités et appui technique aux radios, radios-clubs et noyaux club d'écoute pour l'équité du genre dans les medias au Sud Kivu  | FEI                      | May - October 2013            |                         |                |                | 38,200         | <b>38,200</b>    |
| Couverture médiatique du processus électoral aux fins de favoriser la participation quantitative et qualitative des femmes et prévention des conflits électoraux  | ECI                      | June 2011 - May 2012          | 40,000                  | 30,000         |                |                | <b>70,000</b>    |
| Renforcement du site internet   | ECI                      | March 2011 - August 2011      | 18,000                  |                | 6,722          |                | <b>24,722</b>    |
| Action pour l'amélioration du pouvoir économique des femmes rurales et leur accès à l'information et à la justice en vue de leur participation  | ECI                      | December 2013 - November 2014 |                         |                | 17,729         | 32,573         | <b>50,301</b>    |
| Mobilisation des femmes rurales et renforcement de leur capacité en vue de leur participation quantitative et qualitative aux élections de 2011 et de l'équilibre des rapports de genre dans les différents secteurs de la communauté | Diakonia                 | January 2011-December 2011    | 56,633                  |                |                |                | <b>56,633</b>    |
| Projet mobilisation et accompagnement des femmes rurales dans la participation active à la révision du code de la famille   | Diakonia                 | October - December 2013       |                         |                | 22,552         |                | <b>22,552</b>    |
| Mobilisation et plaidoyer pour une meilleure participation des femmes à la démocratie et à la bonne gouvernance au Sud-Kivu   | Diakonia                 | January 2012-December 2014    |                         | 59,702         | 59,692         | 59,703         | <b>179,097</b>   |
| Formation des femmes journalistes rurales   | NED                      | February 2011-January 2012    | 24,671                  | 8,669          |                |                | <b>33,340</b>    |
| Renforcement des capacités des femmes journalistes et des femmes rurales membres des clubs d'écoute dans leurs radios et zones respectives  | NED                      | February 2012-January 2014    |                         | 45,000         | 44,000         |                | <b>89,000</b>    |
| Accès des femmes rurales aux médias en vue du renforcement du leadership féminin au Sud-Kivu  | DVF                      | October 2012-July 2013        |                         | 39,952         | 10,000         |                | <b>49,952</b>    |
| Lutte contre les violences basées sur le genre  | NCA                      | May 2011 - December 2011      | 19,107                  |                |                |                | <b>19,107</b>    |
| Sensibilisation communautaire et plaidoyer pour l'équilibre des rapports de genre et la lutte contre les violences sexuelles au Sud-Kivu  | NCA                      | May 2011 - December 2012      |                         | 14,174         | 6,022          |                | <b>20,196</b>    |
| Équipement  | NCA                      | May 2013                      |                         |                | 3,109          |                | <b>3,109</b>     |
| journee internationale de la femmes 2013  | NCA                      | March 2013                    |                         |                | 3,190          |                | <b>3,190</b>     |
| amélioration de l'équité du genre dans les médias pour la paix et la sécurité au nord et sud kivu   | NCA                      | January - May 2014            |                         |                |                | 41,271         | <b>41,271</b>    |
| amélioration de l'équité du genre dans les médias pour la paix et la sécurité au nord et sud kivu   | NCA                      | July-December 2014            |                         |                |                | 24,920         | <b>24,920</b>    |
| journee internationale de la femmes 2014  | NCA                      | March 2014                    |                         |                |                | 6,192          | <b>6,192</b>     |
| Étude de base sur la participation politique de la femme dans le territoire de Shabunda   | Kvinna til Kvinna Founda | July-December 2012            |                         | 10,587         |                |                | <b>10,587</b>    |
| Sensitization and advocacy for the improvement of the women's role and position in the community management in Shabunda   | Kvinna til Kvinna Founda | January 2013-February 2014    |                         |                | 44,985         |                | <b>44,985</b>    |
| Projet de mobilisation et renforcement des capacités des femmes et leaders communautaires en vue de la promotion du leadership des femmes en territoire de Shabunda   | Kvinna til Kvinna Founda | January 2014-December 2015    |                         |                |                | 42,266         | <b>42,266</b>    |
| réalisation des programmes radiophoniques sur la journée internationale de la femme   | IPP                      | March 2012                    |                         | 1,800          |                |                | <b>1,800</b>     |
| sensibilisation sur la CPI  | CPI                      | July - December 2013          |                         |                |                | 4,950          | <b>4,950</b>     |
| mobilisation et éligibilité <femmes gagnons les élections>  | RECIC/Cordaid            | January - December 2013       |                         |                | 16,399         |                | <b>16,399</b>    |
| Projet de renforcement des capacités des femmes journalistes en nouvelles technologies d'information et de communication et en journalisme d'investigation  | Free Press Unlimited     | April-September 2014          |                         |                |                | 41,570         | <b>41,570</b>    |
| Femme au Fone   | Cordaid (non-MFS)        | August 2013-July 2015         |                         |                | 12,221         | 29,331         | <b>41,552</b>    |
| <b>Total ANNEX A</b>  |                          | <b>Technical Reports</b>      | <b>283,837</b>          | <b>287,519</b> | <b>316,345</b> | <b>364,332</b> | <b>1,252,032</b> |
| Percentage MFS II   |                          |                               | 36%                     | 20%            | 10%            | 22%            | 22%              |

#### 4. Project description

Here we describe the project and its capacity development and civil society/policy advocacy elements, in terms of size, budget, duration, major objectives and activities.

The partnership between AFEM and Cordaid dates back to 2008, when it started with a project on breaking the silence surrounding sexual violence in South Kivu, through the media (in the territories of Walungu, Kalehe, Kabare and Uvira). The follow-up project focused on engaging traditional leaders, religious leaders and members of parliament in the battle against sexual violence. These projects fell within a holistic approach taken by Cordaid to support victims of sexual violence, involving a number of other Cordaid partners: RFDP (documenting cases and advocacy), OCET (juridical assistance), and CAPES, VICO, and ACODEPA (socio-economic support).

Of the two projects during the evaluation period, the first continues along this line of combating sexual violence in a holistic way, focusing on raising awareness and advocacy on gender-based violence in South Kivu (October 2010-December 2013). The second project shifts in focus somewhat, but continues along the line of women's empowerment: strengthening women leadership for peace and security (December 2013-December 2014). Both projects were funded with MFS II financing, for a total amount of EUR 210,000.

The first project focuses on combating gender-based violence in South Kivu. The project seeks to improve the quantity and quality of information on gender-based violence in the communities, through a systematic research in the areas of intervention. This information is the basis for developing informal ways of exchange and dialogue with traditional leaders, religious leaders, and members of parliament that are susceptible to exerting a positive influence for survivors of gender-based violence.

The project has two specific objectives:

- To improve the understanding of gender-based violence by the chief (*chef de la population*), community actors (*acteurs communautaires*) and those who intervene at the different levels
- To strengthen the capacity of rural women to denounce gender-based violence, to demand the political leaders to take decisions in their favour, and to positively influence the appropriation of the battle against SGBV by the community leaders (traditional leaders, religious leaders, members of parliament)

The project targets 4 territories: Walungu, Mwenga (Kamituga), Kalehe and Kabare. The direct beneficiaries of the project are women who are member of a Listening Club. In each of the 4 territories, 30 women will be trained, made aware of forms of gender-based violence, so that they can serve as relays to the other rural women. In addition, 10 community leaders (traditional leaders – *chefs traditionnels*, religious leaders - *chefs religieux*, members of parliament) are selected because of their power to influence politics and measures in favour of eradicating SGBV, contributing to a more positive image of women. Besides these specific target groups, the project will reach the audiences of the 8 partner radios: 4 urban radio stations, 4 in rural areas, with millions of listeners in total (AFEM estimates some 30 million).

AFEM aims for a snowball effect: women in media that have access to information on SGBV will make women in Listening Clubs and authorities aware of these issues, this will be trigger regular contacts between women of Listening Clubs and local authorities, but also with other rural women.

The second project aims to improve access of women to political decisions and measures for peace and security. It involves extending the reach of AFEM to North Kivu, and targets 80 community actors in Katana (Kabare Territory, South Kivu) and Kicanga (North Kivu). 40 of these beneficiaries are rural women members of Listening Clubs, and 40 are men who are local leaders (traditional chiefs, religious leaders, security actors). Through a snowball effect, each of the 40 women is supposed to pass on the acquired knowledge and skills to 20 other women, thus extending the reach of the project to another 800 women.

Specific objectives :

1. Improving the access of rural women to information about their rights to participate in the management of the community including security issues and peace building
2. Improving the involvement of community leaders who are custodians of customs and power-holders, in promoting women's leadership in the peace process and increasing security in communities
3. Increasing the number of rural women and improving their position in the various local consultation frameworks and local security councils (*conseils de sécurité*)
4. Improving participation of rural women in reducing insecurity and the construction of peace.

#### *Capacity development*

Through this partnership, Cordaid also aimed to contribute to an increase in organisational capacity of AFEM. Cordaid involved AFEM in its *synergie* on 'women and violence', and in its capacity development programme. Most of these activities were not included in the project budget, and we do not have data on the financial investment of Cordaid in developing the capacity of AFEM. Capacity development activities were based on an organisational development plan, which was created to deal with organisational weaknesses identified in the organisational scan done in 2010. The implementation of the plan was monitored by the staff of Cordaid Bukavu. AFEM staff participated in various trainings facilitated by Cordaid:

- Organisational scan (2010)
- Financial management (2011)
- Monitoring and evaluation (2011)
- Results-based management (2011)
- Developing a strategic plan (2011)

During the evaluation period, however, Cordaid changed its approach to partnerships and capacity development. At first, working with local partner organisations and strengthening their capacity was an important element in the theory of change of Cordaid, so the local partners would be able to better serve the needs of the beneficiaries – this resulted in an approach that offered many trainings and opportunities for capacity development to the SPOs. However, after 2012 the approach changed, now focusing on developing communities of change around certain issues, drawing together different

stakeholders, some of which may be structural partners of Cordaid, but also government actors, private sector, other international and local NGOs, in order to improve the situation of the beneficiaries. Instead of operating in the background, Cordaid may now take the lead on certain issues when it deems this necessary, and even intervene on the ground. This means Cordaid now invests less in capacity development of its partners, and is focused more on achieving results for its target group. In the case of AFEM, this means Cordaid has not offered them any trainings since the end of 2012.

Besides the capacity development activities by Cordaid, the project budget of the first, three-year project also contained a specific budget line for own capacity development activities to be developed by AFEM, with EUR 1,000 budgeted for each year. Of the total EUR 3,000, EUR 850 was spent. Besides this budget, Cordaid also supported institutional costs (in the first project, the total expenditure for transportation, personnel, administration and other was USD 129,935). This included the purchase of a vehicle.

### Capacity strengthening by other partners

A number of other funding partners of AFEM have also invested in organisational capacity development. Diakonia, ECI and NCA are partners that have financed and worked on capacity development by providing trainings on project planning, monitoring and evaluation, methods of data collection, and financial management.

Other capacity development activities have focused more on technical knowledge regarding the work of journalists or on a number of themes such as good governance, human rights, democracy, sexual and gender-based violence. Trainings on these themes have been provided by a variety of organisations: NCA, Institut Panos Paris, Jewish World Watch, Free Press Unlimited. Besides, AFEM staff is sometimes invited by other CSOs when they set up/receive training on a certain topic.

### Theory of change on capacity development

AFEM's aim is to become a centre of reference for media professionals in the DRC and in the Great Lakes Region. This will include a publishing house and various services including a thematic radio. The studio has to be professionalised, a database has to be established, as well as a library and education for female journalists. To achieve this, it is necessary to have offices in other provinces, besides the main office in Bukavu. To ensure stability, AFEM will try to buy a building. Personnel has to be trained at all locations, and there has to be exchange of experience between the different provinces. Before expanding, AFEM will have to carry out feasibility studies. Seeking cooperation with other partners will be very important. AFEM also needs to work on its internal organisation; a strategic plan has to be developed for 2013-2015, and the elections for the Board of Directors and Audit Committee need to be organised, as their mandates have expired.

### *Civil society strengthening elements*

The project does not have a specific civil society strengthening component. However, many activities can be seen to contribute to strengthening civil society, mostly at the grassroots level.

Civil society strengthening activities in the first project are:

- Retraining and training animators (*animatrices*) of Listening Clubs and local leaders on gender and human rights



- Producing and broadcasting on 8 local radio channels: 5 debates, 5 round tables, and 5 news magazines
- Organising dialogue sessions between leaders and rural women of Listening Clubs on gender-based violence
- Collecting, analysing and summarising studies on gender-based violence, and share these with women's associations, through Listening Clubs
- Developing informal channels for dialogue and exchange of information resulting from the previous project, between the Association of Women Journalists, rural women members of Listening Clubs, and leaders (parliamentarians, traditional chiefs and religious leaders)
- Supporting three-monthly feedback of awareness raising and advocacy reports on SGBV by women of Listening Clubs in the community
- Supporting the participation of rural women in the World March of Women, through their associations or their Listening Clubs, including the development of their memorandums
- Organising joint media coverage of the World March of Women, producing and broadcasting radio magazines

And in the second project:

- Training 40 women members of Listening Clubs on UN Resolutions 1325 and 1820, as well as articles 14 and 15 of the constitution
- Training 40 local authorities on the UN Resolutions and the Constitution
- Institutional support to 2 NCEs and 2 Cercles Communautaires pour la Paix for their active participation in promoting the participation of women in the process of building peace and security in the communities
- Lobby for the participation of women in local security councils, organising two meetings with members of the local security councils per semester, in both areas of intervention
- Developing a security barometer with 10 rural women based on the monitoring reports produced by the NCEs, training them on monitoring, and giving them the necessary communications equipment
- Setting up two petitions for peace and security, one in each area, addressed to all levels of authorities, and following up on this based on the security barometer
- Realising 54 radio reports on the women involved, producing 48 participatory radio magazines, and posting updates on the website and Facebook page of AFEM

### Theory of change on civil society strengthening

The objective of AFEM is *a fair and egalitarian society, where men and women enjoy their rights*. In order to get there, it is important to establish a social dialogue between the governed and the ones who govern, and for women to become economically autonomous. AFEM can contribute to this by being a reliable partner for information, and being involved in education and advocacy. A social dialogue will allow the population to pressurise authorities to implement the existing laws, such as on gender parity, or sexual violence. In order to establish this dialogue, the population has to be educated on citizenship, and legal texts have to be translated into a comprehensible form. Meanwhile, it is important to raise awareness about the prejudices, stereotypes and discriminatory customs related to women. Women need to become economically autonomous in order to enjoy the same rights as men, and for this to happen it is necessary to act in synergy, so that needs of women are dealt with in a holistic manner. A condition for this a strengthening of the link between the Civil Society Bureau (*Bureau de la Coordination de la Société Civile*) and the population at the grassroots (*la base*). Additionally, it is important that elections are fair, and that CSOs are not manipulated by politicians, so that authorities can be held accountable, and CSOs can raise awareness and mobilise the population.

## 5. Data collection and analytical approach

Here we describe the baseline and follow-up assessment, as well as particular choices and data collection problems. We also explain here which outcomes were selected for the contribution analysis. The general methodology we followed can be found in Annex X, as well as a list of documents employed, workshop participants and other informants (in Annex X).

In our evaluation of AFEM, we generally followed the methodologies for the capacity development and civil society strengthening components described in the Annex. We combined the data collection for the capacity development and civil society strengthening components. Interviews, workshops and focus groups with beneficiaries were conducted during the baseline and endline visits in 2012 and 2014, and additional interviews were held during the midterm visit in 2013. A draft version of this report was discussed with staff of AFEM during a feedback workshop in DRC at the beginning of 2015.

For the civil society strengthening component, as described in our methodology, we decided to conduct a contribution analysis for a subsample, including AFEM. In November 2013, we conducted an additional qualitative study on the women's movement in South Kivu (focusing on Bukavu and Walungu), in order to gain insight into the role of selected SPOs in policy influencing/advocacy at the provincial level, as well as their influence at local level (Walungu) – see the report on the women's movement in Annex X.

Outcomes selected for contribution analysis:

For the analysis of the contribution of the organisational development support by Cordaid to the development of organisational capacity of AFEM, we selected the following main outcome (see also the contribution story under the results of the capacity development component):

- the development of AFEM's monitoring and evaluation capacity. We relate this outcome to the second capability, the capability to adapt and self-renew, specifically the effective application of M&E and its strategic use.

For the analysis of the contribution of the development intervention of AFEM to the strengthening of civil society, we selected the following main outcome (see also the contribution story under the results of the civil society strengthening component):

- the strengthening of local civil society, in the form of the *Noyaux Clubs d'Écoute* – the Listening Clubs. We relate this outcome to the first CSI dimension, Civic engagement, and both priority result areas of this dimension.

## 6. Results

In this section, we describe our findings for the capacity development component. We first provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the five capabilities (Capability to act and commit, Capability to adapt and self-renew, Capability to deliver on development objectives, Capability to relate to others, Capability to achieve coherence). This is followed by a contribution story assembling the evidence for the contribution of MFS II funding to the development of organisational capacity of AFEM, through the interventions of Cordaid.

|   | <b>Baseline (1-5)</b> | <b>Endline</b> |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| Act and commit                                    | 3.5                   | 3.5            |
| Deliver on development objectives                 | 4                     | 4              |
| Adapt and self-renew                              | 3                     | 3.5            |
| Relate to external stakeholders                   | 4                     | 4              |
| Achieve coherence                                 | 3                     | 3              |
| <b>Overall capacity (rounded to nearest half)</b> | <b>3.5</b>            | <b>3.5</b>     |

### ***Capability to act and commit***

*Effective leadership, realistic strategic planning, translation of strategy into operations, staff capacity and motivation, and financial security.*

AFEM is led by a strong and experienced coordinator; during the evaluation period, the Board of Directors has been re-elected and now regularly meets to monitor the course of the organisation. The coordinator is responsible for giving strategic orientation to the organisation. Work on a strategic plan started in 2012 but has not yet finished. Nevertheless, the project plans have realistic targets, and reflect a core strategy. Project proposals are based on an adequate analysis of the situation, based on field visits and reports by Listening Clubs. Projects are broken down into monthly operational plans.

What stands out in the auto-scoring is the high score for team spirit. Motivation generally is good, but is negatively influenced by the low remuneration. Staff have the necessary competencies and has gained experience over the past years. There are regular training opportunities offered by international partners, and some staff members have grown from being a field trainer to a producer or M&E Officer. Staff have no formal contracts but a '*contrat de collaboration*', a collaboration agreement, and thus also no fringe benefits. The relatively low payment has to do with the fact that there are more staff than covered by the different projects, so AFEM redistributes the payment so that everyone can be paid (referred to as '*gymnastiques*'). Nevertheless, there has been little change in staff during the evaluation period, with the exception of the departure of the M&E Officer.

Sources of finances are diversified, as the overview above shows, and cover different periods. Institutional audits for 2011-2013 do not reveal major issues with regards to transparency and procedures. A manual for administrative, financial and accounting management procedures was

finalised in 2012. There is no clear strategy to mobilise financial resources: AFEM has usually been in the –luxurious– position of donors approaching them to offer funding.

Over the evaluation period, we do not find significant change for this capability. There is room for improvement, for example in getting access to larger contracts, and the completion of the strategy for the coming years. The staff participating in the Femme au Fone project are gaining experience in journalism, which may benefit AFEM in the future. The current way the salaries are dealt with lacks transparency towards the donors and seems untenable in the long run.

### ***Capability to deliver on development objectives***

*Delivery of planned products and services, relevance of delivered products and services for target population, work efficiency*

Through cooperation with 27 radio stations in both urban and rural areas, a large number of people are reached, resulting in many comments and feedback, which shows that AFEM's services reach the target group. AFEM has operational plans available for the realisation of the different projects, and activities are regularly discussed during meetings. Financial reports show that operations are based on a reasonable utilisation of resources, with respect to what has been approved by the donor – even if this is not always in line with the needs in the field. Generally, reports show that activities are executed as planned, except in the case of *force majeure*. There have been no changes for this aspect of the capability to deliver during the evaluation period.

Stories of success by beneficiaries reveal that the interventions by AFEM to improve the position of women are relevant to their circumstances; the governance and gender context of DRC shows there remains a lot to be done in terms of the empowerment of women and improving the responsiveness of local authorities and the implementation of relevant legislation at the local level. Through the monitoring forms, AFEM has a mechanism to ensure that the services offered address the needs of the target group, since the reporting formats include room for comments or suggestions. AFEM staff are aware that education on women's rights and advocacy only address part of the needs of the target group, and that an important need concerns economic empowerment of women. AFEM is searching for ways to address these needs.

In terms of work efficiency: AFEM monitors whether inputs effectively lead to the desired outputs, and actively attempts to become more efficient, according to staff. Examples of this are hard to find, however, and the DRC is a context which challenges efficiency in numerous ways (the unpredictable security situation, to mention one factor).

As the project portfolio has increased during the evaluation period, so has the number of staff, and the extent of the services delivered. Apart from this, we find no major change for AFEM's capability to deliver during the evaluation period.

### ***Capability to adapt and self-renew***

*Effective application of M&E, strategic use of M&E, openness to strategic learning, context awareness*

AFEM has developed a relatively effective system to monitor the results at the grassroots level, and to collect feedback from the radio stations that broadcast their programmes. In 2012, the position of M&E Officer was created, and she introduced a monthly reporting format for the Listening Clubs. Activities are monitored per project, and many monitoring forms are available, based on donor requirements. Since this form monitoring is 'participative', it strongly depends on the participation of the beneficiaries and partner radios, which means the quality of monitoring varies. The M&E Officer tries to compensate this by doing M&E field visits, but lacks sufficient resources.

There is room for improvement with respect to the strategic use of M&E: data are now used primarily for reporting to donors and developing new proposals. Monitoring generally focuses on output, versus trying to capture more elusive outcomes or impact. Given the long-term involvement in some areas, we feel it should be possible to do a deeper analysis of the change AFEM has contributed to. There are opportunities for synergy with other CSOs here, as there are CSOs intervening in the same areas which collect similar information (e.g. RFDP or Centre Olame). Though AFEM is in touch with these organisations, there is no joint collection or analysis of data. Additionally, given the importance of formal and informal advocacy, it would be relevant to develop a tool to map the effects of this. AFEM has no encompassing M&E strategy, and the successor of the first M&E Officer (who left in 2013) has not been sufficiently trained in M&E (she is supervised by the Coordinator and the Programmes Officer). A more extensive discussion of M&E can be found under the contribution analysis later in this section.

Though AFEM staff emphasised they want to diversify their strategies, we have found little change in main strategies over the evaluation period. AFEM staff does describe how the intervention strategy changed prior to 2011, from a focus on media alone to using media as a tool in other intervention approaches. The Coordinator emphasises the importance of learning, and several AFEM staff have grown to positions with more responsibilities over the years. Staff members have regularly taken part in international conferences during the evaluation period. Partners with specific knowledge are invited to provide expertise when required. Staff members feel free to suggest improvements, and mention examples of this; during the evaluation workshops we found staff members feel free to give their opinions. AFEM has not managed to complete a strategic plan during the evaluation period.

Context awareness is illustrated by the thorough analyses in project proposals, and is based on the reports from the Listening Clubs. Staff generally feel they are well aware of the needs of the target groups and that interventions are based on these needs, but would like to monitor this more closely. Context is discussed during meetings, AFEM has general staff meetings every month, and meetings in smaller organisational units every two weeks. See also CSI dimension 5 for more on the context.

Concluding: we see some change for this capability, in terms of the implementation of a monthly monitoring system for the Listening Clubs. In terms of strategic learning and context awareness, AFEM has retained the level of 2012. There remains much room for improvement in terms of strategic use of M&E.

### ***Capability to relate to others***

*Involving external parties in internal policy/strategy development; engagement of organisation in networks, alliances and collaborative efforts; active engagement with target groups; effective relationships within the organisation*

Though other organisations based in Bukavu are invited occasionally to share their expertise, they are not frequently involved in developing AFEM's strategy. International partners have an influence through the thematic trainings they provide, and Cordaid has contributed through a training on strategic planning. However, we have found no evidence that external parties have been involved in the ongoing process of developing a strategic plan for AFEM.

AFEM is well-embedded in civil society in Bukavu, and has several CSOs (Centre Olame, for example) with which it is regularly in touch. AFEM is member of several networks (COFAS, Caucus de Femmes, the Civil Society Coordination Bureau of South Kivu), and thus AFEM staff regularly encounter other CSOs that are engaging in similar ways. AFEM is also in touch with similar organisations in the Great Lakes region and other Provinces of DRC. AFEM also describe '*synergies ponctuelles*', for example when

AFEM participates in international conferences, these are paid by donors or the ones who invite AFEM. Collaboration usually takes this 'ponctuelle' form, which means it is issue-based, not structural: for example related to International Women's Day, or the lobby for an improved Family Code. At the grassroots level, collaboration is limited and difficult to develop – initially, for example Cordaid envisioned a holistic approach, with different CSOs addressing different needs, referring beneficiaries to each other depending on their needs. This approach has failed to be effective, however. See also CSI dimension 2 for more on AFEM's integration in civil society.

Regarding engagement with the target groups: as described previously, AFEM uses monitoring forms to get regular monthly feedback of the target group. There are field visits at least every month, and members of Listening Clubs also visit the office of AFEM in Bukavu. Certain leaders of Listening Clubs are involved in the process of developing new project proposals, and their suggestions are integrated. See also our description of CSI dimension 1.

Within the organisation, there is a culture of mutual exchange and asking each other for advice. There are regular staff meetings.

For this Capability, we find no significant change during the evaluation period. AFEM remains well-embedded in civil society, both at level of South Kivu, nationally, regionally, and internationally. Involvement of the target group has remained constant, and expanded to different areas (North Kivu). There is room for improvement in terms of the involvement of the expertise of external parties in the development of AFEM's strategy, as well as the development of more durable collaboration with other CSOs.

### ***Capability to achieve coherence***

#### *Existence of mechanisms for coherence, level of coherence of various efforts of organisation*

Project documents articulate a clear vision, mission and strategy, which is reflected in the contribution of staff during the workshops. Staff also participates in the strategic planning process, and there is room for discussing new ideas. A toolset for internal management is in place, the Procedures Manual, which provides transparency on rights and duties for all staff. A new Board of Directors was elected in 2012, which may also provide strategic guidance.

During the evaluation period, we find that projects, strategy and activities are in line with the vision and mission of AFEM. There is synergy between the different projects, for example between the projects with Diakonia and the projects supported by Cordaid, which involve the same activities, themes and target groups, but in different locations. There is also synergy between the media-activities and the activities at the grassroots level, with radio broadcasts serving to educate beneficiaries at the grassroots, and grassroots groups providing input for new radio programmes in return. Nevertheless, we found some risk in AFEM's ambition to cater to all of the beneficiaries' needs, with one proposal including a large section on developing agricultural activities (this section was not financed), while this is not the core competency of AFEM. Similarly, there is a risk that AFEM's ambitions to become a national centre of reference for women journalists will make the organisation lose touch with the women at the grassroots.

So far, AFEM has developed a coherent portfolio of activities, with its media activities and its activities with women at the grassroots mutually enforcing each other. Though the strategic plan is still in

process, documents articulate a clear vision, mission and strategy. No major development was detected during the evaluation period.

## 7. Contribution story

For the capacity development component, we focus on the contribution of MFS II funding to the development of organisational capacity of AFEM. Specifically, we investigate the contribution of capacity development activities by Cordaid to the development of AFEM's capability to adapt and self-renew, with a focus on monitoring and evaluation (M&E): its effective application and strategic use. Our choice for investigating AFEM's M&E capacity was induced by the fact that during our baseline visit, AFEM had recently appointed a M&E officer and was in the process of implementing more effective M&E procedures. How has AFEM's capacity in terms of M&E changed, and how has Cordaid contributed to this? We will discuss this question in the following contribution story.

First we briefly describe the theory of change and activities of the capacity development support by Cordaid (building on what we described under the project description). Then we assemble the evidence for the practice of change: how the M&E capacity of AFEM has changed over the evaluation period, and how Cordaid has contributed. We continue with a brief overview of other actors and factors that have played a role. We conclude by assessing the evidence, to what extent it is plausible that the capacity development intervention of Cordaid has contributed to increasing organisational capacity in terms of M&E.

### *Theory of change and activities*

Up until roughly the end of 2012, Cordaid engaged actively in the development of capacity of its southern partner organisations. For AFEM, this was based on a scan of its organisational capacity and a resulting organisational development plan. AFEM staff participated in a number of trainings, and the improvements listed in the development plan were monitored by staff of the Cordaid office in Bukavu. One of the improvements was to develop a system for monitoring results of the different activities undertaken by AFEM, and this development was in process during our baseline visit in 2012. The development was induced by donors, and at the same time appreciated by staff; M&E can play an important role in unearthing the needs of beneficiaries and adapting projects to better address these, and at the same time M&E is of great importance to be able to present the results and potential impact of activities to international partner organisations. AFEM's approach to develop its M&E was to designate one of the staff as M&E officer (*chargée de suivi et évaluation*), and to systematise collection of data by developing a series of templates for reporting.

### *Evidence, the practice of change*

For assembling the story for the MFS II contribution to developing M&E capacity of AFEM, we made use of project documents supplied by AFEM and Cordaid, the testimonies of members of various Listening Clubs, interviews with AFEM and Cordaid staff and our own observations.

The creation of the position of **M&E officer** in 2012 is evidence of change in the M&E capacity among the staff of the organisation. This position was proposed by international partner ECI, and during our baseline visit there was one staff member who was responsible for M&E. When she left because her

husband left to study in the United States, she was replaced by one of her colleagues. The new M&E officer had had no specific training on M&E, but had been involved in M&E previously (in the way that all project staff are involved in monitoring and evaluation). Project staff is generally involved in monitoring: M&E is 'participatory', according to AFEM staff, which means that staff and beneficiaries are involved in the collection of data through filling in monitoring forms. The M&E officer is responsible for keeping oversight, developing M&E plans, monitoring execution of activities according to plans, planning evaluation missions, and engaging external expertise when necessary, according to the task description in the Procedures Manual. This reflects the tasks described to us during the individual interviews.

**Trainings on M&E** in which AFEM staff participated were all before 2012, by various donors, including ECI, Cordaid and Diakonia. Cordaid was referred to as a donor that offered many trainings during our baseline visit in 2012; after 2012, AFEM staff received no more training by Cordaid, however, and the thematic meetings with other Cordaid partners also ended. Staff related this to changes in staff at the Bukavu office of Cordaid. From 2012 to 2014, trainings in which AFEM staff participated focused either on contents (human rights, gender) and journalism, and on financial management (OHADA). According to AFEM staff, the most useful capacity development intervention by Cordaid was the organisation scan, because of the recommendations for organisational development that came from this. The result of the lack of training on M&E in recent years is that the current M&E Officer has received no specific training on M&E; she has also not been trained by her predecessor. At the same time, the Coordinator and the Programmes Officer (*chargée de programmes*) have taken part in trainings before, which means that not all institutional knowledge on M&E has disappeared with the departure of the previous M&E officer. Nevertheless, the M&E officer expressed the need for more training.

There already existed a number of **monitoring tools** for the different projects of AFEM: each project and donor have their own requirements and indicators, and AFEM has tables to monitor indicators for each project. For the projects with Cordaid, logical frameworks have been elaborated, including the relevant indicators. These different requirements are seen as a challenge by the M&E officer. A number of additional tools have been introduced during the evaluation period, for participatory data gathering: for the partner radio stations, feedback forms and forms to report on the reach of radio broadcasts. For the Listening Clubs, the M&E officer introduced monitoring forms in 2012, so that Listening Clubs report on their activities, membership, whether they have formed sub-clubs (*sous-noyaux*), additional activities not related to AFEM, and react to the radio broadcasts that they've listened to. The aim of these tools was to collect data in a more structured way, versus the issue-based approach to data gathering that was followed previously.

Listening Clubs are encouraged to report monthly, making use of these forms, as the monitoring budget is too limited to pay monthly evaluation visits to the Clubs. The functioning of this system was confirmed in our discussions with beneficiaries, and reports are available in the AFEM office. Besides these reports, staff that visit the field also report their observations. The information is analysed by the M&E Officer, who consolidates the reports per Territory and verifies information. The Officer indicates it is a challenging task, and is investigating possibilities to involve a staff member of each project in the analysis. Project staff are involved in the internal evaluation that follows the completion of each project, in order to discuss strengths and weaknesses, with the different stakeholders – beneficiaries.



As the above shows, there is no explicit overarching **strategy for M&E**, but rather a collection of complementary templates that are used in the different projects, and which measure different indicators. Data are analysed on a per-project basis, and there is no comprehensive database which gathers all the materials and orders them in relation to each other. As most AFEM staff members are involved in multiple projects there is still some cross-feeding of information.

**Project documents** reflect this approach; each proposal includes a plan for M&E, and reserves budget for monitoring and evaluation. However, the M&E Officer was not included in the budgets for the projects with Cordaid. In fact, we only encounter the M&E Officer in one of the budgets for projects with other donors that have been shared with us. In project proposals, reference is made to the results of previous projects, and new proposals build on these results. AFEM staff indicates that results of M&E help them to adapt their methodology, and to orient new projects to the needs of beneficiaries. Project proposals indeed seem to be well-founded and based on data gathered previously, but sometimes also build on 'older' data. We have found no examples of changes made *during* a project, based on monitoring results.

The **staff of Cordaid** in the Netherlands is not very critical where it concerns M&E, in the case of AFEM. Staff indicate the impact of the work of AFEM is very difficult to measure, especially as they are only one actor in the wider community of change. Cordaid staff indicate they have high degree of trust in the capacity of AFEM, which is illustrated by the fact that they have proceeded with a new project in 2014, while the final report of the 2010-2013 project has yet to become available, if we understand correctly.

#### *Actors and factors*

Our description of the evidence above shows that a number of actors have been involved in the development of M&E capacity of AFEM. Most notably a number of donors have had a strong influence, through their requirements and the trainings they have provided.

Important factors have been the change of staff, with the previous M&E Officer leaving the organisation, and a lack of training opportunities for her successor. Another factor that has shaped AFEM's approach to M&E is the context, where it is often difficult to access intervention areas, which leads to high costs of monitoring in person. Often, the M&E Officer depends on second-hand data that are gathered by other staff members who are not primarily concerned with the collection of data. In other cases, reports are delivered to the AFEM office by beneficiaries. Without a clear budget available for monitoring, the officer depends on possibilities of joining field trips that are planned by others. The difficulties associated with the 'no peace, no war' context may have also led to a focus on monitoring the direct results of activities, versus trying to measure change at the outcomes or even impact levels.

#### *Conclusion: contribution?*

Cordaid is a long-term donor of AFEM, and has invested significantly in the organisational development of AFEM in the first years, through the provision of trainings and an organisation scan, and monitoring improvement. M&E was addressed in this process. During the evaluation period, AFEM has developed its M&E capacity, through installing a dedicated M&E Officer and implementing a number of monitoring tools, with signs of success. We therefore conclude that it is plausible that MFS II funding,

through the capacity development support by Cordaid, has contributed to the development of M&E capacity of AFEM.

Cordaid however was clearly not the only actor involved in this process, as several other funding organisations have provided support to M&E development. Additionally, support to capacity development by Cordaid greatly diminished after 2012. This means we also deem it likely that the contribution of Cordaid to the development of M&E capacity of AFEM was limited, and not crucial for the development of AFEM.

The change of staff furthermore underlines the importance of individual capacity development, and at the same time the risk of investing too much in one person, as it makes an organisation vulnerable to changes in staff.

## 8. Discussion

Cordaid's strategy for capacity development was based on the organisation scan, the resulting organisational development plan (*Chronogram suivi des recommandation Cordaid-AFEM*), and involving AFEM in its *synergie* of its SPOs working on women and peace. Most of the recommendations in the plan were implemented and AFEM staff were satisfied with the plan and the follow-up, indicating it was sufficiently tailored to their organisation and the context. However, halfway through the evaluation period, Cordaid changed its strategy and focused less on capacity development, which resulted in a supervision vacuum for AFEM. The change in strategy, though perhaps well thought through on the side of Cordaid, was not well understood by AFEM staff. As it coincided with a reorganisation at the headquarters of Cordaid in the Netherlands, it is not that communication in this period was sub-optimal.

In the case of AFEM, the reduced focus on capacity development is understandable, as the organisation has a relatively well-developed organisational capacity. Nevertheless, we do feel there continues to be scope for tailored capacity development activities in the future, with the following provisions:

1. Besides Cordaid, there were several international partners investing in capacity development of AFEM, often targeting similar capabilities. It is in capacity development activities that international organisations seem to be working strongly in silos, while there also seem many opportunities for synergy. An organisation as AFEM would benefit if capacity development of its funding partners would be mutually reinforcing, and it seems this would also be more efficient in terms of budget.
2. Of course communicating as different donors about capacity development activities directed at one SPO is complicated. A solution could be to have an organisation like AFEM manage its own capacity management budget, and plan its own training activities. AFEM should have the organizational capacity to do this, though perhaps this requires a shift in mindset (within the first project with Cordaid, AFEM had some budget to spend on capacity where it saw the need, but this was only partly spent).

Besides capacity development activities, an important factor in the partnership with Cordaid has been the continued support for institutional costs, and we recommend to continue to reserve room for institutional costs in project budgets.

With respect to improving the evaluation itself: because the evaluation focused on SPO documentation, we have not managed to gain insight into the expenses related to capacity development activities by Cordaid. These data were also not readily available at the office of Cordaid in Bukavu. Though we have gained an adequate overview of Cordaid's activities to improve the capacity of AFEM, accurate financial data on expenses related to capacity development could have provided relevant additional information on the MFS II input by Cordaid, which would have further strengthened our analysis.

## 9. Conclusion

Here we provide an answer to the three evaluation questions:

### 1. *What are the changes in partner organisations' capacity during the 2012-2014 period?*

There have been limited changes in AFEM's organisational capacity during the evaluation period, as reflected in the scores for the 5 capabilities. Primarily, AFEM has increased its project portfolio, with a growing yearly budget, and an increase in staff (Capability to deliver). Additionally, AFEM has increased its M&E capacity, with new monitoring tools, as well as a permanent M&E Officer (Capability to adapt and self-renew).

There also remains room for improvement, notably in a more strategic application of M&E, the development of tools for monitoring advocacy results/outcomes and analysis of data, the policy on salaries & contracts, the involvement of other CSOs in AFEM interventions and strategy development, and the investigation of opportunities for joint data gathering.

### 2. *To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*

The capacity development interventions by Cordaid were mostly done in the period 2011-2012, preceding this evaluation. Some of the changes in the 2012-2014 period can be related to this, and we conclude that it is plausible that MFS II funding, through the capacity development support by Cordaid, has contributed to the development of M&E capacity of AFEM. Nevertheless, several other international partners of AFEM also offered capacity development activities on similar topics. Thus, we conclude that contribution is plausible, but that the interventions by Cordaid cannot be seen as uniquely responsible for the changes.

### 3. *What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

The most important explanatory factor explaining our findings, is the fact that several other international organisations have invested in capacity development interventions for AFEM, in the same

period as Cordaid. Additionally, the change in M&E staff at AFEM is likely to have slowed the development of M&E capacity.

# CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING COMPONENT

## 1. Results Civil Society Strengthening

In this section, we describe our findings for the civil society strengthening component. We first provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions (Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment). This is followed by a contribution story assembling the evidence for the contribution of MFS II funding to a strengthening of civil society, through the development interventions of AFEM.

|                       | Baseline<br>(0-3) | Endline |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------|
| Civic engagement      | 2.0               | 2.0     |
| Level of organisation | 2.0               | 2.0     |
| Practice of values    | 1.5               | 2.0     |
| Perception of impact  | 2.0               | 2.0     |
| Environment           | 1.5               | 1.5     |

### **Civic Engagement**

*Under this dimension we distinguish the diversity of socially-based engagement (taking into account needs of marginalised groups, participation of target groups in the project), and the diversity of political engagement (is there dialogue of local leaders with government representatives, are beneficiaries member of sectoral user groups).*

In terms of socially-based engagement, AFEM has retained its focus during the evaluation period, working for the needs of women, SGBV victims, members of Listening Clubs; as we described in the context, women in DRC can be considered a marginalised group, both politically, culturally, and economically. Beneficiaries of AFEM are organised in Listening Clubs, and during the evaluation period, the interventions of AFEM have extended to North Kivu, now reaching 30-40 Listening Clubs (from 26 in 2012).

These women are strongly involved in AFEM’s projects: both as beneficiaries of training and support, but also as independent actors engaging with the local authorities and collecting information on the SGBV situation for AFEM – filling in the monitoring forms described in the capacity development section. The women also participate actively in the creation and dissemination of new radio reports, which are broadcasted on the partner radios. Through these reports AFEM gives a voice to rural women, allowing people in other rural areas to respond. Members of Listening Clubs are also encouraged to go out to other communities to share what they have learnt with other women. In the 2014 project, a number of women were involved in the development of the barometer. Beneficiaries participate in project evaluations, and suggestions and feedback by beneficiaries are incorporated in new projects.

The fact that AFEM is aware of the needs of rural women shows in its (not executed) plans to lease communal fields to improve the livelihoods of the members of the Listening Clubs. The Listening Clubs

are intended to become autonomous, and need access to resources for this. This remains a challenge, and AFEM is still lacking a strategy for this. Other challenges that remain are regularly visiting Listening Clubs, especially those in more remote areas, and translating training materials to Swahili and local languages.

With respect to political engagement, AFEM has also focused attention on generating dialogue between the Listening Clubs and local authorities. Members of Listening Clubs are increasingly able to access local authorities to claim their rights, denounce wrongdoings or lobby for change, for example gaining access to the local security councils. In two Territories, a framework for exchange has been put into place involving community leaders, local authorities and women leaders, the *Cercle Communautaire pour le Changement Positif*. There are also numerous examples of positive impact of engagement with the local authorities by the Listening Clubs.

Concluding, for the dimension of civic engagement, we note a sustained engagement, locally leading to gradual change. Beneficiaries play an important role in the dissemination and gathering of information, and generating local cultural change and changed relations with authorities. A number of Listening Clubs are able to operate independently. Yet all Listening Clubs remain in need of support by AFEM, and it is clearly AFEM which is in the lead. There is sustained political engagement at the local level, with numerous examples of positive change resulting from the interactions between the Listening Clubs and local community leaders and authorities.

### ***Level of Organisation***

*This dimension focuses on the organisational level of civil society (the connectedness of SPOs in networks of organisations, the nature of relationships between SPOs and networks, and the degree of representation of interests); peer to peer communication (the strength of the relationships of the SPO with other actors); and financial and human resources (the composition of the financial resource base, availability of human resources).*

AFEM was well-embedded in civil society in South Kivu when we visited the organisation in 2012, and this has remained the case. It is embedded in media organisations through its members, all of whom are women journalists. These members are also involved in AFEMs activities, sharing their expertise. The number of radio partners has increased to 27 in North and South Kivu (from 22). AFEM is member of various provincial and national networks of CSOs that intervene on the same themes, and is connected to other CSOs through partnerships with international funding organisations, 'synergies', such as the Femme au Fone project or the Droit pour Tous campaign with Cordaid. The general synergy on women and peace with other Cordaid partners was discontinued by Cordaid. AFEM has developed joint activities with other CSOs, for example on International Women's Day, but also in projects (Vision Sociale, Panzi Hospital, Radio Maendeleo). Internationally, AFEM maintains relations at the level of the Great Lakes region, with women media organisations in Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda. AFEM also had a fair amount of international exposure, with visits by the actor Ben Affleck and the UN ambassador on sexual violence in 2012, and regular invitations to participate in international conferences during the evaluation period, receiving several international prizes. See also the Capability to relate to others in the capacity development section.

Regarding AFEM's financial and human resource base: AFEM has been well able to capture interest of international donors, and has managed to expand its project portfolio during the evaluation period. As the overview under the description of AFEM shows, it has a varied financial resource base, with several larger and several smaller donors, from both Europe and the US. Staff indicate AFEM is in process of creating a financial reserve (*caisse de reserve*), in order to be less dependent on international donors. AFEM's staff has remained stable, with a growing staff and only one major change, the departure of the first M&E Officer. Staff have received regular training, and benefit from AFEM's network of members.

This means that for the level of organisation, we see a sustained embeddedness in local civil society, and slightly increasing collaboration with other CSOs. In terms of financial and human resources, AFEM has expanded its diverse base of funding partners and further developed its staff. There remains room for improvement in terms of collaboration with other CSOs: collaboration often remains limited to exchange of information, while there is scope for even joint execution of interventions at the grassroots.

### ***Practice of Values***

*This dimension deals with internal governance (the functioning of the legally required committees and members, are they involved in the strategic management of the SPO, and the functioning of lower CSO levels), and transparency (respect of internal written procedures, extent of downward accountability, within the SPO and to lower CSO levels, transparency on finances).*

The necessary restructuring of the Board and committees, as indicated during our baseline visit, has taken place at the end of 2012 in a General Assembly. Internal governance has now improved, according to staff, but there is still need for extra training on the responsibilities of the different committees. The General Assembly has been held yearly, the Board of Directors met at least twice each year to monitor strategic progress and to authorize budgetary plans. Reports are available of all of these meetings. Members of AFEM are all journalists, which also constitute a target group of AFEM. Beneficiaries in the Cordaid projects, the members of the Listening Clubs, are not represented in the General Assembly, however. Downward accountability to the Listening Clubs is thus dependent on the direct interaction between AFEM and the Listening Clubs.

In terms of transparency, AFEM has organised an institutional audit every year since 2011, with support by Cordaid. The reports for 2011-2013 are available. These reports have been presented to the General Assembly. Apart from this, each project may also be audited according to the demands of the donors.

During the evaluation period, we find positive change for this dimension: the functioning of the internal organisation has improved. This means that accountability to the members has increased. An important element in transparency and accountability is formed by the yearly institutional audits, which confirm the respect of internal procedures. There remains room for improvement in terms of training the members of the internal committees on their roles, as well as institutionalising downward accountability to the members of the Listening Clubs.

## **Perception of Impact**

*Under this dimension we discuss the responsiveness (nature and intensity of SPO's relationship with the public sector and the private sector); social impact (target group satisfaction regarding fulfilment of their primary social concern, perception of public and private sector of quality of delivery of services by SPO); and the policy impact (the level of influence of SPOs in the process leading to major policy changes identified in the sector of the SPO's intervention since 2011).*

During the evaluation period, AFEM has started to give some institutional support to the offices of a number of Listening Clubs, as well as a fee for the local animators of the Clubs. This is in response to demands voiced by the beneficiaries. Within the scope of the projects to improve the social position of women, staff feel beneficiaries are satisfied with the support by AFEM, and this is confirmed by the beneficiaries that take part in our focus groups. There is a changing mentality with respect to involving women, and space for dialogue with local authorities has opened up. Members of Listening Clubs have been able to gain access to the local security councils (*Conseil local de sécurité*) in some areas. The needs of the beneficiaries surpass the capacity of AFEM, most notably the need for more support to livelihoods development.

With the public sector, at the provincial level, relations remain mixed. On one hand, authorities approach AFEM as a reference organisation, and invite them to meetings. On the other hand, there remains a level of distrust by authorities vis-à-vis the media, and they do not always respond positively when AFEM invites them to its meetings (during the baseline AFEM described how public sector officials refused to attend a meeting on SGBV). It is proving difficult to engage the authorities at this level in formal dialogue, so AFEM now takes to approaching them informally and more in private. Currently AFEM is part of the Provincial committee to monitor the implementation of UNSCR 1325. At national level, AFEM took the initiative to meet with delegates to discuss revision of the Family Law (Code de la Famille), and the discussion continues. AFEM set up the campaign, and wrote a memorandum based on discriminations listed by local women members of Listening Clubs.

With the private sector, interaction remains limited. Staff indicate they are starting to involve businesswomen in some of their activities.

For the dimension of perception of impact, we find that AFEM has responded to an important concern of beneficiaries regarding institutional support (albeit limitedly), that relations with public authorities have further developed, and there are beginning relations with the private sector. In all, we find a slight change for this dimension during the evaluation period.

## **Environment/context**

*This dimension takes the wider environment into account. What is the degree of participation of the SPO in defining the civil society interventions of the CFA/Consortium; to what extent is a context analysis of the space and role of civil society in the specific country done as part of the programme /project cycle; to what extent is the SPO involved in studies on civil society?*

AFEM plays an important role in the civil society interventions of Cordaid, and considered a key partner in the community of change for women leadership, with involvement in the Femme au Fone project



and the Droit pour Tous campaign. Yet project documents contain no specific reference to civil society strengthening as such.

Project documents display a sufficient level of context awareness, with project proposals building on the results of previous projects, and information provided by the grassroots Listening Clubs. Changes in context are regularly discussed during staff meetings. Context analyses focus on developments in terms of security, the position of women, through the lens of sexual and gender-based violence. As described in the contribution analysis below, AFEM engages in civil society strengthening at the grassroots level through the Listening Clubs. However, AFEM does not explicitly consider civil society at the grassroots, including for example other grassroots associations.

AFEM is one of the leading media organisations in eastern DRC, and has a specific aim to support women journalists and media organisations. Though it does not specifically aim to strengthen civil society, it does have a positive influence on civil society in South Kivu through its activities in collaboration and the media attention it is able to muster.

### **Contribution story: civil society strengthening in Noyaux Clubs d'Écoute, Listening Clubs**

For this component of the evaluation, we focus on the contribution of MFS II funding to the strengthening of civil society. In the case of AFEM, we investigate the contribution at the level of the beneficiaries and grassroots groups, *Noyaux Clubs d'Écoute* or Listening Clubs. We selected this outcome for our contribution story because it is the most concrete example of how SPOs such as AFEM contribute to civil society strengthening. How has MFS II funding, through intermediary organisation AFEM, contributed to the strengthening of local civil society, in the form of the Listening Clubs? We will discuss this question in the following contribution story.

First we briefly describe the basic theory of change and activities of the project carried out by AFEM with support of Cordaid. Then we assemble the evidence for how the described activities have contributed to strengthening of civil society. We continue with a brief overview of other actors and factors that have played a role. We conclude by assessing the evidence, to what extent it is plausible that the development intervention of AFEM has contributed to strengthening civil society.

#### *Theory of change and activities*

AFEM aims for a fair and egalitarian society, where men and women enjoy their rights. Local listening Clubs form a crucial element in AFEM's approach. AFEM views women in DRC as a marginalised group, both politically, culturally, and economically. AFEM works on improving their position, through producing and disseminating radio programmes. The Listening Clubs were formed as clubs of women that listen to the broadcasts produced by AFEM, and discuss these. AFEM structures and trains these groups of women, so that they become aware of their rights and able to claim these. AFEM also provides them with a small meeting place and some stationary materials. In turn, Listening Clubs form an important source of information on the local SGBV situation for AFEM, and local women also participate actively in the creation and dissemination of new radio reports. Through these reports AFEM gives a voice to rural women, allowing people in other rural areas to respond. Members of Listening Clubs are also encouraged to go out to other communities to share what they have learnt

with other women, and collect data on SGBV cases. In time, AFEM aims for the Listening Clubs to become stronger financially, so that they can operate autonomously.

### *Evidence, the practice of change*

For assembling the story for the MFS II contribution to strengthening civil society at field/grassroots level, in the form of the Listening Clubs, we made use of project documents supplied by AFEM and Cordaid, the testimonies of members of various Listening Clubs, interviews with AFEM and Cordaid staff and our own observations. Information gathered from/with other women's organisations provided additional insights.

The first Listening Clubs were set up in 2006, in response to radio programmes made by AFEM. Originally members were only women, but men have started to join as well. Over the years, AFEM has provided training to these Clubs, and instructed them to elect a committee to direct daily affairs (which relates to the 3<sup>rd</sup> CSI dimension, Practice of values). Each committee has a president, a treasurer, a secretary, and a number of ordinary members. The committees organise Listening Club meetings, and send monthly reports to AFEM. The set-up was explained similarly in the various Clubs that we visited, though AFEM staff indicate that not all Clubs manage to send the reports each month.

AFEM works with a snowballing approach: each woman that they train, is expected to pass on the training to a number of other women. Though we were not able to verify exact numbers, our field visits confirmed that the members of the Clubs indeed passed on the information. The Club in Murhesa for example had formed a number of sub-clubs, *sous-noyaux*, of women and men that had been made aware of women's rights.

There are numerous examples of how the position of the women in the Listening Clubs has improved over the years, including the evaluation period. Women we spoke to referred to how they were now no longer afraid to stand up in public and voice their opinion. They described how they now were able to approach the local authorities in order to bring an issue to their attention. And how the radio programmes and trainings by AFEM had helped them understand their rights and claim these. The stories told by members of Listening Clubs concur with the documentation supplied by AFEM and our interviews with staff members. Frequently-cited examples of the effects of the Listening Clubs include inheritance by women, public denunciation of SGBV cases and local authorities taking action against the perpetrators, women members of Listening Clubs are gaining access to the local security councils which are traditionally dominated by men. Women members of Listening Clubs have gained influence in their communities, and have also become important sources of local information for AFEM and radio stations.

The Listening Clubs' activities also raise awareness among local authorities about women's rights, and sexual and gender-based violence. The effects of this vary, and sometimes AFEM staff accompany the members of the Listening Clubs when they approach the local authorities. AFEM can produce radio reports communicating what is decided by local authorities, thus reinforcing their decision and making it public, which makes it difficult for the local authorities to change their mind afterwards. We found an example of good relations with authorities when we visited the Listening Club in Katana, and both the head of the local department of intelligence (ANR) and the *chef de poste d'encadrement de Katana* were available to share their experience in working with the local Listening Club.

Listening Clubs refer to AFEM as ‘our mother’, indicating the close relationship they feel with the organisation. AFEM staff is not able to visit the Clubs very often (once every six months, for the Clubs involved in the 2010-2013 Cordaid project), but the Clubs report regularly to AFEM and come to Bukavu to visit the AFEM office. Several projects now allow AFEM to provide institutional support to a number of Clubs, including paying the rent of a small office, providing some stationary, and paying a fee to local field workers (*animatrices*) of the Clubs. AFEM wishes for the Clubs to become more professional and more independent, also economically; one Club for example has jointly leased a piece of land, so that they could jointly cultivate the land, and AFEM provided the seeds for this. The Listening Club in Katana has set up own activities independently of AFEM, including youth groups and a literacy class. If the Clubs become stronger financially, they will also be able to operate autonomously, according to AFEM staff.

Besides AFEM, however, there are many other Congolese and international organisations that intervene in the same areas. Members of the Listening Clubs mentioned IRC, OCET, Caritas, Cente Olame, CDJP, APRODEPED, the Panzi Foundation, CAMPS, PAIF, ADEMÉR, and these were not exhaustive exercises. Some members of the Listening Clubs also participate in local groups of other CSOs, and for some of them this confirms their position as local women of influence. AFEM staff indicate that other CSOs are complementary, providing juridical support for example, or psychological support, which AFEM does not offer.

#### *Actors and Factors*

Besides the intervention by AFEM, what are other actors and factors that influence the development of the Listening Clubs? We have already mentioned the presence of other Congolese and international organisations, with members of Listening Clubs also taking part in committees and activities organised by these other organisations. Some of these organisations engage in similar activities as AFEM, training people on their rights and how to engage the local authorities. Even though AFEM is a unique organisation, as an organisation of women journalists who make radio programmes to empower women, it is likely that the discourse of women’s rights has come to local women from multiple sides (the use of radio broadcasts to spread a message is a method that Congolese CSOs frequently employ).

AFEM had been working with Listening Clubs for quite some time before the start of the MFS II projects. This means that experience gained in previous projects will have contributed to the results attained during the evaluation period. This also means that besides the influence of other intervening organisations, also the pre-MFS II interventions by AFEM will have contributed to the development of civil society at the grassroots in the form of Listening Clubs.

#### *Conclusion: contribution?*

Based on the analysis above, we deem it highly plausible that the MFS-II funded interventions by AFEM have contributed to the strengthening of civil society at local level. The Listening Clubs are central to the approach of AFEM to empower women, and members of the Clubs exhibit a self-confidence that they attribute wholly to the support by AFEM. Since the intervention by AFEM is part of a larger rights-based discourse, as well as strong international attention to SGBV and the position of women in eastern DRC, it is likely that these changes cannot be attributed to the intervention of AFEM alone. Nevertheless, considering the involvement of AFEM and the combination with radio, we believe the interventions by AFEM have made a strong contribution.

## **2. Discussion Civil Society Strengthening**

Given our findings, we think the interventions of AFEM towards civil society strengthening at the grassroots level were well-designed and suitable for the environment in which they were implemented. Many CSOs use radio as a way to reach a wider audience, but the way AFEM combines this with the local Listening Clubs and uses information and recordings provided by the Listening Clubs in its radio broadcasts, is well thought-through and mutually reinforcing. Radio is particularly suitable for the context of eastern DRC, where many areas are still difficult to access physically. The Listening Clubs express many examples of what they have learnt from AFEM and how this has improved the position of the members, allowing them to approach local authorities. The topic of women's rights remains highly relevant in eastern DRC. We would therefore advise to fund similar projects in the future, taking into account ways to measure the impact of the interventions, as well as the changing context and other related projects such as Femme au Fone.

At the same time, AFEM shows it is well able to gain access to international funding, as an organisation of ambitious, young staff that work on a subject that is drawing a lot of attention internationally. Even though Dutch financing has been a stable support over the years, we find that AFEM is not dependent on this source of financing. In case the Dutch support would be terminated, we believe chances are high that AFEM will be able to find another international donor willing to finance the project.

Reflecting on the evaluation itself: there is room for improvement in terms of the selection of the civil society elements under evaluation. At the beginning of the evaluation, we were under the impression that projects would have clearly delineated civil society strengthening goals, since civil society strengthening had been made an explicit goal of the MFS II grants. The fact that this was not the case complicated our evaluation, forcing us to focus on parts of projects in some cases, and this gave confusion during the baseline. Nevertheless, we were able to correct our approach during the evaluation, and in most cases we have been able to single out specific civil society strengthening elements. Predominantly, these elements target civil society at the grassroots, as we find that there are few projects that explicitly include policy influencing or advocacy elements that aim to influence policy at the Provincial or National level.

In terms of causal mechanisms, the approach of working with grassroots groups is frequently used in DRC, in development interventions but also for example in the parent committees at schools and health committees in health zones. AFEM's approach to set up Listening Clubs that discuss the radio broadcasts, spread the information, and collect information in turn which AFEM uses for developing new broadcasts, can be considered a strong mechanism to raise awareness at the grassroots and help people appropriate new information, applying it to change their situation.

## **3. Conclusion Civil Society Strengthening**

Here we provide an answer to the four evaluation questions for the civil society strengthening component:

1) *What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?*

From the perspective of the general theory of change of AFEM, with the aim of 'a fair and egalitarian society, where men and women enjoy their rights', we see sustained development, but no major changes. With the development of the 30-50% Campaign for women representation in decision-making institutions, there is increasing attention for women leadership, and a shift from focusing on women as victims (of sexual violence) to women as potential leaders.

At the grassroots level, numerous interventions directed at women have brought across messages on fundamental rights that are warranted by the constitution of the DRC, as well as different international legal instruments that protect the rights of women. A culture is developing of denouncing every case of violation of human rights, in particular SGBV cases. In the Territories (our study focused on Walungu, but we believe this is representative for other Territories), we find vibrant associational life. During the evaluation period, this has continued, with many people involved in grassroots groups. Women and men in these groups have been educated on women's rights. Grassroots groups continue to help victims of violence (often women) to access healthcare, judicial and psychological support. The organisation in local groups enables women (and men) to go to the local authorities to advocate for their own position and for the position of vulnerable women and children. In all of this, local grassroots groups continue to depend on nationally or internationally funded NGOs (often based in Bukavu) for many of their operations, seminars, transport and accompaniment.

2) *To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*

There are many organisations intervening at the grassroots level, and many of these interventions constitute a larger rights-based discourse. Since AFEM has started breaking the silence around 2007, there has been strong international attention to SGBV and the position of women in eastern DRC. Based on our contribution analysis, we deem it highly plausible that the MFS-II funded interventions by AFEM have contributed to the strengthening of civil society at local level, strengthening the culture of denouncing human rights violations and claiming rights, allowing members of Listening Clubs to approach the local authorities and hold them accountable. The Listening Clubs are central to the approach of AFEM to empower women, and members of the Clubs exhibit a self-confidence that they attribute wholly to the support by AFEM. However, because of the plurality of organisations intervening at the grassroots, as well as the history of promoting a rights-based discourse and improving the position of women in eastern DRC, these changes cannot be attributed to the intervention of AFEM alone.

3) *What is the relevance of these changes?*

The relevance of these changes for the direct beneficiaries lies in the fact that sexual and gender-based violence still constitutes a serious issue in DRC, and that women continue to be marginalised, both economically, culturally and socially. These changes contribute to improving the position of women, empowering them to take their own decisions and become economically independent. Local grassroots groups are also an important social context for experiencing democracy, and the workings of mechanisms of transparency and accountability.

From the perspective of the theory of change, these changes contribute to attaining ‘a fair and egalitarian society, where men and women enjoy their rights’. In rural areas, the number of women in positions of leadership is still very low; making women aware of their rights and their ability to take decisions, increasing their economic independence, is part of the answer. At the same time, much remains to be done in terms of governance and also cultural changes, for women to truly gain access to positions of leadership.

*4) What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

Important factors underlying our findings, as described under the previous questions, are (i) the strong international attention to SGBV and the position of women in eastern DRC during the last decade, (ii) the plurality of interventions directed towards grassroots groups, (iii) the governance context of low accountability and financial means to implement the laws protecting the rights of women.

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## Workshops, interviews and questionnaires:

Baseline visit: September 3-6, 2012

Midterm visit: November 14, 19-20, 2013

Endline visit: July 2-4, 2014

Feedback workshop: February 4-5, 2015

| Name                | Position   | Workshop baseline | Workshop end line | CS questionnaire baseline | CS questionnaire end line | 5C Questionnaire baseline | 5C Questionnaire endline | interview baseline | interview midterm |
|---------------------|--|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Chouchou Namegabe   | Coordinator  | X                 | X                 | X                         | X                         | X                         |                          | X                  | X                 |
| Marlaine Zawadi     | Producer   | X                 | X                 | X                         | X                         | X                         |                          | X                  |                   |
| Rédéphine Katabesha | Monitoring & Evaluation                                  | X                 |                   | X                         |                           | X                         |                          | X                  |                   |
| Alex Bahati         | Blogger  | X                 |                   |                           |                           |                           |                          |                    |                   |
| Julienne Baseke     | Programme officer  | X                 |                   | X                         |                           | X                         |                          | X                  |                   |
| Augile Noke Nwayuma | Secretary/cashier  | X                 |                   |                           |                           |                           |                          |                    |                   |
| Chrispin Nzanzu     | Administrator/finances                                   | X                 | X                 | X                         |                           | X                         |                          | X                  |                   |
| Douce Namwezi       | Producer   | X                 | X                 |                           |                           |                           |                          |                    |                   |
| Pascaline Zamunda   | Program assistant  | X                 |                   |                           |                           |                           |                          | X                  |                   |
| Maguy Buhendwa      | Producer/Journaliste/FAF                                 | X                 | X                 | X                         | X                         | X                         |                          | X                  |                   |
| Jolly Kamuntu       | President of board AFEM, and director of Radio Maendeleo |                   |                   |                           |                           |                           |                          | X                  | X                 |
| Judith Cuma         | Journaliste/FAF  |                   | X                 |                           | X                         |                           |                          |                    |                   |
| Eliane Polepole     | Journaliste/FAF  |                   | X                 |                           | X                         |                           |                          |                    |                   |
| Isse Tundire        | comptable  |                   | X                 |                           | X                         |                           |                          |                    |                   |

Besides our meetings with AFEM staff, we also had a number of meetings with AFEM beneficiaries:

Five Listening Club members in Murhesa, 06.09.2012

Three Listening Club members in Walungu, 20.11.2013

Six Listening Club members in Katana, 02.07.2014



## **Contacts**

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Centre Olame, Madame Mathilde (coordinatrice), 14.09.2012

Composant Femme du Bureau Société Civile, Marie (Coordinatrice), 14.09.2012

Cordaid The Hague, Roos Wilhelm, 02.14.2013

Cordaid The Hague, Margreet Houdijk, 29.04.2014

Radio Maedeleo, Jolly Kamuntu, 23.05.2014

Cordaid Bukavu, Olivier Chibashimba, 20.05.2014

chef de poste d'encadrement de Katana & chef of ANR, Katana (in the presence of members of the Listening Club), 02.07.2014

# Civil Society Strengthening Report

## AGIR

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

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## Inhoud

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## 1. Introduction

This report is part of a large evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of Southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The report presents the findings of the evaluation team with regard to the impacts on selected MDGs and Themes of the project “*Projet d’ Appui au plan de gestion participative et durable des écosystèmes pour le développement du Secteur de Bapère*”. The project is carried out by AGIR. AGIR is part of the Réseau CREF, which is funded by IUCN Netherlands as part of the Ecosystems Alliance. The project aims to support communities in Bapère sector - a remote area of North Kivu - to secure the rights over the resources which are present: land, water, timber and minerals.

In terms of MDGs & themes, the focus of the project is on MDG 7 - to ensure environmental sustainability. We answer the following questions:

1. What are the changes in terms of resource use during the 2012 – 2014 period?
2. To what degree are these changes at target group level attributable to the development interventions of AGIR?
3. What is the relevance of these changes?
4. Were the development interventions of AGIR efficient?
5. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

The report is structured as follows: First, we will describe the context of the project, followed by a description of the project itself. Then we will briefly describe our methodology, and present our data. We will describe the results of our analyses, and finally we will discuss the finding and provide conclusions to the study.

## 2. Context

### North Kivu

The socio-economic situation in North Kivu is marked by the prevalence of mineral resources, as well as high involvement of humanitarian organizations. Minerals provide a source of income for many, but also form a source of unrest, as the wealth frequently attracts negative attention. The majority of the rural population depends on agriculture for making a living. North Kivu is a fertile province, and used to be a main source of agricultural products for much of the region. Due to the ongoing conflicts in the area, the three cities in North Kivu have grown quickly over the last two decades, increasing pressure on the natural resources in the surrounding areas. Conflict, mineral extraction and agriculture form

additional pressures. A recent development is the discovery of oil at Lake Edward, in the national park Virunga.

In terms of conflict, the largest threat to stability of the province in recent years was M23, which emerged in April 2012. Their power peaked at the end of 2012 when they briefly took control of the provincial capital of Goma. Since then, they have been beaten back by the national army (FARDC) in collaboration with the UN peacekeeping force (MONUSCO). In November 2013 the leader of the movement surrendered, leading to a peace agreement in December 2013. However, Mai Mai militias and pockets of FDLR forces continue to operate in the remote areas of the province.

The political context in North Kivu is similar to the context in the rest of the country: decades of bad governance cannot be easily erased, and the country has only recently started to learn to 'do' democracy. Politicians are learning to be accountable, instead of using their position for personal enrichment. Authorities have long had a parasitical relationship with the population, and it takes time for this to change. Good governance and fragile states are an important focus for present aid organizations, besides providing humanitarian assistance and aid more directly geared towards the MDGs.

Civil society in North Kivu is pluralistic, and organizations work on multiple themes. In recent years, organizations have started to join forces on certain themes in platforms, and meet each other in thematic groups under the Bureau de Coordination de la Société Civile, which is very active in lobbying. Compared to Bukavu, civil society in Goma is more focused on humanitarianism, and dealing with adverse circumstances and recurrent insecurity.

## Bapère

The intervention area for AGIR is Bapère sector. The sector is remote and not densely populated. It is mostly covered by tropical forests. The soils contain rich deposits of cassiterite (tin ore), coltan, gold and tungsten. The autochthonous population partly consists of pygmies who rely on a hunting-gathering lifestyle, while settlements of bantu farmers are also present.

The area is difficult to reach by road, though the state of the main road has improved over the past years. From the main commercial hub of the area, Butembo, it used to take a full day travel along unpaved roads in poor condition to reach the sector's headquarter town, Manguredjipa. Today, road improvements this to around four hours. The connection between Manguredjipa and the other towns in the area has not improved however, as aside from the main road, no road network exists in the region. To reach the other groupement headquarters it is another day along forest paths. To reach the town of Bandulu, one even has to trek for two more days through the jungle.

Due to the remoteness of the area, there are very few viable livelihood options. Possible economic activities include mining, forestry, and small-scale agriculture. Mining is done using artisanal technologies and is generally unregulated. Working conditions in the mines are poor as a consequence, and the proceeds from the extraction of minerals does not benefit the broader population. Average daily income from mining? is estimated to be around \$1, despite the abundance of minerals. Agriculture relies on shifting cultivation, for which stands of forest need to be cleared on a yearly basis.

Though its remote nature has so far shielded the area from the recent M23 rebellion that has affected the southern part of North Kivu, this same remoteness has attracted other rebel groups. Notably, the more remote villages are subject to occasional raids from the FDLR (Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda) and Mai-Mai forces who hide in the remote wilderness. In particular, Eitka/Robinet in the south of the sector is located in FDLR territory.

### 3. Project description

AGIR is an organization with offices in Butembo. With support from the Ecosystems Alliance, AGIR has been active in the Bapère sector since 2009. As a consequence of this presence, AGIR has connections with the development committees both at village/groupement level and at the sector level. In 2012 AGIR started the “*Projet d’Appui au plan de gestion participative et durable des écosystèmes pour le développement du Secteur des Bapère*”. This project was conceived to promote the good governance of natural resources in order to improve living standards in the sector. It has the following specific objectives :

- To promote the participative management of natural resources (NR) in Bapère Sector;
- To improve and diversify the ecosystem conservation initiatives, particularly for women and pygmies to integrate them in the benefits of sustainable development;
- And to reinforce the institutional capacities of AGIR during the implementation of the project.

Specific activities that have been implemented for this are:

- Creation of development committees, both at the sector and the *groupement* level;
- Popularisation of sustainable practices, in particular agro-forestry ;
- And distributing improved cooking stoves to reduce firewood needs.

These activities were planned to be implemented in the six groupement headquarter towns, but over the course of the project this was limited to only three. Reasons for this were the fact that it was too difficult to reach certain villages, while others were located in FDLR territory.

In each of the beneficiary villages, AGIR operates through a *Comité de développement du groupement* (CDG). This is supplemented by a sector level *Comité Local de Développement* (CLD).

### 4. Methodology

The objective of this report is to describe changes in resource use that could be attributed to participation in the AGIR project. To do this, we cannot simply measure the difference in terms of outcome for the beneficiaries of the project between 2012 and 2014. Many factors affect the outcomes, and there would be no way to isolate the causal effect of project participation from this multitude of other factors. The first step we take is to include a control group to our analysis. However, this still leaves two potential errors in our design: firstly, it can suffer from selection bias. The design of the project might mean that people with certain characteristics are more likely to enroll in the program. Beneficiaries could for instance have been wealthier than non-beneficiaries when the program started

or vice versa. Besides self-selection bias, program placement bias is also frequently observed in evaluation studies. NGOs target their projects purposely at specific, often disadvantaged, areas. If the control group's physical, economic and social environment does not match that of the beneficiaries, this will result in differences not caused by the intervention and thus in biased estimates of impact.

To overcome these issues, we would conduct a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) and thus randomize the assignment of the project. Thanks to the law of large number we would have no a priori reason to think that the groups are different, if the project is large enough. This would allow us to make a comparison between both groups in order to find the impact of the project. There are two major constraints that prevent us from adopting this approach: the project had started at the time of the baseline, so there was no way to randomize treatment assignment; and the size of the project is very small, only three villages received a project in the end. Even if we were to select these at random, three is not a large enough number to guarantee balance between treatment and control groups.

We therefore opted to carefully select villages that were comparable to the treatment villages. This is not entirely possible, as the project explicitly targets the headquarter villages of the groupements of the Bapère sector. There is no nearby sector that is as remote as Bapère, and within Bapère there are no other groupements than the ones were intended to be treated. In consultation with AGIR staff, villages were selected that were as large as the treatment villages, and as remote. Not all of these villages were in Bapère, as some were in adjacent areas.

Furthermore, rather than assuming these two groups were completely equal, we assume both are subject to the same trends. This allows us to use a difference-in-difference (DD) model. Rather than measuring a difference ex-post, we measure the difference in the differences of the groups.

Econometrically speaking the difference-in-difference estimator is given by the following expression:

$$Y_{ijt} = \alpha + \beta_1 Post_t + \beta_2 D_j^T + \beta_3 Post_t D_j^T + \varepsilon_{ijt},$$

where  $Y_{ijt}$  denotes an outcome variable for respondent  $i$  in group  $j$  at time  $t$ ,  $D_j^T$  is a dummy variable equal to one if the respondent belonged to the treatment group,  $Post_t$  is a binary variable that takes the value one if the observation corresponds to the post-treatment time period, and  $\varepsilon_{ijt}$  denotes the error term. Then  $\beta_3$  in the equation above is the treatment estimate of the intervention's impact on outcome  $Y$ . That is,  $\beta_3$  measures the difference between the treatment and control group in the growth of outcome  $Y$ , and is an unbiased estimate of the average impact on the dependent variable  $Y$  of being assigned to the treatment group provided there is only selection on the observed variables.

## 5. Data collection

Baseline data collection took place in June/July 2012 by trained Congolese enumerators in 128 households, spread out over 8 villages in the Bapère sector. Four of these were intended to become treatment villages, four were selected as controls. As the project progressed, it turned out not to be

feasible to implement any project activities in one of the intended treatment villages, as it was too remote. This village, and the village selected to be its control village, were therefore not visited during the follow up, and baseline data for these villages will not be considered for analysis. This leaves us with 96 households.

The follow-up was carried out in July 2014, and targeted the same households. Each enumeration site was visited by a team of two enumerators who stayed in the village for three days. By spreading out the work over three days, attrition was minimized to the maximum extent possible within our budget and safety protocols. Despite these measures, enumerators were only able to find 57 households, 60% of the total sample. This means that attrition is extremely high, and more problematically, there are indications that this is not entirely random: in some villages, people had left to visit their farms which were located far away -multiple days of walking. This meant that they did not go back to their homes for extended periods of time. The hope was that they would be in the village for church on Sunday at least, but this was not always the case.

Descriptive statistics for the baseline and endline data collection are presented in Table 1 and Table 2, respectively. We have collected data on sustainable (agro-forestry) and unsustainable activities (mining and forestry). Across the board, very few people engage in agro-forestry, whereas forestry is very popular. For the theme of good governance we have added indicators for the trust in the ability of authorities to act in the interest of respondents.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to get the detailed financial information needed to provide the efficiency analysis.



Table 1: Descriptive statistics for baseline data collection

| Indicator                                    | Control |       |          |     |     | Treatment |       |          |     |     | Diff   |
|--|---------|-------|----------|-----|-----|-----------|-------|----------|-----|-----|--------|
|  | N       | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max | N         | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max |        |
| Fraction of respondents using Agroforestry   | 27      | 0     | 0        | 0   | 0   | 18        | 0.056 | 0.236    | 0   | 1   | 0.056  |
| Engages in forestry (fraction)               | 27      | 0.185 | 0.396    | 0   | 1   | 18        | 0.222 | 0.428    | 0   | 1   | 0.037  |
| Engages in mining (fraction)                 | 27      | 0.148 | 0.362    | 0   | 1   | 18        | 0.056 | 0.236    | 0   | 1   | -0.093 |
| I respect the Mwami (% agree)                | 27      | 0.963 | 0.192    | 0   | 1   | 16        | 1     | 0        | 1   | 1   | 0.037  |
| I can go to the Mwami for help(% agree)      | 27      | 0.963 | 0.192    | 0   | 1   | 16        | 0.875 | 0.342    | 0   | 1   | -0.088 |
| The Mwami can act in my interest (% agree)   | 27      | 0.889 | 0.32     | 0   | 1   | 17        | 0.765 | 0.437    | 0   | 1   | -0.124 |
| I respect our chief (% agree)                | 27      | 0.963 | 0.192    | 0   | 1   | 16        | 1     | 0        | 1   | 1   | 0.037  |
| I can go to our chief for help(% agree)      | 27      | 0.926 | 0.267    | 0   | 1   | 16        | 0.938 | 0.25     | 0   | 1   | 0.012  |
| Our chief can act in my interest (% agree)   | 27      | 0.889 | 0.32     | 0   | 1   | 17        | 0.824 | 0.393    | 0   | 1   | -0.065 |
| I respect politicians (% agree)              | 21      | 0.952 | 0.218    | 0   | 1   | 14        | 0.786 | 0.426    | 0   | 1   | -0.167 |
| I can go to politicians for help(% agree)    | 19      | 0.789 | 0.419    | 0   | 1   | 13        | 0.923 | 0.277    | 0   | 1   | 0.134  |
| Politicians can act in my interest (% agree) | 19      | 0.579 | 0.507    | 0   | 1   | 15        | 0.733 | 0.458    | 0   | 1   | 0.154  |

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for endline data collection

| Indicator  | Control |       |          |     |     | Treatment |       |          |     |     |
|--|---------|-------|----------|-----|-----|-----------|-------|----------|-----|-----|
|  | N       | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max | N         | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max |
| Use agroforestry on at least one plot                  | 27      | 0.037 | 0.192    | 0   | 1   | 18        | 0     | 0        | 0   | 0   |
| Engages in forestry                                    | 27      | 0     | 0        | 0   | 0   | 17        | 0.059 | 0.243    | 0   | 1   |
| Engages in mining                                      | 27      | 0.074 | 0.267    | 0   | 1   | 17        | 0.118 | 0.332    | 0   | 1   |
| I respect the Mwami (agree/don't agree)                | 27      | 1     | 0        | 1   | 1   | 17        | 0.941 | 0.243    | 0   | 1   |
| I can go to the Mwami for help (agree/don't agree)     | 27      | 1     | 0        | 1   | 1   | 17        | 0.941 | 0.243    | 0   | 1   |
| The Mwami can act in my interest (agree/don't agree)   | 27      | 0.926 | 0.267    | 0   | 1   | 18        | 0.667 | 0.485    | 0   | 1   |
| I respect our chief (agree/don't agree)                | 27      | 1     | 0        | 1   | 1   | 17        | 0.941 | 0.243    | 0   | 1   |
| I can go to our chief for help (agree/don't agree)     | 27      | 1     | 0        | 1   | 1   | 18        | 0.889 | 0.323    | 0   | 1   |
| Our chief can act in my interest (agree/don't agree)   | 27      | 0.963 | 0.192    | 0   | 1   | 18        | 0.778 | 0.428    | 0   | 1   |
| I respect politicians (agree/don't agree)              | 27      | 0.815 | 0.396    | 0   | 1   | 15        | 0.6   | 0.507    | 0   | 1   |
| I can go to politicians for help (agree/don't agree)   | 27      | 0.667 | 0.48     | 0   | 1   | 13        | 0.385 | 0.506    | 0   | 1   |
| Politicians can act in my interest (agree/don't agree) | 27      | 0.481 | 0.509    | 0   | 1   | 12        | 0.083 | 0.289    | 0   | 1   |

## 6. Analyses and results

The main findings from our quantitative are presented in Table 3. Results will be discussed by MDG and Theme. After the discussion of the results, we will focus on our second research question: has the project reached its objectives. After this, the relevance of our findings will be discussed.

Table 3: Results

| Indicator  | DD                     |
|--|------------------------|
| <b>MDG 7</b>   |                        |
| Engages in Agroforestry (yes/no)                       | -0.093<br>(-1.383)     |
| Engages in forestry (yes/no)                           | 0.022<br>(0.15)        |
| Engages in mining (yes/no)                             | 0.136<br>(1.192)       |
| <b>Good Governance</b>                                 |                        |
| I respect the Mwami (agree/don't agree)                | -0.096<br>(-1.376)     |
| I can go to the Mwami for help (agree/don't agree)     | 0.029<br>(0.254)       |
| The Mwami can act in my interest (agree/don't agree)   | -0.135<br>(-0.762)     |
| I respect our chief (agree/don't agree)                | -0.096<br>(-1.376)     |
| I can go to our chief for help (agree/don't agree)     | -0.123<br>(-1.064)     |
| Our chief can act in my interest (agree/don't agree)   | -0.12<br>(-0.794)      |
| I respect politicians (agree/don't agree)              | -0.048<br>(-0.237)     |
| I can go to politicians for help (agree/don't agree)   | -0.416 **<br>(-2.161)  |
| Politicians can act in my interest (agree/don't agree) | -0.553 ***<br>(-2.907) |

Notes: *t-values in parentheses; Significance levels: \*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ ;*

First, we consider project impact on MDG 7. A number of indicators were selected to reflect AGIR’s actions. No strong evidence is found for impact AGIR has made. Not many people use sustainable land use practices such as agroforestry. Figure 1 demonstrates that it does not matter whether we look at treatment or control: these practices are unpopular across the board. In terms of mining, the story is

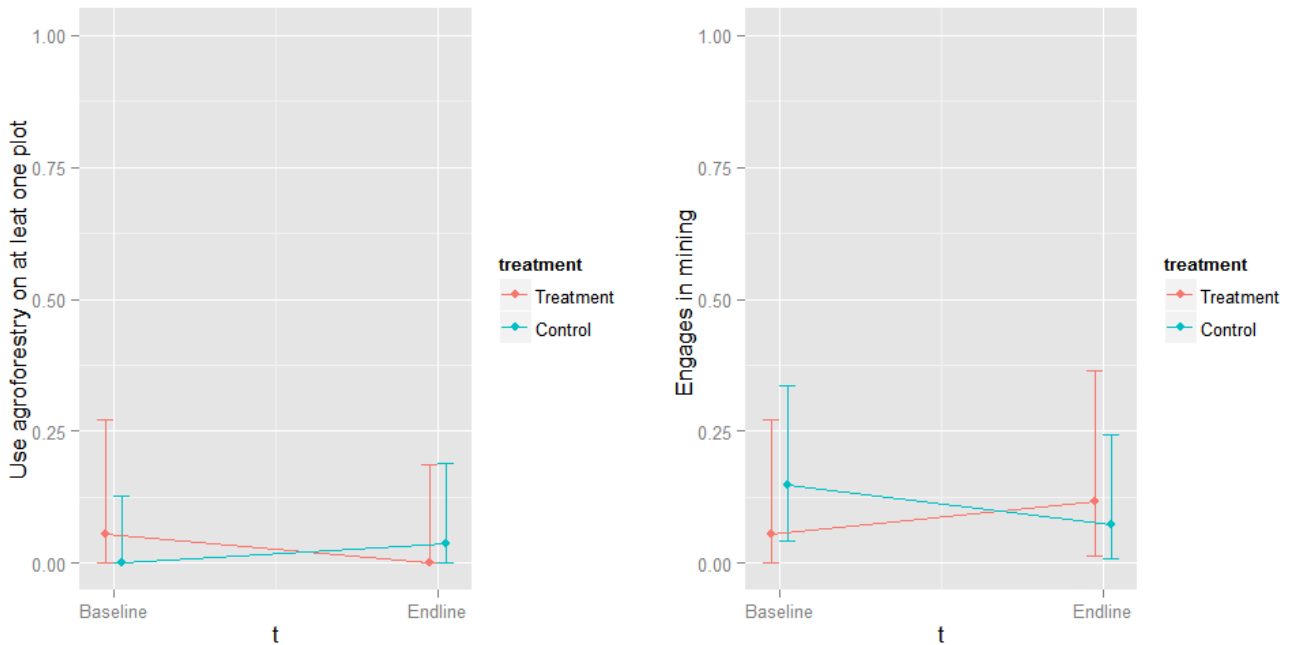


Figure 1: Selected indicators for MDG 7. Vertical bars represent the 95% confidence interval.

similar. Not much has changed. If anything, more people engage in mining in treatment communities. While the coefficient for this indicator is fairly large, it is not significant. This can be attributed to the small sample size in our study. Since the project is fairly small, the sample size is necessarily small as well.

When looking at the theme of good governance, we see no changes at the local level. Trends in terms of

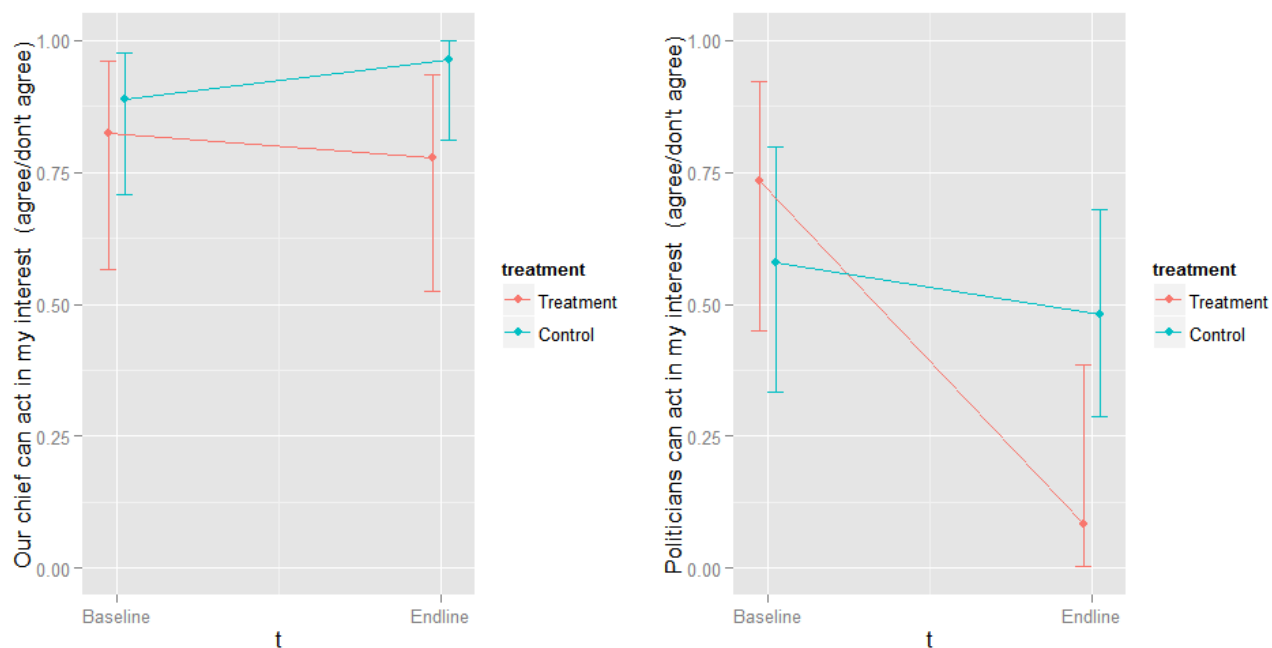


Figure 2

respect for local leaders and their ability to act in the respondents' behalf are about the same for treatment and control group. It should be noted that the confidence in local chiefs has dropped in the treatment group, relative to the control group. This fact is apparent from the left panel of Figure 2. Local leaders are generally respected and accessible to the people. However, a slight decrease is seen in treatment villages, while a slight increase is seen in control villages.

At the higher level, people have a lot less faith in their national politicians. But whereas this stays relatively the same in control villages, the belief in politicians drops precipitously in the treatment arm of our sample. We will elaborate on these trends in the discussion below.

This decline in the indicators for good governance per se does not need to be indicative of a project failure. It could be that through increased participation in treatment villages, communities are more exposed to the Congolese political process. The political process in Congo is not well known for its fairness and efficiency, and people with greater knowledge might have become more disillusioned as a result. We feel this is not the case however. Research supervision staff from Wageningen University and the Université Catholique Graben have visited all treatment villages, and had informal talks with respondents and low-level authorities. The views expressed about AGIR were not flattering. People either complained that they never saw AGIR, or that when they did, it was because AGIR -with the consent of local authorities, bought up land closest to the village for agro-forestry demonstration plots. This has as a direct result that the people have to resort to fields further away for their own farms. This is a risk AGIR took when acquiring those field, with a pronounced short-term cost. We cannot yet say whether this will pay off on the long term, in terms of higher adoption of agroforestry.

AGIR's activities in the research area carry the potential for great relevance. Unlike other parts of the Kivus, the area is largely overlooked by NGO's due its remote location. Yet it is this location - between the Kivu highlands and the low-lying rainforest of the Congo Basin – that ensures it has a high biodiversity. These two factors combined – a very valuable area with little conservation efforts – make this project relevant. Our results indicate however that thus far no impact has been made on land use practices, which means that a further deterioration of the environment is a likely outcome.

## 7. Discussion

We consider a program of this nature as highly relevant for the Bapère sector. The region has a high biodiversity, but is under pressure from mining and forestry exploitation. The fact that the road to the region has been improved will do nothing to improve this situation. Involving communities into conservation activities is an effective way to ensure the sustainability of the environment (Porter-Bolland et al. 2012). Agroforestry is one particular aspect of AGIR's project that can contribute to biodiversity, while at the same time providing benefits to local communities (McNeely and Schroth, 2006).

While the philosophy behind the project is sound, some implementation details are found lacking. The program design did not take into account the extreme remoteness of the sector. The program was implemented in fewer villages than originally anticipated, and program officers cited difficulties in reaching the communities and security concerns as reasons for this. While security issues are highly volatile and cannot be planned for, the remoteness of the area has not become worse between 2012 and 2014. In fact road access to Manguredjipa has markedly improved.

Furthermore, it is unclear whether the projects has been successful in convincing the local governments of its philosophy. While community participation is of great use to conservation efforts, as described above, Frase et al. (2006) argue that for full effectiveness, participatory approaches need full government backing. Governance is quite weak in the area, and in any case it is difficult to measure what can be done in terms of buy in by authorities over the course of two years.

We would recommend several changes to the current project. First of all, monitoring of activities needs to improve. Now that access to the area has improved, this should not be as difficult as it used to be. The research team has had many informal conversations with inhabitants from the area, and these people frequently accuse AGIR of doing too little. It could be that AGIR's activities are not quite visible, but increased monitoring in the field by donors could shed some light on this.

Furthermore, mechanisms of local participation should be strengthened. We have argued above how important participation is, and in theory this project should involve the local community to a large extent. If this were really the case in practice, it is hard to imagine people being upset with the project because their fields have been taken away. So when choosing plots to field test agro-forestry methods, not just the chief of the village should be included in the process, but the community as a whole.

The impact evaluation itself is not perfect either. The sample size is low, restricting the power of the data. The fact that we do not find any results, could be a reflection of this small power. However, given the fact that the coefficients we find are either small, or of the opposite sign than expected, this is not very likely. An additional problem created by the fact that this is a small project, is that it is impossible to select a very good comparison group. If one village among the six is special in some observable or unobservable way, our estimates would be biased. This severely limits our ability to make any causal

claims about the impact of the project. A more qualitative approach would not suffer as badly from the low power, but would still be subject to the lack of a good counterfactual.

## **8. Conclusion**

We have found very little evidence of changing resource use patterns in the research area. People are just as likely to engage in mining, forestry or agro-forestry as before the project, and it does not seem that AGIR has managed to affect this. However, we cannot be completely sure that this lack of observed impact is due to the small sample size of the research.

In terms of good governance we see a decrease in the faith of people in their authorities. Because the sample size is small and non-random, it is not entirely possible to exclude selection bias as a cause of this. However, the research team has noted numerous complaints on how AGIR has worked with authorities rather than with the whole community to obtain plots for their agro forestry programs. While we cannot be certain which of the explanations is true, it is highly unlikely that AGIR has managed to restore faith in the authorities.

All in all, very little evidence of impact on the local population is visible. Our data shows no change in the pattern of resource use but a decline in trust in authorities. Our data is suggestive of the fact that this drop is caused by AGIR but due to the limited sample size we cannot prove it. However, we can certainly not say that AGIR has managed to reach its objectives. Since few other NGOs ever come to Bapère, if AGIR's actions fail to bring about a change, it is likely that demand for minerals and forestry products will remain the driver of change in the ecosystem, rather than the need to preserve biodiversity .



Table 4: Project evaluation. 1= low, 10 = high

|  | <i>Rating</i> | <i>Comments</i>  |
|--|---------------|--|
| The project was well designed                                      | 5             | The location selected for the project proved to be too remote for all of the planned activities to take place. |
| The project was implemented as designed                            | 2             | Not all activities were carried out everywhere. Some villages did not receive any activities.                  |
| The project reached all its objectives                             | 1             | The project has not yet delivered any results.   |
| The observed results are attributable to the project interventions | N/A           |  |
| The observed results are relevant to the project beneficiaries     | N/A           |  |
| The project was implemented efficiently                            |               |  |

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## Village list

| <b>Village</b> | <b>Treatment</b>      |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Katanga        | 1                     |
| Fatua          | 0                     |
| Ombole         | 1                     |
| Masisi         | 0                     |
| Kambau         | 1                     |
| Byambwe        | 0                     |
| Bikoka         | Dropped<br>in endline |
| Mabunazege     |                       |

## Data Sources

The following table provides additional information on the construction of variables. All data cleaning, construction of variables and analysis was done in R, the scripts for these procedures are available on request.

The questionnaire is attached as a separate document.

| Variable label   | Description   |
|--|---|
| <b>MDG 7</b>   |   |
| Use agroforestry on at least one plot                  | Module 3.2: Did you use agroforestry on this plot? 1 = yes for any plot; 0 = no   |
| Engages in forestry                                    | Module 2.1:: Does any household member engage in forestry? 1 = yes; 0 = no  |
| Engages in mining                                      | Module 2.1: Does any household member engage in mining? 1 = yes; 0 = no   |
| <b>Good Governance</b>                                 |   |
| I respect the Mwami (agree/don't agree)                | Module 6.6: I respect the Mwami 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree                |
| I can go to the Mwami for help (agree/don't agree)     | Module 6.6: I can go to the Mwami for help 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree     |
| The Mwami can act in my interest (agree/don't agree)   | Module 6.6: The Mwami can act in my interest 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree   |
| I respect our chief (agree/don't agree)                | Module 6.6: I respect our chief 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree                |
| I can go to our chief for help (agree/don't agree)     | Module 6.6: I can go to our chief for help 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree     |
| Our chief can act in my interest (agree/don't agree)   | Module 6.6: Our chief can act in my interest 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree   |
| I respect politicians (agree/don't agree)              | Module 6.6: I respect politicians 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree              |
| I can go to politicians for help (agree/don't agree)   | Module 6.6: I can go to politicians for help 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree   |
| Politicians can act in my interest (agree/don't agree) | Module 6.6: Politicians can act in my interest 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree |

# Civil Society Strengthening Report Caritas Développement Kindu

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Bart Weijs, Patrick Milabyo and Carolien Jacobs, Wageningen University

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## List of Acronyms

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| CDJP    | - Commission Diocésaine de Justice et Paix                                 |
| CENI    | - Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante                             |
| CFA     | - Co-Financing Agency (the Dutch donor organisation)                       |
| CLGP    | - comité locale de gouvernance participative                               |
| CSO     | - Civil Society Organisation   |
| CSI     | - Civil Society Index  |
| DRC     | - Democratic Republic of the Congo   |
| ETD     | - entités territoriales décentralisées, decentralised territorial entities |
| FSC     | - Fonds pour la Société Civile   |
| IFES    | - International Foundation for Electoral Systems                           |
| MDG     | - Millenium Development Goal   |
| MFS II  | - Mede-Financierings-Stelsel (the Dutch grant system)                      |
| MONUSCO | - Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation du Congo                 |
| NGO     | - Non-Governmental Organisation  |
| RFN     | - Rainforest Foundation Norway   |
| RRN     | - Réseau Ressources Naturelles   |
| SPO     | - Southern Partner Organisation  |

## 1. Introduction

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening. This report focuses on the civil society strengthening component.

As part of the civil society strengthening component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which development projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society during the evaluation period and the extent to which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and endline study and focuses on a broad sample of 19 partnerships. We conducted observations, workshops, field visits and interviews, during three visits in 2012, 2013 (smaller subsample) and 2014. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup> Core elements of our evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the Civicus Civil Society

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by Albert Ngoyi and Abbé Gaspard Lukongo (Caritas Développement Kindu). We thank them for their comments and additions.

Index<sup>2</sup>, which distinguishes five dimensions to civil society: Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment.

In this report we look specifically at the contribution of *Caritas Développement Kindu* to civil society strengthening. Caritas Développement Kindu is a partner of Cordaid and the Communities of Change (CoC) Alliance. Caritas Développement Kindu is a church-based organisation which aims to fight poverty and to promote the welfare of the population of the Kindu Diocese. For this evaluation we focus on the project with Cordaid/CoC: a one-year, EUR 52,491 project to support and involve the population of Kailo Territory (Maniema) in participatory governance. This project had no dedicated civil society strengthening component, but contained elements that can be considered civil society strengthening.

Our analysis reveals that at the level of Kailo Territory, the activities by Caritas Développement Kindu have contributed to increased awareness of human rights and accountability mechanisms among the target population. Surprisingly, local authorities and Caritas Développement Kindu staff indicate that tax revenues have increased. At the same time, two years after the project ended, the effect seems to be wearing off, with diminished activity of the newly-created local governance committees.

In the following, first we describe the country and relevant local context. Then we give a short description of Caritas Développement Kindu and the project with the civil society strengthening/policy influencing elements. Next, we shortly discuss the methodology. We then present the results, followed by a discussion and conclusion.

## 2. Context

In this section, we briefly describe the country and local context as far as it is relevant for the project under evaluation.

The Province of Maniema, and eastern DRC as a whole, is strongly characterised by the legacy of repeated conflict and high levels of insecurity. High levels of poverty are coupled with limited access to basic services, in a still young democracy with a history of clientelism and rent-seeking. Eastern DRC is reputed for high levels of gender-based violence, including sexual violence against women. A great deal of international aid has gone to North and South Kivu, which have a history of civil society mobilisation. Maniema, however, has received significantly less attention from international organisations, and the organisations that are present are mostly concerned with humanitarian aid and food security.

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons. With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013).

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<sup>2</sup> [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org); see also CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (internal working document)



Though Maniema was affected less by the war than North and South Kivu, its isolation also makes it one of the poorest regions in the east of Congo. Many people were displaced during the war, and until 2005 high levels of insecurity severely affected food production. Many roads have fallen into disuse because of lack of maintenance, and the capital Kindu can only be reached by plane. Roads within the province are also in a dire condition, though in recent years several roads have been rehabilitated.

The population in the Territory of Kailo, the area targeted by the project under evaluation, makes a living through agricultural activities and mining in the north of the Territory. Because of the exploitation of mineral resources by the population, all state services that generate public revenue are present to collect taxes. The area has witnessed a series of violent confrontations between military and Mai Mai, but the authority of the state has been re-established, and the different population groups now live together in peace. Access to Kailo by road was difficult until 2013 when the road connecting Kailo to Kindu was rehabilitated by *Office des Routes* - now Kailo city is a two-hour drive from Kindu.

Due to the lack of experience with democracy and generally low levels of literacy (an estimated 20% of rural women can read and write), both citizens and local authorities in Kailo lack knowledge on human rights and the rights and duties of citizens and the civil authorities. Lack of knowledge about rights and judicial frameworks often leads to conflict about taxes or property rights in local communities. Security in Maniema is not yet stable, and these conflicts can pose a serious threat to peace in the region.

A history of corruption and bad governance is not easily undone, and the size of DRC is not making the process any easier. Governance in DRC faces many challenges, including formal and informal taxation, policies that are not implemented, and a stalling process of decentralisation. Decentralisation was part of the Constitution adopted in 2006, and the decision to put in place a more decentralised system of governance was taken 5 years ago.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, local elections have yet to be held. At the level of the local 'decentralised territorial entities' (*entité territoriale décentralisée, or ETD*), which corresponds with the level of the territories in Maniema, some organisations have moved ahead to engage in promoting participatory planning processes, each with their specific issues in mind. Local elections are considered an opportunity for people to gain experience with the political process and public management. Women's organisations view these elections as a strategic moment for increasing women's participation at the decision-making level. The national electoral commission CENI has recently proposed to organise local elections in August 2015.<sup>4</sup>

### **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

In this section we briefly describe Caritas Développement Kindu: its history, organisational details, main approach and areas of intervention.

Caritas Développement Kindu is a church-based organization which was created in order to contribute to development along with the evangelising mission of the Roman Catholic Church. In the Kindu

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<sup>3</sup> For more information, see: Cellule Technique d'Appui à la décentralisation, 2010. *La décentralisation au service de la paix, de la démocratie, du développement et de l'unité nationale.*

<sup>4</sup> For more information about the calendar and the latest news about electoral preparations, see the webpage of the national election commission: <http://www.ceni.gouv.cd/>

Diocese in Maniema, Caritas Développement has been operating for over a decade. Caritas Développement Kindu aims to fight poverty and to promote the welfare of the population of the Kindu Diocese. To achieve this objective, Caritas Développement Kindu focuses its activities on restoring human dignity, improving community health and socioeconomic conditions, as well as protecting and promoting human rights to all.

Since 2006, Caritas Développement Kindu has registered as an independent organisation, with its own judicial recognition. The organisation is led by the Bishop of the Diocese of Kindu, as the president of its Board of Directors. The Board oversees the coordinating/executive part of the organisation, which consists of four departments: the *Bureau Diocésain de la Caritas*, the *Bureau Diocésain de Développement*, the *Bureau Diocésain des Oeuvres Médicales* and the Justice and Peace Commission for the Diocese (*Commission Diocésaine de Justice et Paix*, CDJP).<sup>5</sup> It is this last department that executed the project with Cordaid under evaluation. CDJP aims at (i) protecting and promoting human rights, (ii) civic education, (iii) the education of children in civic matters, (iv) awareness raising of children regarding sexual transmitted diseases (STDs), (v) prevention, management, transformation and pacific resolution of conflicts, and (vi) promoting, peace, justice and reconciliation. CDJP serves as a link between the Kindu Diocese and state services regarding human rights issues.

The geographical focus of CDJP is the Kindu Diocese, with a current activities in the Territories of Kindu, Kibombo, Kailo and Punia. In the area of promoting governance, the CDJP used modules of training for awareness raising of people about issues such as (i) participatory governance, (ii) decentralization and participatory governance in the Maniema province, (iii) participatory planning and budgeting, (iv) the role and mission of the local governance committee in democratic processes. Strategies used include radio theatre, multiplication and distribution of up-to-date legal texts related to decentralisation and income generation, the support of sexual violence victims to get access to justice, as well as the organisation of social dialogue sessions and a *Tribune d'Expression Populaire* (TEP), space for popular expression, in the target area.

During the evaluation period, no major changes have occurred within the organisation. The overview below shows that Cordaid has been one of the major donors for CDJP during the 2011-2014 period. There has been a lack of stable funding by international donors for Caritas Développement Kindu in general. CDJP in particular has suffered from the lack of a permanent donor to support its activities in the Kindu Diocese. The former director of CDJP is nowadays advisor to the Bishop, with one of the former Project Officers functioning as interim director since August 2013.

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<sup>5</sup> Assisted by three support services: administration and finances, logistics, and the secretariat.

Table 1: overview of CDJP funding from 2011 to 2014

| Project  | Donor               | Major objective   | Period                          | Funding in EURO* |           |         |      |
|--|---------------------|---|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------|---------|------|
|  |                     |   |                                 | 2011             | 2012      | 2013    | 2014 |
| 104609 - Civic education project of people of the Kailo territory  | Cordaid             | accompagner et impliquer la population du territoire de Kailo dans la gouvernance participative   | October 2011 - September 2012   | € 46.374         |           |         |      |
| Involving local people in democratic processes                     | IFES/ USAID         | impliquer la population dans le processus démocratique  | 6-month projects in 2011 & 2013 | € 2.761          |           | € 3.842 |      |
| Governance in the mining sector project                            | Christian Aid / FSC | contribuer à la bonne gouvernance dans le secteur minier  | September 2012 - September 2014 |                  | € 76.838  |         |      |
| Improving working conditions of personnel at the tribunal of Kindu | Monusco             | améliorer les conditions de travail des magistrats et du personnel administratif; sécuriser les portes et fenetres du parquet près du tribunal de grande instance de la ville de Kindu par des grilles métalliques antivols | 3-month project in 2013         |                  |           | € 7.562 |      |
| Programme of food security in the Kindu Diocese**                  | Caritas Norway      | améliorer les conditions de vie de 1200 ménages agriculteurs et éleveurs dans le Diocèse de Kindu   | 2012 to 2016                    |                  | € 165.979 |         |      |
| <b>Total amount of funding 2011-2014</b>                           |                     |   |                                 | <b>€ 303.356</b> |           |         |      |

\*Amounts calculated in euros based on OANDA currency exchange rates

\*\*The 5-year project funded by Caritas Norway is about promoting food security in the Kindu Diocese; CDJP is involved in implementing activities related to peace building, alphabetization, good governance, rights of farmers and gender, which amounts to 35% of the total amount of project funding.

## Brief Theory of Change<sup>6</sup>

The 5-year-objective of Caritas Développement Kindu is to *improve socio-economic and health conditions, as well as the management of natural resources, in the Diocese of Kindu*. The organisation lists a series of conditions that have to be met, ranging from economic conditions, to health, human rights, and the own organizational capacity. It is important to have commercial banks provide micro-credit in rural areas, and there is a need to develop functional agricultural cooperatives. The construction of health infrastructure is another important condition, as well as another Peace Tribunal, and improving road access to remote areas is also an important condition. Education on human rights is of great importance in rural areas. To deal with this variety of conditions, there is a need for developing synergies with other organisations, and to collaborate with local authorities. With respect to the own organisation, Caritas Développement Kindu needs to have competent personnel available, and field workers need to be trained on monitoring. Caritas Développement Kindu needs well-maintained vehicles, and the internal organisation of Caritas Développement Kindu should become more dynamic. A final condition is a stable access to funding.

## 4. Project description: civil society/policy advocacy elements

Here we describe the project and its civil society/policy advocacy elements, in terms of size, budget, duration, major objectives and activities.

Cooperation between Cordaid and Caritas Développement Kindu started in 2007. Previous projects ran from 2007-2008 and from 2009-2010. The last project started on October 1, 2011, and ran till

<sup>6</sup> A more elaborate Theory of Change is available as Annex.

September 1, 2012: 104609, 'Civic education of people of the Kailo Territory'. It is this one-year, EUR 52,491 MFS II-funded project that forms the focus of this evaluation.

The project aimed to create a culture of democracy, in which the rights of citizens are respected, and which will lead to the prevention of conflict and improvement in the collection of taxes, so that the decentralised territorial entities will be able to function with their own locally-generated resources, for the development of the area. The project had three main objectives:

1. to strengthen the capacity of the members of the *comités locaux de gouvernance participative (CLGP)*, local committees for participatory governance, and community leaders, agents of public services that generate revenues, local and traditional authorities, as well as inspectors and teachers of civic and moral education at primary and secondary schools in Kailo Territory, in terms of participatory governance and human rights.
2. These people are equipped with a number of national and international juridical instruments on decentralisation, participatory governance, classifications of taxes, and the notion of human rights.
3. The target group has become familiar with human rights

In the area of intervention, CDJP set up 4 local committees for participatory governance, in Kailo, Malela, Katako and Kimiakimia, and worked with 3 CLGPs that were already existent. CDJP organised various trainings, directed at the main beneficiaries for this project, the local CLGPs, local authorities, and teachers. Besides these specific groups of beneficiaries, Caritas reached a large amount of beneficiaries through radio broadcasts and the organisation of public gatherings.

Beneficiaries of the project were ETD authorities: the ETD executive that consists of the chieftom/sector chief, the Secrétaire Administratif, the Receveur-Comptable and other state agents. Another group of beneficiaries consisted of teachers of the civic education course at secondary schools in Kailo territory. These were also trained during a workshop, in which they came up with a more elaborated program of the course of civic education for secondary school students. Finally, local people including diggers and sellers (at the market), who have to pay taxes to local authorities, constituted another group of beneficiaries.

We distinguish the following civil society strengthening elements:

- Creating and training local committees for participatory governance (4 CLGP created)
- Training the members of the CLGP, community leaders, agents of public services that generate revenues, local and traditional authorities, as well as inspectors and teachers of civic and moral education at primary and secondary schools in Kailo Territory on decentralisation, citizen participation in governance, elaboration and monitoring of the budget, citizen control of public action, and accountability and human rights (10 four-day workshops organised)
- Initiating social dialogue between those who govern and those who are governed (12 dialogues organised)
- Organising *tribunes d'expression populaire* (16 TEPs organised)

## 5. Data collection and analytical approach

Here we describe the baseline and follow-up assessment, as well as particular choices and data collection problems. We also explain here which outcomes were selected for the contribution analysis. The general methodology we followed can be found in as an Annex, as well as a list of documents employed, workshop participants and other informants.

Generally, we followed the methodology described in the Annex. The endline workshop was conducted by Patrick Milabyo, who was also involved in the baseline visit, and it involved a number of the same people as the baseline workshop, and a field visit to Kailo Territory. A draft version of this report was discussed with staff of Caritas Développement Kindu during a feedback workshop in DRC at the beginning of 2015.

As described in our methodology, we decided to conduct a contribution analysis for a subsample. Caritas Développement Kindu was not included in this subsample.

## 6. Results

In this section, we describe our findings. We provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions (Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment).

|                       | Baseline<br>2012 (0-3) | Endline<br>2014 (0-3) |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Civic engagement      | 2.0                    | 1.5                   |
| Level of organization | 2.0                    | 2.0                   |
| Practice of values    | 1.5                    | 1.5                   |
| Perception of impact  | 1.5                    | 2.0                   |
| Environment           | 1.5                    | 1.5                   |

### ***Civic Engagement***

*Under this dimension we distinguish the diversity of socially-based engagement (taking into account needs of marginalised groups, participation of target groups in the project), and the diversity of political engagement (is there dialogue of local leaders in dialogue with government representatives, are beneficiaries member of sectoral user groups).*

Through the connection to the church, and the parish committees in the intervention area, CDJP is well aware of the local context and the needs of the people. Target groups are not involved the conception or elaboration of project proposals, but leaders of grassroots organisations, community leaders and churches participate in assessments of needs and potential solutions. The CLGPs that were created during the project with Cordaid have been involved in the organisation of the social dialogue and the TEPs. After the funding for the project ended, members of the CLGPs indicate they continued to meet, but the frequency is diminishing. Without project funding, CDJP staff is not able to frequently visit the intervention area.

During the project, CDJP was regularly in touch with various authorities, and the authorities participated in the trainings that CDJP organised. A certain level of trust has been built between CDJP

staff and these authorities. There was also some collaboration with other CSOs in Kailo Territory, notably CIOD, but CDJP generally focused on the CLGPs. After the end of the project, relations with the authorities have become less frequent. The CLGPs are not often in touch with the authorities or other CSOs.

### **Level of Organisation**

*This dimension focuses on the organisational level of civil society (the connectedness of SPOs in networks of organisations, the nature of relationships between SPOs and networks, and the degree of representation of interests); peer to peer communication (the strength of the relationships of the SPO with other actors); and financial and human resources (the composition of the financial resource base, availability of human resources).*

Since 2011, CDJP is part of the network of human rights organisations operating in Maniema, and participates in the consultations on a number of themes. At the Provincial level, civil society is organised in a *Bureau de la Coordination de la Société Civile*, in which CSOs are grouped in thematic clusters. CDJP indicates that the thematic cluster on civic education, justice and human rights is an important means for them to be in touch with other CSOs. This is where exchange of information and experience takes place. We have found no evidence of collaboration in the form of developing joint activities or projects. There are a number of organisation with which CDJP collaborates more closely, including USAID/DAI, CAMPS, and RHBM. When CDJP encounters organisations operating in the same area, it attempts to make a division of roles. However, there is also competition for funding, and sometimes organisations behave opportunistically, and collaboration is not possible.

At the level of the province, the larger Caritas Développement Kindu collaborates with various levels of authorities, and state services, in the areas of health, justice, water and sanitation, poverty reduction and emergency aid. Internationally, Caritas Développement Kindu is connected to the international Caritas movement, and it receives financing from various Caritas organisations. Other main donors for Caritas Développement Kindu include UNICEF and UNDP. As described previously, recent years have seen a reduction in funding – Caritas staff think that donors feel that there is no longer a humanitarian crisis in Maniema.

### **Practice of Values**

*This dimension deals with internal governance (the functioning of the legally required internal committees, are they involved in the strategic management of the SPO, and the functioning of lower CSO levels), and transparency (respect of internal written procedures, extent of downward accountability, within the SPO and to lower CSO levels, transparency on finances).*

The internal organisational structure of Caritas Développement Kindu includes a General Assembly, a Board of Directors and an Audit Committee. There are no beneficiaries among the members of Caritas Développement Kindu. There are no regular GAs – the last was held in 2008. The Board is not elected. During our baseline visit, meetings of the Board and committee were irregular, and staff indicated that it was necessary to revitalise them.. During our endline visit, staff were more positive about the

functioning of the internal structure, nevertheless, only one of the two required Board meetings was held in 2014.

Audits are done regularly, upon donor demand, and financial audits are part of the organisational code of conduct. Caritas Développement Kindu also has started to conduct institutional audits.

### **Perception of Impact**

*Under this dimension we discuss the responsiveness (nature and intensity of SPO's relationship with the public sector and the private sector); social impact (target group satisfaction regarding fulfilment of their primary social concern, perception of public and private sector of quality of delivery of services by SPO); and the policy impact (the level of influence of SPOs in the process leading to major policy changes identified in the sector of the SPO's intervention since 2011).*

The needs of the target group for information on participatory governance and human rights are to a large extent satisfied; however, the impact of the activities by CDJP is still limited because of the limited financial resources available for technical assistance, after the project ended. Nevertheless, both local authorities, CLGP members and CDJP staff indicate that the activities by CDJP have contributed positively to the payment of taxes in Kailo Territory: apparently, people have become more aware of the need to pay taxes, and are more willing to do so now that they have the tools to hold the authorities accountable. The authorities in Kailo City are using the extra income to rehabilitate several bridges and provide a number of bicycles to state functionaries.

According to CDJP staff, they are invited by public sector actors and vice versa; therefore, they developed a space for information exchange and strategies on the regular basis. Local authorities and teachers in the Kailo territory have increased their knowledge in terms of public accountability and human rights to the extent that these notions are taught to students at school. The relationship with public sector actors is complicated by the tendency of public sector actors to ask for payment for participation in activities organised by CDJP. CDJP targets the private sector as citizens in the project with Cordaid, but does not specifically aim to influence private sector policy.

### **Environment/context**

*This dimension takes the wider environment into account. What is the degree of participation of the SPO in defining the civil society interventions of the CFA/Consortium; to what extent is a context analysis of the space and role of civil society in the specific country done as part of the programme /project cycle; to what extent is the SPO involved in studies on civil society?*

Caritas Développement Kindu staff collect information about the changing socio-economic context, as well as about political-security developments. These data are used in the elaboration of reports and proposals. The organisation does not pay specific attention to the development of civil society as such in Maniema, and it has not participated in defining civil society interventions by Cordaid/CoC.

## 7. Discussion

Given our findings, we think the project ‘Civic education of people of Kailo territory’ was reasonably well-designed and implemented, as it tied into existing needs of authorities to develop a tax base for the decentralised territorial entities, as well as educating people on how to hold the authorities accountable when it came to public expenditure. The development of CLGPs allowed for the involvement of these committees in the execution of the project, and represented a structure that could potentially remain to sustain the intervention after the end of the project.

Nevertheless, the development of participatory governance seems a process that requires a more long-term involvement. In this case, this one-year project was the only civic education project of Caritas Développement Kindu supported by Cordaid. We would advise financing a similar project in the future, on the condition that a more long-term perspective is taken (taking the sustainability into account, even if the actual intervention lasts only a year). The current project clearly shows that two years after the project ended, involvement of the authorities and the local committees has diminished. We would also recommend that a future project is coordinated with other actors who are supporting decentralisation processes in the same or similar areas, in terms of exchange of experience and approaches on the ground.

With respect to the evaluation itself: it would have made more sense to only include Southern Partner Organisations that would surely be funded during the entire evaluation period, to maximise the potential effects of the projects under study. This would require a more stringent procedure for selecting the SPOs and projects to be included in the evaluation.

## 8. Conclusion

Here we provide an answer to the two evaluation questions:

1. *What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?*

This project falls under the theme ‘good governance and fragile states’. Changes in civil society in Kailo Territory during the 2012-2014 period are limited, but there are some tentative changes. Many beneficiaries and school children have received education on participatory governance and human rights – the notions of human rights and citizenship have been successfully included in the curriculum of secondary education. Changes can be seen in the example of improved tax payment in Kailo Territory, and the authorities which are being held accountable. The project has contributed to increased communication and transparency between authorities and citizens, and as such to a strengthening of the social contract at the local level. At the same time, the effects of the project seem to be wearing off, two years after the end of the project. The committees that have been set up during the project are no longer very active.

*What is the relevance of these changes?*

The relevance of these changes is two-fold. The changes are relevant because they contribute to the viability of the ETDs, so that when the decentralisation is implemented a culture of participation already exists. When citizens can hold their leaders accountable, this can foster a culture of



transparency and public accountability, and ETD resources will be used for the development of the area.

The changes are also relevant vis-à-vis the Theory of Change of Caritas Développement Kindu: they contribute to the aim of improving socio-economic and health conditions, as well as the management of natural resources, in the Diocese of Kindu. The increased awareness of human rights, coupled to tools for participation in governance, can give citizens the ability to claim their rights and thus improve their conditions of life.

## List of documents collected

Caritas-Développement Kindu, Rapport annuel d'activités, exercice 2011, Kindu, Mars 2012.

Abbé Milambo Baika Munganga Augustin (Director of CDJP), document définissant les objectifs de la CDJP-Kindu.

Caritas-Développement Kindu, Rapport annuel d'activités, exercice 2010, Kindu, Juin 2011.

Caritas Développement Kindu, financement reçu de Cordaid

Caritas-Développement Kindu, Projet d'éducation civique des populations du territoire de Kailo : rapport narratif final, Kindu, Octobre 2013.

Cellule Technique d'Appui à la Décentralisation. La Décentralisation en bref: la décentralisation au service de la paix, de la démocratie, du développement et de l'unité nationale. Ministère de l'Intérieur, Sécurité, Décentralisation et Affaires Coutumières, Kinshasa, 2013.

Commission Electorale Indépendante. Constitution de la République Démocratique du Congo, Loi portant organisations des élections présidentielles, législatives, provinciales, urbaines, municipales et locales, Décision N° 003/CEI/BUR/06 du 09 Mars 2006 portant mesures d'application de la Loi N° 06/006 du 9 Mars 2006 portant organisation des élections présidentielles, législatives, provinciales, urbaines, municipales et locales, Kinshasa, Mars 2006.

Prévision des matières du cours d'éducation civique et morale (1ère et 2è) dans les écoles secondaires du territoire de Kailo en province du Maniema, Kailo, 13 Avril 2012.

ESynDoc237201212178 projectkenschets

projet révisé 22 aout 2011 1

20120427 104609 Rapport d'Activités 1

37 Organization scan(2)

FINANCEMENTS CORDAID A LA CARITAS DEVELOPPEMENT KINDU 2007 2012

Plan operationnel CDK

RAPPORT ANNUEL 2011

104609 Rapport Narratif final Octobre 2011 - Septembre 2012 Kindu

20111003 104609 Received Contract

CARIKIN 20121211 104609 Rapport Financier Final, Octobre 2011 - Septembre 2012

**Baseline visit: 13-15 October, 2012**

**Endline visit: 13-16 August, 2014**

**Feedback workshop : February 4-5, 2015**

## List of Informants

### Internal to organisation

| Name                   | Position  | Workshop baseline | Workshop end line | CS questionnaire baseline | CS questionnaire end line | interview baseline | Group interview baseline | interview end line |
|------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Joseph Kitumba         | Secrétaire de Direction                               | X                 |                   | X                         |                           |                    |                          |                    |
| Heritier Lutula        | Assistant chargé de programme                         | X                 |                   |                           |                           |                    |                          |                    |
| Lambert Amzati         | Comptable Caritas Kindu                               | X                 | X                 | X                         | X                         |                    |                          | X                  |
| Albert Ngoyi           | chargé projet Justice et Paix/<br>Directeur CDJP a.i. | X                 | X                 | X                         | X                         |                    |                          | X                  |
| Roger Mwaka            | chargé projet Bureau Diocésain de Développement       | X                 |                   | X                         |                           |                    |                          |                    |
| Stanislas Abeli        | Directeur Caritas                                     | X                 |                   | X                         |                           |                    | X1                       |                    |
| Shango Aimé Cesaire    | Directeur BDD   | X                 |                   |                           |                           | X                  |                          |                    |
| Jacques Kambere        | chargé projet Caritas                                 | X                 |                   | X                         |                           | X                  |                          |                    |
| Abbé Augustin Milambo  | Directeur CDJP  | X                 |                   | X                         |                           | X                  |                          |                    |
| Abbé Gaspard Lukongo   | Coordonnateur Caritas Kindu                           | x                 |                   | X                         |                           |                    | X2                       |                    |
| Soeur Elisabeth Kyala  | finance and administration                            |                   |                   |                           |                           | X                  |                          |                    |
| Fabrice Ashibo Itongwa | chargé des Urgences                                   |                   |                   |                           |                           |                    | X1                       |                    |
| Abbé Francois          | Former Coordonnateur Caritas Kindu                    |                   |                   |                           |                           |                    | X2                       |                    |
| Amuri Mashauri Léonard | Président CLGP-Katakoto                               |                   | X                 |                           | X                         |                    |                          |                    |
| Dita Yekuli Charles    | Secrétaire rapporteur CLGP-Katakoto                   |                   | X                 |                           | X                         |                    |                          |                    |
| Mushabah Saleh         | Bénéficiaire  |                   | X                 |                           |                           |                    |                          |                    |

Besides our meetings with Caritas Développement Kindu staff, we also had a number of meetings with beneficiaries:

- CLGP-Kailo: Peneyambula Kanganga, Mutandi Katalo Bushire, Mwangu Adolphe, and Kasisa Balikongo Augustin (1er conseiller, secrétaire rapporteur et membres), 14.08.2014
- 2 Women: Hélène (Trésorière CLGP-Kailo) & Munguakonkwa (Présidente de Wamama Simameni, a local non-profit organisation), 14.08.2014

### External to organisation

Cordaid The Hague, Roos Wilhelm, 09.08.2012

SOCIMA (Société civile de Maniema), Me Guy Mupasa (vice president), 16.10.2012

Cordaid The Hague, Roos Wilhelm, 14.02.2013

Cordaid The Hague, Fanny Meeus, 23.05.2013

Boleko Ngeleza Mukota, Chef de cité Kailo, Kailo territory, 14.08.2014

Maurice Balungi, Kailo civil society president, Kailo, 14.08.2014

# Civil Society Strengthening Report

## Comité pour l'Education et la Promotion de la Femme de FIZI

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs, Bart Weijs, Koen Leuveld, Marrit van den Berg

Wageningen University

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## **List of acronyms**

ASMAKU - Association Maendeleo Kujitegemea  
CCAP - Comité de Coordination des Actions de Paix  
CEPROF - Comité pour l'Éducation et la Promotion de la Femme de FIZI  
CF – Congolese Franc  
CFA – Co-Financing Agency (the Dutch donor organisation)  
CGP – Comité de Gestion de Projet  
CSO – Civil Society Organisation  
CSI – Civil Society Index  
DRC – Democratic Republic of the Congo  
DCR –Dutch Consortium for Rehabilitation  
FARDC - Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo  
GA – General Assembly  
GEADES - Groupe d'Etudes et d'Actions pour le Développement du Sud-Kivu  
IFDC - International Fertilizer Development Center  
MDG – Millenium Development Goal  
MFS II – Mede-Financierings-Stelsel (the Dutch grant system)  
MONUSCO - Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation du Congo  
MUSO – Mutuelle de Solidarité (Solidarity group for savings and loans)  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
SGBV – sexual and gender based violence  
SLRC – Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium  
SPO – Southern Partner Organisation  
USD – United States Dollar

## Introduction

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of southern partner organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening.

In this report, we focus on one SPO, for all three parts of the evaluation.

The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in terms of selected MDGs & Themes, the SPO's capacity and in civil society during the evaluation period and the extent to which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and endline study and focuses on a broad sample of 19 partnerships, 5 of which are included in the capacity development component. We conducted large n surveys, focus group discussions, observations, workshops, field visits and interviews, during visits in 2012, 2013 (smaller subsample) and 2014. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup>

In the MDGs & Themes component of the evaluation, we examine the one project in terms of impact on selected MDGs and themes. To this end, we implemented two rounds of data collection (in 2012 and 2014) in the project's intervention area – both in intervention villages and treatment villages. This allows us to estimate a difference-in-difference model to measure the impact of the project.

In the capacity development component of the evaluation, we looked at the contribution of MFS II funding to strengthening the capacity of SPOs. Core elements of our evaluation approach for the capacity development component are the Theory of Change and the 5 Capabilities framework that has been developed by ECDPM. This framework breaks down organisational capacity into five capabilities: Capability to act and commit, Capability to adapt and self-renew, Capability to deliver on development objectives, Capability to relate, and Capability to achieve coherence.

In the civil society strengthening component, we looked at ways in which development projects have strengthened civil society. For the civil society strengthening component, the core elements of our approach are the Theory of Change and the Civicus Civil Society Index<sup>2</sup>, which distinguishes five dimensions to civil society: Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment. We furthermore used contribution analysis to take an in-depth look at the

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of this report was commented upon by Kenze Ndamukenze (ZOA/DCR), and Baobe Nabalongelwa and Trésor Marius Singira (CEPROF). We thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org); see also CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (internal working document)

contribution of Dutch MFS II funding to the development of organisational capacity and strengthening of civil society.

In this report we look specifically at *Comité pour l'Education et la Promotion de la Femme de FIZI (CEPROF)*. We look at the contribution of Dutch support to achieving impact on MDG 1 and the theme of Fragile States; at the development of organisational capacity of CEPROF, and at the contribution of CEPROF to strengthening civil society. CEPROF is a partner of ZOA and the Dutch Consortium for Rehabilitation (DCR). CEPROF is an organisation that aims to contribute to the development and empowerment of women in Fizi, within the household. Founded in 1986, the organisation has been a partner of ZOA since 2009, focusing on food security and good governance projects. For the evaluations on civil society strengthening and capacity building we focus on the subprojects within the larger ZOA/DCR PAMOJA project during the evaluation period: a five-year project to work on durable change in communities along three dimensions: access to resources and basic services; inclusive community governance.

The approach of ZOA involves closely working together with the implementing partners, and aims to contribute to the development of their organisational capacity. In our contribution analysis, we investigate the contribution of MFS II financing to strengthening the organisational capacity of CEPROF. With respect to strengthening civil society: this project had no dedicated civil society strengthening component, but includes a number of elements that can contribute to strengthening civil society. We have paid special attention to the local project management committees and solidarity groups created by CEPROF. In our contribution analysis, we seek to establish the extent to which MFS II financing has or has not contributed to strengthening civil society at the grassroots.

We find little impact on the selected MDGs and themes, though we cannot conclude that no impact was achieved as the power of the study is low. Our analysis shows that ZOA had the explicit intention to invest in organisational capacity development of CEPROF, and that it was closely involved in project implementation. We find that it is highly plausible that improvements in organisational capacity of CEPROF during the evaluation period, are related to MFS II funding. We found numerous capacity development activities undertaken by ZOA, but we found that the organisational capacity of CEPROF remained more or less constant. In terms of civil society strengthening, the project has been successful so far in stimulating beneficiaries to form MUSOs, and a governance structure at village level has been set up. The availability of farmland for the MUSOs was an important incentive to adhere. Though we think it is plausible that the MUSO approach will strengthen civil society at the grassroots, it was still too early to assess this impact.

In the following, we first describe the country and relevant local context. Then we give a short description of CEPROF and the project with capacity development and civil society strengthening/policy influencing elements. Next, we shortly discuss the methodology. We then first discuss the MDGs & Themes component, where we present our data, results and analysis followed by a discussion and conclusion. We then discuss the capacity development component, we present the results and contribution analysis for this component, which is followed by a discussion and conclusion. Finally, we



discuss our findings for the civil society strengthening component, including the contribution analysis, and again a discussion and conclusion.

## Context

In this section, we briefly describe the country and local context as far as it is relevant for the project under evaluation.

South Kivu, and eastern DRC as a whole, is strongly characterised by the legacy of repeated conflict and high levels of insecurity. High levels of poverty are coupled with limited access to basic services, in a still young democracy with a history of clientelism and rent-seeking. Eastern DRC is reputed for high levels of gender-based violence, including sexual violence against women. At the same time, especially South Kivu has a history of civil society mobilisation, and eastern DRC has received a great deal of international aid. South Kivu possesses a wealth of natural resources and has a high agricultural potential. The following paragraphs describe these issues in more detail.

### Conflict and poverty

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons.<sup>3</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas in South Kivu, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013). The Fall of Goma in December 2012 and consequent threat to Bukavu led to the evacuation of the majority of international staff, and drew the attention of the military to North Kivu, with other armed groups taking advantage of the situation ('the FDLR came out of the forests'<sup>4</sup>). The following defeat of M23 and military moves against other armed groups have led to more optimism, though. In general the security situation in the province was considered as stable, yet unpredictable during the evaluation period.

The decades of insecurity, conflict, and the rent-seeking dictatorship of Mobutu have greatly impoverished the DRC. The country has great potential for agriculture and possesses a wealth of mineral resources. The potential of all these resources however is far from being exploited. On the 2014 Human Development Index, DRC ranked 186 out of 187 (followed only by Niger). Gross national income per head was noted to be at \$444 in 2013, which was lowest of all countries for which data were available. In the same year, 87.7% of the population lived below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel, and the analyses by the Rift Valley Institute

<sup>4</sup> RFDP workshop end line

<sup>5</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014

## Agriculture

In South Kivu, which used to be the granary of DRC, roughly 3 out of 4 people live in rural areas.<sup>6</sup> A survey carried out in South Kivu in 2012 showed that around three-quarters of households in the sampled population make a living primarily in agriculture, either in subsistence agriculture (65%), commercial farming (5%), or by agricultural casual labour (6%).<sup>7</sup> Households within the same sample have access to 2.69 hectares of land, but often not all of this land is held in ownership. Due to various factors, such as insecurity, displacement, and market distortions, agricultural production is low. Food insecurity and poverty remain widespread.

Humanitarian and development organisations intervening in the field of agriculture are well represented in eastern DRC. Typically, humanitarian organisations often provide food aid, seeds, or small livestock, whereas development organisations are often more involved in the provision of small loans, in setting up cooperatives, or in organising mutual solidarity groups. The 2012 SLRC survey carried out in showed that 21% of all households had received food aid, 12% seeds and tools, 4% material aid (for construction) and 2% financial loans.<sup>8</sup> The survey did not investigate participation in cooperatives or saving groups.

We distinguish three dominant approaches in agricultural interventions: integrated soil fertility management; setting up cooperatives; and setting up mutual solidarity groups. The introduction of integrated soil fertility management (ISFM, or the French acronym in DRC: *GIFS*) was promoted by IFDC between 2006 and 2012. IFDC defines ISFM as ‘a set of agricultural practices adapted to local conditions to maximize the efficiency of nutrient and water use and improve agricultural productivity’.<sup>9</sup> According to IFDC, the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa has the highest negative soil nutrient balance in the world. All organisations in our sample that intervene in agriculture (VECO, UPDI, ADI-Kivu and CEPROF) have worked with this strategy and many of the farmers we met would refer to ‘GIFS’ when explaining how they are working towards higher agricultural production.

The second dominant approach consists of setting up cooperatives, which are seen as key to the development of commercial agriculture. Collective commercialisation of agricultural produce is supposed to lead to higher revenues, and joint material investments allow for intensification of production. Besides, organising people in cooperatives can be beneficial for community building and for strengthening social cohesion. The approach focuses on farmers that have stable access to land and are able to produce a surplus; this means that subsistence farmers or people without land titles may lose out. The rationale is that once the cooperatives are successful, the local economy will grow, also benefiting the small farmers that were not included - though there is debate about whether this trickle-down effect really exists, and to what extent.

Mutual solidarity groups (MUSOs) form the third approach. In these groups, a number of people get together to jointly save money. Members of the group can then take small loans, which they can use for

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<sup>6</sup> UNDP (2009) 'Profil Résumé Pauvreté de Sud Kivu 2009'. Kinshasa: UNDP.

<sup>7</sup> n=1259; Milliano, C.W.J, de, A. Ferf, J. Oude Groeniger, and M. Mashanda. 2014. Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study, SLRC.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> From: <http://www.ifdc.org/Expertise/ISFM/About-ISFM/>, viewed on 06.10.2014

developing commercial activities or agricultural investments. In this way, these MUSOs solve the problem of lack of access to credit which is often seen to hamper an increase in agricultural production. The members also make small contributions to support members with urgent needs, for example funerals or health problems.

Particular challenges in agriculture are plant diseases that affect cassava (the mosaic virus) and banana trees (banana bacterial wilt). In the fight against the mosaic virus, efforts have been made to introduce a resistant variety of cassava (called Sawasawa); however, the resistance of this variety is already decreasing. Given that cassava and bananas are staple foods in DRC, these plant diseases are a serious source of concern.

### Civil society in Uvira/Fizi

Civil society in South Kivu is relatively well-developed, with much variation in terms of organisational capacity. There is a large number of local NGOs, organised in thematic groups and networks, and they are not afraid to speak out against the government. At the same time, civil society is challenged in terms of fragmentation and weak governance. There is a strong presence of international organisations willing to partner with local NGOs. Though aid is concentrated in Bukavu and the surrounding Territories, there are also many humanitarian/development projects along the axis Uvira-Baraka (Fizi Territory). Due to persistent insecurity, the emphasis has been on humanitarian aid for a long time. In recent years, this is changing, with more organisations engaging in development aid. Nevertheless, the long-time humanitarian presence is often said to have led to an attitude of dependency, which people describe as *attentisme* (wait and see). This is a challenge for organisations attempting to set up development projects, as their beneficiaries are used to free distribution of materials, and changing this attitude is not a short-term process.

The dependency of civil society on foreign aid is high, and almost complete. NGOs derive their funding almost exclusively from foreign funding. Their own initiatives are indirectly derived from this funding, which does allow them a certain institutional leeway. Local grassroots associations are not directly funded, but depend for their operations, seminars, transport and accompaniment on funded NGOs. With the current diminishing presence of humanitarian organisations in Baraka (OCHA and UNHCR have closed their offices), and development organisations not yet rushing in to replace them, many CSOs and grassroots organisations may be facing a reduction in funding.

## Description of Southern Partner Organisation

In this section we briefly describe CEPROF: its history, organisational details, main approach and areas of intervention.

*Comité pour l'Éducation et la Promotion de la Femme de FIZI (CEPROF)* came into being as the women's branch of *Société Coopérative de Fizi (SOCODEFI)* in 1986. SOCODEFI was one of the first local civil society organisations in Fizi, and was strongly affected by the First and Second Congo wars. During the 1990s, CEPROF became more autonomous, but plans to become fully independent were put on hold during the war. After the war, only one staff member of CEPROF remained: Mrs Baobe Nabalongelwa,

the current Coordinator (*coordinatrice*), and CEPROF had de facto become independent – it was finally legally established as a Congolese non-profit organisation in 2007.

As Congolese NGO, the organisation is structured as follows: member form a General Assembly, which elects a Board and an Audit Committee. These three structures oversee the executive part of the organisation, '*la coordination*', which is composed of the staff of CEPROF and which develops and implements projects. Formally, CEPROF is based in Kazimia in Fizi. However, because of the conflict, the organisation had to move to a temporary office in Uvira, which has now become the de facto headquarters – the office in Kazimia is in ruins. This history explains why CEPROF has a geographical focus on Fizi Territory, while being based in Uvira.

CEPROF does not have a typical approach, other than that a significant number of staff are based in the field. Though its specific objectives aim at supporting women and women's organisations, CEPROF does not have a specific focus on women in its current donor-supported interventions. The organisation broadly works on three themes: agriculture, education, and livelihoods. Projects during the MFS evaluation period fall under the themes of agriculture and livelihoods. Main activities are the distribution of agricultural inputs and livestock, monitoring reimbursement and animal and plant health, and setting up *mutuelles de solidarité (MUSOs)*, solidarity groups in which members save money and lend this to one of the members.

Over the evaluation period, the number of staff grew from 7 to 20. Growth happened mostly in terms of field staff, apart from the Administration and Finances Officer who was employed in 2014. No one has left the organisation.

In previous years (until 2011), CEPROF received financing from Oxfam Novib for an education project - Oxfam Novib had been a long-term partner since 1990. During the evaluation period, ZOA was the only funding partner of CEPROF. Nevertheless, CEPROF continued support to beneficiaries of a previous project with Oxfam Novib in Kikonde. CEPROF also experimented with cattle raising, starting with three households, which have reimbursed. In Kikonde and Kazimia, with CCAP, CEPROF has been involved in reinserting 70 ex-combatants, building houses and providing vocational training, and sensitising authorities and the population.

*Table 1: overview of donor-supported projects of CEPROF during the MFS II period*

| Project                                  | Amount of funding (EUR)*              |                                   |                            |                                   |                          |                          | Total            |
|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
|  | 2011                                  | 2012                              |                            | 2013                              | 2014                     | 2015                     |                  |
|  | Contract: September 2011-January 2012 | March 2012-February 2013          | bridging March-August 2013 | September-December 2013           | April-November 2014      | <i>not yet available</i> |                  |
| Managed by CEPROF                        | € 8.699                               | € 28.853                          |                            |                                   | € 43.095                 | -                        | <b>€ 80.648</b>  |
| Managed by ZOA                           | € 17.048                              | € 59.595                          |                            |                                   | € 32.714                 | -                        | <b>€ 109.358</b> |
| Community (in-kind)**                    | € 4.027                               | € 13.836                          |                            | <i>documentation not provided</i> | n/a                      |                          | <b>€ 17.863</b>  |
| Budget for developing capacity of CEPROF |                                       | <i>documentation not provided</i> |                            |                                   | <i>info not provided</i> | -                        |                  |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>€ 29.774</b>                       | <b>€ 102.285</b>                  |                            | <b>€ -</b>                        | <b>€ 75.809</b>          | <b>€ -</b>               | <b>€ 207.868</b> |
| <i>Percentage managed by CEPROF</i>      | <b>29%</b>                            | <b>28%</b>                        | <b>-</b>                   | <b>-</b>                          | <b>57%</b>               | <b>-</b>                 | <b>39%</b>       |

## Project description

Here we describe the project and its capacity development/civil society strengthening elements, in terms of size, budget, duration, major objectives and activities.

Cooperation between ZOA and CEPROF started in 2009-2010, within the RAP programme. From 2011 onwards, cooperation continued in the PAMOJA project. This cooperation is intended to span the entire MFS II period from 2011 to 2015, in the form of yearly subprojects. As PAMOJA is executed in both North and South Kivu, in a collaboration between the Dutch Consortium for Rehabilitation and a number of partners, we first describe the general project, and go into the activities of CEPROF afterwards.

### The PAMOJA project

The project of CEPROF financed by ZOA is part of PAMOJA, the 5-year MFS II project of DCR in DRC (2011-2015), with a total budget of EUR 5,485,946. PAMOJA aims to contribute to durable change in communities along three dimensions: access to resources and basic services; inclusive community governance; and peace and stability. The project in DRC is executed in consortium by ZOA, Save the children, Healthnet TPO and Care International. Due to a budget reduction, ZOA is the only partner that works in South Kivu (in contrary to North Kivu, where the four partners jointly implement the project).

In South Kivu, the project focuses on the first dimension, and specifically on improving food security and livelihoods of vulnerable households. The project is executed in 12 villages<sup>10</sup> in the health zone of Nundu in the Territory of Fizi, in partnership with three local NGOs: ASMAKU (previously 8<sup>me</sup> CEPAC/BDR), GEADES and CEPROF. Activities of these NGOs are determined on a yearly basis. They submit subprojects to ZOA to work on three objectives: support to vulnerable households; support to good community governance; support to the development of agricultural value chains. ZOA field staff closely

<sup>10</sup> The villages of Mukolwe, Elemyonga, Lulinda, Lusenda, Katungulu, Kenya, Kaboke li, Sandja, Nundu, Tchaboba, Kabondozi, Mboko

monitor implementation, invest in capacity development of the implementing partners, and liaise with local authorities and civil society.

*Table 2: PAMOJA Fizi planning per year and per objective*

| Objective | Support vulnerable households |           |                     | Good governance | Support value chain development |
|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
|           | Agriculture                   | Livestock | Microfinance groups |                 |                                 |
| Year      |                               |           |                     |                 |                                 |
| 2011      | 1956                          | 161       | 20                  | CGP             | Support households              |
| 2012      | 978                           | 300       | 40                  | CGP             | Communal field                  |
| 2013      | 978                           | 260       | 49                  | CGP             | Construction of storehouses     |
| 2014      | 978                           | 195       | 58                  | Producer groups | Start of value chain            |
| 2015      | ???                           | 195       | 64                  | Producer groups | Filière proprement dite         |

*Source: presentation of PAMOJA at ZOA Baraka, July 2014*

Adjustments were made in the course of the project, most notably in putting the microfinance groups at the heart of the project, and the introduction of communal fields:

- the groups form the entry point for new vulnerable households that receive support,
- all the groups in a village elect members to form a village development committee (the successor to the CGP, *comité de gestion de projet*),
- and the microfinance groups form the basis for the formation of producer groups, who exploit a communal field together, and jointly sell the harvest.

Concrete final objectives for PAMOJA in Fizi are the following :

1. Every household has an increase in production of more than 80%
2. 80 groups of producers have been trained and have legal statutes (livestock, agriculture, microfinance groups)
3. Develop functional agri-value chains in the target villages

### CEPROF subprojects

CEPROF executes the PAMOJA project in two villages: Kabondozi and Mboko. The subprojects have a double focus on improving livelihoods and food security on one hand, and good community governance on the other hand. CEPROF does this through supplying agricultural inputs, access to land, goats, and facilitating joint sale of the harvest. CEPROF also set up local project management committees to jointly

implement the project, and facilitated the formation of *mutuelles de solidarité* (MUSOs), solidarity groups for saving and lending.

Over the evaluation period, CEPROF has executed 4 subprojects, all in line with the yearly objectives set by ZOA.

*Table 3: Overview of CEPROF subprojects 2011-2014*

|                              | <b>Year 1</b>   | <b>Year 2</b>  | <b>Year 3</b>   | <b>Year 4</b>  |
|------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Contract period</b>       | September 2011-<br>January 2012   | March 2012-<br>February 2013   | September-<br>December 2013   | April-November 2014  |
| <b># Beneficiaries</b>       | 905   | 2305   | <i>documentation unavailable</i>  | 2917   |
| <b># MUSO</b>                | -   | 2  | <i>Documentation unavailable</i>  | 92   |
| <b>Type of beneficiaries</b> | Farmers and pastoralists, local authorities and leaders   | Displaced, repatriated, returnees, host families   | <i>Documentation unavailable</i>  | Displaced, repatriated, returnees, host families   |
| <b>Objectives/ results</b>   | 1) increase agricultural production 65%<br><br>2) no. goats of 65 households grown from 2 to 4<br><br>3) two village CGP created, composed of 50% women, 40% men, 10% youth | 1) reinforce means of subsistence of 2305 households in agriculture and livestock<br><br>2) strengthen the 2 CGP and 2 MUSO in good governance<br><br>3) raise awareness among beneficiaries about mutual interest groups (MUSO)<br><br>4) develop agri-value chains | <i>Documentation unavailable:</i><br><br><i>From March to August, CEPROF twice received funding for three months, which allowed for the continuation of monitoring and some institutional support. The real project started on September 1, and lasted for four months.</i> | 1) improve access to food and revenue for 2917 households part of microcredit groups<br><br>2) improve operations and dynamics of the microcredit groups, as well as two committees of producers' organisations, 2 CGP, peace committees, local fishing committees, in order strengthen transparency and accountability<br><br>3) raise awareness among beneficiaries about mutual interest groups (MUSO)<br><br>4) develop one value chain for agribusiness per village |





- Capacity strengthening of CEPROF staff

An overview of the actors involved in the CEPROF subproject in 2014 (source: Annexe 1. Projet accepte PAMOJA avril-nov 2014 sous CEPROF). The overview clearly shows the involvement of ZOA at all levels of the implementation of the project, which illustrates the approach of ZOA to capacity development.

## Capacity development

In its approach, ZOA works alongside local partners: in what it calls the ‘programmatic approach’, it seeks to involve local partners in the execution of its projects. In the case of PAMOJA in Fizi, it works with CEPROF, GEADES and ASMAKU. ZOA considers the development of capacity of its southern partners an integral part of the project, with the aim of allowing the partners to independently execute the project, and a gradual withdrawal of ZOA.

Capacity development is included as a separate line in the overall budget for PAMOJA DRC, but has not been translated into a specific budget per partner. Capacity development has not been included in the subproject budgets of CEPROF. Key aspects of the capacity development approach by ZOA are:

- Yearly organisational scan, adapted from the 5C approach
- Yearly organisational development plans for each of the local partners
- Providing trainings on relevant topics
- Collaboration in the field: participation in project activities by ZOA field staff, such as selection of beneficiaries, meetings with authorities, etc
- Management of part of project finances, gradually transitioning during the MFS II period from about 70% in the beginning, to less than 30% in the final year

*Table 4: Overview of trainings in which CEPROF staff participated during the evaluation period*

| <b>Topic</b>             | <b>Date</b>   | <b>Trainer</b>         | <b>Participants</b>   |
|--------------------------|---------------|------------------------|---|
| MUSOs                    | November 2012 | ZOA                    | Ba’aci on behalf of CEPROF, with other partners’ MUSO staff |
| Results-based management | March 2013    | MDF Goma               | Baobe and Marius  |
| Advocacy (plaidoyer)     |               | ZOA Baraka             | Baobe, all partners of ZOA                                  |
| Do no harm               | July 2013     | Corita Corbijn, ZOA NL | Marius and Baobe  |
| Second training on MUSOs | July 2013     | ZOA                    | Ba’aci  |

|              |           |     |                   |
|--------------|-----------|-----|-------------------|
| Bookkeeping  | ???       | ZOA | Feza (bookkeeper) |
| Value chains | June 2014 | ZOA | ???               |

For some workshops, the participants on behalf of CEPROF (e.g. the do no harm and results-based management workshops) shared the input they received with the staff of CEPROF afterwards.

CEPROF had no other partnerships during the evaluation period, and received no training by other parties.

### CEPROF Theory of Change on capacity development<sup>11</sup>

The capacity development goal of CEPROF is *to be a reliable organisation for the advancement of women in terms of livelihoods and good governance in the territory of Fizi*. Staff indicate improvements have to be made in terms of financing, management of human resources, relations with other CSOs, the functioning of the internal organisational structure, and individual capacities. With respect to finances, CEPROF has to broaden the financial resource base, through e.g. submitting joint project proposals. Staff members responsible for donor relations need extra training on this. Funds and activities need to be managed transparently. This is also important for human resources: to have a devoted staff, salaries have to be at an acceptable level, there should be a clear division of tasks, and there should be regular meetings. Additionally, it is important that staff members are qualified and receive the necessary training. For this, a plan for capacity development is necessary, but also the existence of up-to-date statutes, management procedures, and a personnel code. Finally, internal accountability needs to be ameliorated, through providing the members of the GA, Board and Audit Committee with training on the functioning of a non-profit and the roles of the committees. CEPROF in turn should regularly report to its members.

### Civil society strengthening elements

The project does not have a specific civil society strengthening component. Nevertheless, each year the subprojects have a specific objective aimed at improving governance of the committees and structures set up by CEPROF in the two villages. This objective thus aims to strengthen civil society at the local level in Kabondozi and Mboko.

CEPROF undertakes the following general activities to strengthen local governance in Kabondozi and Mboko:

- Setting up, supporting and monitoring MUSOs
- Developing local community governance through setting up and training the CGPs, involving them in the implementation of the project; and integrating the CGPs with MUSOs, producer organisations, peace committees, into one village development committee

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<sup>11</sup> A more elaborate Theory of Change for capacity development is available as an Annex.

We have taken a closer look at these activities for our analysis of the contribution of MFS financing to strengthening civil society at the grassroots.

There are no specific advocacy/policy influencing activities in the subprojects executed by CEPROF. ZOA Baraka does play an important role in maintaining relations with local authorities, government services, and civil society in Fizi (Baraka), but this is beyond the scope of this evaluation.

### **CEPROF Theory of Change on civil society strengthening<sup>12</sup>**

The five-year goal of CEPROF is *an improved position of women in the Fizi territory, equal to men*. More specifically, women will be able to manage microenterprises, 60% of women/girls will enjoy higher levels of education, and women will have a representative presence in the decision-making institutions. To reach this, it is important that microcredit schemes exist, to support women's groups and to train them on microenterprise development. To improve the participation of girls and women in higher levels of education, it is necessary to create schools for girls, and girls and their parents should be educated about the equal rights of boys and girls. For equal participation of women in decision-making, there should be enough female electoral candidates during the elections, and it is crucial that women support female candidates during elections. Women need to be informed about their opportunities to be take part, and to join political parties, or even create new ones. For all of this, a decisive condition is the knowledge of the population about gender and women's rights.

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<sup>12</sup> A more elaborate Theory of Change for civil society strengthening is available as an Annex.

## Methodology

Here we describe the methodologies used for baseline and follow-up assessment, from all three components of the research. More detailed information such as a list of documents employed, workshop participants and other informants can be found in the Annex to this report.

### MDGs & Themes

The objective of this report is to describe changes in the empowerment of women that could be attributed to participation in the activities of CEPROF and the other NGOs involved in PAMOJA. To do this, we cannot simply measure the difference in terms of outcome for the beneficiaries of the project between 2012 and 2014. Many factors affect the outcomes, and there would be no way to isolate the causal effect of project participation from this multitude of other factors. The first step we take is to include a control group to our analysis. However, this still leaves two potential errors in our design: firstly, we can suffer from selection bias. The design of the project might mean that people with certain characteristics are more likely to enroll in the program. Beneficiaries could for instance have been wealthier than non-beneficiaries when the program started or vice versa. Besides self-selection bias, program placement bias is also frequently observed in evaluation studies. NGOs target their projects purposely at specific, often disadvantaged, areas. If the control group's physical, economic and social environment does not match that of the beneficiaries, this will result in differences not caused by the intervention and thus in biased estimates of impact.

To overcome these issues, we would conduct a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) and thus randomize the assignment of the project. Thanks to the law of large number we would have no a priori reason to think that the groups are different, if the project is large enough. This allows us to make a comparison between both groups in order to find the impact of the project.

There are two major constraints that prevent us from adopting this approach: the project had started at the time of the baseline, so there was no way to randomize treatment assignment; and the size of the project is fairly small, as CEPROF itself is only active in two villages. The whole project PAMOJA is larger, comprising activities in 12 villages. In order to increase the sample size of the research, we include all 12 PAMOJA villages in this research. This number is low enough to cause concern regarding the balance if we rely solely on randomization.

To get around the non-random assignment, we employed Propensity Score Matching (PSM). Using information provided by UNOCHA and CEPROF, we drafted a list of villages comparable to the ones in which CEPROF operates. We selected 12 villages, at random from this list. To these control villages, we added observations from the control sampling frames from two other projects that operate in the same area. We then estimate the Propensity Score based on as many non-outcome observables as possible.

Furthermore, even though PSM should produce a good balance, rather than assuming these two groups were completely similar, we only assume both are subject to the same trends. This allows us to use a double difference (DD) model. Rather than measuring a difference ex-post, we measure the difference in the differences of the groups.

Econometrically speaking the double difference estimator is given by the following expression:

$$Y_{ijt} = \alpha + \beta_1 Post_t + \beta_2 D_j^T + \beta_3 Post_t D_j^T + \varepsilon_{ijt}$$

Where  $Y_{ijt}$  denotes an outcome variable for respondent  $i$  in group  $j$  at time  $t$ ,  $D_j^T$  is a dummy variable equal to one if the respondent belonged to the treatment group,  $Post_t$  is a binary variable that takes the value one if the observation corresponds to the post-treatment time period, and  $\varepsilon_{ijt}$  denotes the error term. Then,  $\beta_3$  in the equation above is the treatment estimate of the intervention's impact on outcome  $Y$ . That is,  $\beta_3$  measures the difference between the treatment and control group in the growth of outcome  $Y$ , and is an unbiased estimate of the average impact on the dependent variable  $Y$  of being assigned to the treatment group provided there is only selection on the observed variables.

### Capacity development and civil society

In our evaluation of CEPROF, we generally followed the methodology described in the Annex. Interviews, workshops and focus groups with beneficiaries were conducted during baseline, midterm and endline visits in 2012, 2013 and 2014. A draft version of this report was discussed with staff of ZOA/DCR and CEPROF during a feedback workshop in DRC at the beginning of 2015.

For the civil society strengthening component, as described in our methodology, we decided to conduct a contribution analysis for a subsample, including CEPROF. CEPROF falls under one of the three themes in civil society which we further investigated: agriculture. For this theme, we conducted additional interviews with a range of stakeholders in Bukavu, including government services, other CSOs and international organisations, and some representatives of private sector organisations.

Outcomes selected for contribution analysis:

For the analysis of the contribution of the capacity development support of ZOA to the organisational capacity of CEPROF, we selected the following main outcome (see also the contribution story under the results of the capacity development component):

- the development of CEPROF's capability to Act and commit.

For the analysis of the contribution of the development intervention of CEPROF to the strengthening of civil society, we selected the following main outcome (see also the contribution story under the results of the civil society strengthening component):

- the strengthening of local civil society, in the form of the development of *Mutuelles de Solidarité*. We relate this outcome to the first CSI dimension, Civic engagement, the third dimension, Practice of values, and the fourth dimension, Perception of impact.

## MDGs and themes component

This section presents the evaluations of CEPROF's impact on selected MDGs & themes. The focus of the project is on MDG 1 - the eradication of extreme poverty and the theme of Fragile States. We answer the following questions:

1. What are the changes in terms of the selected MDGs & themes during the 2012 – 2014 period?
2. To what degree are these changes at target group level attributable to the development interventions of CEPROF and its partners?
3. What is the relevance of these changes?
4. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

This section is structured as follows. First we introduce our data, and the way in which it has been collected. We then present the results from our analyses. We then discuss our finding, and provide concluding remarks.

### Data collection

Baseline data collection took place in June/July 2012 by trained Congolese enumerators. The enumerators visited 21 villages (11 treatment, 10 control). This is a lower number than anticipated as during this time the security situation in the area was rather volatile. In some cases this led to the research choosing not to visit a village for safety reasons, and in one case the chief simply refused to cooperate. In the villages that were visited, we had interviews with 337 households, of which 163 were located in control villages and 174 in treatment villages.

The follow-up was carried out in June/July 2014, and targeted the same households. To do so, each enumeration site was visited by an enumerator to identify participants to the baseline, and make sure they would be present when the rest of the team visited the next day. This permitted some time to contact people (e.g. by phone) who were not present. As it was impossible to prevent absentees, enumerators would visit on a pre-determined third day to interview as many of them as could be reached. By spreading out the work over three days, attrition was minimized to the maximum extent possible within our budget, and safety protocols (as no enumerators were allowed to stay overnight).

Despite these measures, enumerators were not able to find 37 households, which translates into slightly under 10% of our total sample of 337 households. In light of the turbulent recent past of the area, this is quite a low rate of attrition.

Most of our indicators are based on standard survey questions. Details for how these were asked and treated can be found in the appendix. In addition we organized a standard trust game (sometimes called investment game) in each village. This game is played between two people: a sender and a receiver, who do not know each other's identity. The sender is endowed with six tokens, each worth FC 500 so the total endowment is FC 3000, or about 3 euros. He can send any number (or none) of his tokens to the receiver. Any tokens sent will be tripled by the researchers, before they're given to the receiver. The receiver then has the option to return any or none of the tokens to the sender (they're not tripled a

second time). The more the sender trusts the receiver to return at least some of the tokens he sends, the more he will be inclined to send. Here we report a simple difference in means of the amount sent by the senders in the treatment group vs. the control group. Every participant plays once as a sender, and once as a receiver, so we have this data for all respondents.

In addition, a general round of focus groups was done in targeted communities. In the treated communities, the sampling frame to invite people for these meetings was the same as the one used for the larger scale survey. In control communities, participants were invited using a semi-formal sampling method in which two enumerators walked through the community in a pre-determined pattern, inviting inhabitants of every 15<sup>th</sup> house they encountered. The time implementing a full census of these villages would have taken was not available, and this method ensured at least a geographic spread over the entire community.

Descriptive statistics for our main outcome indicators from the baseline and the endline can be found in Table 5 and Table 6 respectively. The last column in Table 5 presents the results from a simple t-test for the difference in means between the treatment and control groups. It should be noted that the PSM failed to balance on several indicators. This is not necessarily a problem when using DD models though, if the trends between the two groups are the same, apart from NGO intervention that is. This is a flaw that is inherent to the way the MFS II evaluations have been set up, and this topic will be discussed further in the discussion.

Another large worry in the quality of our data is on agricultural yields. While the structure of this data appears simple – all that is needed is a production figure in kgs and a surface area in hectares to create it – in practice there are some complicating factors. Farmers are not always well aware of the size of their fields, or are unable to express it in a unit of measurement that is comparable across farmers. Likewise, they do not measure their yield in kgs. Often local, volumetric measures are used. While we went to markets to obtain the weight of typical volumetric units, this conversion is never precise. All these steps make the chain leading from farmer answers to usable data a very long one, and prone to errors. If a farmer reports a value that is an outlier or otherwise unusable in one part in the chain, all the other answers are unusable. This leads to a low number of observations, and a high variance.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics for the baseline (continued on next page)

| Statistic  | Control |       |          |      |        | Treatment |       |          |      |        | Diff     |
|--|---------|-------|----------|------|--------|-----------|-------|----------|------|--------|----------|
|  | N       | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min  | Max    | N         | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min  | Max    |          |
| Credit use (fraction)                                | 153     | 0.25  | 0.44     | 0    | 1      | 151       | 0.3   | 0.46     | 0    | 1      | 0.044    |
| Non food expenditure (\$)                            | 145     | 17.83 | 18.41    | 0.44 | 101.44 | 149       | 20.29 | 19.26    | 0.56 | 110.78 | 4.434 ** |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                             | 84      | 18.39 | 32.75    | 0    | 125    | 80        | 22.6  | 36.34    | 0    | 141.67 | 5.125    |
| Fraction of cassava sold                             | 63      | 0.22  | 0.27     | 0    | 0.86   | 57        | 0.24  | 0.25     | 0    | 0.8    | -0.026   |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year                | 152     | 0.9   | 0.3      | 0    | 1      | 150       | 0.9   | 0.3      | 0    | 1      | 0.005    |
| Often suffered from hunger last year                 | 152     | 0.66  | 0.47     | 0    | 1      | 150       | 0.67  | 0.47     | 0    | 1      | 0.013    |
| I respect the Mwami (agree/don't agree)              | 150     | 0.87  | 0.33     | 0    | 1      | 149       | 0.91  | 0.29     | 0    | 1      | 0.003    |
| I can go to the Mwami for help (agree/don't agree)   | 140     | 0.64  | 0.48     | 0    | 1      | 134       | 0.61  | 0.49     | 0    | 1      | -0.01    |
| The Mwami can act in my interest (agree/don't agree) | 135     | 0.59  | 0.49     | 0    | 1      | 122       | 0.62  | 0.49     | 0    | 1      | 0.029    |
| I respect our chief (agree/don't agree)              | 152     | 0.91  | 0.29     | 0    | 1      | 147       | 0.95  | 0.23     | 0    | 1      | 0.012    |
| I can go to our chief for help (agree/don't agree)   | 144     | 0.69  | 0.46     | 0    | 1      | 141       | 0.66  | 0.48     | 0    | 1      | 0.022    |
| Our chief can act in my interest (agree/don't agree) | 139     | 0.59  | 0.49     | 0    | 1      | 132       | 0.68  | 0.47     | 0    | 1      | 0.058    |
| I respect politicians (agree/don't agree)            | 131     | 0.73  | 0.44     | 0    | 1      | 135       | 0.73  | 0.45     | 0    | 1      | -0.018   |
| I can go to politicians for help (agree/don't agree) | 119     | 0.3   | 0.46     | 0    | 1      | 108       | 0.19  | 0.4      | 0    | 1      | -0.053   |



| Statistic  | Control |      |          |     |     | Treatment |      |          |     |     | Diff      |
|--|---------|------|----------|-----|-----|-----------|------|----------|-----|-----|-----------|
|  | N       | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Max | N         | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Max |           |
| Politicians can act in my interest (agree/don't agree)   | 114     | 0.23 | 0.42     | 0   | 1   | 94        | 0.19 | 0.4      | 0   | 1   | 0.016     |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | 149     | 2.72 | 1.74     | 0   | 6   | 145       | 2.1  | 1.67     | 0   | 6   | 0.103     |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | 152     | 0.59 | 0.49     | 0   | 1   | 153       | 0.68 | 0.47     | 0   | 1   | 0.078 **  |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | 153     | 0.22 | 0.42     | 0   | 1   | 153       | 0.3  | 0.46     | 0   | 1   | 0.038     |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | 153     | 0.08 | 0.28     | 0   | 1   | 153       | 0.08 | 0.28     | 0   | 1   | 0         |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | 153     | 0.23 | 0.42     | 0   | 1   | 153       | 0.27 | 0.45     | 0   | 1   | 0.027     |
| Used Fertilizer (yes/no)                                 | 146     | 0.02 | 0.14     | 0   | 1   | 148       | 0.03 | 0.16     | 0   | 1   | 0.128 *** |
| Improved seeds use                                       | 146     | 0.18 | 0.38     | 0   | 1   | 148       | 0.42 | 0.5      | 0   | 1   | 0.177 *** |

Table 6: Descriptive statistics for the endline (Continued on next page)

| Statistic  | Control |       |          |     |        | Treatment |       |          |     |       |
|--|---------|-------|----------|-----|--------|-----------|-------|----------|-----|-------|
|  | N       | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max    | N         | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max   |
| Credit use (fraction)                                | 143     | 0.59  | 0.49     | 0   | 1      | 133       | 0.59  | 0.49     | 0   | 1     |
| Non food expenditure (\$)                            | 139     | 14.91 | 14.25    | 0.7 | 68.56  | 124       | 15.95 | 16.9     | 0.2 | 92.11 |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                             | 72      | 15.62 | 81.96    | 0.1 | 695.45 | 74        | 5.39  | 7.01     | 0   | 39.67 |
| Fraction of cassava sold                             | 111     | 0.25  | 0.25     | 0   | 0.71   | 106       | 0.25  | 0.27     | 0   | 1     |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year                | 143     | 0.96  | 0.2      | 0   | 1      | 133       | 0.95  | 0.22     | 0   | 1     |
| Often suffered from hunger last year                 | 143     | 0.77  | 0.42     | 0   | 1      | 133       | 0.78  | 0.41     | 0   | 1     |
| I respect the Mwami (agree/don't agree)              | 137     | 0.91  | 0.29     | 0   | 1      | 126       | 0.93  | 0.26     | 0   | 1     |
| I can go to the Mwami for help (agree/don't agree)   | 134     | 0.81  | 0.4      | 0   | 1      | 125       | 0.78  | 0.41     | 0   | 1     |
| The Mwami can act in my interest (agree/don't agree) | 135     | 0.68  | 0.47     | 0   | 1      | 124       | 0.62  | 0.49     | 0   | 1     |
| I respect our chief (agree/don't agree)              | 143     | 0.97  | 0.18     | 0   | 1      | 132       | 0.99  | 0.09     | 0   | 1     |
| I can go to our chief for help (agree/don't agree)   | 143     | 0.89  | 0.32     | 0   | 1      | 133       | 0.94  | 0.24     | 0   | 1     |
| Our chief can act in my interest (agree/don't agree) | 140     | 0.76  | 0.43     | 0   | 1      | 133       | 0.79  | 0.41     | 0   | 1     |
| I respect politicians (agree/don't agree)            | 139     | 0.75  | 0.44     | 0   | 1      | 130       | 0.62  | 0.49     | 0   | 1     |
| I can go to politicians for help (agree/don't agree) | 133     | 0.37  | 0.48     | 0   | 1      | 128       | 0.4   | 0.49     | 0   | 1     |

| Statistic  | Control |      |          |     |     | Treatment |      |          |     |     |
|--|---------|------|----------|-----|-----|-----------|------|----------|-----|-----|
|  | N       | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Max | N         | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Max |
| Politicians can act in my interest (agree/don't agree)   | 131     | 0.24 | 0.43     | 0   | 1   | 125       | 0.26 | 0.44     | 0   | 1   |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | 117     | 3.32 | 1.36     | 1   | 6   | 112       | 3.31 | 1.53     | 1   | 6   |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | 142     | 0.56 | 0.5      | 0   | 1   | 133       | 0.47 | 0.5      | 0   | 1   |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | 153     | 0.15 | 0.36     | 0   | 1   | 153       | 0.17 | 0.38     | 0   | 1   |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | 153     | 0.03 | 0.16     | 0   | 1   | 153       | 0.04 | 0.19     | 0   | 1   |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | 153     | 0.09 | 0.29     | 0   | 1   | 153       | 0.1  | 0.3      | 0   | 1   |
| Tokens sent in trust game                                | 143     | 1.8  | 1        | 0   | 5   | 133       | 1.76 | 0.86     | 0   | 5   |
| Used Fertilizer (yes/no)                                 | 137     | 0    | 0        | 0   | 0   | 127       | 0.01 | 0.09     | 0   | 1   |
| Improved seeds use                                       | 137     | 0.04 | 0.19     | 0   | 1   | 127       | 0.01 | 0.09     | 0   | 1   |

## Analyses and results

This section presents the main findings for the MDGs & Themes component. We first discuss the findings from our survey, where possible the results from our focus groups will be included in this section to give context to the findings. We then discuss the relevance of the project.

### Findings

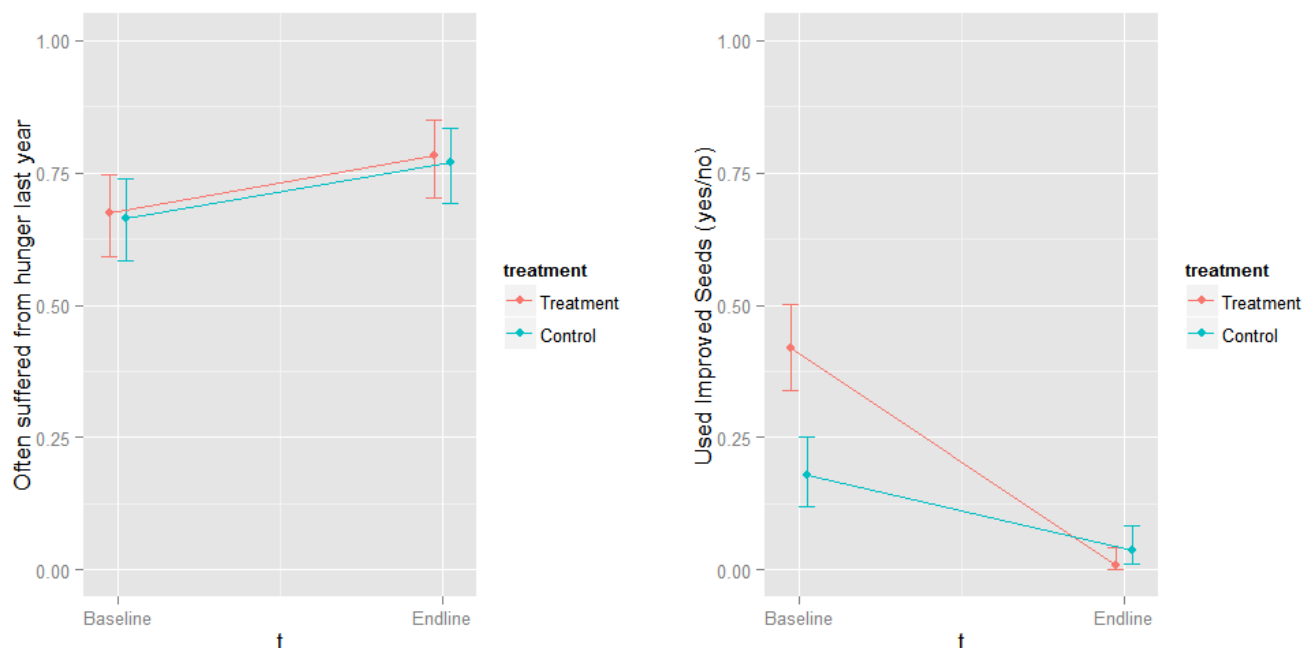
The main findings from our quantitative research are presented in **Fout! Verwijzingsbron niet gevonden..** In the **MDG 1 indicators** there are large decreases in yields. Even though these are quite large, they are insignificant and likely to be caused by the measurement error in our yield figures discussed above. One better indicator of project success would thus be hunger. For both indicators of hunger included, we find results close to zero. **Figure 1** illustrates these results. A large proportion of the respondents reports having suffered from hunger, and this has increased in equal measure for both groups. The indicators for credit use and fraction of harvest sold are very close to zero as well. While power is an issue in our study, these coefficients are so small, that we doubt that power is the issue here. Interestingly, we find a strong negative impact on the use of improved seeds. From **Fout! Verwijzingsbron niet gevonden.** we can see that the treatment group starts out with a higher rate of adoption and over time converges with the control group. The likely reason for this is that program activities had started before the commencement of the baseline study. One important part of this was the distribution of improved cassava planting material (which we include in improved seeds). The negative coefficient thus points at a fading away of initial impact.

The fact that we find we find very few significant coefficients does not automatically mean there is no impact; just that we haven't found it. It could very well be due the low power caused by the small sample size of the study. However the coefficients we do find are very small, and often opposite in sign to what one would expect.

Table 7: Results

| Indicator  | DD                     | DD with controls       |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>MDG 1</b>   |                        |                        |
| Credit use (fraction)                                    | -0.05<br>(-0.602)      | -0.045<br>(-0.524)     |
| Non food expenditure (\$)                                | -1.413<br>(-0.532)     | -2.131<br>(-0.76)      |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                                 | -14.448<br>(-1.296)    | -15.354<br>(-1.409)    |
| Fraction of cassava sold                                 | -0.029<br>(-0.501)     | -0.016<br>(-0.26)      |
| Fertilizer use (yes/no)                                  | 0.001<br>(0.071)       | -0.003<br>(-0.141)     |
| Improved Seeds use (yes/no)                              | -0.269 ***<br>(-4.902) | -0.248 ***<br>(-4.364) |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year                    | -0.009<br>(-0.216)     | -0.035<br>(-0.786)     |
| Often suffered from hunger last year                     | 0.004<br>(0.05)        | -0.013<br>(-0.164)     |
| <b>Good Governance</b>                                   |                        |                        |
| I respect the Mwami (agree/don't agree)                  | -0.009<br>(-0.18)      | -0.003<br>(-0.05)      |
| I can go to the Mwami for help (agree/don't agree)       | 0.002<br>(0.024)       | 0.004<br>(0.049)       |
| The Mwami can act in my interest (agree/don't agree)     | -0.098<br>(-1.166)     | -0.096<br>(-1.092)     |
| I respect our chief (agree/don't agree)                  | -0.01<br>(-0.291)      | -0.005<br>(-0.133)     |
| I can go to our chief for help (agree/don't agree)       | 0.087<br>(1.32)        | 0.096<br>(1.417)       |
| Our chief can act in my interest (agree/don't agree)     | -0.06<br>(-0.757)      | -0.062<br>(-0.754)     |
| I respect politicians (agree/don't agree)                | -0.126<br>(-1.585)     | -0.177 **<br>(-2.15)   |
| I can go to politicians for help (agree/don't agree)     | 0.138 *<br>(1.681)     | 0.135<br>(1.555)       |
| Politicians can act in my interest (agree/don't agree)   | 0.048<br>(0.622)       | 0.047<br>(0.568)       |
| <b>Fragile States</b>                                    |                        |                        |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | 0.609 **<br>(2.192)    | 0.526 *<br>(1.83)      |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | -0.184 **<br>(-2.293)  | -0.173 **<br>(-2.063)  |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | -0.059<br>(-0.864)     | -0.042<br>(-0.586)     |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | 0.013<br>(0.346)       | 0.01<br>(0.237)        |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | -0.039<br>(-0.643)     | -0.033<br>(-0.515)     |
| Tokens sent in trust game                                | 0.036<br>(0.291)       | -0.079<br>(-0.712)     |

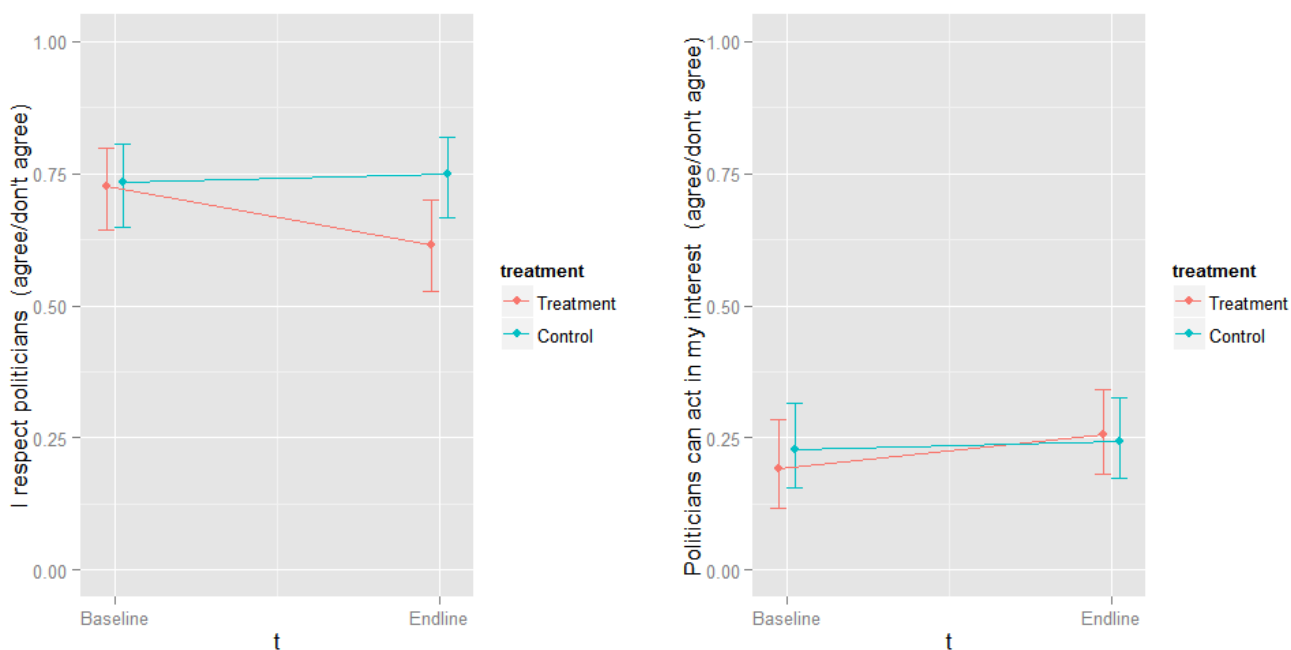
Notes: *t*-values in parentheses; Significance levels: \*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; The trust game was only played in the endline, the coefficients for a *t*-test comparing treatment and control and OLS with controls are reported; Controls include age, education, status of migrant, roof quality, household size.



**Figure 1:** Comparison of means of selected indicators MDG 1. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval

These findings are largely corroborated by our focus group discussions. Over the period of 2012-2014 activities by ZOA have once been mentioned as a negative driver of change because the distribution of improved varieties has stopped. Overall however, activities of NGOs are often mentioned as positive. The main problems affecting food security are the prevalence of the mosaic virus and poor soil quality. Both of these can be addressed using interventions such as ZOA is doing, and this is reflected in the fact that improved seeds, fertilizers and tractors by NGOs are seen as a good development over the past years.

In terms of **Good Governance** we see some signs of change, but not a lot. Trust in local institutions seems not to have improved by much. These are things that change very slowly, and a two year survey effort is not likely to be sufficient to capture any changes. The interesting finding is that while respect for politicians seems to have decreased in treatment villages, people feel they are more approachable for help. **Figure 2** shows the development of these indicators. Results from the focus groups do not indicate any reason for this difference. All groups have benefited from improved roads and other services, the latter being more on account of NGOs, while roads are mostly provided by the government.

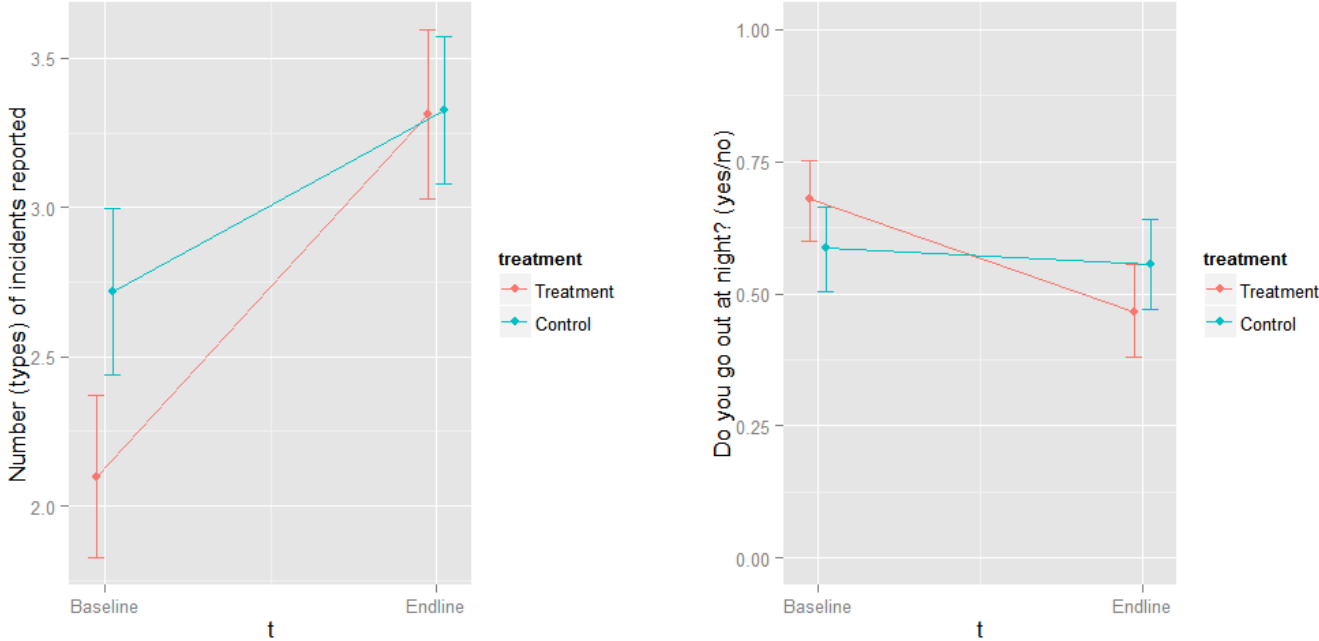


**Figure 2:** Comparison of means of selected indicators for the theme of good governance. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval

When we look at the *fragile states* data, we see a rise in the number of conflicts reported and a negative impact on the perceived safety, expressed as the willingness of people to venture outside their house at night. We display these indicators graphically in **Figure 3**. We see that the coefficient for the number of conflicts is driven by a rise in conflicts reported in the treatment villages. Likewise, people in these treatment villages have been less likely to go out after dark, while the control villages have hardly seen a difference.

Curiously, these findings are not reflected in the results from our focus groups. People report an increase in safety, and that they are more likely to go outside at night. This might be because when asked openly, people think of the macro situation: the risk of armed groups attacking and plundering the village. In this sense, the time between our baseline and endline has seen an improvement, so

the results from the focus groups make sense. However the questions we asked individually pertained to small incidents such as crime. Why this has deteriorated is not clear.



**Figure 3:** Comparison of means of selected indicators for the theme of fragile states. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval

**Relevance**

The main driver of behavior in this area remains the volatile security situation. As pointed out in our focus groups, the security situation determines the frequency with which people will go out of their communities to visit their fields. In this way, it has a significant negative impact on agricultural productivity. As long as the highlands just West of the coastal zone of Fizi remain a safe haven for Mai Mai militias, the risk of pillaging will provide a major disincentive to increasing agricultural productivity through increased effort or investments. The efforts by CEPROF and ZOA do little to alleviate these concerns, which given the seemingly intractable nature of the conflict in the Eastern DRC should not be considered a condemnation of their activities. However, it is a reason to doubt the relevance of the activities. Yet, people in the focus groups expressed optimism in this regard. Throughout 2013 and 2014 the security situation has improved remarkably. This is reflected in the upward trend in credit uptake, which indicates people are optimistic about the future.

Another driver of poor food production is the mosaic virus, ravaging cassava production throughout the region. In focus groups held throughout the area from Bukavu all the way south to Fizi, respondent stressed the adverse impact of this virus. However, in the eyes of at least some respondents the stocks of improved cassava supplied by CEPROF were not more resistant this virus than the traditional varieties. Some participants in focus groups organized to evaluate other programs not related to agriculture have in fact indicated that they blame the increased incidence of crop disease to the introduction of improved varieties. None of the respondents in the area in which



CEPROF operates have expressed this view, but it does illustrate a way in which NGO's need to be careful about the type of aid they provide in this area.

The other main driver of change in the area are the interventions by other NGOs. Even though these are in many cases large internationally operating NGO's ZOA's efforts through CEPROF and others do not go unnoticed, and are appreciated in our focus groups.

## Discussion

The project is multi-faceted. But in the end, a large portion of the welfare needs to come from agriculture, as that will remain the dominant sector in the region. In the end however, the two major drivers for food insecurity are the mosaic virus that ravages cassava production, and the conflict (see Lecoutere et al.,2005). In terms of the first, improved varieties, as handed out by CEPROF, could be a solution. However, some farmers have expressed concerns that the varieties of cassava that are handed out by NGOs are not resistant to mosaic virus. We have not been able to verify this in the field however. Moreover, after project implementation, we see the adoption of improved seeds in the treatment arm of the survey returning to the levels seen in the control group, indicating a lack of persistence of the effects. Given all this, it is questionable whether the design can achieve a lasting impact on food security on the long term.

The project also pays attention to revenue-generating activities other than farming. Fox and Sohneson (2013) argue that these activities have large potential to increase rural welfare. However, for these kind of activities, credit is often the constraint. So the fact that there is a credit component in the program is a crucial positive element. In fact, this might increase agricultural productivity as well, as Ali et al. (2014) find that credit constraints are important for agricultural productivity in Rwanda. However, for both agriculture (as mentioned above) and household enterprises, it is doubtful whether these projects can have a relevant impact in the face of the conflict in the region. Should the security situation improve, a program such as PAMOJA would increase in its relevance. Increased employment could even add to preventing further outbreaks from happening (Blattman and Annan, 2014). The problem is of course how to judge when the time has come. Recent experiences have been problematic, but just before people were highly optimistic.

One aspect of the program that we consider a limiting factor on its ability to deliver impact is the fragmentation: there are many different types of activities, carried out by many SPOs. Having one SPO be responsible for activities in only two villages increases overhead and monitoring and coordination costs. Furthermore, having each SPO implement all activities diminishes the scope for specialization.

A stronger focus would also allow the research team to come to a better evaluation of the activities. Three NGOs implement the activities, each in a small number of communities. Within these villages, there are several domains in which the programs are active. While we do acknowledge that it makes sense in terms of development not to implement blanket approaches but rather implement tailor made solutions to each village, this does not make any sense from an evaluation perspective. In this perspective, you want uniform treatments across the population, so that sample size is large.

One further drawback to the current setup is that activities had started before the research team arrived in the DRC. This prevented the team from having a proper baseline and a proper control. In order to prevent selection biases, randomization is a crucial tool (Duflo et al. 2008).

Furthermore, a larger focus on the interactions between the conflict in the area and the aid that was distributed would have been a relevant addition to the study both from an academic perspective and a policy perspective. We have limited knowledge on the effects of low level conflicts on the effectiveness of development aid. This would have required a large influence on project design, and some “luck” with the way the conflict develops, which is obviously never under control of either NGO or researcher. Neither of these prerequisites were present. The former has been discussed and as for the latter our research time frame actually saw a relatively stable security situation, with mai mai attacks becoming more dangerous right after the departure of the research team, with the largest town in Fizi being taken over not more than one week after the conclusion of data collection activities.

## Conclusion

In this section we will discuss the results of this evaluation theme by theme. Per theme, we address the research questions outlined above. Then we compile a table summarizing our findings.

In terms of MDG 1, we see very little change between 2012 and 2014. The largest change that we see is that fewer respondents in the treatment group now use improved seeds. This is largely due to the fact that distribution of these improved varieties had already started by the time of the baseline. However, in the two years after, respondents have returned to using old varieties, and we thus find a very strong negative effect in our data. This means that – if the improved varieties were beneficial – their effect was not very long-lasting.

Around 75% of the interviewees reported having suffered from hunger over the past year, so food security is a very relevant issue. Our focus groups have found that people most often see the mosaic virus as the most important driver of food (in)security. One other driver is insecurity. Both of these drivers have an impact in treated as well as in control communities, and have no relation with CEPROF activities. It is unclear whether the cassava handed out by CEPROF was of a variety that is resistant to the virus, as some of the focus groups discussants suggested that this wasn't the case.

In terms of good governance, we have seen very little change. This is mostly due to the fact that this is something that changes very slowly, so it is not surprising that no change has been seen over the past two years.

As far as fragility is concerned, the only difference that we have shown is that the security situation in PAMOJA villages has worsened at a faster pace than in other villages. The qualitative data did not reflect this trend: people agreed that the security situation has improved between 2012 and 2014. This difference is mostly due to the absence of attacks by armed groups, which is mainly attributable to the government. The drop in security we see is therefore due to crime. The nature of this evaluation does not permit us to reject selection bias as a cause for this observed change, and we cannot find any reason to attribute this change to activities by CEPROF.

Fragility and governance are very relevant themes in the Eastern DRC. The area is very poor, and in order for development to accelerate, conflicts need to be resolved, and investments made. This means that a stagnation in these areas might be the cause for the stagnation in our MDG 1 outcomes.

Table 8: Project details. 1= low, 10 = high

|  | <i>Rating</i> | <i>Comments</i>  |
|--|---------------|--|
| The project was well designed                                      | 5             | The project was highly fragmented  |
| The project was implemented as designed                            | 7             | Due to the fragmentation, it is very hard to assess whether every detail of the project was implemented as planned, but it seems the case.   |
| The project reached all its objectives                             | 5.5           | Though no impact was shown through quantitative analysis, focus groups showed potential impact.  |
| The observed results are attributable to the project interventions | 6             | The results mentioned in our focus groups discussions were attributed to PAMOJA.<br><br>Our quantitative study did find some negative developments that we cannot attribute to PAMOJA. |
| The observed results are relevant to the project beneficiaries     | 5             | The region needs an increase in governance and a decrease in violence before serious rehabilitation can take place.  |
| The project was implemented efficiently                            |               |  |

## Capacity development component

In this section, we describe our findings for the capacity development component. We first provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the five capabilities (Capability to act and commit, Capability to adapt and self-renew, Capability to deliver on development objectives, Capability to relate to others, Capability to achieve coherence). This is followed by a contribution story assembling the evidence for the contribution of MFS II funding to the development of organisational capacity of CEPROF, through the interventions of ZOA. We then discuss the results and conclude by answering the evaluation questions for this component.

### Results

|  | Baseline<br>(1-5) | Endline |
|--|-------------------|---------|
| Act and commit                             | 3                 | 3       |
| Deliver on development objectives          | 3                 | 3.5     |
| Adapt and self-renew                       | 2                 | 2       |
| Relate to external stakeholders            | 2.5               | 2.5     |
| Achieve coherence                          | 2.5               | 2       |
| Overall capacity (rounded to nearest half) | 2.5               | 2.5     |

#### Capability to act and commit

*Effective leadership, realistic strategic planning, translation of strategy into operations, staff capacity and motivation, and financial security.*

CEPROF has an experienced leader, who has a strong influence on decisions and has provided stability to the organisation during the evaluation period. CEPROF has been working on a new strategic plan in the past two years, but has been unable to complete this. Involvement of the members in strategic orientation is weak, there has been no involvement of the Board in the development of the strategic plan. This means CEPROF depends on the PAMOJA strategy of ZOA for orienting its operations. This strategy translates into yearly contracts under supervision of ZOA staff, and daily operations are based on this.

Staff work according to the organisational structure, with field staff under supervision of a community mobiliser (*chargé de volet*), who in turn is supervised by the Project Supervisor. The number of staff has strongly increased during the evaluation period (from 7 to 22). These are mostly field staff, but also a programme assistant and an Administration and Finances Officer. These two were recruited through a public notice and a recruitment procedure involving the Coordinator and the PAMOJA Project Supervisor. Staff are relatively young and have a relevant education; both the Project Supervisor and the Bookkeeper have working experience at other NGOs. The new Administration and Finances Officer has recently worked on updating the task descriptions. Staff indicate that they feel competent to carry out their tasks, but also would appreciate additional

training. ZOA has offered a number of training sessions to staff of CEPROF; financial means are lacking to follow trainings offered by consultancy originations such as MDF or Globafan. Since 2013, salaries have improved, and staff are more motivated. Still they indicate the salaries are still lacking: *'Des bonnes salaires n'existent pas.'*

Financial resources have been relatively secure during the evaluation period, with the commitment of ZOA until 2015. However, CEPROF has not managed to expand the number of sources of financing, even though it has submitted a number of proposals. It is considering to develop own revenue-generating activities, for example agricultural activities. CEPROF has no acquisition strategy, and the lack of additional donors is a risk for the continuity of the organisation.

During the evaluation period, we see slight improvement for some aspects of the Capability to act and commit, notably the expansion of the organisation, recruitment of a Finance and Administration Officer, and the increased salaries. However, important developments in terms of organisational strategy and diversifying the financial resource base are lacking.

### Capability to deliver on development objectives

*Delivery of planned products and services, relevance of delivered products and services for target population, work efficiency*

CEPROF has yearly plans, as required within the PAMOJA project. Each year, ZOA sets targets for how many beneficiaries should be reached by the activities of CEPROF. There have been some delays in the development of these plans, and thus the plans have never covered the entire year. Staff are aware of the objectives, and are able to indicate the progress made towards reaching these. Apart from the delay in development of new plans, activities are generally executed as planned and in line with the budget. During the evaluation period, as the project became more established, staff of ZOA has become less involved in monitoring the activities in the field.

Within the project, there are several mechanisms to verify whether the activities address the needs of the target group. These include the involvement of the target group in the project management committees, CGPs, in the first years; the organisation of beneficiaries in MUSOs, which elect a village development committee (which replaces the CGP); the organisation of yearly evaluation meetings with the beneficiaries. Through these grassroots structures, the target group can express its needs, and these are taken into account within the limitations posed by the budget (for example the provision of a different type of seeds). Additionally, the presence of field staff who are based in the intervention area allows CEPROF to closely monitor the results of the activities, in collaboration with ZOA. Based on the results of the distribution of livestock, for example, ZOA took the decision to stop the distribution of goats (*geniteurs*). The quick growth of the number of MUSOs during the evaluation period is a sign that the intervention of CEPROF is indeed relevant to the target group.

Work efficiency is not monitored by CEPROF: the focus lies on achieving the results within the available budget. Efficiency could increase by increasing the use of information technology, which would facilitate monitoring and evaluation and the generation of reports.

The Capability to deliver has remained relatively constant during the evaluation period. CEPROF has generally executed the activities as planned, and there are several mechanisms

to verify whether the needs of the target group are addressed. There remains room for improvement in terms of the timely development of the yearly plans.

### Capability to adapt and self-renew

*Effective application of M&E, strategic use of M&E, openness to strategic learning, context awareness*

CEPROF field staff (*animateurs*) use forms to monitor the results of activities. Additionally, through its field staff, CEPROF has a constant presence in the area. The veterinarian and the agronomists monitor the occurrence of diseases, and the agricultural production. The CGP was involved in monitoring the reimbursement of goats. The regular presence of CEPROF and ZOA staff is exemplified by the fact that many people do not make the distinction between the CGP, CEPROF and ZOA: for them, they are all ZOA, or all CGP. Every year a halfway evaluation (*de mi-parcours*) is held, organised by ZOA, CEPROF and the CGP, and here beneficiary satisfaction is measured, results are reported back to the community, and solutions are sought to problems that arise.

Even though CEPROF is well-embedded in the intervention area, it does not have an explicit M&E strategy, and the results are only used to report to ZOA. The staff expresses a willingness to learn, but there are no systems in place for a more systematic discussion of results, and critical reflection on the functioning of the organisation. During most of the evaluation period, there were no regular staff meetings at the level of the coordination. Though it belongs to the tasks of the Project Supervisor, he has never received training on M&E (in fact, a training was foreseen for 2014). At level of CEPROF, M&E is used mainly for justification purposes (ZOA on the other hand actively uses the data to illustrate the impact of its activities and seek out additional financing).

Knowledge is concentrated in several people, notably the coordinating staff. There is no policy for sharing knowledge, learning and capacity development. In this respect, CEPROF strongly depends on trainings and other activities undertaken by ZOA. Staff express the need for additional training, for example on M&E. CEPROF is aware of the intervention context through its embeddedness in the area; it does not execute analyses of developments in the context on its own.

We have found no evidence of change for this Capability during the evaluation period. The M&E capacity of CEPROF is limited, and CEPROF uses the data on the results of its intervention mainly to report to ZOA. Especially in terms of strategic application of M&E, there is room for improvement.

### Capability to relate to others

*Involving external parties in internal policy/strategy development; engagement of organisation in networks, alliances and collaborative efforts; active engagement with target groups; effective relationships within the organisation*

Originating from a well-known civil society organisation in Fizi, SOCODEFI, CEPROF has a relatively long history. CEPROF is involved in various networks, where participation is mostly aimed at the exchange of information to prevent duplication of interventions (see the CSI dimension Level of Organisation for more information). An exception is CCAP, through which CEPROF has developed several activities in collaboration. There are no initiatives at the level of the Territories of Uvira or Fizi

in which CEPROF has a leading role. At the level of the intervention area, however, CEPROF has increased its contacts with the other ZOA partners ASMAKU and GEADES, and set up a framework for exchange for organisations intervening in the same health zone and sector. CEPROF does not involve external parties in internal policy/strategy development; though ZOA has been strongly involved in the development of CEPROF during the evaluation period.

CEPROF actively engages with the target group, as described above: through regular visits, personnel that lives in the intervention area, the CGP and organisation of beneficiaries in MUSOs.

During most of the evaluation period, there have been no regular staff meetings, with sometimes three months between meetings. Some staff have laptops, but there is no regular power supply at the office and staff have only limited access to internet. Communication is done by phone and by meeting each other in the office, but staff indicate they pass a lot of time in the field. A lack of presence at the office in Uvira can also be due to a lack of means of individual staff to travel to Uvira. But also during the evaluation visits, when many staff were present, no initiative was taken to make use of this to have a staff meeting. The new Administration and Finances Officer has started organising weekly meetings for core staff, through, since May 2014. In the intervention area, however, field workers were already used to meeting every Saturday to discuss progress.

CEPROF's Capability to relate to others has largely remained constant during the evaluation period. Participation in networks is not very active, we see some development in terms of engaging with the other ZOA partners, and a recent promising development in terms of the regular organisation of staff meetings.

### Capability to achieve coherence

#### *Existence of mechanisms for coherence, level of coherence of various efforts of organisation*

The mission and vision have remained constant during the evaluation period. The difficulty in completing the strategic plan illustrates the organisation's focus on implementing activities, rather than thinking through the intervention strategy. The last strategic plan was written in 2005. There seems to be a discrepancy between the vision and Theory of Change of CEPROF, which put the focus on improving the position of women, and the actual activities which aim to increase food security. CEPROF claims that women are the main actors involved in agriculture, and that as such the current project falls under their global aim to improve the position of women.

Regular staff meetings could form an important mechanism to ensure coherence of the activities and between activities and the vision and mission; CEPROF has recently begun holding regular meetings. Alternative mechanisms that exist are the procedures manual, as well as the Board of Directors, GA and Audit Committee. With the recruitment of the Administration and Finances Officer, there will be more attention for the organisational procedures. As explained under the CSI dimension Practice of Value, the Board, GA and Audit Committee have not been fully functional during the evaluation period.

CEPROF is also still engaged in activities that relate to previous livelihoods and education projects with Oxfam Novib, as well as collaborative interventions through CCAP, and has the vision to develop

a series of activities to support women leadership. It is not clear how these activities reinforce the current core activities in the PAMOJA project.

We conclude that the Capability to achieve coherence has not yet been well developed for CEPROF. The organisation has a very broad focus, which does not seem to be in accordance with the strong focus of its activities in the PAMOJA project on agriculture and governance. There is no clear synergy between the other activities that CEPROF undertakes, and the activities in the PAMOJA project.

### Contribution story: development of organisational capacity of CEPROF

For the capacity development component, we focus on the contribution of MFS II funding to the development of organisational capacity of CEPROF. We pay extra attention to the contribution of capacity development activities by ZOA to the development of CEPROF's capability to Act and commit, based on the contribution claimed by ZOA in this area, and the fact that it was identified as a weaker capability at the start of the project in 2011. How has CEPROF's capacity changed, and how has ZOA contributed to this? We will discuss this question in the following contribution story.

First we briefly describe the contribution claim, theory of change and activities of the capacity development support by ZOA (building on what we described under the project description). Then we assemble the evidence for the practice of change: how the capacity of CEPROF has changed over the evaluation period, with special attention for the capability to Act and commit, and how ZOA has contributed. We continue with a brief overview of other actors and factors that may have played a role. We conclude by assessing the evidence, to what extent it is plausible that the intervention of ZOA has contributed to increasing organisational capacity of CEPROF.

#### Contribution claim

The contribution to capacity development of CEPROF claimed by ZOA is modest: ZOA claims its support has led to an improvement of 5% in administrative and financial capacity from 2013-2014, as brought out by the evaluation by Globofan Consultants. Additionally, ZOA claims improvements in terms of the way CEPROF is structured, including the development of an organisation chart, the engagement of a Finance & Administration Officer in 2014, and the development of vision and mission of CEPROF.

#### Theory of Change and activities

The approach of ZOA to capacity development is based on hybrid partnering, closely working together with local organisations, joint implementation, activities depend on where ZOA has an added value. Based on premise that ZOA often works in areas which have suffered a lot, weak local organisations, need development of capacity, also to guarantee the sustainability of the project after ZOA has withdrawn. In this approach, ZOA differentiates between strategic partners and implementing partners. CEPROF is a strategic partner.

In line with this Theory of Change, during the evaluation period, capacity development activities of ZOA broadly have been the following:

- Yearly 5C evaluations and plan for capacity strengthening
- Involving an external auditor, Globofan Consultants, to specifically focus on finances and administration



- Providing trainings on relevant topics, through hiring external consultants if necessary
- Collaboration in the field: participation in project activities by ZOA field staff, such as selection of beneficiaries, meetings with authorities, etc
- Financing an extra staff member for the position of Administration and Finances at CEPROF
- Management of part of project finances, gradually transitioning during the MFS II period from about 70% in the beginning, to less than 30% in the final year

### Evidence, the practice of change

For assembling the story for the MFS II contribution to developing the capacity of CEPROF, we made use of project documents supplied by CEPROF and ZOA, the testimonies of beneficiaries, workshops and interviews with CEPROF and ZOA staff and staff of several other CSOs, and our own observations.

How has the organisational capacity of CEPROF changed during the evaluation period? ZOA engaged the external auditor Globofan Consultants to audit CEPROF during the project period, and they scored CEPROF in January 2013 and February 2014. For this period 2013-2014, Globofan Consultants finds a small improvement, from 51% to 56%. This means CEPROF has the lowest score of the 7 ZOA partners involved (scores range from 60-78%), and made the smallest advancement in terms of administration and financial management. A visit by ZOA DRC Administration and Finance Officer Andreas Luiten in 2012 also already found that CEPROF had difficulty following up recommendations following from external audits or the internal Audit Committee.

ZOA and CEPROF staff conducted yearly participatory 5 Capabilities (5C) evaluations as major mechanism to monitor the capacity development of CEPROF. The baseline organisational scan at the beginning of the project in 2011 revealed there was much work to do, especially in terms of the Capability to act and commit, and the Capability to adapt and self-renew. However, the subsequent 5C evaluations do not show marked progress. In fact, the organisation scores lower for 3 of the 5 Capabilities in December 2013, than in December 2011 (Capability to deliver, Capability to relate, Capability to ensure coherence). The total score remains more or less the same, 3.3 in 2011 and 3.2 in 2013 (on a scale of 1-5).

Our own assessment of the organisational development of CEPROF during the evaluation period from 2012-2014 shows a similar picture, with overall capacity remaining more or less constant. We find slight improvement for some aspects of the Capability to act and commit and the Capability to relate, and no evidence of change for the other Capabilities.

Nevertheless, CEPROF and ZOA staff mentioned a number of organisational changes that have taken place during the evaluation period. CEPROF staff mention:

- the formulation of the mission and vision, the development of the strategic plan (still in progress)
- an increased involvement of the members of CEPROF, with a more functional Board and Audit Committee
- improving the legal status of the organisation, getting documentation in order and paying taxes, with recognition at Kinshasa pending
- a salary increase from 2013 onwards
- development of a standardised recruitment procedure and a procedures manual
- the organisation of regular meetings for field staff and development of individual plannings

- improved capacity of staff in terms of project writing and management, bookkeeping, technical knowledge on agriculture and livestock keeping, MUSOs, good governance

ZOA and CEPROF both mention:

- the recruitment of an Administration and Finances officer. This was a specific recommendation by ZOA, and ZOA was involved in the recruitment process and made extra budget available for the salary of the new Officer.

Besides the staff of CEPROF and ZOA, documentation provides further evidence for capacity development activities by ZOA. Documentation is available of the training sessions and 5C evaluations. Since 2014, ZOA signs a separate capacity development agreement with its partners. The coaching plan for 2014 explicitly targets number of capabilities, engaging a consultant to train CEPROF on networking, monitoring and evaluation (reporting), the functioning of a non-profit organisation (revitalise internal structure), and techniques to mobilise additional funding. The project budgets confirm the transfer of responsibility for the budget (CEPROF managed around 30% in first two years, which then increased to almost 60% in 2014). Additionally, the Administration and Finances Officer has been recruited, and CEPROF staff confirm participation in training sessions and workshops organised by ZOA. The involvement of ZOA staff in the implementation of the project was clearly shown by the familiarity of beneficiaries with ZOA, and was apparent during a visit with ZOA staff to one of the project sites.

*Repeated: Table # Overview of trainings in which CEPROF staff participated during the evaluation period*

| <b>Topic</b>             | <b>Date</b>   | <b>Trainer</b>         | <b>Participants</b>   |
|--------------------------|---------------|------------------------|---|
| MUSOs                    | November 2012 | ZOA                    | Ba'aci on behalf of CEPROF, with other partners' MUSO staff |
| Results-based management | March 2013    | MDF Goma               | Baobe and Marius  |
| Advocacy (plaidoyer)     | ???           | ZOA Baraka             | Baobe, all partners of ZOA                                  |
| Do no harm               | July 2013     | Corita Corbijn, ZOA NL | Marius and Baobe  |
| Second training on MUSOs | July 2013     | ZOA                    | Ba'aci  |
| Bookkeeping              | ???           | ZOA                    | Feza (bookkeeper)   |
| Value chains             | June 2014     | ZOA                    | ???   |

What role have these activities played in the changes mentioned earlier? Some evidence for the outcome of these activities is provided by CEPROF staff.

- The training on MUSOs has been particularly timely and effective, the number of supported MUSOs has increased rapidly, and CEPROF staff are convinced of the potential of this approach (see the civil society strengthening contribution analysis for a more elaborate analysis of the MUSOs)
- The training on advocacy has not led to notable changes
- The training on results-based management has increased insight in reporting, what needs to be done to improve the work of CEPROF and how to develop activities that yield impacts in the short term
- The do no harm training has made CEPROF staff aware that their activities can also contribute to conflict
- The 5C evaluations have made CEPROF staff aware of the weaknesses of their organisation, and what to do to deal with this

The recruitment of the Administration and Finances Officer is a key piece of evidence. It shows that notwithstanding the training sessions provided by ZOA, CEPROF did not manage to sufficiently improve its financial management and administration in the 2011-2013 period. In order to change this situation, ZOA recommended the recruitment of an employee dedicated to administration and finances, who was also to be involved in human resource management and monitoring & evaluation. An important task for this Officer would be to organise regular meetings, providing space for vision and strategy development, and thus replacing the Coordinator when she is in the field or has other obligations. Though it was still too early to evaluate the impact of the recruitment of the Administration and Finances Officer during the endline visit for the evaluation, it was clear that he was taking task very seriously, developing and revising a number of administrative tools, and indeed organising weekly staff meetings.

Even though all evidence points to limited changes in organisational capacity at most, the evidence with respect to the execution of project activities shows that CEPROF is on track to reach the PAMOJA objectives. ZOA staff are satisfied with the implementation of the project by CEPROF, and in our field visits we have confirmed a visible presence of CEPROF in the intervention area. This means that CEPROF has sufficient organisational capacity to function at least as an implementing partner of ZOA – taking into account that ZOA staff has supervised CEPROF field staff in a number of activities, in order to increase CEPROF's capacity to implement the project.

Though the end of the MFS II period is approaching, both ZOA and CEPROF staff indicate that they believe the partnership should be continued after 2015. Both in terms of financing and in terms of organisational capacity development, CEPROF thinks it will need another 3-5 years before it can continue on its own. Time is needed to develop income-generating activities, and staff is in need of additional training – for example on monitoring and evaluation, good governance, and the OHADA bookkeeping approach.

### Actors and factors

Besides the capacity development activities by ZOA, a number of other actors and factors can be identified that may have contributed to the organisational capacity of CEPROF.

An important factor is formed by the previous partnerships of CEPROF. Over the years, Oxfam Novib has organised many trainings (until 2011), which the Coordinator and the bookkeeper have

participated in – e.g. on management and on accounting software. However, the majority of the staff have only received trainings organised by ZOA. This means that the current organisational capacity is in part the result of the activities by Oxfam Novib. However, these activities took place before the baselines for the project and this evaluation, and will thus not be taken into account.

The involvement of other organisations and the staff themselves in the development of organisational capacity is another factor. CEPROF mentioned the involvement of one external party independently of ZOA: the CCAP consultant who has helped in the development of the strategic plan. The consultant has organised several workshops with CEPROF to develop the plan, because CEPROF was not able to do this independently. The consultant helped CEPROF staff to formulate their ideas, but the process is slow, because the consultant does not have much time.

Staff themselves also play a role in the development of organisational capacity of CEPROF. Staff explain how they learnt how to work with a computer, how to archive documents, and how to make a personal weekly planning. Staff also informed each other about the mission and vision of CEPROF, and how to train beneficiaries. Sometimes, staff share within CEPROF what they have learnt in external training sessions.

Staff describe the lack of equipment as a challenge, both in the field and in the office in Uvira. Only some staff have computers, for example, and often there is no electricity. This lack of facilities is not conducive for internal communication, the development of project proposals, or finding new potential donors.

### Contribution

It is highly plausible that improvements in organisational capacity of CEPROF during the evaluation period, are related to MFS II funding. ZOA is the only organisation involved in developing capacity of CEPROF during the evaluation period, apart from a small involvement of the CCAP consultant in developing a strategic plan for CEPROF. ZOA also has taken an explicit approach to closely collaborate with local CSOs in implementing the project, meanwhile investing in their organisational capacity, and to progressively transfer responsibility to the partner CSO.

At the same time, the effect of the contribution of MFS II funding to the development of organisational capacity of CEPROF has been limited. The capacity of CEPROF has remained more or less constant during the evaluation period. The close involvement of ZOA sometimes makes it hard to isolate the organisational capacity of CEPROF – especially in terms of activities towards the beneficiaries, the implementation of the project, we are unable to say whether CEPROF would have been able to execute these activities on its own, or with less involvement of ZOA. CEPROF depends strongly on ZOA for taking the initiative in organisational development, and has the tendency to focus on project implementation. As such it seems more an implementing partner than a strategic partner.

The majority of changes that we have identified, have to do with the Capability to act and commit. An important and tangible effect in this respect is the new Administration and Finances Officer, who may pave the way for further professionalising the organisation.

Concluding: we do find that it is likely that MFS II funding has contributed to organisational development of CEPROF, but the effect of this funding has been limited so far. The most likely effect is on the Capability to act and commit.

## Discussion

Given our findings, we think that ZOA's strategy for capacity development of the Southern Partner Organisation was well-designed and suitable for the implementation environment. It has provided a clear orientation for CEPROF during the project. ZOA has probably correctly judged the capacity of CEPROF to be insufficient to sustainably develop the agricultural value chains for the beneficiaries. Through the field office in Baraka, ZOA has been able to closely supervise the implementation of the project, and to invest in developing the capacity of CEPROF. Nevertheless, the organisational capacity of CEPROF has remained relatively low. This may also have to do with the lack of a comprehensive analysis of the weaknesses of the organisation, and a comprehensive plan to address these. In contrast, the 5C assessments seem to have provided more ad hoc recommendations.

CEPROF has delivered on its development objectives, and collaboration with ZOA staff has been very important for this. The degree of organisational capacity development during the evaluation period is low, though the engagement of a dedicated and experience Administration and Finances Officer may help to tip the balance towards becoming a more professional organisation, with more room for strategy development. It is still too early to judge this, and our current impression is that CEPROF will have a hard time finding a new source of financing after the current project ends. Without financial support, we doubt that CEPROF will be able to continue to adequately support the grassroots structures set up in the project, most of which are not yet ready to continue independently. We therefore advise to continue funding, perhaps reducing the status of CEPROF to implementing partner, and to focus on the development of the grassroots structures: if these develop a stable generation of revenues, they can become autonomous.

The fact that CEPROF had no other international partners during the project with ZOA, has facilitated our analysis of the contribution of ZOA. In case CEPROF does develop partnerships with other donors, it will be important to harmonise the capacity development activities, considering the close involvement of ZOA in the development of CEPROF. The close involvement of ZOA may also entail the risk of allowing a form of dependency by CEPROF in certain respects; for example in terms of directing organisational development, or developing and maintaining relationships with civil society and the authorities in Baraka/Fizi.

In terms of the evaluation, we encountered difficulties acquiring the necessary documentation, because as a large project involving multiple SPOs in Fizi, this project was different of other interventions by Dutch CFAs, and it has taken time to discover what were the relevant sources of information.

## Conclusion

Here we provide an answer to the three evaluation questions for the capacity development component:

- 1. What are the changes in partner organisations' capacity during the 2012-2014 period?*

The capacity of CEPROF has remained almost constant during the 2012-2014 period, and we have not encountered major changes. There have been slight improvement for some aspects of the Capability to act and commit, notably the expansion of the organisation, recruitment of a Finance and Administration Officer, and the increased salaries. For the Capability to relate to others, we see some development in terms of engaging with the other ZOA partners, and a recent promising development in terms of the regular organisation of staff meetings.

There remains scope for improvement in terms of developing organisational strategy and diversifying the financial resource base are lacking. The M&E capacity of CEPROF is limited, and CEPROF uses the data on the results of its intervention mainly to report to ZOA. Especially in terms of strategic application of M&E, there is room for improvement. Finally, it is not clear how certain activities that CEPROF undertakes relate to the activities in the PAMOJA project.

*2. To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*

It is highly plausible that the changes in CEPROF's capacity identified above, are related to MFS II funding. ZOA is the only organisation involved in developing capacity of CEPROF during the evaluation period, apart from a small involvement of an external consultant. At the same time, the effect of the contribution of MFS II funding to the development of organisational capacity of CEPROF has been limited, since the capacity of CEPROF has remained more or less constant during the evaluation period.

*3. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

An important factor is CEPROF's focus on implementation of the project. Staff spend a great deal of time in the intervention area, and as a result there is limited time for interaction in the office. The lack of meetings for following up on capacity development recommendations, and to take time for strategic reflection, is not conducive for capacity development. The leadership of the Coordinator plays a role in this, as her focus lies with the beneficiaries. Additionally, the relatively young age of the staff and thus lack of experience may also be an important factor. Finally, the relatively short time-frame of the evaluation plays a role: ZOA is taking a more long-term approach to developing capacity of CEPROF, because developing organisational capacity takes time, and may not yet show at the time of evaluating.

# Civil society strengthening component

In this section, we describe our findings. We first provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the s (Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment). This is followed by a contribution story assembling the evidence for the contribution of MFS II funding to a strengthening of civil society, through the development interventions of CEPROF. We then discuss our findings, and conclude by providing an answer to the evaluation questions for this component of the evaluation.

## CSI dimensions

|                       | Baseline (0-3) | Endline |
|-----------------------|----------------|---------|
| Civic engagement      | 1.5            | 1.5     |
| Level of organisation | 1              | 1       |
| Practice of values    | 1              | 1       |
| Perception of impact  | 1              | 1.5     |
| Environment           | 0.5            | 1       |

### Civic Engagement

*Under this dimension we distinguish the diversity of socially-based engagement (taking into account needs of marginalised groups, participation of target groups in the project), and the diversity of political engagement (is there dialogue of local leaders with government representatives, are beneficiaries member of sectoral user groups).*

CEPROF intervenes in an area where the majority of people are somehow involved in agriculture. In seeking to develop people’s livelihoods, it addresses a primary need of the target group. Though it seeks to involve vulnerable people, CEPROF does not exclusively focus on marginalised groups; in fact, in seeking to connect local producers to the agricultural value chain, its interventions target smallholder farmers that have access to land, thereby excluding the most vulnerable households. Originally a women’s organisation, CEPROF sees its focus on gender in targeting the agricultural sector, since women are often responsible for cultivating the fields. During the implementation of the PAMOJA project, CEPROF has set up 2 project management committees - CGPs and a quickly growing number of around 100 MUSOs. The number of field staff has simultaneously increased, increasing the presence of CEPROF in the intervention area. Through these grassroots structures, CEPROF aims to increasingly involve the target group in project management, problem analysis, and the development of solutions. Beneficiaries already express their preference in terms of what crops to cultivate, e.g. their preference for the resistant Sawasawa variety of cassava. But their involvement has not yet reached the level that they can continue on their own.

In terms of engagement with local leaders: during the evaluation period CEPROF has maintained regular contacts with local authorities in the area of intervention, through its staff in the area, as well as the CGPs. It informs authorities about activities, and local authorities participate in meetings as beneficiaries. Important actors are the village/neighbourhood chiefs (*capita*), who are involved in organising community gatherings and motivating the community to participate in the project (for example the construction of the warehouses). The grouping (*groupement*) chiefs are also considered important by CEPROF. However, CEPROF staff also indicate that collaboration is not always easy, as

authorities tend to ask for a financial motivation in exchange for their goodwill. Besides these authorities, CEPROF also mentions the police, the territorial and provincial agriculture and livestock inspectors, the provincial governor and even the national ministry of agriculture, fishing and livestock (for the necessary documents).

This means that for this dimension, we see sustained socially-based and political engagement, with a quickly expanding group of beneficiaries structured in MUSOs that are supported by CEPROF, and generally favourable relations with the local authorities.

### Level of Organisation

*This dimension focuses on the organisational level of civil society (the connectedness of SPOs in networks of organisations, the nature of relationships between SPOs and networks, and the degree of representation of interests); peer to peer communication (the strength of the relationships of the SPO with other actors); and financial and human resources (the composition of the financial resource base, availability of human resources).*

CEPROF participates in thematic meetings, where it encounters other CSOs for exchange of information about planned activities, and sometimes develop joint action to lobby (*plaidoyer*) on a certain issue. At the grassroots level, CEPROF is closely involved in the Lusambya ('those who unite') network, bringing together 28 women's associations in the Territory of Fizi. CEPROF has also set up a framework for exchange for organisations that are active in the same geographical area. CEPROF is a member of CCAP, *Comité de Coordination des Actions de Paix*, through which they are involved in the reinsertion of ex-combatants. They are also part of a network for the struggle against sexual violence directed at women, and part of the national 'Yes we can' campaign. At the regional level, CEPROF indicate they are member of a women's network spanning the Kivus, Maniema and Province Orientale. CEPROF is regularly involved in activities of CCAP, but apart from this the development of collaboration with other civil society organisations does not get high priority. The relationship with its fellow ZOA partners ASMAKU and GEADES has developed over the evaluation period, they have started to organise meetings independently of ZOA, and ZOA makes use of their facilities.

In terms of the financial resources, CEPROF has not managed to develop partnerships with other international donors. Until 2011, Oxfam Novib was a long-term donor, and CEPROF also has a small project with Medica. The organisation receives a small amount through contributions of its members, which are aimed to support the functioning of internal governing committees. The local community contributes in-kind or through community work. CEPROF therefore continues to strongly depend on the financial support of ZOA. ZOA also provides a great deal of organisational support, and has supervised many activities during the evaluation period. Importantly, ZOA also is involved in the relations with local authorities, as well as for example in engaging with the civil society bureau (*Bureau de la Coordination de la Société Civile*) in Baraka. CEPROF also sees ZOA as responsible for harmonising with other international organisations that intervene in the same area.

For the dimension of Level of Organisation, we find that CEPROF has sustained its involvement in civil society in Uvira and Fizi, and has not managed to expand its financial resource base during the evaluation period. It strongly depends on ZOA for financial support and its influence with authorities and other international organisations.



## Practice of Values

*This dimension deals with internal governance (the functioning of the legally required internal structure, including a Board of Directors and General Assembly, are they involved in the strategic management of the SPO, and the functioning of lower CSO levels), and transparency (respect of internal written procedures, extent of downward accountability, within the SPO and to lower CSO levels, transparency on finances).*

CEPROF has the legally required internal organisational structure, with members, a General Assembly, Board of Directors, and an Audit Committee. Meetings of the GA and committees have been irregular during the evaluation period: the yearly GA was not held in 2013 (it was held in 2012 and an elective GA was held in August 2014), and the Board of Directors did not manage to hold the required quarterly meetings. This has to do with a lack of budget for organising these meetings (as few members actually pay their membership fees), as well as the fact that many members are based in Kazimia in Fizi Territory, where CEPFOP originally had its office. Additionally, CEPFOP staff indicate that members need to be educated on their role as members, and the roles of the different committees, and a training session was included in the organisational development plan for 2014. The Board has not been involved in the development of the strategic plan.

The current target group is not represented in the General Assembly. In the future, downward accountability may be ensured through the involvement of the beneficiaries in the management and implementation of activities, but currently this is still a rather top-down process. The last internal audit by the audit committee was done in 2011. In collaboration with ZOA staff, CEPFOP does a yearly analysis of its organisational capacity in terms of the five capabilities. ZOA has also facilitated the execution of two external financial-administrative audits by Globofan.

During the evaluation period, we find no significant development in this dimension. There remains room for improvement in terms of downward accountability, as well as the active involvement of the members in the strategy of CEPFOP and monitoring its activities.

## Perception of Impact

*Under this dimension we discuss the responsiveness (nature and intensity of SPO's relationship with the public sector and the private sector); social impact (target group satisfaction regarding fulfilment of their primary social concern, perception of public and private sector of quality of delivery of services by SPO); and the policy impact (the level of influence of SPOs in the process leading to major policy changes identified in the sector of the SPO's intervention since 2011).*

CEPROF directs its attention primarily at the grassroots level, and focuses on the implementation of the project, to improve the livelihoods and the food security of the target group. The number of beneficiaries has increased during the evaluation period, and yearly targets in terms of support offered to beneficiaries and the structuring of beneficiaries in MUSOs, have been met. Beneficiaries are involved in yearly evaluation meetings, where they can express their opinion on the project. ZOA staff are satisfied with the activities carried out by CEPFOP in the field. At the time of the evaluation, data on the agricultural production and revenues were not yet available, but the beneficiaries we met generally expressed their satisfaction. CEPFOP staff do not describe their support of the CGP and the MUSOs as civil society strengthening activities. Nevertheless, through the evaluation period of two years has proven too short to see the impact of this intervention, it is reasonable to expect that

the structuring of beneficiaries in MUSOs, which together will form a Village Development Committee (to replace the CGP), will increase the social tissue at the local level.

In terms of influencing policies of the public and private sector, the impact of CEPROF has been negligible during the evaluation period – CEPROF has also not had the intention to influence policy at this level. CEPROF focuses on project implementation, and depends on ZOA for strategic relations with authorities – with ZOA, CEPROF has successfully approached the authorities to get access to land for the MUSOs. CEPROF is sometimes invited to meetings with public sector organisations. We have found no evidence of influence on private sector organisations; also here, CEPROF looks to ZOA for analysing the market for the agricultural products, and contact with potential customers.

For this dimension, we see impact mostly at the local level, with the target group. CEPROF has not worked on influencing public or private sector policy, and depends on ZOA in this respect.

### Environment/context

*This dimension takes the wider environment into account. What is the degree of participation of the SPO in defining the civil society interventions of the CFA/Consortium; to what extent is a context analysis of the space and role of civil society in the specific country done as part of the programme /project cycle; to what extent is the SPO involved in studies on civil society?*

CEPROF staff indicate that the project strategy is their most important guidance, for the execution of activities. CEPROF has been working on developing its strategic plan in the past years, but this has not yet been completed. The SPO is not involved in defining civil society interventions of ZOA/DCR; its focus lies on developing grassroots structures, with the aim to improve the livelihoods of the members, and link small producers to agricultural value chains through facilitating increased production and groups sale.

During our visits, CEPROF displayed a preference for established approaches, with a strong focus on *sensibilisation*, which refers to various types of activities to spread a certain message (days of reflection, spreading the message through church services, in schools, etc.). In this sense, CEPROF has not displayed much creativity, for example to think about alternative approaches to respond to changes in the context. We also saw no strategy in place for dealing with renewed outbreaks of violence, in order to limit the impact of violence on the project. Similarly, there is no strategy for selecting and sustaining essential activities, should international financing diminish or end.

There has been some improvement for this dimension, as CEPROF has worked on finalising its strategic plan. This plan will help CEPROF to orient its activities and not depend on the strategy of the donor organisation. At the same time, there remains room for improvement, for example in developing critical thinking about the process of agricultural modernisation which CEPROF is engaging in.

### Contribution story: civil society strengthening in *Mutuelles de Solidarité in Fizi*

For this component of the evaluation, we focus on the contribution of MFS II funding to the strengthening of civil society. In the case of CEPROF, we investigate the contribution at the level of the beneficiaries, in the form of developing the *Mutuelles de Solidarité* (MUSOs). The MUSOs play a central role in the PAMOJA project, both in terms of supporting the livelihoods of small agricultural producers, as well as in terms of improving community governance. We ask the question: how has

MFS II funding, through intermediary organisation CEPROF, contributed to the strengthening of local civil society, in the form of the MUSOs? We will discuss this question in the following contribution story.

First we briefly describe the contribution claim, basic Theory of Change and activities of the project supported by ZOA. Then we assemble the evidence for how the described activities have contributed to strengthening of civil society. We continue with a brief overview of other actors and factors that have played a role. We conclude by assessing the evidence, to what extent it is plausible that the development intervention of CEPROF has contributed to strengthening civil society.

## Contribution claim

CEPROF claims to have contributed in the form a the number of MUSOs that has been set up. It also claims that these grassroots structures allow the population to organise. The project has no explicit aim to develop civil society at the grassroots, SO no claims are made in this respect.

## Theory of Change and activities

The PAMOJA project in Fizi aims to improve food security and livelihoods of vulnerable households, through orienting small subsistence farmers to business. The project also envisages to contribute to good community governance. Initially, it was thought to improve food security and livelihoods via setting up agricultural cooperatives. In the second year the focus was shifted to setting up *Mutuelles de Solidarité*, with the same aim to facilitate joint selling of agricultural products. These MUSOs have the advantage that they are less complicated to set up than cooperatives, and that they also provide small amounts of credit to their members. In the PAMOJA project, MUSOs have three main roles: 1) to provide a mechanism for saving and providing credit to the members, 2) to facilitate the Commercialisation of agricultural products, connecting producers to markets through group sale of agricultural products from communal fields, 3) to group beneficiaries in a structure for local governance at the village level. Because they generate their own funds, MUSOs are expected to be able to continue on their own without support by CEPROF when the project ends.

CEPROF developed the following general activities to set up the MUSOs:

- Raising awareness
- Structuring and training
- Monitoring
- Negotiating access to communal fields
- Arranging access to mechanised labour
- Providing access to agricultural inputs
- Construction of a Warehouse for storage

## Evidence: practice of change

CEPROF started with no MUSOs in 2011, and had a target of 92 MUSOs by the end of 2014. There were 58 MUSOs existing at the time of our endline visit in July, and considering the strong growth in a short period, it is not unlikely that CEPROF had even more than 92 MUSOs at the end of 2014. Many MUSOs were actually already existing groups, which were trained by CEPROF in the MUSO approach. Before joining the project, the groups had often been practicing a local form of MUSO: 'kilimba', which was explained to us as 'I give to you today, another day you give me. We put money together, then give it to one of us.'

In order to set up MUSOs, CEPROF staff actively promoted the approach. Beneficiaries of CEPROF were encouraged to organise themselves in groups, and form a MUSO. Existing groups were approached by CEPROF to ask them whether they wanted to join the project. Local chiefs were involved to encourage the local population to join. CEPROF did not target specific population groups, or exclude groups from joining: 'I cannot refuse to accompany them, it is my duty to inform', said the community mobiliser of CEPROF.

CEPROF explains people how to set up a MUSO: to form a group of minimally 10-15 people, elect a treasurer, president and secretary, decide on when to meet, and on the amounts of money to be saved and paid in interest. MUSOs typically have three cash boxes, the green, red and blue boxes (*caisse*). The green box is for saving money to provide group members with small loans, the red box is for saving some money that is used to support members of the group when they encounter difficulties such illness, and the blue box is in case the supporting organisation wants to make a donation to the group – in this project, this box is inactive. Members explain that the monthly contributions differ per group: in one MUSO we saw members contributed 1000CF for the green box, and 100CF for the red box; while in another MUSO, the members contribute 10USD to the green box, and 1000FC for the red box. Groups typically decide to first save for a few months, before giving out the first credit to a member. The members of the MUSO jointly decide who gets the credit, and under what terms. After the creation of MUSOs, CEPROF staff give them support, and regularly visit

**Examples of activities developed with MUSO credit:**

Lady: "I received money, one month ago, for trading small fish, after three months I will give it back. I received 20 dollars. The interest is 2000FC. I buy one bucket for 20 dollars, and sell for 22 or 23. 1 bucket every 1 or 2 days."

Other lady: "25000FC, I bought one bag of flour, to make beignets, 15000FC for 10 kilos of flour. Oil 4 bottles, 1 kilo sugar, yeast. Sugar is 1400FC, oil 2000/bottle, I make 5 dollars profit for a bag of 25kg. 1 bag per 2,5 days."

them. Several people in the intervention area have been trained as 'Para-MUSO', to work as field workers for the MUSOs. CEPROF staff estimate that a MUSO needs six months up to a year to become fully independent. MUSOs provide written reports of their activities to CEPROF.

In addition to setting up the MUSOs, CEPROF and ZOA negotiated access to farmland, so that each MUSO would be able to cultivate 1ha. ZOA played an important role, they went with CEPROF to talk to the local authorities. The authorities granted access to land that was not being used; for example, for 2ha in Mboko, the owner agreed to lease it, MUSOs cleaned it, and the land will be given back after the harvest. CEPROF was a broker to put the two groups in touch. The beneficiaries are expected to save money through the MUSOs (in the red box), in order to pay the rent. CEPROF has also arranged access to mechanised labour: the tractor of a cooperative not far from Mboko. There is also a tractor in Suima. There are not enough tractors to cover the needs of the population, and they are expensive (190USD/ha, including fuel). The use of the tractor was paid by the project; because the costs were higher than foreseen, CEPROF was not able to cultivate the intended total surface of 30ha in 2014. CEPROF had got access to 21ha of land by the time of our endline visit, and was aiming for a total of 25ha. Apparently, the access to land was a strong incentive for groups to join the

project – in order to get access, one had to be member of a MUSO, and a number of MUSOs we saw indicated that this had been an important reason for them.

Besides providing access to farmland and mechanised labour, CEPROF also arranged agricultural inputs and seeds, and has two warehouses for storing the harvest. The MUSOs are supposed to prepare and maintain the fields. The members of each MUSO agree on two fixed days a week to work on the communal field together. The harvest is supposed to be sold jointly, and the revenues are intended to increase the capital of the MUSOs. Part of the profit goes into the cash box of the MUSO, to pay for future rent and agricultural inputs, and another part is split among the members. CEPROF intends to store the harvest in the warehouse, while they search for a market. The idea is to first increase production, through access to land and mechanised labour, and then find the market.

Besides allowing access to communal land, CEPROF's approach to MUSOs also has a community governance element. Initially, CEPROF set up project management committees, CGP, to manage the project at the village level, and function as a representation of the population of the village (1 committee in Mboko, and 1 in Kabondozi). When the CGP approached the end of their two-year mandate, the new committees were elected by the members of the MUSOs. Each MUSO was required to provide one member as candidate, and two members who would cast a vote. As MUSO members explained to us, one could not vote for the candidate of one's own MUSO. The CGPs are intended to become village development committees in the long term, representing all the MUSOs and other committees or associations in the villages.

There are big difference between MUSOs. CEPROF staff mention the example of one MUSO that does not need any funds from ZOA or CEPROF to buy inputs or seeds. But other MUSOs have weak members, who hope to get international aid through the MUSO. Then there are other MUSOs who do not even consider this, they appropriate the approach, have capital and do not need CEPROF support, or maybe only technical support. CEPROF expects some MUSOs to be able to continue independently in 2015.

At the endline visit in July 2014, CEPROF staff indicated that all MUSOs were still in need of technical support. Financially, out of the 58 MUSOs, there were at least 3 that no longer needed financial support for their agricultural activities. At the same time, there were 5-10 MUSOs that were not functioning well. CEPROF staff related this to an unbalanced combination of members: all members should be able to more or less contribute the same amount. If more affluent households are combined with poorer households, this complicates the functioning of the MUSO.

When inquired about potential risks of this approach, CEPROF staff indicate that a potential risk is that someone leaves with the money they have received as loan. Or that the money they got as a credit, is stolen from them. In such as case, there is a grace period, so that the member can reimburse bit by bit. If that does not work, it will be necessary to go to the authorities to find a solution. A lot of accompaniment is necessary, to really understand the different tools, develop a culture of holding meetings, accountable management: this asks a lot of people, according to staff. In the long term, the objective is to create sources of microfinance, with a lower interest rate than a commercial bank.

Beneficiaries described that they foresaw difficulties in maintaining a field of 1ha with a MUSO of 11 members. Another adds that even with 30 members it will not be possible, because the members

have other fields to tend to, and 'your husband will not allow you to spend the whole day at this field'. Another beneficiary described the challenge that the contributions were not enough, to be able to get a significant credit. Beneficiaries also described the need for additional training on how to cultivate such a large piece of land, and the need for tools to work the land. They cannot use the money saved in the MUSOs for this, because this is for using in case of health problems, or school fees.

Generally, members of MUSOs were positive and expectant about the approach. During the endline visit, members of MUSOs emphasised the importance of group solidarity, and how the work together developed interpersonal trust. Through MUSOs, they said, people get to know each other better. They were also able to mention various examples of members that had received aid from the red box of the MUSO.

With respect to good community governance, we found that this was not brought up by the members of MUSOs, or the members of the CGP. The CGP was very much focused on the distribution of goods, and the setting up of the MUSOs. Awareness about governance in the project is still very limited. In the approach of MUSOs, there are clear good governance elements in how MUSOs are structured, and in the internal rules that members agree on democratically. Similarly, the elections for the CGP are an example of good democratic elections. However, we have not yet found evidence that these principles are being internalised. The MUSOs and CGP are still very much looking at CEPROF for their orientation.

### Actors and factors

Besides the activities of CEPROF, a number of other actors and factors can be identified that may have contributed to the development of the MUSOs.

Insecurity remains an important factor in the zone. During the evaluation period, there were no areas that were not accessible in the intervention area. With the defeat of M23 and subsequent demobilisations, the situation is believed to be improving. Nevertheless, the situation always remains a bit unpredictable. For the development of stable MUSOs, peace is vital, as this allows them to safely save money and to reimburse credit.

Many of the groups that joined were already a rudimentary form of MUSO, a group of people that pooled some of their resources. This means that the development of the MUSO cannot be attributed to the interventions by CEPROF alone.

The acquisition of capital is of vital importance in the approach to MUSOs taken by CEPROF. In order to successfully sell the agricultural products, access to markets is of vital importance. CEPROF staff were confident that it would be possible to find buyers for the harvest. Nevertheless, in order to durably develop the value chain, it is important to have a good knowledge of the expected demand, and the market, so that production can be adapted to this. Since access to markets is crucial for selling the products of the MUSOs, this factor can also be considered crucial for the future continued existence of this approach.

Another factor is the transition from humanitarian aid to development aid. CEPROF staff explain how there are multiple organisations that intervene in the same area, such as ADRA, GIZ, Caritas and IRC, and most of them supply goods for free. This causes problems for the PAMOJA project, as people are not

used to reimburse for example goats and seeds. This is also referred to as a spirit of *attentisme*, dependency, and can seriously affect the successful development of MUSOs.

Finally, the weather is also an important factor for agricultural production. It can affect production both positively and negatively, and if it negatively affects the harvest, this may threaten the continued existence of the MUSOs.

## Contribution

It is plausible that the activities of CEPROF have contributed to the strong increase in number of MUSOs in the intervention area, during the evaluation period. The construction of the warehouses and the successful negotiations for access to farmland for the MUSOs have strongly contributed to the appeal of this approach for the target population. At the same time, many groups were already existent before joining as MUSO, and the two other partner organisations of ZOA were implementing similar savings and loans groups in neighbouring areas. This means the development of the MUSOs cannot be uniquely attributed to the intervention by CEPROF.

In terms of contribution to strengthening civil society, it is still too early to make a conclusive statement about this. Tentatively, it is likely that the introduction of the MUSO approach, including many elements of good governance and democratic decision-making, may have an important contribution to civic education of the involved population, as well as the development of social cohesion.

We found only limited change in the organisational capacity of CEPROF during the evaluation period. There is not a clear link between these changes and the civil society objectives. It is more likely that the close involvement of ZOA staff in the implementation of the project has contributed to the successful setting up of MUSOs – for example through the negotiations for access to land with the local authorities.

## Discussion

Given our findings, we think the intervention by CEPROF towards civil society strengthening was well-designed and suitable for the environment in which it was implemented. CEPROF has successfully managed to form a large amount of MUSOs, and set up an overarching governance structure at village level. The combination of the governance objective of the project with the objective to improve livelihoods and food security seems very successful. It remains to be seen however how other committees in the village (sometimes supported by other CSOs) can be involved in the village development committee, which may be crucial for its local legitimacy. Additionally, in this form the success of the civil society strengthening intervention is strongly dependent on the success of the agricultural activities.

We would advise to continue funding this project, and fund similar projects in the future – with one recommendation, to pay more attention to analysing the market for agricultural products. The assumption that a market exists for the crops under production is a risk, because if this turns out to be false, beneficiaries will have wasted a great deal of effort, and both the livelihoods and the governance objective will be compromised. Additionally, we would be interested to see a thorough analysis of the effects of the MUSO approach on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries: in its current

form, people with more or less the same income are stimulated to join in one MUSO, thus creating richer and poorer MUSOs, and we wonder whether there is not a threshold for contributions to a MUSO in order to generate sufficient credit to really make a significant difference for the income of the members.

This evaluation could have been improved in terms of a better selection of SPOs in the sample: as we were not aware of the consortium approach of DCR, we were unaware of the difference in approach between PAMOJA in North Kivu, involving all the consortium partners, and South Kivu, where only ZOA is active. Our (random) selection of CEPROF is therefore not entirely representative of the way the consortium operates, and it would have been very interesting to evaluate the impact of the joint approach in North Kivu.

In terms of causal mechanisms that can be considered valid beyond this case, we note that the approach of working with grassroots groups is common among SPOs. To form a MUSO, there is no minimum requirement to the level of contribution of the members. This makes the approach of MUSOs flexible and suitable for many different contexts. Nevertheless, we wonder whether MUSOs will also work for the most poor and vulnerable. The combination with access to farmland in this project is an interesting innovation in this respect.

## Conclusion

Here we provide an answer to the four evaluation questions:

1. *What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?*

A great deal of development interventions target civil society in some way, but often not with the explicit intent to strengthen civil society. Many NGOs, including CEPROF and other SPOs in our sample, work with grassroots structures. These structures are often trained on good governance principles, have a democratically elected Board or Steering Committee, and organise meetings in which members can discuss activities and decisions to be taken. The vast majority of these local structures does not function without support from an NGO, often with international funding.

As set out in the context description, we note two major trends in civil society in the agricultural sector: farmers' cooperatives and Mutual Solidarity Groups, MUSOs. Many NGOs aim to set up or promote cooperatives and/or mutual solidarity groups. This is done with varying levels of success and impact. Especially the MUSOs can be seen as contributing to civil society development at the grassroots level. Most of these initiatives, however, have not yet reached the stage of maturity. This makes it difficult to assess to what extent they will make a sustainable contribution to civil society and the realisation of a more viable agricultural sector.

In terms of civil society development, we observe a tendency among donors to promote synergies/collaboration between civil society actors. This was often limited to collaboration between SPOs that were funded by the same donor. Ambitions now exist to promote more encompassing synergies, including not only civil society but also other actors in agricultural value chains. However, collaboration between donors themselves is often also limited, which does not set a good example for SPOs.



2. *To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*

With its ambition to develop the livelihoods and food security of the beneficiaries, and promote good society governance, the intervention of CEPROF is in line with the changes described above. During the evaluation period, a large number of beneficiaries of CEPROF were joined in MUSOs, and gained access to communal farmlands to develop agricultural activities together.

It is plausible that the activities of CEPROF have contributed to the strong increase in number of MUSOs in the intervention area, during the evaluation period. The construction of the warehouses and the successful negotiations for access to farmland for the MUSOs have strongly contributed to the appeal of this approach for the target population. At the same time, many groups were already existent before joining as MUSO, and the two other partner organisations of ZOA were implementing similar savings and loans groups in the vicinity. This means the development of the MUSOs cannot be uniquely attributed to the intervention by CEPROF.

In terms of contribution to strengthening civil society, it is still too early to make a conclusive statement about this. Tentatively, it is likely that the introduction of the MUSO approach, including many elements of good governance and democratic decision-making, may have an important contribution to civic education of the involved population, as well as the development of social cohesion.

3. *What is the relevance of these changes?*

To the target group, the possibility to get access to microcredit through the MUSOs, and getting access to communal farmland, are highly relevant. There are not many opportunities to earn an income, and agriculture is the main livelihoods activity in the intervention area. The relevance is proven by sharp increase in number of MUSOs in the last two years, with many existing groups also adhering.

In terms of the introduction of elements of good governance and democracy: in a context of years of corruption and mismanagement of public affairs, where citizens have little reason to trust the authorities, these local grassroots groups are an important social context for experiencing democracy. The involvement of mostly women in MUSOs provides them with a space to develop their leadership skills. This is all the more relevant with the local elections planned for August 2015.

From the perspective of the theory of change of CEPROF, with the aim of *'an improved position of women in the Fizi territory, equal to men'*, the relevance of these changes is less apparent. Nevertheless, seeing as the majority of the members of the MUSOs are women, and women are traditionally involved in cultivating the fields in the intervention area, the changes can also be considered relevant in light of CEPROF's general Theory of Change. The relevance could be increased by introducing specific elements, for example to stimulate women to develop their leadership skills.

4. *What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

Many civil society actors in the agricultural sector work towards realising the changes mentioned above, and there seems to be a momentum to achieve things. People see examples of success in neighbouring communities and become motivated to join initiatives themselves. Roughly, the

elements mentioned in the contribution story can all be seen as actors and factors that explain our findings. Key factors are the access to land and markets provided by CEPROF, the existence of many groups that already has experience with a rudimentary form of MUSOs, and the transition from humanitarian aid to development aid. The close involvement of ZOA in the implementation of the project is another factor that has been important for its success.

## **Concluding remarks**

In this section we briefly summarize the findings of the three components of this evaluation: impact on MDGs & themes, capacity development and civil society strengthening. We then discuss the relationship between these three components.

We find little impact on MDGs & Themes. This does not mean the evaluated project has failed in this respect, as the power of the study was low. Furthermore we find that the largest driver of change in the region in terms of MDG 1 and Fragile States is the security situation. This situation is affected mostly by the activities of the government and armed groups, and lies mostly outside the reach of NGOs like CEPROF. This makes potential results less relevant, as gains in productivity are dominated by the negative impact of the conflict.

In terms of capacity development we have not encountered major changes over the evaluation period of 2012 – 2014, although there have been slight improvement for some aspects of capacity. It is highly plausible that these changes in capacity are related to MFS II funding, as there are few other organisations contributing to CEPROF's capacity. At the same time, the effect of the contribution of MFS II funding to the development of organisational capacity of CEPROF has been limited, since the capacity of CEPROF has remained more or less constant during the evaluation period.

In the domain of civil society we note a strong increase in number of MUSOs in the intervention area, during the evaluation period. It is likely that this increase is due to activities by CEPROF. In terms of contribution to strengthening civil society, it is still too early to make a conclusive statement about this. Tentatively, it is likely that the introduction of the MUSO approach, including many elements of good governance and democratic decision-making, may have an important contribution to civic education of the involved population, as well as the development of social cohesion.

The potential exists for civil society organisations like MUSOs to be a driving force for agricultural productivity, and a mitigating force for conflict, thereby helping to achieve impact in both MDG 1 and the themes of fragile states and good governance. Thus far, there is no evidence that this potential has been realized through the activities carried out by CEPROF and its partners. However, it would be unrealistic to expect this within an evaluation period of two years. The fact that MFS II funding local capacity has been strengthened – even if modestly – and civil society organisation have been organised at the grassroots level quite possibly means that the scope for achieving the goals in terms of MDGs and themes in the long run has improved.

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Accord CEPROF 2012 sous Pamoja signé par JH  
*Documents for 2013 were not provided*  
00. Accord de collaboration Pamoja avril-novembre 2014 ZOA et CEPROF  
Annexe 1. Projet accepte PAMOJA avril-nov 2014 sous CEPROF  
Copie de Canevas livre de caisse + rapport financier partenaire Pamoja 2012 CEPROF 30-6-2012  
MFS2 budget ZOA DRC 2010-2015  
RAPPORT MOIS D'AVRIL,2014  
Rapport mois de mars 2014 Compilation

CEPROF EVALUATION 5 CAPACITES MARS 2012

CEPROF 5C Avril 2014

01. CEPROF Accord de collaboration de RC\_Pamoja 2014  
02. CEPROF Annex 1 PLAN de RC et COACHING\_Pamoja 2014  
03. CEPROF Annexe 2. Produits concrets attendus de RC\_Pamoja 2014  
PLAN RC PARTENAIRES ZOA PAMOJA 2014

Visite Partenaire CEPROF\_ZOA BARAKA Mai 2012\_AL

ZOA-Rapport définitif consolidé réévaluation de 7 partenaires

ZOA-Rapport définitif réévaluation-CEPROF

Rapport sur l'évaluation de 5 capacités de l'ONG CEPROF

130322 - Policy on partnerships and capacity development final

ZOA Joint workshop with partner on 5C assessment and the formulation of a capacity development plan 29102012

ZOA Training on the use of the 5C model for capacity strengthening of NGO partners 29102012

PLAN STRATEGIQUE CEPROF 2014

CEPROF - Réponses de ZOA aux questions

Presentation 2014 ZOA FIZI\_Program FIZI\_Equipe MFS 2

## Workshops, interviews and questionnaires:

Baseline visit: September 17-19, 21, 2012

Midterm visit: November 20-22, 2013

Endline visit: July 6, 10-11, 2014

Feedback workshop: February 4-5, 2015

| Name                      | Position                   | Workshop baseline | Workshop midterm | Workshop end line | CS questionnaire baseline | CS questionnaire end line | 5C Questionnaire baseline | 5C Questionnaire endline | interview baseline | interview midterm | interview endline |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Dunia Saidi               | animateur agronome         | X                 |                  |                   | x                         |                           | x                         |                          |                    |                   |                   |
| Shimita Enyanya           | animateur vétérinaire      | X                 | X                |                   | x                         |                           | x                         |                          | X                  |                   |                   |
| Lo,oci Benga Modeste      | animateur agronome         | X                 |                  |                   | x                         |                           | x                         |                          |                    |                   |                   |
| Baobe Nabalongelwa        | Coordinatrice              | X                 | X                | X                 | x                         | X                         | x                         | X                        | X                  | X                 | X                 |
| Trésor Marius Singira     | Superviseur projet Pamoja  | X                 | X                | X                 | x                         | X                         | x                         | X                        | X                  | X                 | X                 |
| Ursule Feza Mombo         | Comptable                  | X                 | X                | X                 | x                         | X                         | x                         | X                        | X                  | X                 |                   |
| Ba'aci M'Munga            | Animatrice                 | X                 | X                |                   | x                         |                           | x                         |                          | X                  | X                 |                   |
| Mulamba Mupassa           | Chauffeur                  |                   |                  |                   |                           |                           | x                         |                          |                    |                   |                   |
| Byaombe Mbobuchi          | animateur agronome         | X                 |                  |                   | x                         |                           | x                         |                          |                    |                   |                   |
| Akili Losebya             | Animateur                  | X                 |                  |                   |                           |                           |                           |                          |                    |                   |                   |
| Zabibu Lwangaisha Cadetwa | secrétaire-caissière       |                   | X                | X                 | X                         | X                         |                           | X                        |                    |                   |                   |
| Linda Nisalo              | charge de programmes       |                   | X                | X                 |                           | X                         |                           | X                        |                    |                   |                   |
| Aubain Mwaka Migani       | Administration et finances |                   |                  | X                 |                           | X                         |                           | X                        |                    |                   | X                 |

Besides our meetings with CEPFROF staff, we also had a number of meetings with CEPFROF beneficiaries:

- A focus group meeting was organised by CEPFROF in Kabondozi on 20.09.2012, with the members of the local Comité de Gestion de Projet. Mastagubu (President), Mbiso (Vice

president), Mwangaza, Mbeyo, Mwengwe, Songolo & Namagenda (councillors), and the Secretary

- We also spoke with a beneficiary, who had received a goat, on 20.09.2012
- Short meeting with authorities, chef, ANR, Mboko, 21-11-2013
- Meeting with 3 CGP members, Mboko, 21-11-2013
- Meeting with members of women’s association Lusambya, Mboko, 21-11-2013
- Meeting with 10 members of 4 MUSOs, Mboko, 21-11-2013
- Meeting with 10 CGP and MUSO members, Mboko, 6-7-14

## Contacts

- UNDSS Uvira, 21.09.2012
- CCAP Uvira, 19.09.2012, Francois Mionda Lucelu, Secretaire Executif
- ECOOKAL Uvira, 19.09.2012, Mulala Bahati, directeur general
- ZOA DRC, Bukavu, 11.09.2012, Amédée, programme manager Baraka/Fizi
- ZOA NL, Apeldoorn, 10.04.2014, Corita Corbijn
- ZOA DRC, Bukavu, 21.05.2014, Amédée, programme manager Baraka/Fizi
- ZOA DRC, Baraka, 6.07.2014, meeting with ZOA staff and presentation by ZOA Programme Manager

|   |   |           |
|---|---|-----------|
| Willy Mulimbi<br>Byamungu                       | Catholic Relief Services (CRS),<br>agronomist                                 | 21.5.2014 |
| Felicien Zozo<br>Jean Marie<br>Delphine Mapendu | ASOP, coordinator<br>ASOP, programme officer<br>ASOP, field trainer           | 16.6.2014 |
| Solomon Kilongo                                 | ACDI, coordinator   | 13.5.2014 |
| Emmanuel  | AVUDS, coordinator  | 13.5.2014 |
| Laurent Ikundji                                 | FAO, M&E officer  | 16.5.2014 |
| Moussa Mahamane                                 | IFDC, DRC representative  | 20.5.2014 |
| Gaspard Zamu Haizuru                            | IFDC, economist   | 21.5.2014 |
| Nono Mwavita                                    | SARCAF, coordinator   | 24.5.2014 |
| Mireille Mihigo Nabintu                         | FOPAC, lobby and advocacy<br>officer  | 13.5.2014 |
| Dieudonné Bakulikira<br>Nguma                   | UPACO, vice-president   | 23.5.2014 |
| 7 staff members, incl.<br>provincial inspector  | IPAPEL (provincial inspection for<br>agriculture, fisheries and<br>livestock) | 21.5.2014 |
| Netlyn Bernard<br>Moïse Foki                    | ICCO Bukavu   | 14.5.2014 |
| Thierry Kalimira                                | ICCO Bukavu, agronomist   | 14.5.2014 |
| Bilubi Meschac                                  | ISDR lecturer, consultant   | 21.5.2014 |

We consulted the people mentioned above to provide us deeper insight into what is going on in the agricultural sector in South Kivu, to provide additional background to our analysis of the CIVICUS dimensions and the contribution analysis.

Next to the people listed above, we also talked to staff members of ADI-Kivu, VECO and UPDI (as part of our evaluation of these organisations). These organisations are working in the same field and some of the information gathered from them fed into our understanding of CEPROF. For a complete list of people consulted at these organisations, please see the respective organisation reports.

Besides, we attended one day of a workshop organised by UPDI as part of the ICCO synergy COS-PASAK. Participants in this workshop were representatives of the food security partners of ICCO (and some former partners), as well as some other NGO representatives, and representatives of state institutions such as IPAPEL (provincial inspection of agriculture, fisheries and livestock), INERA (national institute for agronomic study and research), SENASEM (national seed service), and the ministerial divisions of planning and environment.

## Village list MDGs & Themes

| Village              | Treatment |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Mboko (gr2)          | 1         |
| Nundu (gr2 )         | 1         |
| Kabondozi (gr2)      | 1         |
| Kenya                | 1         |
| Sangya               | 1         |
| Kaboke II            | 1         |
| Katungula            | 1         |
| Lusenda              | 1         |
| Lulinda              | 1         |
| Elimyonga/Kilimyonga | 1         |
| Mukolwe              | 1         |
| Mukunga              | 0         |
| Kasombo              | 0         |
| Kasekesi             | 0         |
| Itabiro              | 0         |
| Basimukindje         | 0         |
| Lukondamisa          | 0         |
| Kibundu              | 0         |
| Abele                | 0         |
| Lweba                | 0         |
| Ekwena               | 0         |



## MDGs & Themes Data

The following table provides additional information on the construction of variables. All data cleaning, construction of variables and analysis was done in R, the scripts for these procedures are available on request.

The questionnaire is attached as a separate document.

| Variable label                                       | Description  |
|--|--|
| <b>MDG 1</b>   |  |
| Credit use (fraction)                                | Module 2.4: Has your household used credit in the past year? 1 = yes; 0 = no   |
| Non food expenditure (\$)                            | Module 4.2: Sum of all non-food expenditures in the past fourteen days. (Longer would cause larger imprecision)  |
| Revenue from rice (\$)                               | Module 3.3: Revenue of all rice sold   |
| Revenue from cassava (\$)                            | Module 3.3.: Revenue of all cassava sold   |
| Rice yield (Tonne/Ha)                                | Module 3.3: Rice produced on all fields  |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                             | Module 3.3: Cassava produced on all fields   |
| Rice Price (\$/kg)                                   | Module 3.3: Revenue of rice divided by the production  |
| Cassava Price (\$/kg)                                | Module 3.3: Revenue of cassava divided by the production   |
| Fraction of rice sold                                | Module 3.3: Rice sold / rice produced  |
| Fraction of cassava sold                             | Module 3.3: Cassava sold / cassava produced  |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year                | Module 4.1 Did you or someone in your household suffer from hunger in the last year? 0 = Never; 1 = just one or two times, multiple times, often, or always  |
| Often suffered from hunger last year                 | Module 4.1 Did you or someone in your household suffer from hunger in the last year? 10= Never or just one or two times 1 = multiple times, often, or always |
| Use Fertilizer (yes/no)                              | Module 3.4 Did you use fertilizer 1= yes; 0 = no   |
| Used Improved Seeds (yes/no)                         | Module 3.4 Did you use irrigation 1= yes; 0 = no   |
| <b>Good Governance</b>                               |  |
| I respect the Mwami (agree/don't agree)              | Module 6.6: I respect the Mwami 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree   |
| I can go to the Mwami for help (agree/don't agree)   | Module 6.6: I can go to the Mwami for help 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree  |
| The Mwami can act in my interest (agree/don't agree) | Module 6.6: The Mwami can act in my interest 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree                                      |
| I respect our chief (agree/don't agree)              | Module 6.6: I respect our chief 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree   |
| I can go to our chief for help (agree/don't agree)   | Module 6.6: I can go to our chief for help 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree  |
| Our chief can act in my interest (agree/don't agree) | Module 6.6: Our chief can act in my interest 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree                                      |
| I respect politicians (agree/don't agree)            | Module 6.6: I respect politicians 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree   |
| I can go to politicians for help (agree/don't agree) | Module 6.6: I can go to politicians for help 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree                                      |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Politicians can act in my interest (agree/don't agree)   | Module 6.6: Politicians can act in my interest 1= totally agree or agree; 0 = neutral, don't agree or totally don't agree  |
| <b>Fragile States</b>                                    |  |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | Module 5.2: Asked if there were any of the following types of insults, in the community: theft,abuse,rape,witchcraft,land conflict, other. Number of yes reported. |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | Module 5.1: Do you go out at night? 1 = yes; 0 = no  |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | Module 6.1: Did you discuss security with members of the community 1 = yes; 0 = no.  |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | Module 6.1: Did you discuss security with an NGO 1 = yes; 0 = no.  |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | Module 6.1: Did you discuss security with the authorities? 1 = yes; 0 = no.  |
| Tokens sent in trust game                                | Number of tokens sent in the trust game (electronic questionnaire)   |

# Civil Society Strengthening Report Centre Médical Évangélique de Nyankunde

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs and Bart Weijs

Wageningen University

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## List of Acronyms

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| ALOCES | Alliance des Organisations Chrétiennes pour l'Éducation et la Santé |
| CBHI   | Community-Based Health Insurance Schemes                            |
| CMEN   | Centre Médical Évangélique de Nyankunde                             |
| ECDPM  | European Centre for Development Policy Management                   |
| FARDC  | Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo                |
| MFS II | Medefinancieringsstelsel 2011-2015                                  |
| MUSACA | Mutuelle de Santé Canaan  |
| NESAP  | Noyau d'entraide, solidarité, amour et participation communautaire  |
| NGO    | Non Governmental Organisation                                       |
| SPO    | Southern Partner Organisation                                       |

### 1. Introduction

Briefly describe the purpose of the paper; give outline of the paper; provide a brief summary of the analyses and the findings.

This report is part of a large evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of Southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society development.

As part of the civil society component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which development projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society in the evaluation period and the extent in which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and end line study and focuses on a large sample of 19 partnerships. In the following report we look specifically at the contribution of the *Centre Médical Évangélique de Nyankunde* (CME) to civil society strengthening. CME is a partner of Tear NL, and as such partner of the ICCO Alliance.

The report is based on observations, workshops, field visits and interviews conducted during visits in 2012 and 2014. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by Gerinke Fountain (Tear), Elisée Undehoso Okameli and Wachan Kika Dayerombe (CME) We thank them for their comments and additions.

Core elements of our evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the Civic Civil Society Index.<sup>2</sup> Dimensions of this index are:

- Civic engagement
- Level of organisation
- Practice of values
- Perception of impact
- Environment<sup>3</sup>

CME is a healthcare provider and not primarily concerned with civil society building and policy influencing. Through ALOCES, the alliance of ICCO partners in DRC working on health and education CME is involved in joint lobby and advocacy efforts. Activities within this alliance were relatively limited and CME staff did not really take ownership of this. This report does not cover realisations of this alliance.

Since 2008 a subsection of CME Bunia works on the promotion of Community-Based Health Insurance Schemes (CBHI). This is done through the MUSACA (*Mutuelle de Santé Canaan*). The MUSACA has its own organisational structure that was initiated by CME. In our evaluation, we have approached the MUSACA as a result of civil society strengthening efforts of Tear, through CME. The MUSACA organises community members in small groups to collectively save money for healthcare provision. The main aim of these schemes is to make healthcare more accessible to poor people, which is in the public interest. At the grassroots level, these schemes also contribute to civil society strengthening ; people learn to organise themselves in groups: NESAP (*Noyau d'entraide, solidarité, amour et participation communautaire*), making use of governance structures. Because money is involved, it is important to build trust within the group. This has a positive impact on civil society at the grassroots level. The executive team of the MUSACA leading the CBHI was highly motivated and showed ability to mobilise people. The project is highly relevant for the beneficiaries in terms of improving access to healthcare, and membership is growing. In the course of the evaluation period, the MUSACA itself has developed positively. The role of CME in this is limited, but the role of Tear funding is very significant, as auto-financing is far from sufficient. At the grassroots level, civil society strengthening elements were less prominent.

## 2. Context

Briefly describe the country/local context as far as it is relevant for the evaluated project.

After independence, the DRC started to set up a new health policy. Primary healthcare was the main focus. To achieve this, the sector was organised in different units at national, provincial and at decentralised local level. Policy is set out at the national level. At the operational level, organisation is in health zones. Geographical coverage of health zone usually coincide with administrative territories. Health zones in their turn are subdivided into a number of *aires de santé*; the local health centres/clinics and health posts.

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<sup>2</sup> CDI, *Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (see Annex X)*

<sup>3</sup> Please note: In the methodology annex we provide more information about our sampling strategy and about the methodology we used.

Each health zone has a general referral hospital.<sup>4</sup> These hospitals take the lead in organising the zone's healthcare. The setup of the DRC health sector was widely praised and used as an example in its early days.<sup>5</sup> Today the structure exists on paper, but does not reach all the capillary ends of the country. DRC health indicators generally give rise to concern, as the following parameters from the WHO show:

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Total population (2012)  | 65 705 000 |
| Gross national income per capita (PPP international \$, 2012)                | 390        |
| Life expectancy at birth m/f (years, 2012)                                   | 50/53      |
| Probability of dying under five (per 1 000 live births, 2012)                | 146        |
| Probability of dying between 15 and 60 years m/f (per 1000 population, 2012) | 382/323    |
| Total expenditure on health per capita (international \$, 2012)              | 24         |
| Total expenditure on health as % of GDP (2012)                               | 5.6        |

Source: <http://www.who.int/countries/cod/en/>, retrieved on 8.09.2014

Involvement of non-state actors in the health sector is high; (I)NGOs, churches, and private institutions provide support to state-based health institutions, but also act as service providers themselves. It is estimated that in the whole of the DRC, about 60% of the healthcare is provided by the state, whereas 40% comes from the private sector; 36% from non-profit healthcare providers and 6% from commercial providers.<sup>6</sup> A lot of the non-state actors were founded after the war or came during the war with international support.

CME is based in Ituri (Orientale province) and in the North of North Kivu province. It is a relatively remote area with less international interventions than can be found in most other parts of eastern DRC (especially North and South Kivu). Towns in the area can best be described as semi-urban. The majority of the population depend on agriculture and often do not dispose of stable incomes. Poverty is a major impediment to access healthcare. This makes it difficult for healthcare providers to be strict in demanding payment from patients, as many people simply cannot afford the costs. Limited payments can endanger quality of services. Some NGOs in the area work on agricultural activities, which can be of indirect help to access healthcare as it can help to improve access to financial resources.

Ituri district has a long history of conflicts. One of the more severe conflicts took place from 1999 to 2007, with the period until 2003 being most vehement. The district is home to a number of different ethnicities leading to ethnically based tensions; on the one hand are the agriculturalist Lendu, on the other hand the pastoralist Hema. The latter were the favoured group during colonial times. There is a strong hierarchy among the Hema, and a feeling of being superior to the Lendu. Cycles of violence have been repeated over the past hundred years. In the conflict starting in 1999 other ethnic groups were involved as well, such as Bira and Alur. Instability in the area led the EU to decide to set up the first autonomous EU military mission outside Europe, named Operation Artemis. One of the aims of the mission was to contribute to 'the stabilisation of the security conditions and the improvement of the humanitarian situation in Bunia',

<sup>4</sup> Waldman, R. 2006. *Health in Fragile States, Country Case Study: Democratic Republic of the Congo*. Arlington, Virginia, USA: BASICS for the USAID.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* See also Bwimana, A. 2014 unpublished paper

<sup>6</sup> CME, Proposition 2012 pour Tear Hollande

Ituri's capital.<sup>7</sup> Thomas Lubanga, leader of the fighting Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) was arrested in 2005 and sentenced guilty at the International Criminal Court in the Hague for a number of war crimes. Despite the formal end of the conflict, various militia groups continue their presence in Ituri district and North Kivu. This is often in shifting constellations and areas, making the militia landscape blurred and difficult to assess. The surrender of M23 in North Kivu end of 2013, and in its wake, the surrender of other armed groups in this province, has not led to increased security in Ituri, but in fact led to the spread of loose rebel factions in North Kivu and in Ituri.

Presence of humanitarians and of development organisations in Ituri is more limited than in the Kivus. Civil society is less vibrant than in the Kivus, which limits possibilities for cooperation with other civil society actors.

### **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

*Brief description of the SPO: history, nature of organisation, major changes during evaluation period, main areas of intervention, geographical focus*

The Centre Medical Évangélique de Nyankunde (CME) is primarily a healthcare provider. CME was founded in 1965 in Nyankunde by five local churches. These churches supply the members that form the General Assembly of CME, and still have a voice in the appointment of staff members and other organisational matters. The Christian orientation of CME is reflected in its mission: "To spread the gospel of Jesus Christ through health service".<sup>8</sup> Over the years, CME rapidly developed as a reliable healthcare provider in the area, serving an estimated population of 150 000 people, and attracting patients from far and wide, up to Kisangani. CME has always received a lot of support (financial, human resources) from a number of international donors, especially missionary organisations. In September 2002, CME was greatly affected by an ethnically inspired conflict in Ituri; the centre was attacked and within half an hour over 1000 people got killed, infrastructure got largely destroyed and staff who managed to escape got scattered. Some of them found refuge in Bunia (the capital of Ituri district), others went further south to Beni, in North Kivu. In their places of refuge, staff started working as well, inducing the growth of the CME locations in Beni and Bunia. CME Nyankunde became functional again in 2004. Meanwhile large steps have been taken to reconstruct Nyankunde, but staff members nevertheless argue that the Centre is still a long way from what it used to be.<sup>9</sup>

Through the long-term establishment of CME in Nyankunde and the centre's reputation, CME is responsible for overseeing the whole health zone of Nyankunde and acts as the general referral hospital in the zone. In the health zones of Beni and Bunia this is not the case. Therefore, CME Nyankunde is in a more powerful position vis-à-vis other healthcare providers (like the state). In Beni and Bunia, the CME

---

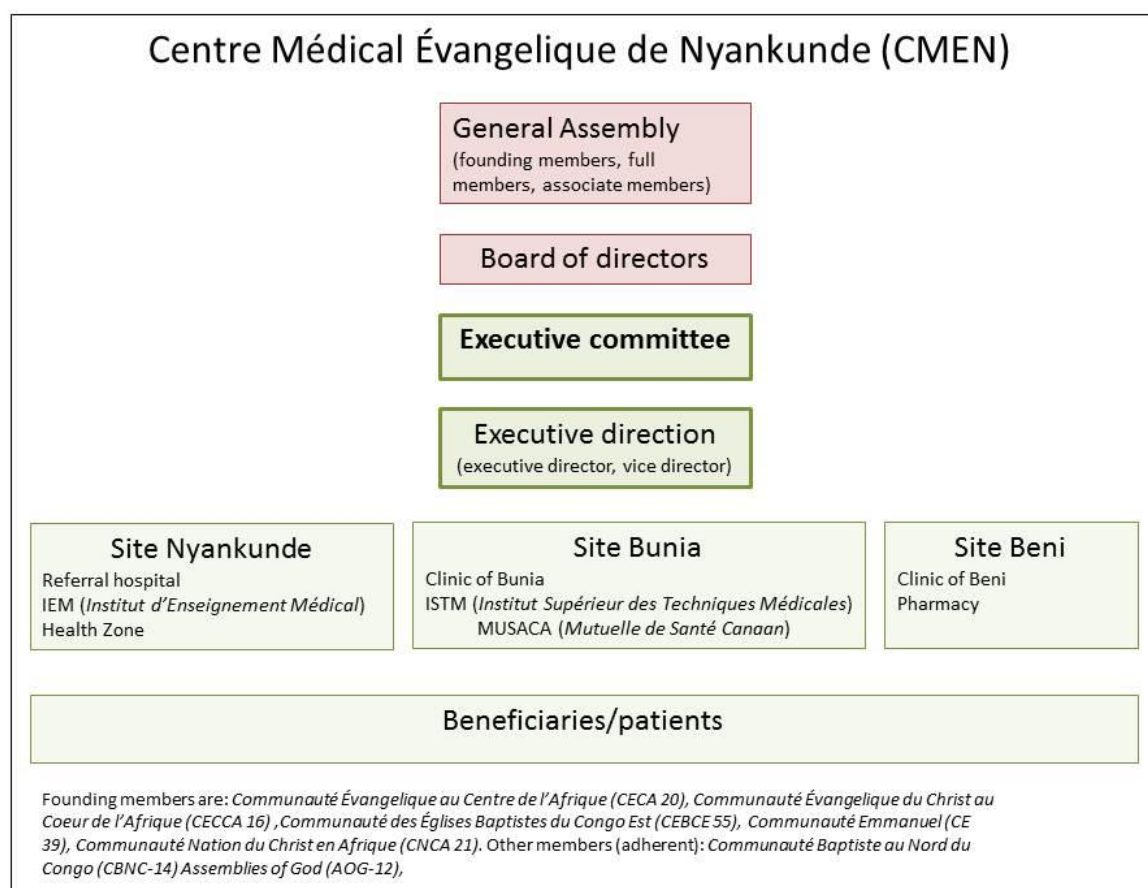
<sup>7</sup> [http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/artemis-drc/mission-description/index\\_en.htm](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/artemis-drc/mission-description/index_en.htm), viewed on 28.07.2014.

<sup>8</sup> Statuts du Centre Médical Evangélique de Nyankunde (revision 2009), retrieved from [http://www.nyankunde.org/statuts/statuts\\_cme.html](http://www.nyankunde.org/statuts/statuts_cme.html)

<sup>9</sup> For more background about the organisation's structure and history, see <http://www.nyankunde.org/index.htm>, viewed on 10.10.2012.



health structures are part of the state’s health zone. Staff argued that in the past decade the number of healthcare providers – often of confessional denominations- has grown a lot, but many are considered to be of inferior quality. The plural context of healthcare providers has put the CME in a new position; in the past patients would come automatically to the CME as it was the only option. Now CME has to work more on outreach and go to the people. In Nyankunde the CME is already well-known and trusted. Staff can build on personal relationships with the communities. In Beni and Bunia involvement of the state to take care of beneficiaries is weak.



## 4. Project description

| Project                                 | Donor   | Major objective   | Period    | Amount of funding (in \$, unless indicated otherwise) |         |         |        |
|---|---------|---|-----------|---|---------|---------|--------|
|   |         |   |           | 2011  | 2012    | 2013    | 2014   |
| Basic healthcare programme and HIV/AIDS | Tear NL | Contribute to improvement of health of the population, especially most vulnerable | 2011-2014 | €60817  | €57 000 | €56 236 | €32878 |
|   | DIFAEM  |   |           |   | \$ 9161 |         |        |

|  |                   |   |                                 |             |             |       |   |
|--|-------------------|---|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------|---|
| Chemin pour la vie-Stop SIDA                 | Tear fund UK      | Reduce prevalence and mitigate impact of HIV and GBV in the east of DRC   | 2009-2014                       | 60174       | 54937       | 62176 |   |
| Institutional support                        | CME Friends       | Contribute to financial accessibility of tertiary health care for vulnerable patients<br>Contribute to development of hospital infrastructure | Indetermined (provided in kind) |             |             |       |   |
| Institutional support in equipment and staff | Samaritan's Purse |   | In kind                         |             |             |       |   |
| Own revenues                                 |                   |   |                                 | ?           | ?           | ?     | ? |
| Total budget per year                        |                   |   |                                 | \$1 548 000 | \$1 639 000 |       |   |
| Total amount of funding 2011-2014            |                   |   |                                 |             |             |       |   |

Please note here that CME, as provider of healthcare generates its own revenues. Contribution of Tear covers only about 5% of its annual budget.

### Theory of Change of CME<sup>10</sup>

The aim of CME is to improve access to primary and secondary healthcare for at least 80% of the population, especially women, and children in the age of 0-5. Firstly, this requires motivated and well trained staff. To realise this, CME offers education, and provides training. Generally, CME staff is well motivated. For many of them, the Christian orientation of the centre provides extra incentives, and makes CME more attractive as employer, in comparison to health institutions of the state. Secondly, CME needs to engage the local beneficiaries; people need to understand the importance of good health, and need to be able to pay for it. To facilitate payment, the community-based health insurance scheme is set up. This is an important civil society component for CME. Through awareness raising by local animators, and by taking on board local leaders, people are informed. Government support is important to facilitate the functioning of CME and its sub-structures. Generally, CME contributes to improvement of quality of healthcare and access. Some organisational challenges however remain and seem to be difficult to overcome. Tear NL supports the initiative of community-based health insurance. Next to this, Tear NL supports some of the healthcare provision, and gives support to organisational development on the basis of needs.

### Contribution of Tear NL to CME

Incidental funding was provided by Tear NL already in the early recovery phase after the 2002 massacre in Nyankunde. More structural funding has been given since 2007. The present multi-year project aims at improving the health of the population, especially the most vulnerable people; both by improving services,

<sup>10</sup> The Theory of Change is based on workshop exercises during baseline and end line, project documents, and interviews, in combination with our own impression.

but also by making healthcare more accessible. The contract for 2014 was pending during our visit in July 2014, awaiting 2013 reporting (which was due February 28). The 2013 project is smaller than the one in 2012 (during baseline visit). Tear used to fund 4 elements: community-based health insurance (CBHI) or MUSACAs (*Mutuelles de Santé Canaan*); ophthalmology; community committees; and organisational strengthening (in terms of vision development, but also more technical skills such as bookkeeping). At present, funding is mainly for the community-based health insurance and ophthalmology. The first three months of the project foresee in a contribution to healthcare of the most vulnerable people. Besides, Tear will cover costs of 3 workshops/evaluations that should contribute to capacity strengthening of CME. The community committees are no longer funded from 2014 onwards (and only limitedly funded in 2013, because it was difficult for CME to get a clear view and vision on these, and results were not satisfying for Tear). The budget of 2013 (in euros) gives an impression of the division of funding:

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| CME vision development                                   | 3 000         |
| Ophthalmology  | 9 588         |
| Mutuelle de Santé Canaan (MUSACA)                        | 14 000        |
| Community activities (by focal point)                    | 8 909         |
| Training on SAGE and OHADA                               | 4 000         |
| Workshop and CODIR ALOCES+ midterm survey                | 2 500         |
| Care for the most vulnerable (for 3 months)              | 5 120         |
| CME administration                                       | 4880          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>51 997</b> |
| Total incl. support to Medical Education Institute (IEM) | 56 645        |
| Contribution TEAR minus underspending 2012               | 56 236        |

### **Contribution of TEAR to civil society/policy advocacy elements**

The projects with CME do not have an explicit civil society strengthening component. However, a number of civil society strengthening activities can be drawn from the project documents. Activities that can be seen to contribute to civil society strengthening are: CME's participation in ALOCES; the work on the MUSACA; the community committees.

Lobby, advocacy, and exchange with other civil society actors is done through CME's participation in the ICCO alliance of partners active in the field of health and/or education, ALOCES. Two CME representatives participate in joint activities of the alliance, and ownership is felt, but this is mostly at the level of the specific representatives and not directly part of the realisations by CME. Tear contributes to ALOCES but activities have an incidental character and are difficult to monitor. Because partners are geographically spread over different areas, we were not able to get a clear view of the role of CME in ALOCES.<sup>11</sup> Staff acknowledged that still a lot needed to be done before reaching out for successful lobby and advocacy at

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<sup>11</sup> For more information about ALOCES, please consult the organisational report on Armée du Salut. Armée du Salut is the lead organisation within ALOCES.

the provincial and national level. For these reasons, ALOCES does not have a prominent place in this report.

Another civil society element (promoting public interest) is support provided by Tear to CME for the MUSACA. Community-based health insurance schemes have been run in DRC since the 1980s,<sup>12</sup> but the MUSACA was the first in its kind to be implemented in Ituri district and efforts had to be taken to raise awareness among the population about its usefulness, and to promote understanding that healthcare needs to be paid for. A growing number of adherents in Bunia underlines the need for this type of health insurance, although growth is not as fast as expected. For 2012 for instance 500 new members were foreseen, and for 2013 700 new members.

| Year | # of adherents/members |
|------|------------------------|
| 2008 | 0                      |
| 2009 | 288                    |
| 2010 | 411                    |
| 2011 | 1260                   |
| 2012 | 1327                   |
| 2013 | 1539                   |

Source: Photographie de la MUSACA, no date

Paying membership fees is and remains a challenge for many people. The set-up of the MUSACA, with its monitoring team, local nodes, and field trainers allows for close and intense monitoring of the functioning of the program and possible needs of beneficiaries.

Support to the community health insurance can be seen as civil society strengthening in two ways; first of all the insurance scheme is realised by an organised group of people; the MUSACA. This structure was set up as an initiative of CME and funding for them is channelled from Tear through CME to MUSACA. Support to the organisation of the MUSACA in itself is support to civil society strengthening. Secondly, within the grassroots groups of adherents, people are encouraged to support each other; visit each other when in hospital etc. This mutual support can contribute to safety nets people can resort to and strengthen social cohesion. During our visit, we found that beneficiaries mostly emphasise the gains of the health insurance in terms of providing access to healthcare, and did not talk so much about this social cohesion. This is in line with literature evaluating the impact of community-based health insurance schemes. This literature usually concentrates on the impact on the quality, efficiency, and accessibility of healthcare.<sup>13</sup> We do not consider the grassroots groups as having a major contribution to civil society strengthening, at least not thus far. The MUSACA has close contacts with the authorities of the health zone of Bunia. A staff member

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<sup>12</sup> Soglohoun, P. 2012. *Contribution des Mutuelles de santé à l'organisation de la demande des services et soins de santé en RDC*. Bethesda, MD : Health Systems 20/20 project, Abt Associates Inc.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Ekman, B. 2004. 'Community-based health insurance in low-income countries: a systematic review of the evidence', *Health Policy and Planning* 19(5): 249-270, Mladovsky, P and E. Mossialos, 2008. 'A conceptual framework for community-based health insurance in low-income countries: Social capital and economic development', *World Development* 36(4): 590-607, Soglohoun, P. 2012. *Contribution des Mutuelles de santé à l'organisation de la demande des services et soins de santé en RDC*. Bethesda, MD : Health Systems 20/20 project, Abt Associates Inc.

of the central health zone office (BCZ) for instance attends strategic meetings of the MUSACA. The involvement of the authorities provides opportunities for policy influencing.

The health committees were part of Tear funding, aimed at rooting CME more firmly in the communities by setting up various initiatives, such as for example small credit groups to support income-generating activities. Tear has ended funding because of a felt lack of results, but CME staff is still interested in continuing these activities, as they nevertheless see an added value in it. The committees were supposed to link and root CME more into the communities. This idea was based on the assumption that people with access to assets are better able to pay for healthcare. It makes healthcare more accessible but in the end is also beneficial for CME as a higher percentage of people would be able to pay for the care they receive. Engaging community leaders was a strategy to reach out to the population. It was foreseen that the committees would contribute to more accountability and create a level of ownership over the health institutions among the communities. We did not cover them extensively in our evaluation (see our explanation under methodology). An external evaluation carried out in April-May 2014 showed that capacities of the health committees had been improved during the project.<sup>14</sup>

### **Other civil society/policy advocacy elements**

Besides the civil society strengthening elements in the MFS II-funded projects, it is worth mentioning that since the end of the war episode, CME has played an important role in creating new civil society structures, based on needs that were assessed in the field. Examples of these are an organisation that provides psychological care to people traumatised because of war (OEIL); an organisation that works on improving sanitary and health conditions (PPSSP); a Conflict Resolution Centre (CRC); an organisation working in the field of agriculture (PPAS), and an organisation that is involved in marketing and distribution of medication (CADIMEBU). The MUSACA is at present still part of CME, but it might also become more independent in the future. Next to Tear funding, the MUSACA also receives funding from DIFAEM for setting up health insurance schemes in the health zones of Rwampara and Gety.

## **5. Data collection and analytical approach**

Describe the baseline and follow-up assessment. If there is one general methodology, that can be described in an Annex. Please present particular choices and data collection problems in the main text. Sampling method and sample sizes; workshop participants and other informants (in Annex).

CME is based at three different locations. During the baseline we visited the CME in Nyankunde, as this was the basis from which the organisation has started. It gave a good impression of the overall impact of CME. To zoom in more specifically on the civil society component of the funding, we decided to focus our end line visit on Bunia, where the community-based health insurance scheme had been set up in 2008. The workshop itself was carried out with a similar group of participants as in 2012; representatives of all

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<sup>14</sup> CIF Santé, 2014. *Rapport d'évaluation technique externe du projet: Primary Health Care Promotion in Province of North-Kivu and Ituri District-CME Project.*

three locations attended, adding to the comparability of the data. Generally, we were able to follow the methodology as described in the methodology annex.

Due to an unanticipated change of flight schedule, we were obliged to shorten our visit to the staff and beneficiaries of the MUSACA. The MUSACA staff managed to reschedule our visit and was nevertheless able to present us the office, members of the different MUSACA organs, a group of beneficiaries in Dele, and a health centre in town. Thanks to their smooth organisation we obtained a good impression of the scheme and its functioning.

A smaller component of the Tear-funded program focused on community development, making people better able to pay for their healthcare. Funding of this component was ended in 2013 as the donor felt not enough progress was made. Since we expected little impact here, we mainly focused on the MUSACA during our end line visit.

Activities developed within the ICCO alliance of health and education partners (ALOCES) are not included in our evaluation. We talked with the CME staff involved in ALOCES but did not find a high level of ownership. ALOCES is supposed to effectuate joint lobby and advocacy activities, but thus far this has been limited in scope and we were not able to clearly trace the role of CME during our visit, also because ALOCES partners meet incidentally. MUSACA, by contrast, is much more seen as an offspring of CME.

## 6. Results

Research Question 1: Provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions. If available, provide description of individual indicators in an Annex.

|                       | Baseline          | Endline |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------|
| Civic engagement      | 1.5               | 2       |
| Level of organisation | 2                 | 2       |
| Practice of values    | 1.5               | 1.5     |
| Perception of impact  | 2                 | 2       |
| Environment           | 1.5 <sup>15</sup> | 1.5     |

### *Civic engagement*

As a provider of medical services, CME has always responded to the health needs of the population. For a long time already, CME tries to reserve some funds for the provision of free healthcare to those who are most vulnerable. In more recent times, and encouraged by the donor Tear, CME has started thinking about

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<sup>15</sup> Please note that scoring is relative and has been done by looking at the characteristics of the organisations and by comparing them among each other (taking into account specificities of each).

community activities to strengthen its ties to the community and to have a stronger impact. After a brainstorming session, it was decided to set up a community-based health insurance; the MUSACA. After community consultations, Bunia was chosen as the place to start with this. Meanwhile, MUSACAs have been set up by CME in adjacent health zones Rwampara and Gethy as well (with support of DIFAEM).

At present, staff is considering to implement the insurance in Nyankunde as well. The director of the MUSACA explained to us that no definite decision had been taken yet, as she first wanted to carry out a feasibility study to assess the existing needs and the demand for the programme. Her idea was to train members of the already existing MUSACAs to carry out the study, as she felt people would be more open to express their opinion to peers. Subsequently data should be analysed by an expert.<sup>16</sup> The example underlines the awareness among CME staff to be sensitive towards the needs of beneficiaries. In the past, similar studies have been carried out. Also, formal meetings take place to assess the needs of the population. These meetings were starting to take shape in 2012, but now seemed to have become more regular as part of the community program. With reduction of funding by Tear for the community focal points, this might become less again.

In its community activities, CME manages to engage local leaders, mostly administrative leaders and church leaders. Since CME is founded by church-based member organisations, there is relatively easy access to church leaders. Through the organisation of the health zones, formal contacts exist with local authorities. Besides, CME has actively mobilised local leaders to raise awareness in the communities about the health insurance, and many of them show engagement. The president of the MUSACA board in Bunia for instance is chief of Lumumba, the biggest neighbourhood in Bunia. For the MUSACA, a contract has been signed with the town of Bunia, which has helped to bring the parties closer together.

In general, we are convinced that CME staff is sincerely concerned about the well-being of the population and willing to seriously engage with them. Engagement with state actors in the field is almost self-evident and unavoidable. We found that relationships with the state were especially constructive through the MUSACA.

### ***Level of organisation***

CME has always had strong links with other civil society actors. First of all, this is through the founding member churches. Staff is often recruited from among the network of the member organisations. Over the years, CME has been involved in founding a number of other civil society organisations that are now independent, but with which close contacts still exist, as mentioned above. Additionally, since 2009, CME has been part of an alliance of organisations named *Chemin pour la Vie* (CHEPVI). The alliance was funded by Tearfund UK for carrying out a joint programme on HIV/AIDS, until 2013. Activities of member organisations were complementary. When talking about collaboration with other organisations, staff frequently referred to this alliance and some contacts still exist.

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<sup>16</sup> Staff is counting on DIFAEM to fund the study.

In 2011, the ICCO Alliance decided to unite its education and health partners in ALOCES. In the first years of its existence, it appeared to be difficult to gather the ALOCES members together; they are spread over the east of DRC (North and South Kivu, Ituri), and partners prioritised more on their own organisational targets than on joint activities. Towards the end of 2013, and encouraged by the Dutch donors, a consultant was hired by the coalition to increase impact. The consultant works for both the health and the education partners in the alliance. At the level of CME, two staff members have regularly attended joint ALOCES activities, but impact and level of ownership still seem to be relatively limited. The explanation given to us for the limited impact, was that ALOCES first needed to obtain a legal recognition, otherwise 'you risk being taken for a fool' as one of the CME representatives for ALOCES explained during an interview.<sup>17</sup> Relations with other partners in ALOCES vary. PPSSP for instance is one of the NGOs that were co-created by CME and close relations naturally exist. Such close relations also exist with CECA20, which is connected to ECC, one of the founding members of CME.

In a climate in which international funding is becoming more and more difficult to obtain, CME is in a relatively good position, as it has its own revenues through the payments of patients. These payments are mainly used to pay salaries to staff, and do not cover the procurement of new equipment or infrastructure. During the war CME has lost a number of donors, but a small number of stable donors has remained and has pledged big investments for reconstruction. This is not all reflected in the annual budgets of CME as some of the support is provided in kind (e.g. construction of buildings, provision of medical expat staff).

### ***Practice of values***

CME staff make continuous efforts to improve the organisation. Level of education of staff members is generally very high (higher education, university level, quite a few have studied abroad). One of the challenges that remains is the location of the organisation over three different sites. At the same time this is also considered an advantage by some (as it allows them to be closer to beneficiaries in a larger area), and there seems a lot of reluctance to change this. Organisationally however, CME has undergone some changes that could contribute to more efficient management. A General Assembly was held in February 2013 with all the 7 member churches participating. During this assembly, a new executive board was appointed. For the first time, the director of CME does not have a medical background. Instead of six members, the board - for now - consists of four members. It is not yet clear whether these changes will make management more efficient. In the course of 2013, the Administrative Council (consisting of 11 members) has had two board meetings (normally one board meeting is supposed to take place every year, and a GA once every two years). Challenges remain, especially when it comes to timely delivery of reports. The consolidated financial and narrative reports 2013 were submitted to Tear in summer 2014, after which Tear proceeded on releasing the 2014 funding. The negative impact of this was especially felt at the level of the MUSACA in Bunia, since this structure depends largely on Tear funding, and they had submitted their part of the reports some months earlier. As a result, MUSACA staff had not yet received

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<sup>17</sup> 17.07.2014.



any salary in 2014 at the time of our visit in July. Tear is planning to change this funding set up from 2015 onwards, making the different project components less dependent from each other.

Looking at the distribution of financial resources, it is clear that getting a complete overview is difficult. This certainly complicates transparency. The 2012 audit report mentions 5 different divisions of the organisation with bank accounts: at the level of the direction, there are 3 accounts at BIC, 3 accounts at Natwest Bank in the UK, one in Nairobi, and one in Kampala. Next to this, Nyankunde and Beni both have accounts at BIC, the clinic in Bunia has accounts at BIC and RAWBANK and a separate account for microfinancing at MECRE. The education institute ISTM in Bunia has a microfinance account and should open a BIC account as well.<sup>18</sup>

CME, encouraged by Tear NL, carries out an O-Scan annually since 2011. Based on this, plans are made for strengthening the capacity of the organisation. Staff felt this to be useful, and argued that the O-Scan already led them to work on the legal texts such as by-laws, statutes, and procedure manuals. Next, Tear NL is planning to organise a workshop to discuss vision development of CME. A start has been made with revising the strategic plan for the period 2015-2019. The level of education of CME staff can positively contribute to critical reflection.

Downward accountability is ensured mainly through the General Assemblies. During the baseline visit, executive staff already pointed out that members of the social bodies come from the founding (ecclesiastic) bodies of CME and do not have adequate knowledge on CME's working theme. Only the health zone of Nyankunde has beneficiaries among the members of the General Assembly. It was pointed out by one of the board members that CME needs to find ways to work more with the communities to be stronger connected to the beneficiaries and have easier ways to include their opinion in planning. Accountability through the GA does not seem to be very relevant. Accountability at the level of the MUSACA in Bunia seems to be stronger, and inherent part of the whole structure: local committees monitor quality of services offered, there is an oversight committee in place, as well as a general assembly. Inside the MUSACA office, information about the functioning and planning is written on papers put on the wall and easily accessible for all visitors.

### ***Perception of impact (internal and external)***

Traditionally, CME's activities address beneficiaries mainly in a direct way. In the health zone of Nyankunde CME is the main large-scale provider of healthcare for about 100 000 inhabitants. Over the last years, the provision of healthcare has continued. Gradual and continuing (re)construction of facilities enables CME to increase the number of services.<sup>19</sup> In terms of social impact, it is most relevant to look at community activities. In the course of the evaluation period, Tear has ended funding of part of these activities, as it was felt that there was not enough impact. The community focal points of CME did not agree on this. According to them, organising people in small groups and promoting economic empowerment can contribute to improving the health of the population. To increase impact, more time

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<sup>18</sup> Cabinet EXAF, Mai 2013. Rapport d'audit des etats financiers du CME Nyankunde, exercice 2012, p. 15.

<sup>19</sup> No aggregate figures about number of patients available.

would be needed. This position was shared by other CME staff, mostly because it could help to encourage people to consult healthcare providers in case of illness. Over the last years, CME noted that some people make use of health facilities more frequently, but this is not a general trend among the whole population.

At the level of the community-based health insurance, CME (or in fact the MUSACA) has become more visible. The health insurance helps to make healthcare more accessible to people, as it reduces fear of not being able to pay. The MUSACA is well able to mobilise people. Indicative is the field visit which we carried out: having been informed only the evening before, over 50 beneficiaries turned up early in the morning to testify about their experiences with MUSACA. Several of them testified how the MUSACA helps them, not only to pay their health costs, but also in terms of mutual support among the members. Field animators of the programme argued that over time it has become easier “little by little by little” to convince people to adhere to the insurance and pay the membership fee. A certain level of trust is obviously needed for people to pay a fee without receiving a direct benefit. An experience which encourages people to contribute is that people have been used to community based funeral insurance schemes for a longer time already. Through this, they were familiar with the idea of saving money collectively for use at a point in the future. Gradually, there is a change in attitude and adhesion becomes easier, especially when organisations subscribe their employees or members collectively. Nevertheless, payment of the contribution remains difficult. Significantly, some other NGOs in Ituri have now started setting up programmes of community health insurance as well. In November 2014 MUSACA was asked to take the lead in a synergy of health insurance initiatives. This synergy should promote mutual learning. It underlines that the MUSACA is a positive example for other actors active in the health sector and shows the impact of CME on other civil society organisations. Considering the total population in the health zone of Bunia, impact of the MUSACA is still limited, as pointed out by an external evaluator of the programme: less than 1% of the population has subscribed.<sup>20</sup>

As noted already during the baseline visit, CME has played a significant role in setting up other civil society organisations in the area to respond to the needs of the population that did not fall directly within the area of expertise of CME. Relations with these NGOs continue to be good. Interaction with the public sector in Nyankunde exists through formalised cooperation and consultation through the structure of the health zone that makes CME Nyankunde as general reference hospital also responsible for supervising the existing public health structures within the zone. Influence on policy and practice of public sector actors is therefore assessed as high in Nyankunde. In Bunia the impact is growing through the MUSACA that involves local authorities as well in mobilisation of people. Besides, CME in Bunia, through the MUSACA, also carried out a project on WASH in collaboration with the municipality of Bunia. There is strong awareness of the importance of maintaining good relations with the state authorities.

Relations with private sector are about healthcare provision, and for selling and buying medicines. CME in Beni has its own pharmacy in which some medicines are produced. In Bunia, some private companies have inscribed their staff members collectively to the MUSACA.

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<sup>20</sup> Cishimbi, V. 2013. *Rapport d'évaluation formative de la Mutuelle de Sante de Canaan à Bunia (MUSACA)*. (Evaluation carried out with support from Tear).

### ***Context dimension (external environment)***

Generally, CME staff is well aware of the socio-economic, political and security context. When setting up the MUSACA in 2008/09 the donor (Tear NL) suggested CME to set up an activity at the benefit of the communities. Several options were explored and then the board decided on setting up the MUSACA. Before putting things in practice, a feasibility study was carried out. At present, another study is being planned to assess the potential for setting up other MUSACAs. A context analysis showed for instance that it would make sense to set up MUSACAs only in communities where people have a certain level of income-generation. A concrete example of a small project that was strongly rooted in demands of the beneficiaries, is the WASH project that the MUSACA Bunia carried out with EU funding. When we talked to beneficiaries in Dele we noted that the need for clean drinking water existed in this community as well.

One of the major concerns for CME is on how to make healthcare accessible and affordable to the population. There is awareness that donor funding is not eternal and that CME should aim at generating its own income. A major barrier here is the purchasing power of the clients of the health services. The health insurance is one way to support people in making healthcare affordable. Other initiatives have been explored by CME but still remain low-scale. Examples of this are the gardening project in Nyankunde (not MFS-funding) and the community activities CME was starting to set up with support of Tear for some time. These activities are based on a context analysis but – apart from the MUSACA- with limited results thus far. The core activity of CME is to provide healthcare, as well as to offer health education to students. Setting up other civil society organisations has been a strategy for CME to respond to other needs of the population and to engage in civil society strengthening. In the evaluation period no such initiatives have been taken, but in the past CME has been quite successful in this, as mentioned before.

The context of (in)security has had a great impact on the functioning of CME and this is still felt. The continuation of the functioning of the centre in an adapted way shows that the centre has developed strategies to respond to changing situations. Yet, until today, the CME is struggling to find proper ways to organise itself more efficiently, and not so much progress can be noted during the evaluation period in this regard.

## **7. Discussion**

*Given your findings, do you think this project (as in: SPO interventions towards civil society strengthening) was well-designed, suitable for the environment in which it was implemented? Would you advice to fund a similar project in the future (or to continue funding this one)? What changes would you recommend, if any? How could the impact evaluation itself be improved?*

In this evaluation, we have looked especially at the MUSACA as a contribution of CME to strengthen civil society. Generally, the community-based health insurance was well designed. Before starting this scheme, a sound context analysis was carried out. The person leading the scheme is well equipped for the task. The project has an impact on the population and there is mutual strengthening between the MUSACA and

the direct healthcare provided by CME, which can be seen as positive. This is in line with a comprehensive literature review carried out by Ekman. The review shows that community based health insurance (CBHI) is most effective when combined with other interventions trying to improve the health sector. This is ensured by CME by providing healthcare and offering health education. The review furthermore shows that urgent costs are reduced, providing some financial protection to members of the insurance.<sup>21</sup> Civil society strengthening is not the main objective of the insurance scheme, but more of a side effect. Nevertheless, we are convinced that the MUSACA is an effective intervention, which we would recommend to fund, provided it is in combination with other funding of the health sector (through CME). Both access and quality of healthcare can benefit from international engagement.

Other community components of the Tear NL-funded programme appeared to be less successful and funding was ended. From the beginning this component of the funding did not come out very clearly. This should be understood by taking into consideration that CME is a healthcare provider in the first place, and as such not involved in community building. This shift appears to be difficult to make. It can be questioned whether an organisation like CME should aim at civil society strengthening, or rather stay with its core and focus on healthcare. If CME is expected to have an impact on civil society and in the communities, probably more time and close supervision would be needed to be successful. Given the state of the health sector in DRC, the strength of CME lies more in providing healthcare, and in offering education on healthcare. CME's involvement in setting up a number of other NGOs shows that an indirect impact can also be effective and that direct involvement is not necessarily needed.

An impeding factor for the MUSACA in Bunia lies in the delay with which donor funding is released. This is not necessarily due to delay in reporting by MUSACA itself, but sometimes also because of delays in submission of consolidated reports. At the time of our visit we could see that the community based health insurance in Bunia is negatively affected by this delay. Tear is now working on changing its funding strategy to solve this issue: a first round of funding will be provided in January to cover project components for which reports are submitted on time. Other parts of the project will be covered in a second round when all reports are submitted. We expect this to have a positive impact on the MUSACA. During our feedback workshop, CME staff expressed their dissatisfaction with this change: with the MUSACA being contracted directly by Tear, it is felt that internal accountability mechanisms are more difficult to ensure as reports are no longer checked by the executive directors.

Within ALOCES lobby and advocacy is foreseen, but progress here has been limited and no stories of success could be provided. During our visit, the alliance was working on obtaining legal recognition as an organisation to be able to carry out these activities. We are not convinced that this is an adequate investment of resources. Is a separate organisation really needed for joint lobby and advocacy or can member organisations simply get together and undertake lobby and advocacy together, but as representatives of their own organisations, and making use of their own networks?

The evaluation itself was limited in the sense that we were not able to visit the three different locations. This might have helped to gain a better overall picture. During the baseline visit, our focus was mostly on

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<sup>21</sup> Ekman, B. 2004...

CME in Nyankunde, as this is seen as the core of the organisation. We then paid less attention to the MUSACA. During the end line visit we were able to make up for this, but we could only reconstruct the story of change in hindsight. We are still convinced that the choice to go to Nyankunde first was a good one, but it would have been good if we had also been able to visit the MUSACA already in 2012 for a more thorough comparison. Another limitation was the time we had available for the field visit to Dele due to an unexpected change in our flight schedule. MUSACA staff managed to improvise and find a solution for this, but we would have preferred having had more time.

## 8. Conclusion

*Provide an answer to the evaluation questions.*

- 1) *What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?*

The main contribution to civil society strengthening by the Tear-funded project is the MUSACA. This project started in 2008 and is still expanding in size. At present, CME has set up one MUSACA in Bunia that is funded by Tear and two MUSACAs in other health zones funded through another donor (DIFAEM). At the grassroots level, the MUSACA takes shape through the NESAP. People we talked to in Bunia and surroundings about the MUSACA are all positive. Also elsewhere in DRC, community-based health insurance and other community-based solidarity groups are gaining prominence. For the MUSACA to function well, a certain level of trust is needed between the members. CME is aware of this and undertakes continuous efforts to raise awareness among the population about this. The MUSACA itself, also a civil society structure, was well organised and open to learning. Based on narratives and documentation provided we could clearly see progress. The community programme, designed to improve access to healthcare in various ways (raising awareness about health; income-generating activities enabling people to pay for healthcare) was more limited in time and scope, also because funding was terminated.

CME was the first to set up CBHI in Ituri district, whereas these schemes have existed in other areas of DRC already since the '80s.<sup>22</sup> After the initiative of CME, some other NGOs have started to offer CBHI in the district as well, which shows the demands for it. Once people learn about the benefits of the scheme, many are interested to adhere. Payment of membership fees remains difficult though. It should be noted here that community-based insurance schemes in different ways have a longer history in Ituri. People are especially used to insurance/savings scheme for funerals. It helps CME to explain the rationale behind the insurance scheme.

As healthcare provider CME contributes to the achievement of health related MDGs (4, 5 and 6). CME is the general referral hospital in Nyankunde health zone, and plays significant roles in Beni and Bunia as well. Health facilities are growing, and able to cater for a growing number of patients, CME's education

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<sup>22</sup> Soglohoun, P. 2012...

institutes contribute to higher education levels of medical staff, not only of its own structures but also for other healthcare providers. The centre has a strong reputation and graduates are widely hired by other healthcare structures. Besides, the centre regularly receives medical expatriate staff who contribute time, energy and skills to the centre. Patients from far and wide come to make use of healthcare offered by the CME.

Within civil society CME is an important driving factor, especially because its engagement in creation new civil society structures.

## 2) *What is the relevance of these changes?*

These changes are relevant in various respects. On one side, the MUSACA helps increase levels of trust and security in a context where conflict has severely affected communities. The MUSACA involves local leaders and authorities, and allows members to experience the effect of accountability and transparency mechanisms. On the other side, the structure of the MUSACA allows people to gain access to healthcare, in a situation where healthcare indicators are generally poor. CME undertakes efforts to improve the health situation of the population of Ituri and of the northern part of North Kivu. This is in the interest of the general population/beneficiaries (and as such can be seen as a civil society goal). If CME would not operate, people would depend on health structures that are often at a longer distance, that do not always provide the same level of care, and that might ask for higher personal contributions from people. CME's interventions can therefore certainly be seen as relevant for MDGs 4, 5 and 6.

In its Theory of Change, the longer-term goal of CME is 'to improve access to primary and secondary healthcare for at least 80% of the population, especially women, and children in the age of 0-5'. By helping people to save money for health care, CME makes health care more accessible for a large group of people, including women and children, as adherence is per household. Hence, the MUSACA is relevant for both beneficiaries and for realising CME's Theory of Change.

## **List of key documents**

*ALOCES, Rapport annuel 2012*

*ALOCES, Rapport annuel 2013*

*Cabinet EXAF, Mai 2013. Rapport d'audit des états financiers du CME Nyankunde, exercice 2012.*

*CIF Santé, 2014. Rapport d'évaluation technique externe du projet: Primary Health Care Promotion in Province of North-Kivu and Ituri District-CME Project.*

*Cishimbi, V. 2013. Rapport d'évaluation formative de la Mutuelle de Sante de Canaan à Bunia (MUSACA). (Evaluation carried out with support from Tear).*

*CME, Budget consolidé 2011-2012*

*CME, Contract 2013*

*CME, O-Scan 2011*

*CME, O-Scan 2013*

*CME, Proposition 2012 pour Tear Hollande*

*CME, Rapport financier 2011*

CME, *Rapport financier*

CME, Statuts du Centre Médical Evangélique de Nyankunde (revision 2009), retrieved from [http://www.nyankunde.org/statuts/statuts\\_cme.html](http://www.nyankunde.org/statuts/statuts_cme.html)

Next to these documents, we made use of other narrative and financial reports, progress reports, correspondence between donor and SPO etc. We collected documents from both Tear and CME, as well as MUSACA. A full list of documents is available on request.

### ABOUT DATA COLLECTION END LINE:

| Name                          | Position                   | Workshop<br>17.07.2014 | CS questions | Individual<br>interview | Group<br>interview |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Rev. Kasereka Tsongo          | Executive director         | X                      | X            | 17.7.2014               |                    |
| Wachan Kika<br>Djayerombe     | Director human resources   | X                      | X            |                         | 17.7.2014          |
| Baudouin Odhipio Avuti        | Focal point ALOCES         | X                      | X            |                         |                    |
| Elisée Undehoso<br>Okameli    | Vice executive director    | X                      | X            | 17.7.2014               |                    |
| Dr. Chantal Malosi<br>Mahenga | Medical director           | X                      | X            |                         |                    |
| Dr. Paulin Anga<br>Musungufu  | Medical director           | X                      | X            |                         | 17.7.2014          |
| Emmanuel Duabo<br>Kisukulu    | Director IEM Nyankunde     | X                      | X            |                         |                    |
| Moïse Kakule Magheni          | Supervisor MUSACA          | X                      | X            | 18.7.2014<br>(informal) |                    |
| Rose Mumbere Nzanu            | Director MUSACA            |                        | X            | 18.7.2014<br>(informal) |                    |
| Marie Jeanne Mungushi         | Interim administrator Beni | X                      |              |                         |                    |
| Justin Kambele                | Administrator Bunia        | X                      |              |                         |                    |

|                                       |               |   |  |  |           |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---|--|--|-----------|
| Prof. Kirere Mathe                    | Director ISTM | X |  |  |           |
| Gerinke Fountain and Caspar Waalewijn | Tear NL       |   |  |  | 22.4.2014 |

We are grateful for the following members of the MUSACA who were willing to turn up for a group interview at 7.00AM on 18-07-2014:

| Name                 | Position                                       |
|----------------------|--|
| John Tibamwenda      | President of board MUSACA                      |
| Henriette Nkasade    | President of community sensitizers MUSACA      |
| Joseph Jimbu         | Coordinator NESAP                              |
| Angele Mambe         | Cashier MUSACA                                 |
| Maman Masimengo      | Vice-president of community sensitizers MUSACA |
| Yvonne Aranda        | Supervisor MUSACA                              |
| Justin Mbadhu        | Monitoring MUSACA                              |
| Rose Mumbere Nzanzu  | Director MUSACA                                |
| Moïse Kakule Magheni | Supervisor MUSACA                              |

Together with some of the MUSACA staff members, we visited the community of Dele, where we found a number of about 50 people gathered to testify about their experiences with the MUSACA.



# Civil Society Strengthening Report

## GROUPE JÉRÉMIE

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs and Bart Weijs

Wageningen University

## Inhoud

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# 1. Introduction

Briefly describe the purpose of the paper; give outline of the paper; provide a brief summary of the analyses and the findings.

This report is part of a large evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of Southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society development.

As part of the civil society component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society in the evaluation period and the extent in which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and end line study and focuses on a large sample of 19 partnerships. In the following report we look specifically at the contribution of Groupe Jérémie (GJ) to civil society strengthening. Groupe Jérémie is a partner of Mensen met een Missie and as such part of the Communities of Change Alliance.

The report is based on observations, workshops, field visits, questionnaires, and interviews conducted during visits in 2012 and 2014, unless otherwise indicated. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup>

Core elements of our evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the Civic Civil Society Index.<sup>2</sup> Dimensions of this index are:

- Civic engagement
- Level of organisation
- Practice of values
- Perception of impact
- Environment<sup>3</sup>

We furthermore carried out a contribution analysis to look in-depth at the contribution of Groupe Jérémie to the improvement of prison conditions. Based on this analysis we construct a contribution story. The story shows that GJ plays an important role in raising awareness among both population and state officials

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by Kees Ton (Mensen met een Missie) and by Groupe Jérémie staff. We thank them for their concise reading, comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> *CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012*

<sup>3</sup> Please note: In annex XX we provide more information about our sampling strategy and about the methodology we used.

on the rights of detainees and the state of justice. We consider GJ a relevant actor in the field involved in policy influencing and in awareness raising. GJ contributes to civil society strengthening, both at the grassroots level through its local antennae, but also at the level of Bukavu, where GJ is often solicited by other actors to provide training and advice on human rights issues.

## 2. Context

Briefly describe the country/local context as far as it is relevant for the evaluated project.

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons.<sup>4</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas in South Kivu, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013). The Fall of Goma in December 2012 and consequent threat to Bukavu led to the evacuation of the majority of international staff, and drew the attention of the military to North Kivu, with other armed groups taking advantage of the situation. The following defeat of M23 and military moves against other armed groups have led to more optimism, though. In general the security situation in the province was considered as stable, yet unpredictable during the evaluation period. The decades of insecurity, conflict, and a weak state context continue to pose a lot of challenges to governance in the DRC. Human rights are often violated, both by state and non-state actors such as rebel groups, and impunity is a persistent problem.<sup>5</sup>

The MFS-funded project has a specific focus on improving prison conditions in DRC and the functioning of the justice sector. Prison conditions are notoriously bad in DRC. Data of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) show that between January 2010 and December 2012 211 deaths in detention could be classified as human rights violations.<sup>6</sup> Although causes are manifold, some main categories can be found: Firstly, prisons are overcrowded. Indicatively, the report mentions an occupancy rate of the Goma Central Prison of 800% in September 2012.<sup>7</sup> In some cases, overcrowding has led to suffocation of prisoners. Lobby and advocacy efforts by Groupe Jérémie, other human rights groups, and MONUSCO sometimes lead to release of a number of prisoners, reducing pressure somewhat.<sup>8</sup> Secondly, there is a problem of malnutrition in prisons. Although law prescribes prisoners should get daily food, this is often not the case in reality. Prisoners often depend on friends and relatives for the provision of food, but even

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<sup>4</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel ([www.christophvogel.net](http://www.christophvogel.net)), and the elucidating analyses by the Rift Valley Institute ([www.riftvalley.net](http://www.riftvalley.net))

<sup>5</sup> See for instance: United Nation Security Council, January 2014. *Final report of the group of experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo*, and Héritiers de la Justice, January 2014. *Entre espoirs de paix doubles de reconstruction et persistance de l'impunité de graves violations des droits de l'homme : Rapport annuel 2013*. Bukavu : HJ.

<sup>6</sup> MONUSCO-OHCHR, March 2013. *Report of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (MONUSCO-OHCHR) on deaths in detention centres in the Democratic Republic of Congo*.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> For an example of such an advocacy effort, see for instance GJ, 2013. *Rapport narratif final 2013*.

then, “to eat in prison, you first have to feed the police. Even the police eats a bit of nothing”, as one of the participants of our focus group expressed during our baseline visit. Until today, the provision of food to detainees remains a challenge, despite advocacy efforts of human rights groups. A third cause of concern is the complete absence or lack of health care facilities for detainees. A fourth, and very general problem is the lack of state budget available for prisons and for staff.<sup>9</sup> Groupe Jérémie staff reported how police officers in the rural areas often make use of small rooms in their houses to keep people in provisional detention. Besides, prison staff, judicial police officers often lack the necessary capacities or training to be able to perform their tasks. A high-ranking colonel we talked to in Bukavu explained that part of the problem was rooted in the fact that the police force in DRC, and especially in the east, has very little ‘formal’ recruitment; many of the lower level police officers are in fact former rebel group members, who have surrendered and then been reintegrated in the Congolese police forces. The colonel argued that the process of recruitment has started only recently in the province. To restructure the police force, the Congolese government has promulgated a law in 2011.<sup>10</sup> This law should help to improve working conditions and functioning of the police. Another important step taken in 2011, was the adoption of the law criminalising torture, in line with the UN Convention against torture.<sup>11</sup>

A relatively new trend - allegedly having started about 3-4 years ago- that was pointed out by Groupe Jérémie staff during our end line visit is the phenomenon of popular justice; dissatisfied with state responses of justice, people are increasingly resorting to their own means of justice. This was explained as an indication of people’s dissatisfaction with the state of impunity, absence of the state, and slowness of the state’s justice. There is a widely spread feeling among especially the poor population that state justice is only for the rich people; “if you’re rich, you don’t get to prison. It’s the miserables who are in prison”, as one respondent explained to us.

An effort to bring state justice closer to the people as part of the decentralisation process, is the creation of the so-called ‘peace tribunals’ (*tribunaux de paix*) in the territories of DRC. These courts are supposed to exist in all towns and territories as substitute and complement of the police court and customary authorities.<sup>12</sup> Although their creation has been foreseen already by Legislative Order in 1968, their instalment in many territories is only of recent date.<sup>13</sup> In South Kivu province, at least 6 out of 8 territories now have a peace tribunal (Fizi and Shabunda are still lacking). In many cases, it is only the involvement of international organisations that enables the state to install these courts and make them functioning. Civil affairs, and penal affairs with a punishment of 5 years maximum fall under the jurisdiction of the Peace Tribunals. More serious cases have to be transferred to the High Court of Justice (*Tribunal de Grande Instance*) in the provincial capital Bukavu.

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Law no. 11/013, 11 August 2011. *Loi organique, portant organisation et fonctionnement de la PNC*

<sup>11</sup> Law no.11/008, 9 July 2011 : *Loi portant criminalisation de la torture.*

<sup>12</sup> Manzanza Lumingo, Y-J. 2010. *De l’organisation et du fonctionnement des tribunaux de paix à Kinshasa*, retrieved from [http://the-rule-of-law-in-africa.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/De-l-organisation-et-du-fonctionnement-des-tribunaux-de-paix-a-Kinshasa-MANZANZA\\_LUMINGU\\_Yves-Junior.pdf](http://the-rule-of-law-in-africa.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/De-l-organisation-et-du-fonctionnement-des-tribunaux-de-paix-a-Kinshasa-MANZANZA_LUMINGU_Yves-Junior.pdf), on 29.09.2014.

<sup>13</sup> Legislative Order no. 68-248, 10 September 1968, article 4.

### **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

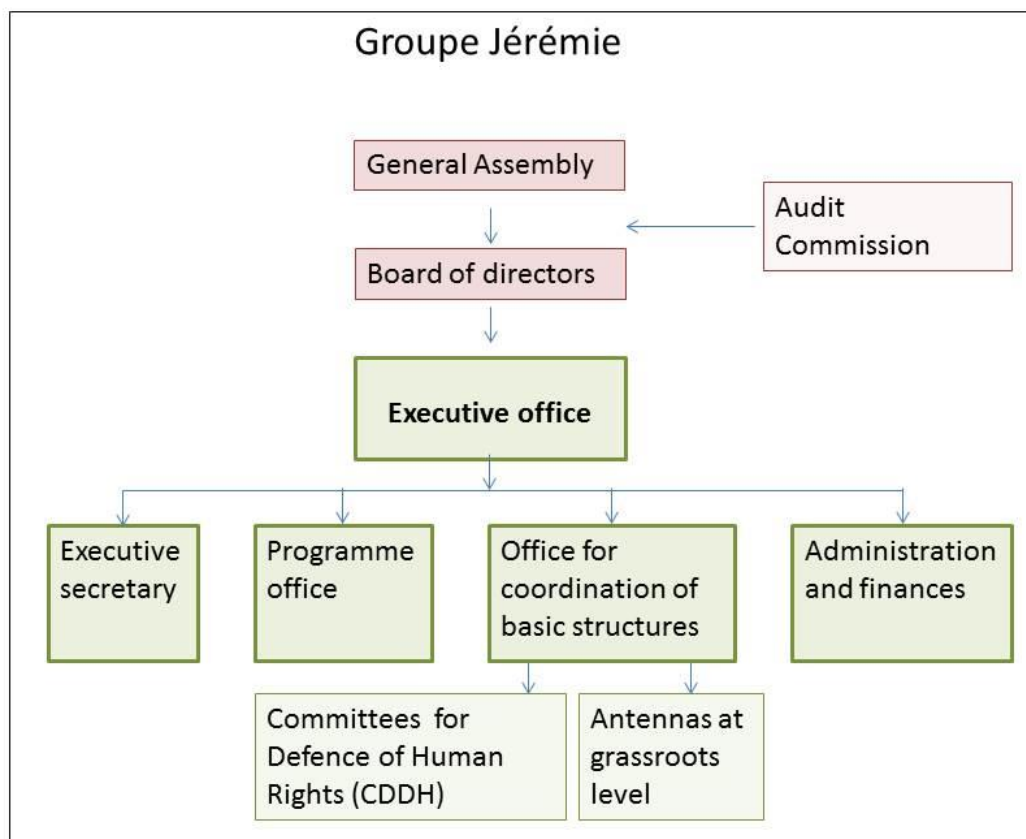
Brief description of the SPO: history, nature of organization, major changes in the organization during the evaluation period, main areas of intervention, geographical focus

Groupe Jérémie (GJ) was founded in 1993, when the country was still under the reign of Mobutu. The founders got together with the aim of promoting justice, peace and democracy. Over the years, the focus of Groupe Jérémie has not changed much, as a lot of work remains to be done in these fields. Hence, the vision is: ‘Groupe Jérémie dreams of a democratic society in which rights of people are respected, where human beings regain their dignity in peace and justice, and where the population is involved in management of the common good.’ It is the mission of GJ to: “contribute to civic education, the emergence of good governance, peace and democracy, to promote and defend rights, and to fight permanently against corruption, injustice, impunity, egoism, and all forms of anti-values”.<sup>14</sup>

GJ is a stable organisation with a dedicated and experienced core team of four staff. No major changes have taken place in terms of staff size, composition, or orientation of the organisation in the course of the evaluation period. GJ has a clear focus in activities, which does not shift with shifts in donor funding. One change in staff concerns the cashier in the course of 2013. Mensen met een Missie (MMM) is a donor of GJ since 2003. A new donor with which GJ has started to work in 2014 is *RCN- Justice & Démocratie*. This Belgian NGO has started working on a project in eastern DRC to monitor conditions of detention and has engaged various local NGOs to provide input for this.

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<sup>14</sup> Groupe Jérémie, Strategic plan 2009-2013.



Based on: Groupe Jérémie, *Strategic Plan 2009-2013*

#### 4. Project description

- Briefly describe the project; size, budget, duration; major objectives and activities
- describe the projects main civil society/policy advocacy elements
- shortly describe (max 10 lines) the theory of change, to show how the project fits into the general vision of the organisation
- then describe other civil society/policy advocacy activities of the organization (and indicate the projects in the table below)

| Project   | Donor                       | Major objective   | Period                                     | Amount of funding |         |          |         |
|---|-----------------------------|---|--|-------------------|---------|----------|---------|
|   |                             |   |  | 2011              | 2012    | 2013     | 2014    |
| Humanisation of prison conditions in territories of Kabare and Walungu in South Kivu province | Mensen met een Missie (MMM) | Contribute to humanisation of prison conditions in the two territories. | 2011-2013 (plus €7439 own contribution GJ) | €25 000           | €20 000 | € 20 000 | -       |
| Promotion and protection of human rights in prisons   | MMM                         | Contribute to humanisation of prison conditions                         | 2014-2016                                  | -                 | -       | -        | €18 900 |

|   |                           |   |                            |                                 |             |            |             |
|---|---------------------------|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| Capacity strengthening of staff GJ  | MMM                       | Various activities funded, such as English language course, Microsoft Office training, training on Most Significant Change                                | 2013-2014                  | -                               | -           | €5000      | €5000       |
| Citizen participation and construction of peace in South Kivu                                       | FONCABA                   | Contribute to consolidation of peace and the promotion of responsible citizenship   | 2012                       | -                               | €20000      | -          | -           |
| Civic and electoral education   | IFES                      | Raise awareness among the population of Idjwi on the electoral process and on decentralisation  | 2012                       | -                               | \$2000      | -          | -           |
| Restoring social cohesion between communities after elections                                       | EIRENE                    | Contribute to restoring social cohesion in the post-election period in Bukavu town  | 2012                       | -                               | \$8350      | -          | -           |
| Fight against gender-based violence in Kamanyola and Nyangezi                                       | DIAKONIA                  | Contribute to strengthening the fight against discriminatory customs and impunity of gender-based violence in the 'groupements' of Nyangezi and Kamanyola | 2011                       | 320 000 SEK                     | -           | -          | -           |
| Support to participatory management of local entities for better access to rights and gender equity | DIAKONIA                  | Contribute to strengthening good governance and accountability at the local level and the promotion of gender at all levels in the province of South-Kivu | 2012-2014                  | -                               | 400 000 SEK | 400000 SEK | 400 000 SEK |
| Elaboration of civic and moral education manuals for primary and secondary schools                  | Anonymous donor           | Contribute to social integration of school-going youth in their school, family, and in society  | 2012                       | -                               | €77 000     | -          | -           |
| Campagne Droit pour Tous  | Cordaid                   | Promotion of justice among population and police and justice officials in Bukavu, Walungu and Kabare.   | Oct. 2012-Aug 2013         | -                               | \$ 11 389   | -          | -           |
| Uhaki Safi  | RCN-Justice et Démocratie | Monitoring of human rights violations in prisons  | Mar-Jun 2014 <sup>15</sup> | -                               | -           | -          | \$2042      |
| Total amount of funding 2011-2014   |                           |   |                            | €190900 + \$23781+ 1 200 000SEK |             |            |             |

<sup>15</sup> Negotiations about continuation of funding are ongoing



## **Description of MFS-funded projects**

During the evaluation period, GJ has received various funds from Dutch donors, as the table above reveals. The only MFS-funding in this list, is the funding provided by Mensen met een Missie (MMM). This funding was provided under a contract running from 2011-2013. In 2014 a new contract was signed as a continuation of the previous contract. Until the end of MFS, funding of this project will be covered under MFS. After MFS, MMM intends to continue funding the project for another year with another funding source. For 2015 MMM contributes an amount of €21 600. The 2016 contribution will be comparable.. The global aim of the project that started in 2011, was to contribute to the humanisation of prison conditions in the territories of Walungu and Kabare. Specific objectives are twofold:

1. to strengthen the capacities of the population in increasing their knowledge on rights and duties, citizen participation and public management affairs.
2. to strengthen the operational capacities of police officers (both administrative and judicial police) in management of the files of detainees.

Thus, GJ aims at informing people about their rights and duties on the one hand, and provides training to the police and justice sector on the other hand. Grassroots groups help to inform people, but also to monitor human rights abuses. This information feeds into GJ's advocacy activities towards judicial police officers at the higher level who can then subsequently act to influence behaviour of lower ranking officials. In order to bring communities and the police and justice sectors closer together, GJ regularly organises training for the different target groups together.

Under two separate contracts, MMM has funded human resources development activities of GJ staff in 2013 and 2014. This can be seen as organisational capacity strengthening. This was also done through MFS funding. The contract for 2013 covered English language training and training in computer skills (Access, SPSS, Excel, PPT) for the office staff. Next, a training was organised for the GJ grassroots groups on how to work with Most Significant Change as a monitoring method and on how to carry out context analyses. The 2014 contract foresees in further English training and computer training for staff, and training for grassroots groups on restitution of knowledge and experiences to the communities. Besides, GJ requested support for compiling a strategic plan for the coming years with the help of the MMM-funded local consultant Bilubi Meschac as part of an Institutional Development and Organisational Strengthening (ID/OS) programme. The current strategic plan covers the period 2009-2013.

Generally, GJ staff is well able to distinguish activities of different projects and different funding sources. The newly started project with RCN, which also involves monitoring of prison conditions however might have some overlap with the MMM-funded project and in terms of contribution it will be more difficult to distinguish realisations of the two projects from each other.

## **Main civil society/policy advocacy elements and objectives**

Different elements can be distinguished in the project plans, although none of these elements is explicitly labelled as civil society/policy advocacy. A lot of the activities of GJ aim at strengthening knowledge of the population, often through its grassroots structures. These activities can be seen as strengthening local civil society. At the same time, they can also contribute to lobby and advocacy geared towards policy

improvements, since GJ educates citizens on how to claim their rights. Additionally, in providing training to state officials at different levels, GJ contributes to influencing policy and praxis of governance of prisons and of judicial processes. The capacity strengthening contracts of MMM with GJ can be seen as contributing to civil society development.

Main results and activities, as derived from project descriptions and narrative report:

| <b>Main objective</b>   | <b>Activities</b>  | <b>Results<sup>16</sup></b>  |
|---|--|--|
| Population knows about essential laws, rights and duties of citizens (strengthening civil society)        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Radio emissions</li> <li>- Training sessions</li> <li>- Posters (in French and Swahili) on rights of detainees produced and distributed</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local antennas carry out protest actions against power holders and denounce human rights violations, manage to free detainees imprisoned irregularly, people start to understand difference between civil and penal cases</li> <li>- Sit-in organised by detainees to demand health care</li> </ul>   |
| Operational capacity of police officers in management of files of detainees improved (influencing policy) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meetings to raise awareness among population about mission and role of police, justice and other security providers</li> <li>- Workshops with police and state attorneys to promote collaboration</li> <li>- Training of police on law</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Population engages more into community policing</li> <li>- Increased collaboration between different authorities (justice, police, control, admin)</li> <li>- Monitoring visits by GJ and attorney allowed</li> <li>- Reduction in arbitrary arrests</li> </ul>   |
| Rights of detainees are known and respected (influencing policy)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reflection meetings with stakeholders involved (ministry of justice, NGOs, local leaders)</li> <li>- Monitoring visits to prisons with auditor or prosecutor</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Irregularities are denounced by different stakeholders</li> <li>- Members of local groups speak out about prison conditions and discuss with officers.</li> <li>- Ministry of justice promises to make food and health care better available. Prisoners of central prison (Bukavu) have received uniforms, Kabare 100 mattresses, etc.</li> </ul> |
| Advocacy towards the state to improve prison conditions (influencing policy)                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reflection meeting with provincial ministry of justice and with NGOs to explore strategies.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministry agrees on putting in place priority action plan to improve conditions</li> </ul>   |

<sup>16</sup> Based on narrative reports provided by Groupe Jérémie for the period under evaluation.

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leaflets produced to denounce cases of arbitrary arrest, irregular detention, and human rights violation</li> <li>- Annual evaluation of conditions with stakeholders involved</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leaflets have been subject of debate of big radio emission, but population still needs encouragements to denounce.</li> <li>- Efforts to diminish torture</li> <li>- Some improvements in conditions noted, but other conditions need continuation of advocacy</li> </ul> |
|--|--|--|

**Theory of Change**

Within the projects funded by MMM, Groupe Jérémie works towards improving and humanising prison conditions. In order to achieve this goal, rights of detainees need to be more respected, both inside and outside the prisons. GJ follows a two-pronged approach; targeting both the population in general, and the police in particular. Both are long-term processes. GJ aims to raise awareness among the population about human rights, and on how to denounce human rights violations. This is done by providing training, through radio programs, and the distribution of posters, leaflets and books. On the local level, members of grassroots structures are trained to monitor the situation of detainees, and to denounce abuses. Police are trained to become more professional; to be aware of the rights of detainees, to know how to keep the files of legal processes etc. Turnover of staff in this sector is a challenge for GJ as it reduces the impact of training. By providing training to state officers and the population together, relationships between the two improve, which can facilitate access to justice. Challenges still remain, especially in relation to the fight against impunity. The trust of the population in the justice sector still needs a lot of improvement.

Over the last years, GJ has noted some improvements in prison conditions, but is also aware that a lot of work still remains to be done. MMM therefore intends to continue funding the project for another 3 years, hence also after the MFS-period.

**Other projects of GJ**

All projects carried out by GJ are in line with the organisation’s overall mission (to contribute to civic education, the emergence of good governance, peace and democracy, to promote and defend rights, and to fight permanently against corruption, injustice, impunity, egoism, and all forms of anti-values). This means that projects all have strong civil society/policy influencing components, as is also clear from the presented project overview above.

**5. Data collection and analytical approach**

Describe the baseline and follow-up assessment. If there is one general methodology, that can be described in an Annex. Please present particular choices and data collection problems in the main text. Sampling method and sample sizes; workshop participants and other informants (in Annex). *Which key outcome(s) was/were selected for process tracing, based on which criteria?*

## Methodology

We were able to follow the general methodology as outlined in the methodology annex. Since staff of GJ was well able to single out the MMM-funded project from other projects, we were able to focus much more specifically on the realisations achieved as part of this project. In terms of the evaluation, we feel the information gathered allows us to focus very specifically on the impact of the MFS-funding, which corresponds well with the evaluation assignment. We would like to emphasise here that this was mainly related to high levels of reflection within the organisation. In the report we provide some information on other project realisations, especially in relation to the new RCN project that has a similar objective to the MMM-project.

In the course of the evaluation, and especially when talking to other stakeholders within the field, we found that our clear delimitation of GJ's efforts was more problematic. These stakeholders are generally - and fully understandable - not aware of the funding origin of different efforts undertaken by GJ. In the end however, we feel that we have obtained a fairly good picture about interventions aimed at improving prison conditions in South Kivu.

### Key outcomes for contribution analysis

Interventions of GJ have a twofold focus; both on the population, and on police and justice officers. We therefore decided to select two outcome domains that respond with these two foci, and that fall within two different dimensions of the Civil Society Index, namely civic engagement and perception of impact. The outcome domains selected allow us to study interventions of GJ both 'up' (at policy level) and 'down' (at community level). They are at the heart of our contribution story. Further detail is provided below.

## 6. Results

Research Question 1: Provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions. If available, provide description of individual indicators in an Annex.

|                       | Baseline | Change |
|-----------------------|----------|--------|
| Civic engagement      | 3        | 3      |
| Level of organisation | 2        | 2      |
| Practice of values    | 2.5      | 2      |
| Perception of impact  | 2        | 2.5    |
| Environment           | 2.5      | 2      |

**Civic engagement:** *Socially-based engagement/ Political engagement*

Beneficiaries have an important place for GJ. Prior to defining project priorities, Groupe Jérémie carries out a problem analysis together with its beneficiaries to ensure that projects respond to the needs defined by the communities. Yet, the needs sometimes exceed the means available. The direct targets of the project on imprisonment are the detainees who are clearly marginalised. In certain cases members of the grassroots structures denounce specific cases of human rights violations. They either try to set up a dialogue with the local officials directly, or inform Groupe Jérémie staff who can then inform the superiors of these officials and trigger positive changes. GJ works with both state officials and the population. Training is organised for citizens to denounce violations of their rights, and for police and justice officers on how to respect rights. By bringing citizens and officials together in training sessions, GJ strengthens mutual contacts and understanding, and thus the *social contract* between state and citizens. Over the last two years, these exchanges have become more frequent on demand of the beneficiaries. Subjects of training arise from consultations with the police and with the population. Data provided by local members of GJ are the basis of awareness raising radio emissions.

GJ explicitly does not have political ambitions, nor do the individual staff members. Over the years, the relationship with politicians and government structures has not always been easy. Yet it is a strength of Groupe Jérémie to have good contacts everywhere throughout society, government etc. Some of the people in public functions have been educated by staff members in the past. Visits to prisons are done in cooperation with the military or civil prosecutor, who facilitates access. It is key for GJ to approach both detainees, the general public and state officials. During our end line visit we were able to talk to several other civil society actors working on improving prison conditions, or working on human rights in general. It is remarkable to note that the Congolese civil society organisations were all well aware of the role of Groupe Jérémie and acknowledged their contribution, whereas international actors in the field had limited or no knowledge about GJ.

Relations between GJ with state officials have become stronger according to most stakeholders we talked to; both at the level of Bukavu and in the communities. Members of the local groups are consulted for information, for suggestions on how to mediate in conflicts, and they sometimes take part in security councils organised by the state at the local level. One of the staff members expressed this modestly as ‘a beginning of confidence’.

***Level of organisation:*** *organisational level of civil society (infrastructure)/peer to peer communication/financial and human resources*

During the baseline visit, GJ already showed being well connected to other Congolese civil society actors in the province, by being a member of various networks, in the coordination office of civil society, by providing training to others, and by exchanging information. This was still the case during the end line visit. We noted however that there is a certain level of disconnect between Groupe Jérémie and other Congolese NGOs on the one hand and the international organisations with offices in Bukavu on the other hand. We talked for instance to an officer of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO, commonly known in Bukavu as *bureau conjoint*) who was also involved in visiting prisons and monitoring detention conditions. Although he emphasised the importance of not duplicating tasks and of working

together, he was not familiar with the work of Groupe Jérémie. He was aware however of the work of RCN, a recent partner of Groupe Jérémie.<sup>17</sup> With RCN, GJ is also involved in a project on monitoring detention conditions. RCN had identified GJ as a possible partner when going to the field and talking to people. This underlines that GJ is a reputable organisation. Remarkably, RCN was not aware of the MMM-funded project under which GJ has been working on improving penitentiary conditions for a longer time already.<sup>18</sup> Bridging the gap between international NGOs and the Congolese NGOs working in the same field could be a way for both sectors to become more efficient.

At the local level, GJ notes that their grassroots structures are being consulted by other NGOs seeking collaboration. Information about activities is shared by the local antennae in the quarterly reports submitted to GJ.

In terms of financial resources, GJ, like other CSOs notes a reduction in availability of funding. It was argued that international organisations seem to become more interested in working directly with state institutions rather than supporting human rights organisations that try to improve conditions. Thus far, it has not yet greatly affected the functioning of GJ; the organisation has never employed a large number of staff at times when funding was more easily available. Members of the local antennae work as volunteers, but receive a small compensation when funding allows. Although they would prefer to receive more, the volunteers are intrinsically motivated ('We felt a calling to do the work') and feel respected by state authorities as the following testimony of one of the members of the local antennae shows: '*We started becoming interested in prisons/jails when a member was arrested and we saw the conditions in prison so we went to talk to the police officer. We already had a notion of rights, but he thought he had a monopoly on knowledge about rights. But then he listened to us, when he realised we knew what we were talking about*'.<sup>19</sup>

Core staff working at the office is limited in number and the office is owned rather than rented. Operational costs of GJ are hence relatively modest in comparison to many other organisations which we visited. Generally, GJ staff are positive about the support provided by Mensen met een Missie (although funding could obviously always be more). Next to project funding, MMM also supported capacity development of GJ staff in 2013 and 2014 through separate contracts. During the baseline, GJ staff already indicated that MMM had helped them as well to get in touch with other donors (with Cordaid for instance for *Campagne Droits pour Tous*, and with MIVA to obtain a vehicle). Strikingly, an evaluation about satisfaction of MMM partners in general brought out that partners would like MMM to provide more support in accessing other sources of funding.<sup>20</sup> In the case of GJ this already seems to be assured.

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<sup>17</sup> Individual interview, MONUSCO, 23.05.2014

<sup>18</sup> RCN, 06.05.2014

<sup>19</sup> Interview 05.05.2014

<sup>20</sup> Keystone, 2013. 'Partner Feedback Report: Mensen met een Missie', *Keystone Performance Surveys: Development Partnerships Survey 2013*.

**Practice of values:** *internal governance (democratic decision-making and governance), transparency*

The General Assembly and Board of Directors are in place and meet annually. Members of the board often have experience themselves within the organisation and are therefore well able to understand things going on. The efforts of the board's president helped GJ to launch its own website in March 2014 ([www.groupe-jeremie.org](http://www.groupe-jeremie.org)). It underlines the involvement of the board in the organisation. Statutes and a strategic plan are available, but the strategic plan needs to be renewed, as the current plan covers 2009-2013.

At the local level, operational structures are the antennae (*noyaux*). Some of these are also involved in running the legal clinics that people can consult to obtain legal advice. At secondary schools, GJ has set up over 30 Human Rights Defence Committees (*Comités de Défense de Droits Humains- CDDH*). Members of the local structures generally seem to be confident about the functioning of the organisation, and about levels of transparency: *'Sometimes with other NGOs, the money does not reach the people at the basis. This does not happen with Groupe Jérémie'*, as one of the members of a local group explained to us.<sup>21</sup> Downward accountability is an important issue for GJ; in their projects, they try to hold state officials accountable towards the public, for instance by organising public meetings after prison visits. During these meetings police commanders are invited to explain things in an open manner. Promoting this, gives GJ the moral obligation to also be accountable towards beneficiaries.

Audit reports are available and support our impression that transparency of GJ is adequately assured. Financial and narrative reports are on the basis of projects and no consolidated reports exist. Also audits are carried out on project-basis. During our visits we were able to consult several audit reports, especially the ones looking at projects funded by Diakonia. One such report (auditing a Diakonia-funded project) for instance stated: *'The control mission is rejoiced and congratulates the organisation for its proper project management. She continues to encourage the organisation to elaborate certain documents in order to materialise certain tasks that are being realised within the structure and hopes for a good and/or excellent follow-up of previous recommendations from the prior audit.'*<sup>22</sup> Staff try to work on recommendations provided in the audit reports and feel the reports help them to strengthen their financial management practices and efficacy and efficiency in projects. Replacement of the finance officer might have an impact on stability of finance management. A clear strength of GJ is that they are usually able to submit reports and other requested documents on time.

**Perception of impact :** *responsiveness/social impact/policy impact*

GJ staff are modest in their claims of having an impact on beneficiaries or policy. During our visit, we have noted examples of achievements realised, both from the side of beneficiaries (here: members of the grassroots structures) and state officials. Members of the antennae were able to provide concrete

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<sup>21</sup> Interview, 05.05.2014

<sup>22</sup> BEDAP, Dec. 2011. *Rapport d'audit du projet : renforcement de la lutte contre les violences liées au genre à Kamanyola and in Nyangezi*, p. 8

examples of cases in which they intervened and helped to fight violations of human rights, for instance in relation to arbitrary arrests, or illegal detention without a formal accusation being launched (the legal term for this is 48 hours). A high-ranking captain of the Military Prosecutor's Office in Bukavu explained how the work of GJ helped him to monitor human rights abuses of the police and military at the local level. The official pointed out: "the state gives us power to do things, but does not give us the means needed [...] Civil society can play a role in advocacy. We cannot organise a strike ourselves, but civil society can do advocacy, organise strikes, and support us, they can talk. Also the international NGOs can put pressure".<sup>23</sup> In more concrete terms, he praised especially the efforts of GJ to monitor prison conditions on the local level. This information helped him to address his subordinates. He would prefer to see these visits being carried out on a more regular basis even.

A Bukavu-based colonel we talked to praised GJ for the training and monitoring data provided, as it helped to improve not only policy but also practice of the police forces. Moreover, the colonel explained making use of the educational material developed by Groupe Jérémie. This material was published with the aim of providing civic and moral education to primary and secondary school students, but the colonel acknowledged using it in training for new recruits. Generally, it seems that GJ has been able to find the right balance between being critical towards the government and being a constructive partner at the same time. It is illustrated by the following words of the colonel: '[name of GJ staff member] is very critical, but it helps us. [...]. The best friend is the one who tells you the truth of what is happening and he [GJ staff member] does.'<sup>24</sup>

One of the achievements of the prison project that was often referred to positively by stakeholders we talked to, is that Groupe Jérémie involves both beneficiaries and police / justice officers in the same training at the same time. In doing so, the training not only provides knowledge to the participants, but also promotes exchange between parties that are usually more at a distance of each other. Recipients of the training felt this to be very helpful in increasing mutual trust. One of GJ's staff members felt that trust was renewed but felt it could still be improved, as relationships were still 'cold'<sup>25</sup>. This element of the project came out much stronger during the end line visit than during the baseline.

Engagement with the private sector is limited, although it was pointed out that the private sector also benefits from interventions that denounce human rights violations and that make people more aware of their rights. An example that was given was the reduction of maltreatment and extortion along the road, as this has a positive impact on trading opportunities.

### ***Environment***

'Groupe Jérémie is right. If they speak out, it is after investigation', argued the vice prosecutor of the Military Prosecutor's Office, when he was talking with us about human rights violations denounced by members of Groupe Jérémie.<sup>26</sup> It underlines that GJ undertakes action after an analysis of what is

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<sup>23</sup> Individual interview, 06.05.2014

<sup>24</sup> Individual interview, 21.05.2014

<sup>25</sup> Questionnaire

<sup>26</sup> Individual interview, 06.05.2014



happening. In recent years, and as part of MFS-funding GJ has mainly continued working on a project set up earlier. No major changes have taken place in terms of project activities but analysis of the context is still continuously carried out to plan specific content of interventions. The topic of radio emissions for instance is always based on information that is coming out of data collected by the antennae. Topics for training modules are decided after consultation of police officers and grassroots members.

For further programming (next to the MFS-funded project), GJ continues to carry out context analyses on a regular basis. Since a couple of years, this information is picked up especially for the development of the participatory budgets and local development plans. Several of the antennae of GJ are involved in setting up these plans and budgets and GJ provides support to increase participation of the population in management of the public good (Diakonia-funded).

Information gathered by GJ not only feeds into further programming and planning of specific activities directed towards beneficiaries, but also helps to feed into lobby and advocacy efforts carried out either by GJ independently, or in collaboration with others. GJ is involved in different networks and synergies that can help to spread the information collected and analysed by GJ.

## **7. Contribution story**

### **Improving and humanising penitentiary conditions**

*Research Question 2 and 5: Which plausible causal mechanisms were identified, what evidence was needed to overturn or substantiate these mechanisms? Provide the results; Succinctly describe the major results; Did the SPO interventions reach their objectives? Can the results be attributed to the interventions? If not, why not? Did other factors/causal mechanisms play a role?*

*Research Question 3: How relevant are the results?*

*If MDG and CD interventions were evaluated: how did these contribute to reaching civil society objectives.*

*Attribution problem: What does the project want to achieve?*

The MMM-funded project of Groupe Jérémie has a very clear goal: to improve and humanise penitentiary conditions in the territories of Kabare and Walungu, as also set out in the Theory of Change in the first part of this report. In our contribution story we look at the civil society dimensions civic engagement and perception of impact by looking at two outcomes:

- 1) Civic engagement: socially-based engagement: *the project foresees in informing the population about their rights and duties.* Obtaining access to fair justice is especially challenging for more marginalised people. In DRC people often complain that influential and well-to-do people do not get caught in justice as easily as poorer people. Contacts with people at high level positions are often essential to get a positive outcome of one's trial. GJ wants people to know their rights, and works with local groups to achieve this. These efforts contribute to a stronger civil society at the grassroots level that is better able to undertake lobby and advocacy efforts geared towards improving prison conditions for detainees. In our contribution story, we will explore; to what

extent the project contributes to better knowledge on human rights among the population; and whether people use this information to demand better penitentiary conditions.

- 2) Perception of impact: policy impact. More specifically: *extent to which GJ's lobby and advocacy has an impact on penitentiary conditions/ the state's policy vis-à-vis prisons/detainees*. This is a main focus of the MMM-funded project. Next to usual lobby and advocacy activities, GJ actively engages in training and support of state officials, making officials more aware on how to act properly and professionally. In doing so, lobby and advocacy efforts are supported by very concrete capacity building of state officials, making them better able to indeed improve their policy in terms of penitentiary conditions. In our story we explore to what extent (lobby and advocacy) efforts of GJ indeed contribute to an improvement of penitentiary conditions/the state's policy vis-à-vis detainees?

We will first set out the Theory of Change and rationale underlying the interventions of GJ. We set out how planned interventions are supposed to contribute to the civil society outcomes set out above. We also set out risks underlying this rationale. We then present evidence of the actual practice of change based on the data we collected and show to what extent stakeholders involved contribute a role to GJ in this practice of change (causal mechanisms). After that, we give an overview of other actors and factors that play a role; we present the opinion of some of these actors about GJ and show the role they play themselves. In the concluding section, we assess the evidence and set out to what extent it is plausible that the intervention of GJ contributed to the selected outcomes in terms of civil society strengthening. We will also discuss the relevance of the intervention.

*Theory of Change: How are the outcomes supposed to be achieved?*

GJ wants people to know their rights, and works with grassroots groups to achieve this; members of these groups receive training, and documentation is made available for consultation. Radio emissions are used to denounce human rights abuses, but also to inform the population about their rights and the way in which the justice system should function. All these efforts are supposed to contribute to a stronger civil society that is better able to undertake lobby and advocacy efforts geared towards improving prison conditions for detainees. People who know about human rights violations can stand up and demand accountability. In individual cases people can get support to stand up for their rights. The assumption here is that people who know their rights, are also better able to demand these rights and to act if their rights are violated. This is especially important for the most vulnerable and marginalised who are often at disadvantage in cases of detention (lacking means to pay for a fair trial, for getting extra food or other privileges in detention etc.).

Next to usual lobby and advocacy activities, GJ actively engages in training and support of state officials, making officials more aware on how to act properly and professionally. In doing so, lobby and advocacy efforts are supported by very concrete capacity building of state officials, making them better able to indeed improve their policy in terms of penitentiary conditions. Radio emissions serve to denounce but also to trigger responses from among the population.

The Theory of Change underlying the project depends a lot on the way in which members of the antennae pick up and internalise information, and subsequently make use of the information. A lot of time and energy is demanded from them, in return for only a small fee. In denouncing abuses, the volunteers run the risk that they or their family members become targets of rights violations.

A challenge in improving conditions by strengthening capacity is that state officials are frequently transferred to other positions in other geographic locations. As a result, capacity building has to start all over again and becomes less sustainable.

*Practice of change: Evidence of what has been done...*

After 3 years, the prison project was evaluated by Groupe Jérémie and Mensen met een Missie. Together, they agreed that progress had been made, but that further improving the situation and sustaining results would continue to require considerable efforts. Hence, the decision was taken to continue funding. But the key question here, is to what extent things did change? Since the project aims at inducing shifts in mentality, in conditions, and in knowledge, it is difficult to provide quantitative evidence, or ‘hard facts’ of what has changed. These data on people’s attitudes are also not collected by GJ. A staff member of one of the other NGOs pointed out that we should “appreciate changes more on the qualitative level, not on the quantitative level”.<sup>27</sup> We agree on this and traced the role of Groupe Jérémie in possible changes by talking to a range of stakeholders (see annex), ranging from police officers, high ranking officials at the ministry of Justice and the military prosecutor’s office, to beneficiaries at the local level and representatives of a number of other NGOs involved in projects with a similar focus.

Talking to all these stakeholders, and reading project documentation, we found that GJ was largely able to execute project activities as foreseen (as presented in the first part of this report). All people we interviewed were able to give examples of success in terms of GJ’s realisations. GJ clearly has a very good reputation among stakeholders. The only exception was the human rights officer at MONUSCO. He was involved in a project on monitoring prison conditions himself, and had heard about GJ, but was not aware of the work they did. Strikingly however, the only NGOs he was familiar with were international NGOs such as the American Bar Association (despite its international name run by Congolese staff), RCN and Avocats sans Frontières.<sup>28</sup> We feel this is illustrative for the way in which MONUSCO functions and is connected to the local level, but this does not say much about the extent at which GJ contributes to improved prison conditions. Some of the examples:

- A woman who was trained on her rights had the boldness and knowledge to tell a police officer that information he noted down was not correct;
- Another woman was arrested on request of a debtor she owed \$35. Members of GJ’s grassroots structures intervened and mediated an agreement after which the woman was released
- The vice military prosecutor explained that thanks to the information provided by GJ he is able to intervene and correct behaviour of his personnel on the local level and to improve their functioning

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<sup>27</sup> ASOP, 06.05.2014

<sup>28</sup> Interview, MONUSCO office Bukavu, 23.05.2014

- A report on a reflection day organised by GJ shows that GJ is able to mobilise state and non-state actors for meetings during which information is shared in a critical manner, which allows for lobby and advocacy.<sup>29</sup>
- A Bukavu-based colonel in the police forces explained to us how he uses the GJ school manuals on civic education to train newly recruited staff.

Generally, interviewees agreed that GJ has taken some steps to increase knowledge about human rights among the population, and to help people to claim these rights. Contacts with state officials were constructive. The officials we talked to were very positive about the achievements of GJ. We should point out here however that we were mainly able to talk to rather high-ranking officers. They found support from GJ in disciplining their staff members, and could give examples of how the prison conditions and judicial processes benefited from GJ's interventions. Nevertheless, we felt it was a positive sign to hear these officials talking about the challenges in the legal sector, and to note that GJ avails of strong entry points to influence government policy and practice in this field. The strength of GJ is furthermore shown by the fact that GJ is consulted by other NGOs to provide training in the field of human rights.

On the grassroots level, we found that members of the local groups continue their work and are engaged, despite not receiving a significant remuneration and despite sometimes running risks themselves for denouncing abuses. What came to the fore strongest in our focus group discussion and in individual interviews which we carried out was the role of GJ in training its members on human rights issues, on how to denounce abuses, and on how to provide legal support to citizens. This was not directly related to conditions in prisons. Although the members are involved in monitoring prison conditions, they do not consider this their main activity. The legal support is certainly the core activity at the grassroots level. In an indirect way however, this can also contribute to an increase in respect of rights of detainees because GJ members make people aware of these rights and help them to denounce violations. Within GJ's project documentation a link is made between the protection of rights of detainees inside and outside prison. In the field, we did not find awareness about this link. Members mainly explain their activities in terms of promotion of human rights.

A major achievement of GJ that often came up in the interviews we carried out, is that GJ organises training sessions that target citizens and members of the antennae together with state officials. This way, a dialogue between the state and the population is promoted; after the training, citizens find it easier to consult state officials and to hold them accountable. These strengthened relations increase mutual understanding and strengthen the social contract between the state and its citizens. Whereas we found a number of other organisations that work on improvement of penitentiary conditions and on raising awareness on human rights, we found the approach to engage state officials and citizens at the same time innovative and effective. Both parties appreciated the rapprochement induced by the GJ training sessions: "These are fruitful exchanges where the members of the antennae talk concretely about their concerns. I am with them in the training. It permits us to identify the problems", as a police colonel set out to us.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Groupe Jérémie, July 2013. *Rapport de la Journée de réflexion sur l'humanisation des conditions carcérales.*

<sup>30</sup> 21.05.2014

Most of the activities oriented towards prison conditions are funded by MMM. In 2014, GJ had a short project with RCN on monitoring prison conditions, but this project came with limited funding. Generally, we therefore feel it is fair to say that GJ-induced changes in relation to policy and praxis of prison conditions/governance can be attributed to the MFS-funded project. In terms of GJ's civic engagement, and its role in promoting human rights, attribution is more difficult to single out; GJ works and has been working with local groups through various projects, and for the grassroots members it is not always clear which source of funding is used for a certain activity.

#### *...and what still needs to be done*

Although actors were positive about the changes that were realised, everybody pointed out that a lot still needs to be done. At the same time, both state and civil society actors agreed that without civil society interventions, the situation would be worse: "If there are changes, it is thanks to civil society actors... If they would not intervene, the situation would be catastrophic,"<sup>31</sup> as pointed out by a civil society actor. Several (high-ranking) state officials pointed out that the Congolese state was searching for ways to put good governance in place and they felt civil society could help them to realise this.<sup>32</sup>

Activities of GJ are concentrated in two territories of South Kivu and there is only one car available to carry out field visits. Generally, the human rights situation in DRC is still far from rosy. Violations of human rights, arbitrary detentions, armed pillages, sexual violence, and killings continue to be omnipresent in the Congolese news. In November 2014 for instance the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) reported a total of 236 cases of registered human rights violations in DRC in October 2014. The majority of violations were reportedly committed by the Congolese army, the national police, but also by armed groups.<sup>33</sup>

#### *The role of other actors and factors*

A lot of NGOs in South Kivu province (and probably also in DRC in general) work on the promotion of human rights. During our visit we talked to a number of civil society actors that work on this. A striking number of them also has projects to improve prison conditions. We present some of them here. We do not claim this overview to be exhaustive and are aware that many more actors are active in the field. Aim of this overview is mostly to reveal a bit of the diversity in organisations, background, and focus of civil society and to put the contribution of GJ into perspective. It shows that changes in prison conditions cannot automatically be contributed to GJ's efforts.

*ASOP (Action Sociale et d'Organisation Paysanne)* is a holistic development organisation that fights against poverty and injustice. This is an important difference with GJ, as GJ is primarily a human rights organisation. Promotion of rights is seen as a transversal theme by ASOP. Special focus is on land rights. Amongst others, ASOP provides juridical and judicial assistance to people, gives training to

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<sup>31</sup> ASOP, 06.05.2014

<sup>32</sup> CE21.05.2014, BC21.05.2014, AB06.05.2014

<sup>33</sup> Radio Okapi, 'RDC: 236 cas de violations des droits de l'homme enregistrés en octobre (ONU)', 26.11.2014, retrieved from <http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2014/11/26/rdc-236-cas-de-violations-des-droits-de-lhomme-enregistres-en-octobre/>, on 27.11.2014.

paralegals, and monitors prison conditions in collaboration with the *parquet*. When we visited ASOP in May, the staff was preparing a surprise visit to a prison in Walungu. A report on findings is made available each semester and spread through radio channels. It was pointed out by one of the staff members that: "Taking into account the condition of the state apparatus, you know they need support."<sup>34</sup> The contribution of ASOP is quite similar to the contribution made by GJ.

*Héritiers de la Justice (HdJ)*, like GJ, is one of the older civil society actors in South Kivu : it was founded in 1991. The organisation's mission is to make the weak strong so that they will be able to claim their rights in daily life. One of the programmes carried out by HdJ is specifically concerned with the provision of legal aid, conflict mediation, and prison visits. These visits have a dual purpose: to monitor conditions and to provide legal support to detainees. At the grassroots level, HdJ works with Mediation and Human Rights Defence Committees (CMD). The organisation is active in all the territories of South Kivu except Idjwi and thus covers a much larger area than GJ. HdJ is one of the civil society actors that is highly critical and that does not refrain from denouncing human rights abuses. Its relation with the state is sometimes tense. Some of the staff members have a legal background. Staff admitted that several NGOs, including GJ work on the same themes in the field of human rights, but they felt this to be complementary and argued that each NGO has its specific niche.

*CDJP* is the Justice and Peace Commission of the Diocese of Bukavu. CDJP works to raise awareness about human rights issues. CDJP is also involved in educating people about their rights, providing legal assistance, and in monitoring prison conditions. The latter is done in close collaboration with the state in five territories of South Kivu. During our interview, the CDJP officer admitted knowing that GJ used to do prison monitoring, but he was not sure whether this was still ongoing. He was not aware of other organisations working in this field. He was primarily concerned with things happening at the grassroots, and not so much in possible collaboration at Bukavu level. Some of the beneficiaries we met were familiar with the work of CDJP. They argued that at first they felt interventions of CDJP and GJ to be competitive, but said they soon realised that the field was vast enough to allow work for everybody.<sup>35</sup>

*Vision Sociale* is a relatively young NGO, established in 2006 and primarily concerned with defence and promotion of human rights. Vision Sociale is active in all territories of the province, including Bukavu town. Most of the staff members (8 out of 10) are lawyers. It puts Vision Sociale in a strong position to provide legal support to citizens. Projects focus amongst others on legal support, on conflict mediation, on arbitrary detention, on training justice officials, and on social reintegration of prisoners post detention. The latter is a focus which we did not commonly encounter elsewhere. Asked about other civil society actors, the director argued that he felt a lot of organisations work in a dispersed way and mainly run after donors without having a clear impact. To him, it is a sign of strength if organisations refer people to other organisations if they feel not being in a position to do something themselves. To him, Panzi, Groupe Jérémie and Heritiers de la Justice are examples of strong organisations that collaborate well with others.

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<sup>34</sup> ASOP, 06.05.2014

<sup>35</sup> GJ focus group, 14.09.2012

*American Bar Association* is a lawyers' organisation that started working from Bukavu early 2010. The organisation is part of the US-based ABA. Amongst others, the organisation is concerned with the fight against impunity, respect of human rights, fight against sexual and gender-based violence and with reforming the prison system and addressing prolonged pre-trial detention. Activities are comparable to activities carried out by other organisations in the field, but ABA has a relatively strong focus on women. What sets ABA apart from the other organisations above, is that it has a strong international affiliation and is hence strongly connected to its US umbrella organisation, but also to MONUSCO. ABA staff claimed having put the issue of prisons on the agenda in DRC and of having been the first one to organise prison visits. We were not able to verify this claim. In comparison to other NGOs, ABA was rather state-centred, and expressed the need to provide more support to the state apparatus and the state officials. Most NGOs are primarily people-centred.

*RCN Justice & Démocratie* is a Belgian NGO that initially started working in Rwanda after the genocide. Since end 2012 RCN is also active in South Kivu, aiming to contribute to consolidation of the rule of law by fighting impunity. Mid 2013 RCN organised a workshop on monitoring prison conditions, for which about 20 civil society actors active in this field were invited, mostly through the Civil Society Coordination Office. From March 2014 onwards, GJ became a partner of RCN in monitoring. Just like other organisations, RCN is also involved in providing support to the justice sector and in promoting good governance, as well as in raising awareness among the population on justice and in reducing the gap between justice seekers and justice providers. Strikingly, the RCN officers we met were fully aware of the collaboration with GJ, but were not aware of the content of the MMM-funded project carried out by GJ parallel to their own project and with very similar objectives.

*UNJHRO* is the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office, created in 2008 and merging the MONUSCO Human Rights Division and the former Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The aim of the UNJHRO is "to lay the groundwork for MONUSCO's departure by encouraging Congolese citizens to complain to authorities about human rights violations and by enhancing the Government's capacity to respond to citizens' complaints"<sup>36</sup> In its involvement, UNJHRO mainly focuses on cases that are beyond the capacity of others, such as NGOs or local authorities. To reach the grassroots level, UNJHRO mainly works through other NGOs. Connections with state officials are more direct. Although mission of UNJHRO is very much in line with other organisations presented here, interaction was very limited. Only the ABA and RCN were known by the officer we met. It is indicative for the gap which we encountered more often between the large international organisations and the Congolese NGOs. Internationals often have limited knowledge on what happens at the local level, and at the local level, actors feel that internationals are not easily accessible.

*The state: weak but willing?* Talking about improving prison conditions, the state is an obvious target for lobby and advocacy activities. But the DRC is a typical example of a weak state in which service delivery arrangements are taken up by a wide range of other actors. Indicative in this regard is the

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<sup>36</sup> <http://www.monusco.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=10766&language=en-US>, retrieved on 28.11.2014.

overview provided by the provincial minister of justice in a reflection meeting organised by GJ. In her speech, she shed light on the progress made in prison infrastructure. Her list features the following:

- 1) Construction of the prison of Walungu (executed by AAP with Cordaid funding)
- 2) Construction of the prison of Fizi (funding UNDP as part of the stabilisation programme (STAREC/ISSS)
- 3) Construction of the prison of Bunyakiri (STAREC/ISSS)
- 4) Rehabilitation of the prison of Kabare (REJUSCO/BTC)
- 5) Partial rehabilitation of the prison of Kalehe (MONUSCO).<sup>37</sup>

The overview clearly shows that improving prison conditions is an area that is far from being dominated by the state. Indeed, many international and some national actors intervene and make a contribution. When it comes to legal processes, we see a high level of engagement of civil society actors. State officials we encountered were all well aware of the negative image of the state and expressed their eagerness to improve and willingness to learn. Of course, we are aware that the views expressed were probably also influenced by ourselves, because we were often seen as representing a potential donor. Yet, it should also be taken into consideration that these officials are trapped in a structure where means are limited and challenges endless. DRC is a weak state that is struggling to become stronger and more mature. This takes time and efforts and justifies and explains the large number of NGOs working on the promotion of good governance and human rights. In this regard, we consider the state both as an active actor which can contribute to change and as a contextual factor that is mostly impeding positive changes.

#### *Conclusion: contribution and relevance of GJ?*

We talked to a wide range of stakeholders about realisations of Groupe Jérémie. The ones who were familiar with the work being done by GJ were all able to give examples of GJ's activities and how they helped people to know their rights or to even actively claim these rights. It is plausible to claim that GJ has contributed to the first outcome which we have looked at: More knowledge among the population about their rights. It is more difficult to tell whether this was caused by the MMM-funded project in the evaluation period, or whether it was through another project, or more in general through GJ's strong position in society that is based on many years of experience and interventions. We also show that many other actors engage in similar activities as GJ aiming at the promotion of human rights among the population, either in the same area of intervention or in different areas. Increased knowledge about human rights can therefore certainly not be uniquely attributed to the interventions of GJ, let alone specifically to the MFS-funded intervention.

Secondly, we have asked ourselves and stakeholders the question whether interventions of GJ have contributed to better penitentiary conditions and in improvements in the state's policy and practice vis-à-vis detainees. Also here, we conclude that it is certainly plausible that GJ has contributed to improvements; both state and non-state actors were able to give examples of this. For most of the evaluation period, the MMM-funded project was the only project of GJ that had a specific focus on

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<sup>37</sup> Groupe Jérémie, July 2013. *Rapport de la Journée de réflexion sur l'humanisation des conditions carcérales. Annexe*



prisons. We therefore feel that changes by GJ in this area can be mostly contributed to the MFS funding, with the exception of the monitoring activities that were carried out during 3 months in 2014 as part of an RCN-funded project. The financial contribution of this project was much smaller and the project benefits from experience of GJ obtained within the MMM-project. Besides, the project also benefited from earlier projects carried out by GJ, as they helped GJ to obtain experience and skills, but also a relevant network and a strong position in civil society. Just like for the first outcome, also here many other actors engage in similar activities as GJ to improve prison conditions. Although the specific focus sometimes varies, general objective and intervention strategies are often the same.

For both outcomes, we were able to trace examples of positive changes, but at the same time we also found wide agreement that a lot still needs to be done. Indeed, and as mentioned earlier, human rights violations, arbitrary detentions, overpopulated prisons, underfunding etc. remain rampant. The context of DRC is a challenging one for projects focusing on good governance and human rights, and this is one of the factors that explains why progress is slow. This makes the project highly relevant and also justifies and explains why so many civil society actors engage in the same type of projects. Multiple and joint efforts can create the momentum for change.

## 8. Discussion

Given your findings, do you think this project (as in: SPO interventions towards civil society strengthening) was well-designed, suitable for the environment in which it was implemented? Would you advice to fund a similar project in the future (or to continue funding this one)? What changes would you recommend, if any? How could the impact evaluation itself be improved? *Which causal mechanisms do you consider to be valid beyond this case?*

MMM is a long-term donor for GJ. In contrast to many other donors, MMM provides multi-annual contracts. This is beneficial for organisations to set out longer-term strategies and promotes organisational stability; if people have financial security for a longer period they are less inclined to leave for attractive offers elsewhere. This makes investments in organisational capacity strengthening more effective and also contributes positively to the impact of interventions. The stability in donor relationship has a positive impact on GJ as an organisation.

GJ is a strong partner, which executes projects according to planning, which provides timely reports, and which is accurate. The project was well-designed, and also well-understood by all staff members. GJ is strongly rooted in the communities through its antennae and staff have good knowledge about the local context. Although they live in Bukavu themselves, staff are well-connected to other areas and therefore able to set up a project that is suitable for the environment in which it is implemented.

In our evaluation, we found a number of other organisations that carry out similar projects as GJ. Nevertheless, we would recommend funding a similar project in the future or continue funding this project. The issue of human rights deserves a lot of attention by various actors who can together put pressure. Many human rights activists have experienced threats and acts of repression for their work of

denouncing abuses. The more people speak out, the more difficult it is to simply ignore their voice and the more powerful they will become. For this reason, we feel it is not a problem to have different actors engaging in the same field, also because each organisation seeks a particular niche and has specific skills and capabilities. GJ for instance is a relatively old and established organisation. Through its contacts at different levels of government, GJ staff is sometimes a bit less vulnerable to repression than some other actors when denouncing violations.

One element that comes out less strongly is the connection that is sought in the project proposal between prison conditions inside and outside of prison; the latter is argued to be about protecting the rights of detainees in the pre-trial stage, about promoting a fair judicial process etc. In practice however, this component of the project is primarily concerned with the promotion of human rights in the communities, but not so much reference is made to the rights of detainees. Although we understand the idea of connecting this in the project to prison conditions (as it makes different project elements coherent), we do not see this as necessary; projects can just as well cover different fields.

Generally, we are convinced about the strategy of GJ in this project. An important approach, which could be valid beyond this case and which would be worth exploring for others is that GJ unites citizens and state officials and targets them in the same training. The meetings then serve not only training purposes but also help to promote dialogue and mutual understanding. People we talked to about this were all very positive about this approach.

## 9. Conclusion

Provide an answer to the evaluation questions.

- 1) What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?

The fields of human rights, justice and security is vast and complex and it is difficult to sketch an encompassing picture. On the one hand it is indisputable that some progress has been made, but on the other hand we found very similar concerns in 2014 as we found in 2012.

Security: A number of armed groups has surrendered, most notably M23 and the security situation in many parts of South Kivu has improved. But security is highly fluid; armed groups can rapidly emergence and dissolve. People who are the target of individual acts of injustice will certainly not agree that security has improved.

Human rights NGOs in South Kivu are bustling and dare to speak out. A large number of activities carried out by human rights NGOs focuses on raising awareness among the population about their rights, and on publicly denouncing human rights violations. We were not able to carry out an in-depth analysis of people's perceptions and knowledge about human rights. Nevertheless, we were able to note that beneficiaries of human rights projects and programmes are often well-informed and able to reproduce human rights talk. They often did so in very concrete terms; by providing examples of first-hand

experiences. This shows us that interventions help beneficiaries to adequately capture the meaning of human rights in their lives. We also found a culture of denouncing human rights; this is often done by NGOs themselves or through the Civil Society Coordination Office. Such cases are often based on information provided by the grassroots level. With ongoing efforts by human rights activists, it is likely that people's knowledge about human rights will further increase in the future.

Justice: Under this theme we explored especially the prison conditions as set out in the contribution story. We found that to some extent the dialogue between state officials in the justice sector (both police and judiciary) and citizens has improved. This is a trend about which we are very positive as it helps to strengthen the social contract between the state and its citizens. We found important efforts are undertaken to improve not only the position of beneficiaries, but also to support the state in strengthening the legal sector.

Talking about the strength of civil society in general, we heard many people claiming that civil society in South Kivu today is less strong than it used to be in the 1990s. An often heard complaint is that people use civil society as a vehicle to build up a constituency and to get into politics. We heard these concerns in 2012, but they continued to be raised in 2014.

2) *To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*

GJ is one among many human rights NGOs in South Kivu. What distinguishes GJ is its long-term reputation in this field. GJ is often consulted by other organisations who seek expert knowledge and as such efforts of GJ go beyond its own project interventions.

At the grassroots level, GJ is active in the promotion of human rights through various projects for a long period already. We therefore consider it plausible that GJ has made a contribution to the increased awareness among citizens about human rights and to acts of denouncing.

A particular strength of GJ can be found in its approach to bring together state officials and citizens in one training. This is a strong contribution of GJ in strengthening the social contract. For the prison project, GJ has received an amount of about €80 000 from MMM for a 4-year period. This is a relatively modest amount of funding with which GJ nevertheless made a clear contribution to the analysed outcomes. We therefore consider the intervention effective.

3) What is the relevance of these changes?

The provision of justice and security is often considered as the most elementary function of the state. A survey carried out in 2012 in South Kivu province as part of a large DFID-funded project noted that about half of the respondents ( $n=1259$ ) felt rather unsafe or not at all safe while staying in their villages, whereas 58% felt rather unsafe or not at all safe while travelling.<sup>38</sup> It underlines the relevance of promoting justice

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<sup>38</sup> De Milliano, C.W.J., A. Ferf. J. Oude Groeniger and M. Mashanda. 2014 *Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study*. Wageningen/London: Wageningen University/ODI.

and security in a country. Although we do not have more recent data available, we expect the provision of justice and security to have a continued relevance.

Human rights violations continue to be reported in DRC, such as the already mentioned recently released UNJHRO report shows.<sup>39</sup> It continues to be relevant to work on the promotion of human rights and on strengthening the social contract between the state and its citizens.

*4) What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

In our contribution story we show that next to GJ a number of other actors works towards an improvement of the justice sector in general and towards an improvement of prison conditions and the promotion of human rights in particular. By pushing for change from different sides, shifts in mentality are promoted. There is widespread agreement among all these actors about which direction to go; not only within civil society, but also a number of (high-ranking) state officials agree on the desirable direction. The willingness that we noted among at least some of the state officials gives us confidence that efforts are not useless and can lead to positive change.

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<sup>39</sup> Radio Okapi, 'RDC: 236 cas de violations des droits de l'homme enregistrés en octobre (ONU)', 26.11.2014, retrieved from <http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2014/11/26/rdc-236-cas-de-violations-des-droits-de-lhomme-enregistres-en-octobre/>, on 27.11.2014

## List of key documents

GJ 115.1236 Projet Groupe Jérémie 2011-2013

GJ 2013.10.03 Demande de financement 2014-2016

GJ, Rapport financier MM 2013

GJ 2013.12.23 Rapport narratif et financier 2013

GJ 2013. Rapport narratif final 2013

GJ 2013.12.23 Rapport staff training 2013

GJ 2014.03.03 Contract financiering programma 2014

GJ, July 2013. *Rapport de la Journée de réflexion sur l'humanisation des conditions carcérales.*

GJ, Strategic plan 2009-2013.

Héritiers de la Justice, January 2014. *Entre espoirs de paix doubles de reconstruction et persistance de l'impunité de graves violations des droits de l'homme : Rapport annuel 2013.* Bukavu : HJ.

Keystone, 2013. 'Partner Feedback Report: Mensen met een Missie', *Keystone Performance Surveys: Development Partnerships Survey 2013.*

MONUSCO-OHCHR, March 2013. *Report of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (MONUSCO-OHCHR) on deaths in detention centres in the Democratic Republic of Congo.*

United Nations Security Council, January 2014. *Final report of the group of experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo*

Next to the documents listed here we made use of narrative and financial project reports, progress reports etc. We collected documents from both Groupe Jérémie and MMM. A full list of documents is available on request.

## ABOUT DATA COLLECTION:

| Name  | Position  | Workshop<br>05.05.2014 | CS questions | Individual<br>interview | Group interview |
|---|---|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Jean-Baptiste Mulengezi                               | Groupe Jérémie, executive secretary                                   | X                      | X            | 14.05.2014              |                 |
| Désiré Shamavu  | Groupe Jérémie, programme officer                                     | X                      | X            | 14.05.2014              |                 |
| Jean Moreau Tubibu                                    | Groupe Jérémie, coordinator of the<br><i>noyaux</i>                   | X                      | X            | 14.05.2014              |                 |
| Innocent Assumani Muganza                             | Groupe Jérémie, programme assistant,<br>grassroots monitoring         | x                      | x            | X (informal)            |                 |
| Rukabya Murhezi                                       | Groupe Jérémie, focal point Birhava                                   |                        |              |                         | 05.05.2014      |
| Mapendano Bihigi                                      | Groupe Jérémie, focal point Kavumbu                                   |                        |              |                         | 05.05.2014      |
| Eric Wynants  | RCN, chef d'antenne   |                        |              |                         | 06.05.2014      |
| Deo Kikando   | RCN project assistant   |                        |              |                         |                 |
| Alain Balobalowa...                                   | Vice military prosecutor, Bukavu                                      |                        |              | 06.05.2014              |                 |
| Jean-Marie, Vicky, Aimee                              | ASOP, project officers  |                        |              |                         | 06.05.2014      |
| Berthe Chekanabo                                      | Chief of justice division, provincial<br>ministry of justice (S-Kivu) |                        |              | 21.05.2014              |                 |
| Pablo Muke  | Civil society coordination office, Bukavu,<br>human rights section    |                        |              |                         | 06.05.2014      |
| Hortense Megabo,<br>Marie Migani                      | Civil society coordination office, Bukavu,<br>women section           |                        |              |                         | 06.05.2014      |
| Adrien Zawadi   | Civil society coordination office, Bukavu,<br>youth platform          |                        |              |                         | 06.05.2014      |
| Papy Kajabika   | Vision Sociale, director  |                        |              | 06.05.2014              |                 |
| François  | CDJP Bukavu officer   |                        |              | 16.05.2014              |                 |
| Colonel Ekofo   | Police Bukavu   |                        |              | 21.05.2014              |                 |
| Romain and Faustin                                    | American Bar Association  |                        |              |                         | 13.05.2014      |
| Franc Riziki Baguma, Jean-<br>Paul Charazire, Charles | Héritiers de la Justice   |                        |              |                         | 06.05.2014      |

|                            |   |  |  |                          |  |
|----------------------------|---|--|--|--------------------------|--|
| Alexandre Lopes Rocha Lima | MONUSCO, Human rights officer             |  |  | 23.05.2014               |  |
| Bilubi Meschac             | ISDR, lecturer and independent consultant |  |  | 21.05.2014               |  |
| Lebon Mulimbi              | APDHUD, coordinator                       |  |  | 7.05.2014                |  |
| Kees Ton                   | Mensen met een Missie, programme officer  |  |  | 14.02.2013<br>24.04.2014 |  |

Next to the people mentioned above, we also carried out a focus group discussion on 10.05.2014 with a number of people who had attended a workshop organised by Groupe Jérémie in Nyangezi. Participants in this discussion (15 in total) were part of the grassroots structures, or local authorities.

In addition, we carried out short interviews (n=5) with random people in Nyangezi to learn about their view of GJ.

# Civil society Strengthening Report IFDP

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs and Bart Weijs

Wageningen University



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## List of Acronyms

AGRIPAX : Agriculture for peace  
CCAD- Consultation framework for consolidation of peace and decentralisation  
CSI- Civil Society Index  
DRC- Democratic Republic of Congo  
ETD – Decentralised territorial entities  
FFI - Fauna & Flora International  
GIZ – German Technical Cooperation  
GRF – Reflection groups about land issues  
IFDP - Innovation and Training for Development and Peace (Innovation et Formation pour le Développement et la Paix)  
IUCN-NL – International Union for the Conservation of Nature-Netherlands  
MDG- Millenium Development Goals  
MFS II – Mede-Financieringsstelsel (Grant programme of the Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs)  
NGO- Non-governmental Organisation  
PACEBCO – Support programme for the conservation of ecosystems of the Congo Bassin  
SPO- Southern Partner Organisation  
UN: United Nations  
UPACO – Union of Agricultural Producers of Congo

### 1. Introduction

Briefly describe the purpose of the paper; give outline of the paper; provide a brief summary of the analyses and the findings.

This report is part of a large evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of Southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society development.

As part of the civil society component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society in the evaluation period and the extent in which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and end line study and focuses on a large sample of 19 partnerships. In the following report we look specifically at the contribution of IFDP (*Innovation et Formation pour le Développement et la Paix*) to civil society strengthening. IFPD is a partner of both Cordaid and IUCN-NL and as such part of the Communities of Change Alliance and of the Ecosystem Alliance.

The report is based on project documents, observations, workshops, field visits, questionnaires, and interviews conducted during visits in 2012 and 2014, unless otherwise indicated. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup>

Core elements of our evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the Civic Civil Society Index.<sup>2</sup> Dimensions of this index are:

- Civic engagement
- Level of organisation
- Practice of values
- Perception of impact
- Environment<sup>3</sup>

We furthermore carried out a contribution analysis to look in-depth at the contribution of IFDP to the adoption of a decree on environmental protection. Based on this analysis we construct a contribution story. The story shows that IFDP played an important role in the process leading to the decree. We therefore consider IFDP a relevant actor in the field involved in policy influencing. At the level of civil society strengthening, we also noted a number of initiatives and activities of IFDP which contribute to civil society, both at the level of Bukavu and at the grassroots level.

## 2. Context

Briefly describe the country/local context as far as it is relevant for the evaluated project.

DRC, and especially the eastern provinces have been characterised by high levels of insecurity and the prolonged presence of armed groups for many years. The Democratic Republic of Congo is rich in natural resources, but large part of the population does not benefit from exploitation of these resources. In contrast, conflicts over land and other natural resources hinder development and contribute to a climate of insecurity. Land is often seen as one of the main sources of the conflicts in eastern DRC.<sup>4</sup> A number of challenges need to be overcome to reduce these conflicts. First of all, the Congolese land law – which dates back to 1973- does not apply in customary areas. Most land rights, especially the customary land rights are not registered in a formal way. At present, different institutions hand out land ‘titles’; chiefs of the neighbourhood, traditional chiefs, state administration. As a result of these overlapping spheres of authority, it can happen that various claims are laid over a single plot of land. This can evidently lead to

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was shared with the CFAs (Tina Lain, IUCN, Anneke Mulder, Cordaid) and with IFDP for approval. Jean Baptiste Safari and Jocelyne Matabaro (both IFDP staff) provided meticulous comments to the French version of the report. We thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> *CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (see Annex X)*

<sup>3</sup> Please note: In annex XX we provide more information about our sampling strategy and about the methodology we used.

<sup>4</sup> Vlassenroot, K. (ed). 2012. *Dealing with land issues and conflict in eastern Congo: Towards an integrated and participatory approach*, Ghent: CRG. Van Leeuwen, M., and G. van der Haar. 2014. *Land governance as an avenue for local state building in eastern DRC*, IS Academy Occasional Paper, Wageningen University.

conflicts between the stakeholders involved. In such situations, smallholders are most likely the ones who lose out. Without formal titles people are more prone to expulsion and risk losing their lands at the moment large-scale investors make agreements with the government about land exploitation. Increasing population pressure, the presence of internally displaced people, or returnees constitute other factors that add to the complexity of land governance. In 2012 a land reform process was launched. IFDP has participated in a number of stakeholder meetings to reflect on the issue. The legislation however, will ultimately need to be passed at the national level. This level is not so easy to reach for organisations that are based in Bukavu.

Access to land gets more complicated at the moment the land contains natural resources, such as minerals. In practice, this often leads to forced displacement of people with little or no compensation. Distribution of benefits is unequal and does not always reach the population. Different strategies are needed to protect the interest of the population, in cases of artisanal or industrial mining. Pressure on land also leads to environmental degradation. Protection of the environment (and especially of forest sites) is generally of little concern to the population. A large part of the population in rural areas lives on a subsistence level and is more concerned with daily survival than with the environment. In this context, economic opportunities and protection of the environment do not sit comfortably together. An example of this is the production and consumption of charcoal.

Another important phenomenon is the ongoing process of decentralisation, for which local elections are supposed to take place in 2016. Thus far, the country is governed through a centralised system. Already 5 years ago, it was decided to put a more decentralised governance system in place, but elections to make the system effective have not yet taken place.<sup>5</sup> At the local level, governance is shaped at the level of the ‘territorial decentralised entities’ (ETD). Meanwhile, many Congolese NGOs – with or without international donor support- have engaged in promoting participatory planning processes at the level of the ETDs; local community leaders, NGOs, and the population get together to compile a development plan and budget for their community. Engagement of NGOs often brings specific issues to the attention of the plan, depending on the background of the NGO; gender, environment, or human rights for instance.

### **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

*Innovation et Formation pour le Développement et la Paix* (IFDP) is a Bukavu-based NGO that is active in the province of South Kivu. The majority of activities take place in Kabare and Walungu territories. More recently, Mwenga has been added as territory of intervention. IFDP was founded in 2002 with the aim to contribute to conflict transformation and sustainable peace. This is done by working on the root causes of conflict; poverty and social injustice.

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<sup>5</sup> The Constitution of DRC, adopted on February 18, 2006 opted for decentralisation as mode of governance. It lay down the legal framework for two levels of power; the central power and the provinces. Furthermore, it distinguishes 3 levels of governance; the central power, the provinces, and the ETDs. For more information, see: Cellule Technique d’Appui à la décentralisation, 2010. *La décentralisation au service de la paix, de la démocratie, du développement et de l’unité nationale.*

Activities of IFDP are concentrated around 4 main themes:

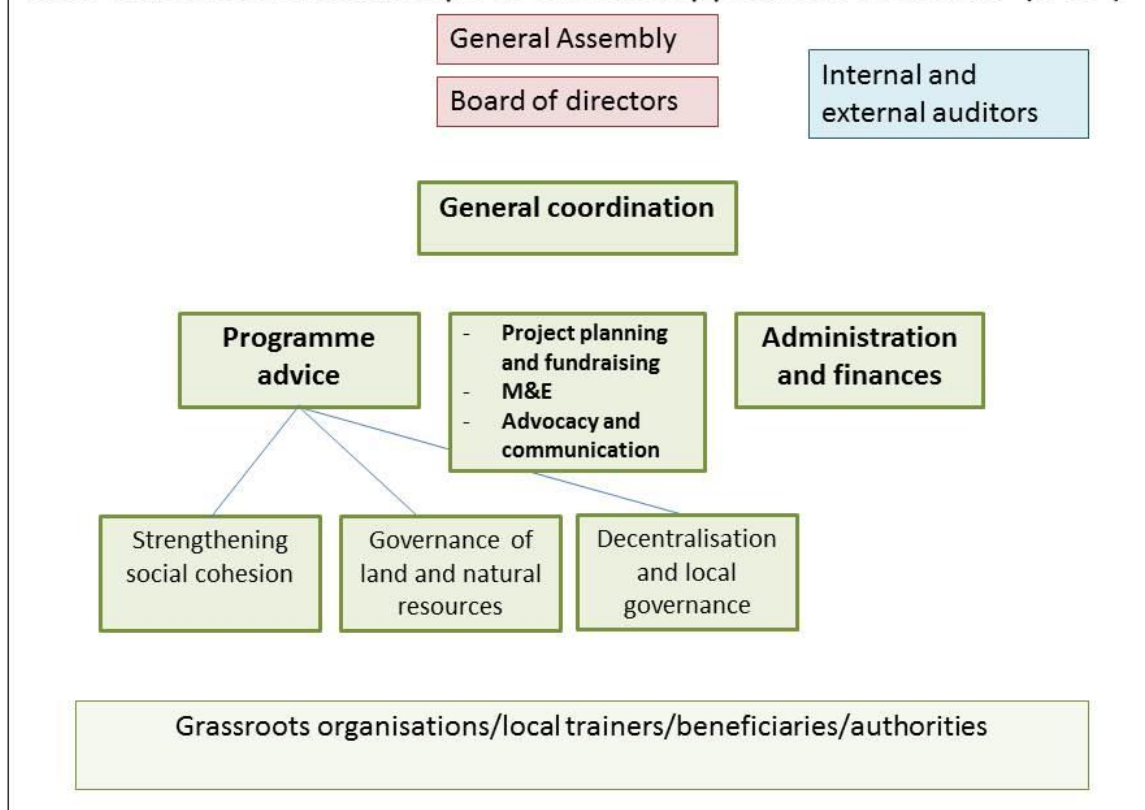
- 1) land issues: under this theme, IFDP carries out projects to strengthen livelihood strategies of people in rural areas, by improving access to land and by securing customary land rights, and by transforming land conflicts in a peaceful manner. IFDP does so by making use of the method of sociotherapy and its grassroots structures (GRFs), and by its involvement in land reform;<sup>6</sup>
- 2) environment and sustainable development; IFDP is aware of soil degradation and environmental degradation and therefore provides environmental education. IFDP supports local communities in rehabilitation and ecosystem protection, reforestation and environmental education. IFDP also engages in efforts to improve environmental legislation in South Kivu. An example was the lobby and advocacy effort that was carried out to draft a legislation about protection of the environment at the provincial level of South Kivu
- 3) Mining resources: at various mining sites in South Kivu, IFDP is involved in the dialogue between local community members and the mining company to talk about compensation for the communities.
- 4) Local governance and decentralisation: As part of the decentralisation agenda of the state, local communities (ETDs) are provided a so-called 'participatory budget' to encourage them to come up with their own suggestions for a development plan. IFDP helps community leaders to set up consultations of their citizens to come to a successful plan that is supported by the population.

IFDP has relatively stable financial resources. The organisation has various donors. Staff composition and size are stable; no major changes have taken place during the evaluation period. IFDP counts 14 paid staff members. Internally, most of them have been offered opportunities to improve their capacities, which helps to keep staff motivated. Since the foundation of IFDP in 2007, only 3 staff members have left; mainly because they could earn higher salaries elsewhere. 3 field trainers were added to the organisation, but they spend most of the time in the communities and are therefore not very visible at the level of the executive office. Over 100 volunteers work with IFDP at the local level. The General Assembly consists of about 120 members, 5 of them form the Board of Directors.

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<sup>6</sup> For a description of the sociotherapy approach, see: Richters, A., C. Dekker and W.F. Scholte, 2008. 'Community based socio-therapy in Byumba, Rwanda', *Intervention*, 6(2): 100-116.

## Innovation et Formation pour le Développement et la Paix (IFDP)



### 4. Project description

| Project                | Donor   | Main objective   | Period              | Amount of funding (in €/ \$) |           |           |      |      |
|------------------------|---------|--|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------|------|
|                        |         |  |                     | 2011                         | 2012      | 2013      | 2014 | 2015 |
| Vision PATS            | Cordaid | Support to conflict reduction and transformation initiatives based on sociotherapy                                   | Nov 2010-Oct. 2012  | \$ 268 000*                  |           |           |      |      |
| TUIMARISHE, no. 108235 | Cordaid | Contribute to consolidation of peace based on local economic development around land and mining issues in South-Kivu | Nov. 2012-Oct. 2014 |                              | € 130 799 |           |      |      |
| RECOP                  | Cordaid | Contribute to a mining sector that respects human rights and is in favour of the fight                               | Nov 2013-Oct. 2014  |                              |           | \$ 67 870 |      |      |

|   |                              |   |                      |            |            |            |           |     |
|---|------------------------------|---|----------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----|
|   |                              | against poverty in chiefdoms of Luhwindja and Ngweshe   |                      |            |            |            |           |     |
| AGRIPAX   | IUCN NL                      | Improve land access for poor farming households in private concessions by long-term lease contracts in South-Kivu | July 2012-June 2015  |            | €50133     | €75199,50  | €41777,50 |     |
| Rehabilitation-protection of communal forest sites for biodiversity and the local economy in Kabare and Ngweshe | IUCN NL                      | Promote participatory management of natural resources, improve and diversify conservation initiatives             | July 2012-April 2015 |            | \$ 205 677 |            |           |     |
| In-depth study  | Coopération Suisse-DDC       | Study about land question in chiefdom of Kabare to better understand context.                                     | Nov. 2012            |            | \$ 38 520  |            |           |     |
| Pilot project to support land management  | Coopération Suisse           | Experimentation of a decentralised land management device based on custom in Kabare chiefdom                      | July 2013-May2014    |            |            | \$ 224 189 |           |     |
|   | CCFD                         | Participation in a sub-regional study on land issues  | 2011-2013            | -          | -          | -          |           |     |
|   | GIZ                          | Study on land rights in national park area Businga  | 2013-2015            |            |            | \$36 000   | \$48 000  | TBA |
|   | Rainforest Foundation-Norway | Study on land and forest rights for indigenous pygme people   | 2014                 |            |            |            | \$139 000 |     |
| Material support  | MIVA                         | Equipment (car, V-sat, motor) to facilitate communication and monitoring  | 2010-2013            | \$38027    | \$26000    |            |           |     |
|   | FFI                          | Travail en synergie pour le plan de développement local à Kabare  |                      |            |            |            |           |     |
|   | IRCT-Denmark                 |   | 2011                 | \$55211,50 |            |            |           |     |
| Land of Understanding, Great Lakes  | Search for Common Ground     | Linking and learning between Great Lakes countries on land mediation  | 2013-2015            |            |            | \$ 12 000  |           |     |
| Total funding 2011-2014   |                              |   |                      |            |            |            |           |     |

\*Incl. Nov-Dec 2010.

### **About the MFS-funded projects:**

IFDP has two sources of MFS-funding: through Cordaid and through IUCN. Cordaid has been a partner since 2005, initially with a small project, but from 2007 onwards with bigger projects. The core of the projects that ran from 2008-2012 focused on conflict transformation. This was done by introducing communities to the method of sociotherapy. The initial group of beneficiaries received a 3-month training on this subject and learnt how to train other community members in applying sociotherapy. Making use of this method, people learn to connect in more positive ways to each other, and become aware of the impact their behaviour has on others. The sociotherapy restores or increases confidence and trust between people. In the conflict context of DRC, this trust is often lacking. Restoring this is a way to realise more sustainable solutions to conflicts that take place within communities or within households. Over the years, 26730 people have been trained in the approach. Also as part of Cordaid-funded projects, IFDP has supported grassroots groups to seek solutions to land conflicts. These groups (GRF: *Groupes de Réflexion sur les questions foncières*) are primarily concerned with land issues. Mediation is done on the basis of sociotherapy, not appointing a party that is right and a party that is wrong, but by looking for a solution that can satisfy both parties and create a 'win-win', without any payment. The latter two projects carried out with Cordaid support had a focus on mining areas and aimed at finding ways in which local communities can profit more from the mining sector and find ways to develop economically in a sustainable way. Peacebuilding continues to be a central element in these projects as well. The project RECOP (ongoing) aims at making the mining sector more respectful of human rights, and looks for ways in which mining can contribute to poverty reduction.

Internal reorganisation at the level of Cordaid HQ has caused various shifts in focus for the projects of IFDP that have been funded by Cordaid. In the early years, focus was mostly on gender, and a lot of attention was paid to women, especially victims of sexual violence. Next, focus was more on conflict transformation. Since November 2012, projects have shifted attention to mining areas, at the request of Cordaid, as IFDP became a partner of the Business Unit Extractives after Cordaid's reorganisation. IFDP however, has tried to keep part of its focus, and sought for ways to continue working with sociotherapy, also in the mining areas. Meanwhile, the second mining project is coming to a close (November 2014), and it seems to be likely that – if Cordaid funding continues- IFDP will become a partner of the Business Unit Security & Justice, and not continue with Extractives. Although the Extractives contact person expressed great satisfaction about IFDP as a partner, it was argued that the agendas did not match well enough together. In Cordaid's perception IFDP had a focus on artisanal mining communities, whereas the Business Unit concentrates mostly on industrial mining.<sup>7</sup> IFDP staff refuted this claim and explained to be interested in improving living conditions in mining areas in general

Thanks to contacts with Cordaid, IFDP was able to secure funding from IUCN NL from 2010 onwards. IUCN projects promote sustainable use of the land, biodiversity and conservation efforts. Partly, the project with IUCN also entails a continuation of projects set up earlier with Cordaid; IFDP continues to work with the GRFs at the grassroots level to reduce conflicts, here with a more specific focus on the fight against environmental degradation, but without ignoring the economic opportunities people need. Through

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<sup>7</sup> 20140424, AM, Cordaid



sessions of *cinéma écologique*, people are made more aware of the importance of environmental protection.<sup>8</sup> To encourage fair land use, IFDP has set up a collaboration with the *Union des Producteurs Agricoles au Congo* (UPACO) which is an organisation that unites large landholders. This collaboration is meant to lead to partnership agreements between the landholders and small-scale producers without access to land. This way, land that is otherwise left fallow is used for agriculture by the landless farmer, in exchange of a small part of the production. Another part of the IFDP's portfolio, supported by both Cordaid and IUCN, is to help communities to put in place participatory development plans and budgets, taking into consideration environmental issues. This has meanwhile happened in the chiefdoms of Ngweshe and Kabare.

### **MFS civil society/policy advocacy elements**

Cordaid, Vision PATS:

- GRFs receive continued support to carry out their work on resolving land conflicts. This strengthens civil society at the grassroots level. Local authorities are also included in some of the training sessions and gain an understanding of the work of GRFs and of sociotherapy. It helps them to improve their modes of governance, as several of them testified to us.
- GRFs and local authorities learn more about land legislation and other regulations about land management. It helps them to improve land governance practices
- Sociotherapy increases understanding between men and women, and the position of women and of youth in society becomes more respected.
- Consultation framework for peacebuilding and decentralisation (CCAD): During these meetings, various stakeholders are brought together on the local level to talk about problems in the communities. Setting up this dialogue is beneficial for the social contract between citizens and powerholders. It can contribute to more accountability and better mutual understanding.<sup>9</sup>

Cordaid, programme TUIMARISHE (Swahili for 'strengthen'):

- IFDP aims to set up a dialogue with stakeholders involved in management of land and mining resources in the chiefdoms of Ngweshe and Luhwindja. This should contribute to better governance of natural resources.
- As a member of the National Coalition Publish What You Pay, IFDP has participated in a meeting in Kinshasa to talk about transparency in the extractives industry. After this meeting, an exchange session was organised in Bukavu with other civil society actors. Joint activities of lobby and advocacy have been developed (such as debates, exchanges to promote transparency).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fYB4ZXDVNA> for an example of a movie made within one of the communities targeted by the project.

<sup>9</sup> Based on: IFDP, *PATS: Programme d'accompagnement des initiatives de réduction des conflits et de transformation sociale basé sur la sociothérapie au Sud-Kivu à l'Est de la RDC (Phase 2010-2012)*, version finale, juillet 2011.

<sup>10</sup> Based on: IFDP, *Programme 108235- Rapport narrative des activités allant du 1<sup>er</sup> nov. 2012 au 31 oct. 2013*.

Cordaid, project RECOP:

- IFDP tries to promote the dialogue between Banro and local communities around mining sites in Luhwindja and Ngweshe.<sup>11</sup> In doing this, IFDP hopes to improve governance of the mining sites.<sup>12</sup>

The IUCN-funded project contributes to civil society/ policy advocacy in a number of ways, mostly indirectly:

- Support to the chiefdoms of Ngweshe and Kabare to set up their participatory development plans contributes to a strengthening of the social contract between the population and the local authorities; community members participate in the dialogue, which can be beneficial for improving policy.
- Collaboration with UPACO to help landless farmers to get access to land contributes to better land policy (albeit private sector policy and not implemented by the government)
- Increased knowledge about environmental issues can help to develop policy that is more environmentally sound.
- Throughout the project, IFDP continues to work with its grassroots structures. Continuing engagement helps to strengthen these local civil society structures further.

### **Other civil society/advocacy elements**

Coopération Suisse provided funding for two projects. The first project was an action-research aimed to get a better understanding of land management practices. The second project aimed to come up with a land management device that could improve land governance practices. This project involved some of the grassroots structures of IFDP, but also engaged local power holders. Activities can be seen as contributing to strengthening civil society. Eventually, recommendations made about land management can contribute to policy changes.

With the information gathered about land use practices, IFDP works on lobby and advocacy to improve land legislation. October 2013, South Kivu provincial deputies adopted a law about the environmental code. At present, the code still needs to be promulgated by the governor. Realisation was largely set in motion by IFDP. We will discuss this in further detail in the contribution story.

### **Theory of Change**

IFDP wants to contribute to improved governance of land and other natural resources (such as minerals) for an equitable social justice in the DRC. To achieve this, IFDP employs various strategies, or pillars. As part of the first pillar, IFDP aims to improve people's access to land. Studies are carried out to better understand actual land management practices, mediation is done in case of land conflicts by making use

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<sup>11</sup> Banro is a Canadian-based gold mining company which carries out mining activities in South Kivu and Maniema provinces. See also [www.banro.com](http://www.banro.com)

<sup>12</sup> Based on: IFDP, *Projet RECOP: Renforcement d' une économie pacifiée et pro-pauvre autour des sites miniers dans la province du Sud-Kivu, RDC.*

of sociotherapy, and lobby and advocacy activities take place to change land management systems and make them more fitting with the local reality and needs of the population. Secondly, IFDP tries to raise awareness about environment degradation and promotes sustainable development, as this will help to improve land governance practices in the longer run as well. Thirdly, IFDP tries to improve living conditions in mining areas; this is done by raising discussion between mining companies and local communities about sharing benefits of exploitation, but also by supporting women who want to transition into another economic sector. To make changes more sustainable, IFDP engages with local authorities and helps them to develop participatory development plans that take into consideration the needs of the population and of the environment.

## 5. Data collection and analytical approach

We were able to follow **the** general methodology, as set out in the methodology annex. Unfortunately, we could only carry out two individual interviews with staff members because the others all had to leave for the field after the workshop. Informally, we talked to some of the others at other moments.

For contribution analysis, we decided to focus on the environmental code that was drafted and adopted by the provincial deputies in October 2013. The law is an outcome of successful lobby and advocacy efforts. Only limited MFS-funding was available for this, but at the same time, it is fair to say that without the funding, especially by IUCN-NL, IFDP would not have been able to carry out this lobby and advocacy. What made this case interesting, is that delimitation is relatively straightforward and that we were well able to gather information to single out the contribution of IFDP. The case shows us the contribution of civil society to policy making. Within the Civil Society Index, this case falls especially within the Perception of Impact dimension.

## 6. Results

Research Question 1: Provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions. If available, provide description of individual indicators in an Annex.

|                       | Baseline | Change |
|-----------------------|----------|--------|
| Civic engagement      | 2.5      | 2.5    |
| Level of organisation | 2        | 2.5    |
| Practice of values    | 2        | 2      |
| Perception of impact  | 2.5      | 2.5    |

|             |   |   |
|-------------|---|---|
| Environment | 2 | 3 |
|-------------|---|---|

**Civic engagement:** diversity of socially-based engagement/diversity of political engagement

Among staff there is good awareness of the needs of beneficiaries. IFDP has been involved in various studies to assess the local situation, in terms of land rights, conflicts etc. Beneficiaries, including women and youth, are involved in situation analysis and planning of activities. IFDP staff has a regular presence in the field and carries out close monitoring (*suivi de proximité*). This contributes to having a good understanding of local needs. IFDP is strongly against creating dependency, and grassroots structures are encouraged to become autonomous and to take their own initiatives, independent of IFDP. This is reflected in the way beneficiaries and grassroots members talk about their structures; during the focus groups, participants talk about achievements of the GRFs rather than about achievements of IFDP. In this sense, IFDP has managed to achieve high levels of ownership of the projects on the local level. It is reflected in a statement we heard during the workshop with IFDP staff: “We noted that, in the end, we do not want to create too many expectations from the side of the population. They should take the initiative and come to us”. IFDP mainly wants to contribute to an enabling environment in which people feel comfortable to take initiatives themselves. One of the beneficiaries we met during our field visit, explained how she perceived the work of the grassroots structures: “GRF is like the eyes, ears and feet of the population. They help to solve all our problems”.

Engagement with power holders is visible at different levels. During both baseline and endline visits we encountered local authorities who testified how the work of IFDP and the GRFs had changed their way of governing. Citizens showed their satisfaction with these changes, as they felt less prone to extortion from the side of power holders when asking them to mediate in a conflict. IFDP’s support to the participatory development plan underlines engagement with both citizens and power holders.

On the provincial level, IFDP engages with political authorities for its lobby and advocacy efforts to change legislation about land and the environment. Various research projects carried out recently by IFDP are proof that the organisation is dedicated to find out about the needs of the target groups. This information is used to feed into further programming of activities targeting beneficiaries directly, or for developing lobby and advocacy strategies that should help to create a more favourable climate for the beneficiaries.

**Level of organisation:** organisational level of civil society (infrastructure)/peer-to-peer communication/financial and human resources

IFDP takes a pro-active role in approaching other civil society actors to seek collaboration, both to share and to seek knowledge. Various examples of this are available: In October 2012, IFDP organised a conference in Bukavu on land issues. Technical and financial support were provided by Cordaid. About 50 people participated; amongst them were representatives of international organisations, local civil society,

state institutions, private sector and media.<sup>13</sup> An example of synergy that was sought by IFDP at the local level, is the collaboration in the realisation of the participatory development plan of the chiefdom of Kabare. Before the plan could be developed, a socio-economic study was carried out. As soon as IFDP started to work on the plan with financial support from IUCN, it noted that other organisations were interested in it. Apart from the chiefdom itself, interested parties included representatives of the National Park Kahuzi-Biega, and of Fauna & Flora International (FFI), supported by PACEBCO (a programme of the *Communauté Économique des États d'Afrique Centrale*, supported by the African Development Bank).<sup>14</sup> The exchange with these partners initially started by chance at a meeting of the Ecosystem Alliance organised by IUCN-NL in Goma. IFDP took the initiative to seek cooperation with these other parties. No formal agreement was set up between the parties involved to organise the collaboration. Staff expressed great satisfaction about this collaboration. They felt working in synergy had an added value and helped to avoid duplication of activities.

Apart from these forms of collaboration, IFDP has been involved in the provision of training for other civil society organisations, especially about sociotherapy. IFDP staff shows eagerness to share experiences with others. At the same time, the coordinator does not refrain from expressing his criticism about (mal)functioning of civil society in general. This is not always appreciated by other actors in the field.

Financial resources of IFDP are diversified and relatively stable, although also IFDP has received less funding over the last years. At first sight, Cordaid funding seems to be a stable source over the years. Looking at it closer however, a number of shifts in orientation and content can be observed, as set out above. IFDP was able to accommodate these shifts but without losing sight of its core strengths. No major compromises are made in terms of programming to obtain access to funding: projects of IFDP are coherent, despite different backgrounds of donors. IFDP staff has been stable over the last years. This is partly related to the security in financial resources, but two other elements are worth mentioning here as they contribute to staff's motivation: firstly, staff members all praise the amicable atmosphere in the team; people work and eat together. Secondly, the coordinator encourages staff members to continue improving themselves and actively seeks opportunities for staff to realise this.

**Practice of values:** internal governance (democratic decision-making and governance)/transparency

During the baseline visit, IFDP already presented itself as an organisation with high levels of transparency: information about projects, including financial information is generally shared internally. During meetings, everybody is encouraged to give her/his opinion, and in individual interviews staff members expressed their satisfaction about this. Staff members are generally well aware of the vision and mission of the organisation, they have access to information, including financial information. Audits that have been carried out are largely positive about bookkeeping. Cordaid financed an institutional audit for 2013.

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<sup>13</sup> IFDP, *Conférence-débat sur la problématique foncière : Quelle sécurisation foncière en milieu rural. Cas du Sud-Kivu*, 18.10.2012.

<sup>14</sup> Based on: IFDP, *Rapport annuel 2013*, January 2014, and on workshop findings.

Contrary to many other organisations, IFDP compiles consolidated financial and narrative reports. Reports are generally available on time. This all contributes to transparency and accountability of the organisation.

Required governing bodies are in place, including a General Assembly and a Board of Directors. The connection between these bodies and the executive staff seems to be rather loose, and the coordinator is well able to develop the organisation's strategy with the input of his executive team. There is no strong need for the Board to intervene here. As long as no problems arise, staff does not feel very much urged to consult these bodies. One of the staff members admitted that the president of the Board is the only person who regularly passes by at the office, but it is felt that the Board of Directors is becoming more engaged. From a gender perspective, it is interesting to note that the president of the board is a woman.

IFDP works hard to further improve its internal governance. Several examples of this were given during our visit; IFDP is working on a new version of its procedural manual; efforts are made to get different bank accounts for each project. This can help to increase traceability and transparency. To register presence of staff members in the office, a finger print attendance system has been introduced. It is meant to encourage staff to be on time. Staff felt positive about this.

In its documentation IFDP subscribes to a number of key values which need to be defended in the work that is carried out. These values are: dignity, trust, participation, engagement, transparency, equity, responsibility, accountability, independence and team spirit. The coordinator of IFDP is very categorical and outspoken about corruption and misappropriation of funds. To illustrate this, he explained to us how he had turned down offers for collaboration of two of the major international humanitarian actors in eastern DRC, as some people within these institutions are reputed to ask a share of the budget in return of providing support to get a project proposal passed.

**Perception of impact:** responsiveness/social impact/policy impact

The projects of IFDP emphasise the importance of appropriation of the project by the beneficiaries; people are trained in being able to apply socio-therapy themselves, without assistance by IFDP. During the focus group meetings carried out during baseline and end line visits, we encountered beneficiaries who expressed great satisfaction. They were able to give examples of ways in which the training has helped them to change their comportment towards others and to live more peacefully together. It was argued that they had come to realise that unity is more important than wealth; community chiefs testified that they would no longer accept money for their interventions in conflicts. The spouse of a local village chief illustrated this by saying: "We have now grown fat because we no longer eat the curse." In a region where humanitarian aid is omnipresent, and where many CSOs deplore the spirit of 'wait-and-see', it can be seen as a major achievement that people value an organisation that is not providing any material goods but instead is working on behavioural change. At present, IFDP has ceased active support of a number of the grassroots structures, but many of them still continue to present their reports of activities to IFDP. The GRFs have largely been set up already before the MFS-II period, but IFDP continues to stay connected to them and some of the groups are still involved in IFDP's projects. The continuation of functioning of these

groups, even without financial support shows that IFDP has a lasting impact on civil society at the grassroots level.

Bringing on behavioural change, mediation in conflicts, and support to land tenure systems all have an impact on the task and position of local authorities. IFDP is conscious of the position of authorities and respects them. Often, local authorities are involved in IFDP's projects. During field visits, we noted that relationships with local authorities are amicable; the work of IFDP is seen as supportive to the work of the authorities. An example of this is the efforts made for recognition of customary land rights. During a focus group we carried out in Mumosho, we found that about half of the participants had already obtained recognition of their land rights during the process started by IFDP with support of the local authorities.. The local chief of the *groupement* of Mumosho was very positive about this and he acknowledged the help provided by IFDP in the process. Both beneficiaries and chief felt that recognition of their land rights helps to reduce conflicts, as the process is carried out in a participatory and consultative way, involving all land users in a collective and systematic way, including women.

The public sector is an important cooperation partner for IFDP. Relations with the private sector are much more limited, although the win-win approach (*gagnant-gagnant*) does imply a certain level of cooperation. This approach (AGRIPAX)– developed with the union of large landholders- promotes partnerships between private concession holders and landless farmers; enabling the latter to cultivate a plot of land in return for a share of the profit.

In the contribution story below, we will further elaborate on the impact of IFDP on policy making by presenting the case of the environmental code.

### **Environment/context**

IFDP staff is well aware of the context in which it operates. Many of them spend a lot of time in the field. Analyses of the context are made to provide input to project proposals. IFDP has carried out various studies at the request of others, like GIZ, Cooperation Suisse. The research reports that are produced show a good understanding of the context. IFDP is not an organisation that simply composes reports on the basis of earlier reports. The organisation is serious about continuously increasing its understanding of the context, and project activities are developed accordingly. One of the staff members explained this by referring to the mining project set up with support of Cordaid. The analysis showed them that apart from having a different economic setup, relations between people in mining communities are also slightly different than in other communities. Since conflict potential is high in mining areas, it was felt to be important to invest a lot of efforts in sociotherapy, and to work especially on the element of trust. To live together peacefully, levels of trust in these communities often need to rise.

When a project starts, beneficiaries are consulted for the planning process. The grassroots structures are greatly encouraged to take ownership of the project themselves. This seems to work well.

In all its projects, IFDP is open to collaboration with others. Possibilities and impossibilities are explored and shared with other partners in civil society but also with government actors through lobbying and advocacy. One of the major challenges at present is the land reform process. More peaceful cohabitation of people should lead to increased security levels, which will allow people as well to think more of their future. IFDP is well aware that changes cannot only come from the grassroots level, but need to be supported by creating a favourable regulatory framework. It is in this light that lobby and advocacy activities should be understood. Hence, context analysis on the local level is not only used for project planning at this level, but also to feed into lobby and advocacy on the higher level.

## 7. Contribution story

### Drafting an environmental law

*Research Question 2 and 5: Which plausible causal mechanisms were identified, what evidence was needed to overturn or substantiate these mechanisms? Provide the results; Succinctly describe the major results; Did the SPO interventions reach their objectives? Can the results be attributed to the interventions? If not, why not? Did other factors/causal mechanisms play a role?*

*Research Question 3: How relevant are the results?*

*If MDG and CD interventions were evaluated: how did these contribute to reaching civil society objectives.*

*Attribution question: passing a law*

June, 28, 2013. The website of Radio Maendeleo, (the major community radio in South Kivu) reports that an decree on the environmental code is adopted by the Provincial Assembly. According to the article, the legislation outlines a management plan for waste and a plan on how to prevent erosion in the province. The decree is said to enable the establishment of programmes to protect water, coastal areas, and tourist sites. Besides, the decree provides for the creation of new protection areas, and for restoration of woodlands that are being destroyed. Deputy David Ombeni Nakabinda is referred to as the author of the decree.<sup>15</sup>

Early July, the coordinator of IFDP sends around an email to a large number of contact persons in his network (both national and international, and including the evaluation team) to inform them about the successful adoption of the decree. In his e-mail, the coordinator expresses his gratitude to all the parties that have been involved in passing the decree or in supporting the initiative of IFDP. The email clearly

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<sup>15</sup> Radio Maendeleo, 28.06.2013. *Un édit portant code de l'environnement au Sud Kivu voit le jour*, [www.radiomaendeleo.net](http://www.radiomaendeleo.net).



shows that IFDP feels ownership of the realisation. In the following, we look at the role of IFDP and other actors in the process that led to the adoption of the decree in the Provincial Assembly.

### *Theory of Change:*

Drafting legislation in South Kivu can come from different levels, as set out to us by the provincial minister of agriculture and environment. Firstly, initiatives can be taken by the population themselves. This usually goes through civil society. Secondly, deputies can come up with texts themselves. This is the most direct way as deputies can directly consult their colleagues. Thirdly, the ministries can come up with their own initiatives. Civil society can play an important role in drawing attention of deputies and ministries. Lobby and advocacy efforts can help to raise awareness about a certain issue. Civil society actors can make use of information they gather at the local level to feed into lobby and advocacy. In trying to influence deputies, civil society actors battle against temporality; at the moment deputies are replaced during elections for instance, there is the risk of having to start all over again. The positive side of it is that deputies have an interest themselves in having an impact before the end of their term, which can help to speed up processes. Temporality is less an issue when targeting officers within the ministries.

### *Practice of change: How it all started...*

As part of its projects on land tenure, IFDP set up various seminars to train people about land issues. Among the participants were citizens, local leaders, but sometimes also provincial deputies with a background in the territories concerned. One of the deputies who expressed his interest in the training material was David Ombeni Nakabinda, member of provincial parliament since 2006 and representative of Walungu territory. Then, in 2009, IUCN-NL took the initiative to organise an exchange visit to Tanzania for different actors interested in land and/or the environment in DRC. In Tanzania, visits were organised to several communities working on reforestation and environmental protection. Participants learned from this experience and realised that ‘small laws’ could also be effective in protecting nature. Legislation at the provincial level is easier to realise than at the national level. IFDP was involved in the trip, as well as deputy Ombeni.

After returning from the trip, IFDP started to work more on environmental issues, amongst others through the Ecological Cinema sessions. This mainly aimed at raising awareness among the population about nature conservation. In addition, a multi-actor debate was organised about environmental problems in Businga and Nyangezi. IFDP, the deputy and some experts started to reflect more about the possibility of coming up with new legislation. The first step was to see which legal documents were actually in place in relation to the environment. They quickly found that these laws dated back to colonial times. The present forestry code does not talk about certain specific aspects of the environment, such as for instance community forestry. The team of IFDP, together with consultants proposed a text to the deputy. The deputy then felt that the text should become more encompassing; whereas IFDP focused mainly on nature conservation and reforestation, he felt it would be better to take into account other issues at the same time, including protection of lakes and coastal areas. Yet, he admitted that “the idea came from IFDP, and almost all elements of their work come back in there”.

### *Towards becoming adopted*

Towards 2011, a proposal for a legal text was in place. Next steps then were for the actors already involved to start lobbying towards individual deputies to tell them about the importance of the law and to convince them to vote in favour. The deputy then submitted the law. This involves different steps: from the 'conference of the presidents of the parliamentary groups, to the plenary to assess whether the text is admissible, and then to a special commission in charge of environment and natural resources to check whether the text is not contradictory to already existing legislation and to assess whether it actually adds something. In the last phase, the text is sent back to the plenary again for discussion, article by article. Within the plenary, every article has to be voted separately, after which the full text can be voted and adopted. The president then validates the results of the votes and sends the text to the government. This whole process was tedious and time-consuming, but in June 2013 the Assembly finally adopted the text. After that, the governor had 30 days to reject the law. After that period the legislation should enter automatically into force.

Roughly one year after the adoption, we met the deputy and talked with him about the process and its aftermath. He told us that he has already received requests from colleagues in Maniema and Katanga provinces to get a copy of the legislation. It shows that the law has potential for wider implementation.

#### *What still needs to be done*

- Promulgation of the decree by the provincial governor: The provincial governor did not make any objections against the law within the legally prescribed period. This means the law is in place. What remains however is the formal promulgation of the law; the law still needs to be published in the official state bulletin. Once this is done, it will be easier to refer to it, and to use the text as a source of inspiration for environmental protection.
- Appropriation in communities of environmental issues: For a law to be realised in practice, more is needed than just a paper. From the start of the process onwards, IFDP has been active in environmental education in the communities, and in setting up projects of nature protection and reforestation. Beneficiaries of IFDP expressed having an understanding of the importance of the environment, but to be really successful, nature needs to be protected by a much larger group of people. This will require further awareness raising, from IFDP, but possibly also from other civil society actors and the state.
- Enforcement of the law: IFDP has played a role in drafting the legislation and continues to play a role in raising awareness, but the strongest mechanism to ensure the law is applied, is to take measures of enforcement. This is ultimately in the hands of the state. As long as people are not sanctioned in case of crime, incentives to respect the environment are relatively low. For this however, the state will need some means of enforcement; possibilities to carry out monitoring etc. This will probably be a big challenge.

#### *Which actors and factors played a positive role:*

IFDP played a key role in the process of getting the law adopted and in raising awareness among the population about the content of the legislation and how to put the law into practice. Analysis at the local

level by IFDP in the early stages of the process helped to get a good understanding of issues at stake and to make the law suited for the reality.

Next to IFDP, a number of other actors and factors has been decisive in the process of passing the law:

- Deputy David Ombeni Nakabinda: IFDP needed an entry point into the Provincial Assembly. A parliamentarian was needed to take up the case and to propose the law. Mr. Ombeni was involved in the process already in an early stage and was willing to cooperate. Talking to him, we found that he was sincerely concerned about environmental issues. An attractive side-effect for him was that he is now seen as the author of the law, something which fills him with pride: “so when I am no longer there, it is like making yourself immortal”.
- IUCN-NL: In 2009, IUCN-NL organised an exchange visit to Tanzania for a number of Congolese people. The invitees all had an interest in environmental issues and the aim of the visit was to increase awareness, and to learn from local level initiatives to put in place legislation that is in favour of nature conservation. Throughout the process, IUCN-NL was a source of information, inspiration, and funding for IFDP. Some financial means were available for this new decree to be realised, but not anymore for the present implementation phase. IFDP was actually very determined in not wanting to engage people on the basis of financial incentives. They consciously engaged individuals who really wanted to push for the legislation.
- Favourable votes in plenary of the Provincial Assembly: A majority was needed to get the legislation passed in the Provincial Assembly. This was a crucial step. The environmental code is not a highly political subject which made it easier to pass (in comparison to for instance legislation about land or mining). Another ‘advantage’ for IFDP was the lack of new provincial elections in the period during which the process enrolled. The current parliamentarians have been elected in 2006, and there have been no new elections since. Meanwhile some have been replaced, but no major overhaul has taken place. If this had been the case, lobbying would have had to start anew.
- Media: Played a role in raising awareness among the public about the importance of environmental protection. Through the general public, individual parliamentarians can also be reached and convinced of voting in favour of the legislation. Media can also help in the implementation phase by encouraging people to carry out environmental protection measures. IFDP staff felt that the media had well appropriated the topic in the course of time. Partly this is driven by international discourse. A tangible example of the engagement of the media, is the website of Radio Okapi, the UN-funded radio station in DRC. Environment features as one of the main categories about which articles are published.<sup>16</sup> Radio Maendeleo and Radio Neno la Uzima were examples given by IFDP staff of (community) radio stations that pay a lot of attention to environmental issues. This was mostly taken up by the stations themselves, not promoted by civil society.
- Civil society: IFDP acknowledged that other civil society actors played a role as well in promoting the environmental code but staff did not give concrete examples of organisations that played a

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<sup>16</sup> Radiookapi.net

significant role. The Civil Society Coordination Office approached IFDP for money to carry out advocacy, but this was refused by IFDP.

*Which factors can complicate the process?*

- Changes of staff at the level of ministries/deputies: Whereas no major changes took place at the level of the provincial assembly, a lot of shifts have taken place at the level of ministries. The present minister of agriculture and the environment for instance was appointed in June 2013 only and missed most of the lobby process. Such changes can potentially greatly slow down lobby processes. In this case, the minister admitted that her ministry itself had been consulted, but without a strong involvement, and she did not claim ownership over the initiative, but referred to IFDP instead.

In the above we already mentioned that promulgation of the code is still pending with the governor. As long as this is not yet done, stakeholders find it more difficult to promote the legislation. Awareness and willingness among the population is another decisive element. Ultimately, the state will be responsible for taking law enforcement measures.

*Conclusion: contribution of IFDP, contribution of IUCN-NL*

The environmental protection decree was eventually proposed by a deputy in the assembly, but he was very clear in acknowledging the role of IFDP in accompanying the whole process. IFDP has been the driving force to set things in motion. At the local level it is also IFDP that is raising awareness among the population about the legislation. This helps to change behaviour of the population. Looking at the Civicus dimension 'perception of impact', we conclude that IFDP has played and continues to play an important role in the environmental protection legislation. This impact is felt both at the policy level, where IFDP has been key to drafting the text, and at the social level, where community members are encouraged to provide environmental protection measures. This ensures that the law will not only remain a paper law, but that it will also be a law that is applied in practice. It still needs to be seen to what extent the code will induce more sustainable behaviour of the population.

Financial involvement of IUCN during the MFS-II period was not directly related to the lobby efforts to get legislation adopted. In the early stages of the process, IUCN-NL played an essential role in bringing together a number of interested stakeholders for an exchange visit to Tanzania, as it was the onset of further activities. The MFS-funded project contributed to advocacy about the environmental legislation, as project activities contributed to raising awareness among the population about environmental protection. Some of the project activities, such as reforestation contribute in concrete terms to the realisation of the legislation, albeit that this legislation is not yet promulgated. In that regard, the MFS funding can be seen as a contributing factor to both policy and practice of the environmental protection decree. Technical (non-monetary) support by IUCN-NL was significant, as it helped IFDP to set out its strategy, and to gain more insight into the importance of nature protection.

## 8. Discussion

Given your findings, do you think this project (as in: SPO interventions towards civil society strengthening) was well-designed, suitable for the environment in which it was implemented? Would you advise to fund a similar project in the future (or to continue funding this one)? What changes would you recommend, if any? How could the impact evaluation itself be improved?

As set out in this report, IFDP carries out a wide range of interventions that contribute to civil society strengthening; A major achievement- but partly set in motion already before the MFS-II period- is the set-up of grassroots structures that mediate in conflicts and promote local peace. Projects aiming at this have been well-designed, and beneficiaries show a lot of enthusiasm and engagement when talking about the sociotherapy method.

IFDP's involvement in land issues and in promoting a fair distribution and sustainable use will need a fair amount of time. Some progress has certainly been achieved, but more time is needed before the land legislation will change, before people improve their position of land tenure security. Making land use practices more sustainable and environmental friendly is a big challenge. Environmental cinema is an attractive way to reach a large audience. Given population pressure and ongoing erosion the project is very relevant for the area.

The mining sector (both industrial and artisanal) has an important role in the economy of Eastern DRC. High profits are made but not always at the benefit of the local communities. For a more rightful distribution of revenues, we feel this project is suitable for the environment.

For all the projects, we have gained the impression that IFDP is a suitable partner; reliable and with adequate capacities to carry out activities and to make a contribution. We would therefore recommend funding similar projects in the future or to continue this one. In the case of Cordaid however, we would like to point out that it would be desirable to have more continuity in orientation. Encouraging IFDP to move from one theme to the other encourages a sort of 'project shopping', with the risk of losing orientation and overall objective. For IFDP this did not really happen, as the organisation has a clear focus and is able to think in an innovative way about opportunities without losing sight of what the organisation stands for. Nevertheless, it is not desirable to replicate this in other circumstances and with other organisations. For stability, it would be recommendable to limit changes in programme officers/contact persons at the level of headquarters.

With IUCN, IFDP was able to carry out project activities on the basis of a more stable agenda. The project cycle has a longer duration which provides more stability to activities. The project was well-designed and is relevant for the beneficiaries (although some of them might not have been aware of that in the beginning; environmental protection is not self-evident for most people in DRC). IFDP generally meets its targets and beneficiaries take ownership of the project.

The contribution story sets out a clear example of how lobby and advocacy can be carried out in an effective way. A number of (f)actors contributed to the success of the process. It is important to note here that IFDP's connections with the local level ensured enough grounding in society to be able to aim at policy

influencing in a credible manner. This is also visible in the lobby and advocacy currently still undertaken to change the land legislation. Based on its knowledge of local realities, IFDP is able to provide constructive and relevant information to feed into the process. The process leading to the adoption of the law cannot necessarily be reproduced in other processes, such as the land legislation. For each law, different interests are at stake, and different parties involved. This means that each process needs to be tailor-made.

For the impact evaluation itself, it might have been more effective to focus on the contribution of only one MFS-donor instead of two. This sometimes worked confusingly. An additional challenge here was the change in focus in the Cordaid projects. This made it more difficult to talk in concrete terms about the impact of the projects on beneficiaries.

*Which causal mechanisms do you consider to be valid beyond this case?*

IFDP has realised a successful lobby for environmental protection legislation. This is a major achievement. Can this example be used as a blueprint for other lobby efforts aimed at changing legislation? IFDP has been involved already for several years in efforts to improve the Congolese land legislation, but results in this area are not yet as successful as in the environmental area. It should be taken into account here that land is a much more contested and political issue than the environment. Whereas many Congolese people are little concerned about nature and the environment, much stronger sentiments come to the surface when it comes to land issues. Land has given rise to a lot of conflicts, and issues of money, identity, and power are involved. State and non-state regulatory frameworks that are in place at present do not always match. Yet, all parties need to be consulted and agreement needs to be found from many stakeholders involved. Besides, the land legislation should be put in place at the national level, which requires further-reaching lobby and advocacy. This is not easy to realise for a Bukavu-based NGO. Hence, we certainly do not want to dismiss the realisations of IFDP, but want to emphasise here that it is unlikely that a new land legislation can be achieved in a similar way and with similar means.

## **9. Conclusion**

Provide an answer to the evaluation questions.

- 1) What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?

IFDP works on a number of different themes. Firstly, and at its core, IFDP is involved in the promotion of peace at the local level. In the evaluation period, the situation in South Kivu has generally become slightly more stable, although certain –especially remote- areas continue to be characterised as insecure and unstable. This is mostly the case in Shabunda territory and to lesser extent in Mwenga and in Fizi and Uvira territories. Kabare and Walungu territories, areas in which IFDP carries out the bulk of its interventions have been relatively stable.

The issue of land receives a lot of attention in DRC and many lobby and advocacy initiatives are taken by civil society actors to work on an improvement of the legislation. Steps have been taken but not yet leading to the final drafting of a new law.

Participatory development plans have been drafted at many places, usually with support of one or several NGOs. They contribute to more accountability and transparency. In some cases, such as in Kabare they have already been put in place.

A decree on environmental protection was adopted in South Kivu province. This is a major change that has the potential to contribute to reduction of pollution, erosion and other environmental damages.

*2) To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*

Our contribution analysis shows that IFDP played an important role in putting in place a law to protect the environment. This was done with only limited financial resources available and can be seen as very effective.

In relation to the other themes mentioned above, IFDP played a role as well, but we did not look at contribution in depth. IFDP was especially proud about its role in setting up the participatory development plans for the ETD Kabare. Promotion of peace at the local level was praised a lot by beneficiaries we met during our field visit. Lobby and advocacy to change the land legislation is ongoing.

*3) What is the relevance of these changes?*

IFDP's themes are omnipresent in society and hence highly relevant. Beneficiaries we met were all very positive about IFDP and its grassroots structures, the GRFs. When talking about the project, beneficiaries generally referred to the GRFs rather than to IFDP, which shows that the local groups have strongly taken ownership of the projects. IFDP usually refrains from providing sitting allowances to people for turning up at a meeting (which is a rather common practice among NGOs in DRC). It is indicative that beneficiaries nevertheless turn up for meetings that do not provide any material benefit and shows that the project is indeed relevant for the population. In the fragile context of eastern DRC conflicts are rife, often in relation to land or other natural resources. It is certainly relevant to engage in projects that promote peace, seek ways to address conflicts, and that contribute to better management of natural resources.

*4) What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

Many actors engage in the promotion of peace in DRC, but with its sociotherapy, IFDP has found an approach which seems to work well for the target groups. This is a major key to the results achieved by IFDP at the grassroots level. Introduction of sociotherapy to IFDP and its grassroots groups was initiated – already before MFS-II- by Cordaid.

Our contribution story shows that for the successful adoption of the environmental protection code a number of factors played a role. Apart from the involvement of IFDP, the engagement of the deputy was essential in getting the law proposed in the assembly. The role of IUCN was very important, not so much

in providing financial support, but mostly in providing technical support; on how to navigate the process and in terms of the provision of information.

### **List of key documents:**

IFDP, *Conférence-débat sur la problématique foncière : Quelle sécurisation foncière en milieu rural. Cas du Sud-Kivu*, Conference report, 18.10.2012.

IFDP, dépliant

IFDP, Listes actualisées du personnel et des membres du CA, 2012

IFDP, *PATS: Programme d'accompagnement des initiatives de réduction des conflits et de transformation sociale basé sur la sociothérapie au Sud-Kivu à l'Est de la RDC (Phase 2010-2012)*, version finale, juillet 2011.

IFDP, *Programme 108235- Rapport narrative des activités allant du 1<sup>er</sup> nov. 2012 au 31 oct. 2013*.

IFDP- *Projet de réhabilitation-protection participative des sites forestiers communautaires pour la biodiversité et l'économie locale dans les chefferies de Kabare & Ngweshe*

IFDP, *Projet RECOP: Renforcement d' une économie pacifiée et pro-pauvre autour des sites miniers dans la province du Sud-Kivu, RDC*

IFDP, *Rapport annuel consolidée 2013*, January 2014

IFDP and UPACO, *AGRIPAX : Agriculture pour la paix : Un outil de transformation des rapports socio-économiques dans le monde rural à l'Est RDC*

Provincial government South Kivu, *Edit sur la conservation*, n.d.

Vision PATS, October 2010

Next to these documents, we made use of narrative and financial reports for all projects, organisational scans, progress reports etc. We collected documents from Cordaid, IUCN and IFDP itself. A full list of IFDP-documents is available on request.



## ABOUT DATA COLLECTION:

| Name                        | Position   | Workshop<br>08.05.2014 | CS questions | Individual<br>interview |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Jean Marie Nyamulinda       | IFDP project officer in charge of training and documentation | X                      | x            |                         |
| Ghislain Magabe Muderhwa    | IFDP M&E officer   | x                      | X            |                         |
| Sifa Ruhamanyi              | IFDP administration and logistics assistant                  | x                      | X            |                         |
| Simon Risasi                | IFDP environmental affairs officer                           | X                      | x            |                         |
| Vital Mbula                 | IFDP assistant environmental affairs officer                 | x                      | X            |                         |
| Floribert Cirhuza           | IFDP assistant land, mining and decentralisation             | x                      | X            | 13.05.2014              |
| Byamungu Cirume Byadieu     | IFDP communication officer                                   | X                      | X            |                         |
| Jean-Baptiste Safari Bagula | IFDP coordinator   | X                      |              | 13.05.2014              |
| Jocelyn Matabaro            | IFDP officer land, mining and decentralisation               | X                      |              |                         |
| Muhinga Mitima              | IFDP logistics officer                                       | X                      |              |                         |
| Anneke Mulder               | Cordaid- BU Extractives                                      |                        |              | 6.05.2013<br>17.04.2014 |
| Tina Lain                   | IUCN-NL  |                        |              | 14.04.2014              |
| Laurent Kasindi             | Search for Common Ground Bukavu                              |                        |              | 9.05.2014               |
| Murhega Mashanda            | RIO Bukavu   |                        |              | 10.05.2014              |

|                             |  |  |  |                         |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|-------------------------|
| David Ombeni<br>Nakabinda   | South Kivu provincial deputy   |  |  | 9.05.2014<br>16.05.2014 |
| Eric Kajemba                | Observatoire Gouvernance et<br>Paix  |  |  | 12.05.2014              |
| Pascal Tchikala             | UN-Habitat   |  |  | 24.05.2014              |
| Adolphine Byaywuwa<br>Muley | South Kivu provincial minister of<br>agriculture, environment and<br>natural resources |  |  | 9.05.2014               |
| Berthe Chekanabo            | Chief of justice division, South<br>Kivu provincial ministry of justice                |  |  | 21.05.2014              |
| Bilubi Meschac              | ISDR, lecturer and independent<br>consultant   |  |  | 21.05.2014              |
| Lebon Mulimbi               | APDHUD   |  |  | 07.05.2014              |

In addition, we carried out a focus group meeting on May 9, 2014 in Mumosho with about 80-100 representatives of the 4 GRFs from Burembo, Mofa, Shimbi and Mumosho.

On May 10, 2014 we undertook a field visit to Nyangezi where we asked randomly selected vilagers about civil society actors such as IFDP for triangulation purposes.

# Civil Society Strengthening Report KMS

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs and Bart Weijs

Wageningen University

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## List of Acronyms

ADECOP- Action des Jeunes pour le Développement Communautaire et la Paix  
ADS - Association pour le Développement du Sud  
ASED- Action pour la Santé, l'Environnement et le Développement  
COS-PASAK – Consortium de la Sécurité Alimentaire- Programme d'Appui à la Sécurité Alimentaire au Sud-Kivu (Consortium of Food Security- Programme of Food Security Support in South Kivu)  
CSI – Civil Society Index  
ECDPM - European Centre for Development Policy Management  
FARDC - Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo  
ICCO – Interchurch Cooperative for Development Cooperation  
IRC- International Rescue Committee  
MDG- Millenium Development Goals  
MFS II – Medefinancieringsstelsel (the Dutch grant system)  
MONUSCO – United Nations Stabilisation Mission in DRC  
MSH- Management Sciences for Health  
NGO– Non-Governmental Organisation  
OSC- Overseas Strategic Consulting  
PASAK – Programme of Food Security Support in South Kivu  
PRADEP -Programme de Renforcement des Actions Durables à l'Eau Potable  
PROSANI- Integrated Health Project  
RDC - République démocratique du Congo  
SNHR - Service National d'Hydraulique Rurale  
SLRC – Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium  
SPO- Southern Partner Organisation  
UNEP – United Nations Environmental Programme  
WASH –Water, sanitation and hygiene  
WHO– World Health Organisation

## Introduction

Briefly describe the purpose of the paper; give outline of the paper; provide a brief summary of the analyses and the findings.

This report is part of a large evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of Southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society development.

In this report, we look at two components of the evaluation; capacity development of Southern Partner Organisation, and civil society development. As part of the capacity development evaluation, we looked

at the contribution of MFS funding to capacity development of SPOs. As part of the civil society component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in organisation's capacity and in civil society in the evaluation period and the extent in which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and end line study. For the capacity development component, we have looked at 5 SPOs. For the civil society component, we focus on a larger sample of 19 partnerships. All organisations included in the capacity development sample are also part of the civil society sample.

The report is based on observations, workshops, field visits, questionnaires, and interviews conducted during visits in 2012 and 2014, and on project documentation unless otherwise indicated. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup>

Core elements of our capacity development evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the 5 Capabilities framework that has been developed by ECDPM. This framework looks at:

- Capability to act and commit
- Capability to adapt and self-renew
- Capability to deliver on development objectives
- Capability to relate
- Capability to achieve coherence.<sup>2</sup>

We furthermore carried out a contribution analysis to look in-depth at the contribution of Dutch and non-Dutch funding to organisational capacity development. Based on this analysis we construct a contribution story.

Core elements of our civil society evaluation approach are also the Theory of Change (but with a different focus than for capacity development) and the Civicus Civil Society Index.<sup>3</sup> Dimensions of this index are:

- Civic engagement
- Level of organisation
- Practice of values
- Perception of impact
- Environment<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by Louis Guemou Togba (ICCO), Eliphaz Bashilwango and Imaja Matiyabu Itulelo (KMS). We thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> ECDPM, 2011. *Bringing the invisible into perspective: Reference document for using the 5Cs framework to plan, monitor and evaluate capacity and results of capacity development processes*. Maastricht: ECDPM

<sup>3</sup> *CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012*

<sup>4</sup> Please note: In the methodology annex we provide more information about our sampling strategy and about the methodology we used.

In this report we look specifically at Kamati la Maji Safi (KMS); We look at the contribution of Dutch support to the organisation's capacity, and we look at the contribution of KMS to civil society strengthening. KMS is a partner of ICCO and as such part of the ICCO Alliance. KMS is an organisation that was set up in 1997 to improve water systems and to promote safe drinking water. But the vision has become more encompassing and today reflects a holistic approach to development. With limited funding available KMS is not able to implement this approach completely. Current activities cover fields such as agriculture, water and sanitation and health, but with little coherence between the different components.

Our contribution story shows that KMS had limited opportunities to develop its capacity. This is also reflected in our analysis of the 5Cs and changes over the last years.

In terms of the civil society index, we noted little to no progress. Partly, this is related to the fact that KMS is a hands-on organisation in which most staff members are primarily interested in developing 'hard skills', but not so much in the 'soft skills' of development, whereas these soft skills are often more related to development of certain norms.

Generally, we noted limited progress for KMS, but we do not consider this to be surprising, given the limited amount of funding that was available for KMS.

## Context

Briefly describe the country/local context as far as it is relevant for the evaluated SPO.

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons.<sup>5</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas in South Kivu, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013). The Fall of Goma in December 2012 and consequent threat to Bukavu led to the evacuation of the majority of international staff, and drew the attention of the military to North Kivu, with other armed groups taking advantage of the situation. The following defeat of M23 and military moves against other armed groups have led to more optimism, though. In general the security situation in the province was considered as stable, yet unpredictable during the evaluation period. The decades of insecurity, conflict, and the rent-seeking dictatorship of Mobutu continue to pose a lot of challenges to governance in the DRC, also in setting up development projects. Poor infrastructure due to years of neglect in maintenance, coupled with insecurity make large areas in the South of South Kivu difficult to access until today. For those who nevertheless take the courage to invest, high transport costs need to be dealt with.

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<sup>5</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel ([www.christophvogel.net](http://www.christophvogel.net)), and the elucidating analyses by the Rift Valley Institute ([www.riftvalley.net](http://www.riftvalley.net))

The majority (just over 60%) of DRC's population live in rural areas according to the latest data available from the National Statistics Institute.<sup>6</sup> In the province of South Kivu roughly 3 out of 4 people live in rural areas.<sup>7</sup> The country has great potential for agriculture and possesses a wealth of mineral resources. The potential of all these resources however is far from being exploited. On the 2014 Human Development Index, DRC ranked 186 out of 187 (only followed by Niger). Gross national income per head was noted to be at \$444 in 2013, which was lowest of all countries for which data were available. In the same year, 87.7% of the population lived below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>8</sup> A survey carried out by SLRC in South Kivu in 2012 ( $n=1259$ ) showed that around three-quarters of households in the sampled population make a living primarily in agriculture, either in subsistence agriculture (65%), commercial farming (5%), or by agricultural casual labour (6%).<sup>9</sup> Households within the same sample have access to 2.69 hectares of land, but often not all of this land is held in ownership.<sup>10</sup> Due to various factors, such as insecurity, displacement, and market distortions, agricultural production is low. Food insecurity and poverty remain rife. Land issues are often seen as one of the main sources of conflicts in DRC; there is a lack of arable land in densely populated areas; displacements causes competition; regulatory frameworks overlap and statutory law is not considered as matching with rural reality.<sup>11</sup>

Projects of KMS are executed in Fizi and Uvira territories. These areas have a strong presence of humanitarian organisations. Typically, humanitarian organisations often provide food aid, seeds, or small livestock, whereas development organisations are often more involved in the provision of small loans, in setting up cooperatives, or in organising mutual solidarity groups. The SLRC survey carried out in 2012, showed that 21% of all households had received food aid, 12% seeds and tools, 4% material aid (for construction) and 2% financial loans.<sup>12</sup> The survey did not cover participation in cooperatives or saving groups. Presence of humanitarian organisations is often noted by Congolese development works to have an impact on the mentality among the population; people get used to receiving goods for free, and it is more difficult to engage them in development projects.

Water is generously available in DRC. Eastern DRC is located in the Great Lakes region. Yet, access to clean water is a major challenge for large part of the population. A 2011 UNEP report estimated that only 26% of the population has access to potable water.<sup>13</sup> The report shows that in rural areas, next to low levels of access, water is of bad quality. Besides, it is estimated that 60% of rural water systems is not operational and maintenance of water sources is inadequate.<sup>14</sup> The already mentioned SLRC survey showed that the

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/drc/overview>, viewed on 06.10.2014

<sup>7</sup> UNDP (UN Development Programme) (2009) 'Profil Résumé Pauvreté de Sud Kivu 2009'. Kinshasa: UNDP.

<sup>8</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014

<sup>9</sup> Miliano, C.W.J, de, A. Ferf, J. Oude Groeniger, and M. Mashanda. 2014. Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study, SLRC.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Vlassenroot, K. (ed). 2012. *Dealing with land issues and conflict in eastern Congo: Towards an integrated and participatory approach*, Ghent: CRG. Van Leeuwen, M., and G. van der Haar. 2014. *Land governance as an avenue for local state building in eastern DRC*, IS Academy Occasional Paper, Wageningen University.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Partow, H. 2011. *Water Issues in the Democratic Republic of the Congo : Challenges and opportunities- Technical Report*, Kenya: UNEP.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*



population does not consider the government to be responsible for the provision of water. International and national NGOs play a far greater role. Interestingly, 77% of respondents in the survey feel that the drinking water they access is clean and safe.<sup>15</sup>

DRC health indicators generally give rise to concern, as the following parameters from the WHO show:

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Total population (2012)  | 65 705 000 |
| Gross national income per capita (PPP international \$, 2012)                | 390        |
| Life expectancy at birth m/f (years, 2012)                                   | 50/53      |
| Probability of dying under five (per 1 000 live births, 2012)                | 146        |
| Probability of dying between 15 and 60 years m/f (per 1000 population, 2012) | 382/323    |
| Total expenditure on health per capita (international \$, 2012)              | 24         |
| Total expenditure on health as % of GDP (2012)                               | 5.6        |

Source: <http://www.who.int/countries/cod/en/>, retrieved on 8.09.2014

One of the innovative approaches that is in vogue in the health sector is Performance-Based Financing; these are support schemes funded largely by international organisations to improve functioning of the health sector.<sup>16</sup> Cordaid is one of the actors that is involved in this. Local NGOs are often hired to carry out monitoring of realisations of this approach.

## Description of Southern Partner Organisation

Brief description of the SPO: history, nature of organization, major changes in the organization during the evaluation period, main areas of intervention, geographical focus

Kamati Maji Safi (KMS) means Drinking Water Committee in the Swahili language. It indicates the origin of the organisation; KMS was set up in 1997 under the National Service of Rural Hydraulics (SNHR), part of the Ministry of Rural Development. KMS was one of the local committees set up under SNHR to manage and maintain local water constructions. KMS was installed in Swima, in the territory of Fizi. Until today, the head office of KMS is based in Swima, at about 30 km South of Uvira town. Next to this, KMS hires an office in Uvira, both because of insecurity in Fizi territory, and for strategic reasons (to be better accessible/visible for donors). In 2002 KMS became officially established as a non-profit association.

Vision: Make sustainable development a reality in all the places where KMS works. Life and human dignity of the most marginalized are strengthened.<sup>17</sup>

Mission: To change the world thanks to actions of KMS for human dignity and the fight against poverty. This will help to save lives and to relieve misery of the marginalized population.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Miliano, C.W.J, de, A. Ferf, J. Oude Groeniger, and M. Mashanda. 2014. Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study, SLRC.

<sup>16</sup> See for instance <http://www.fbrsanterdc.cd/about/item/6.html>, viewed on 05.11.2014.

<sup>17</sup> KMS, *Document de référence de KMS : Comprendre ce qui est KMS*, n.d., p.4

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

Over the years, KMS has maintained a focus on water constructions in various projects. Water committees continue to exist at the grassroots level and are supported by KMS. In search of funding, KMS has broadened its focus and gradually started to execute projects in other domains of intervention. The ICCO-funded project on food security is an example of this. Indicative of this broadening, is the range of focal themes defined by KMS in its strategic plan 2011-2015: WASH, basic infrastructures (such as schools, health centres, water supply systems, latrines), food security, community development, human rights, conflict and peace building. Transversal themes are: gender, HIV/AIDS and environment.<sup>19</sup> In the course of 2013, KMS formally changed its name into ADS, *Association pour le Développement du Sud*. At present, both names are used. Staff argued that other parties have not yet gotten used to the change of name, and therefore staff also continue to refer to KMS. To avoid confusion, and for consistency with the baseline report, we will use KMS throughout this report. The new name underlines the more holistic approach KMS aims to apply.

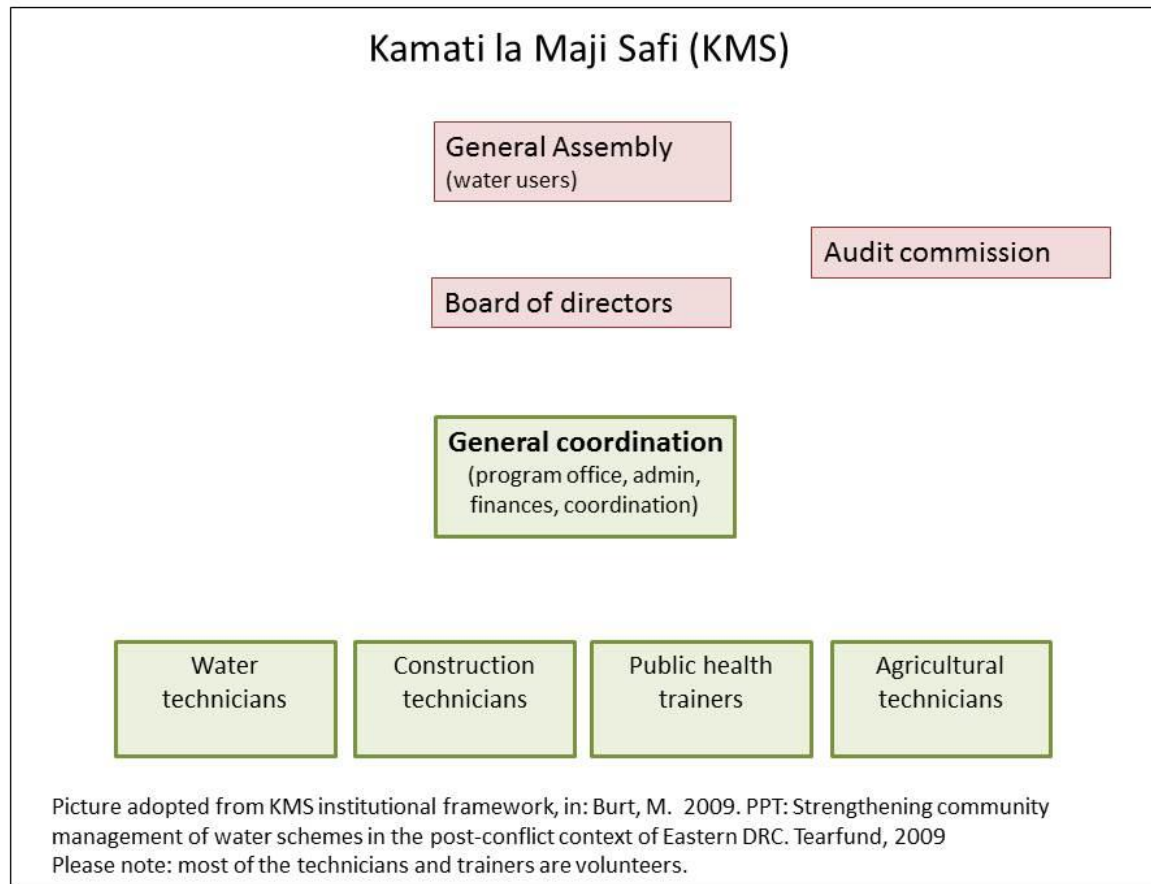
In its first years, KMS received support from Tearfund UK. In recent years, funding has been limited for KMS, but ambitions remain. Without funding, staff members work as volunteers. Professional consultancy assignments carried out by the organisation's coordinator contributed some means to KMS.<sup>20</sup> Some people have left after the end of projects, others continue to be in touch on a part-time and voluntary basis. For the current project, new fieldworkers have been hired. Core staff members (coordinator, deputy coordinator and administrator/finance officer).have remained, despite a lack of funding. They continue to show their engagement.

With lack of funding, KMS has difficulties in meeting formal requirements such as organising General Assemblies, Board meetings, or carrying out audits.

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<sup>19</sup> KMS ONGD- Plan stratégique 2011-2015

<sup>20</sup> See for instance, Bashilwango, E.L., 2013. *Projet Pro-Routes: Mise en oeuvre du Plan d' actions prioritaire de développement des peuples autochtones dans les territoires d'Uvira et de Fizi. Rapport final des activités*, BEGES, with support of WorldBank and DFID.



## Project description

Briefly describe the SPO and the project's capacity development elements; size, budget, duration; major objectives and activities.

| Project   | Donor | Major objective  | Period                                  | Amount of funding |          |      |      |
|---|-------|--|---|-------------------|----------|------|------|
|   |       |  |   | 2011              | 2012     | 2013 | 2014 |
| PRADep-<br>Water<br>construction,<br>75-02-14-<br>004 <sup>21</sup> | ICCO  | Water construction   | Oct.2010-<br>Dec.<br>2011 <sup>22</sup> | € 32 145          |          |      |      |
| PASAK <sup>23</sup> 75-<br>02-13-018                                | ICCO  | Support to<br>production and<br>transformation of<br>cassava | Oct 2012-<br>May 2013                   |                   | € 20 000 |      |      |

<sup>21</sup> Programme de Renforcement des Actions Durables à l'Eau Potable

<sup>22</sup> Please note that the first 3 months of the project do not fall within the MFS-II evaluation period. It is difficult to disentangle these months from the project realisations, and we therefore looked at the whole project, without setting this period apart. The amount of funding provided here, refers to the total project period.

<sup>23</sup> Programme d'Appui à la Sécurité Alimentaire au Sud-Kivu

|  |                               |  |                    |         |        |         |  |
|--|-------------------------------|--|--------------------|---------|--------|---------|--|
| Project on recuperation of children  | GAVI/CNOS                     | Raise awareness among mothers to vaccinate their children  | 2013               |         |        | \$5000  |  |
| PROSANI  | USAID                         | Construction of latrines   | 2012-2013          |         | ??     | ??      |  |
| PROSANI  | USAID (through IRC, OSC, MSH) | Monitoring achievements of performance-based financing in health   | 2014               |         |        |         | \$ 18 000  |
| Biosand water filter   | Friendly Water for the World  | Promotion of biosand water filters among pygmies   | May 2013           |         |        | \$6000  |  |
| Biosand water filter   | Friendly Water for the World  | Promotion of biosand water filters in Goma to improve access to drinking water   | March 2014         |         |        |         | \$15000  |
| Fight against cholera and waterborne diseases in eastern DRC <sup>24</sup> | Solidarit  International      | Joint project with SI to contribute to better public health in health zone Mweso   | June 2014-Dec 2014 |         |        |         | Material support provided+ \$ 10 000                         |
| Abeka water construction gravity system's project                          | Quakers Congo Partnership     | Support and strengthen institutions and population of Abeka in construction and sustainable management of drinking water | 2015?              |         |        |         | \$ 91461 (not yet transferred/nor used. Negotiations ongoing |
| Total amount of funding 2011-2014  |                               |  |                    | \$32145 |  20000 | \$11000 | \$43000  |

PRADep-Water construction was the first ICCO-funded project executed by KMS. Main objective of this project was the restoration of water constructions in communities in Fizi territory. Specific objectives were:

- Identification and selection of water points to be rehabilitated
- Training and awareness raising in communities on the importance of water infrastructures and on maintenance;
- Creation and training of water management committees
- Construction of water points.

<sup>24</sup> Solidarit  International. *Protocole d'Accord dans le cadre du projet* : PA 06/GOM/HYD-ECHO 1178/14

In total, the project foresaw in the rehabilitation of 32 water points, and in setting up functional management committees for each of these points. This was supposed to ensure access to safe drinking water for 6500 inhabitants.<sup>25</sup>

The final report notes rehabilitation of 27 water points; the creation and training of 15 water management committees. About 80% of committee members appeared to engage in the management. It was estimated that 11500 inhabitants obtained access to water through the project.

PASAK-support to intensification of cassava crop was an ICCO-funded project of KMS meant to integrate former PRADEP (WASH) partners in the food security program, while continuing to work on making drinking water accessible. Overall objective was therefore twofold, and aimed to improve both food security and access to water. Specific objectives were:

- Assist 50 household producers of cassava
- Provide access to safe drinking water for 800 inhabitants (160 households)<sup>26</sup>

Major realisations noted in the final report are: 50 household have been supported in increasing their cassava production. A mill for transformation was installed in Swima, a cooperative set up, two mutual solidarity groups set up. 5 water constructions have been rehabilitated and provide access to drinking water for 286 households.<sup>27</sup>

### ***Capacity development by ICCO***

As part of PRADEP partners of ICCO, KMS received various forms of support to develop capacity. This was not part of the PRADEP project budget for KMS, but provided directly through the ICCO office. These included:

- Support to provide more professional financial and narrative reports
- Training on: results-based management; project management; HRM; administration and finances; good governance.
- Bilateral exchanges between ICCO and KMS; these meetings served to provide direct feedback to KMS on how to improve things. Such meetings however take place in an informal setting and are not necessarily well documented. For us as evaluation team it was difficult to get a clear impression of these exchanges, especially since at the time of our visits there was no ICCO project running for KMS. ICCO staff pointed out that this is nevertheless an important element of its approach towards capacity development.

It is remarkable to note here that during the baseline visit staff referred to the various trainings several times. This impact was much less visible during the end line visit.

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<sup>25</sup> Project plan, 75-02-14-004 PRADEP- Water construction

<sup>26</sup> Project plan, 75-02-14-018, PASAK- Support to the intensification of cassava crop

<sup>27</sup> KMS, June 2013. *Rapport technique contractuel d'activités : Soutien à la production et transformation de manioc à Swima, Territoire de Fizi.*

As PASAK partner of ICCO, KMS took part in activities organised for/by members of the ICCO Food Security Consortium (COS-PASAK). This was supposed to contribute to capacity development through mutual learning. No specific capacity development activities were foreseen in the project proposal, nor in the final report. In May 2014, we noted the presence of two staff members in a COS-PASAK workshop and training. Despite no longer being a funded member of the consortium, KMS still tries to participate as much as possible in activities organised by the consortium. Topics that were covered during COS-PASAK training: land access and nutrition; disaster risk management; nutrition.

### ***Capacity development by other partners***

Friendly Water for the World is a new partner for KMS. It has introduced a new technology for purifying water, making use of biosand filters. Several staff members attended a training on how to construct these water filters. This contributes to KMS' capability to deliver on development objectives.

In the past, KMS has received funding and technical support from Tearfund UK. According to staff, this still contributes to the actual capacity of KMS.

For the health project PROSANI KMS is primarily hired as executive partner. Training was provided to new and old staff members involved in the project to learn about the approach of performance-based financing.

### **Theory of change for capacity development**

KMS aims to systematically increase its presence in the field. This can only be achieved by developing organisational capacities, but also individual capacities of staff. For this, more institutional support is needed, whereas at present funding is mostly for the execution of project activities. Lack of funding is seen to be the major bottleneck to further develop capacities. A well-equipped office and adequate logistical support can contribute to work of higher quality. Working in synergy with others is seen to be beneficial. Management (financial, project, general) need to become more transparent, which requires more frequent interaction between different staff members. There is awareness that to convince donors to provide more funding, activities need to be executed according to the chronogram. Furthermore, KMS intends to improve the terms of project management. Progress over the last two years has been limited: without funding, there are little opportunities to improve, but without improving, it is difficult to obtain funding. Staff believe that if this challenge is overcome, the organisation can progress much more.

During PRADEP, ICCO has invested in a number of training sessions for KMS staff to develop organisational capacity. PASAK was more oriented towards introducing the programmatic approach to partners and to encourage synergy between different stakeholders. The contribution of ICCO is less direct here; KMS learnt about food security issues mostly through the joint activities of the consortium. This way of learning is part of ICCO's programmatic approach.

## Data collection and analytical approach

Describe the baseline and follow-up assessment. If there is one general methodology, that can be described in an Annex. Please present particular choices and data collection problems in the main text. Sampling method and sample sizes; workshop participants and other informants (in Annex). *Which key outcome(s) was/were selected for process tracing, based on which criteria?*

We were not able to carry out an extensive interim visit to KMS in 2013. On our 2013 trip we only met the coordinator and one of the core staff members for an informal meeting. We therefore held an elaborate workshop with KMS during the end line visit in July 2014. For this, we followed the general methodology as described in annex X.

A challenge for the evaluation was posed by the type of projects that were MFS-funded. Both during baseline and during end line visit, KMS did not have an active project that was funded by ICCO. The first project already ended before our baseline visit (December 2011). The second project took place between the two visits; it started one month after baseline visit and ended in May 2013. Hence, we were not able to observe an organisation that was in full action. Another complicating factor was that the two projects had different foci: First project was in the field of water and sanitation. The second project still had a small WASH component, but focused mainly on food security. This makes it more difficult to monitor progress and to compare the situation in 2012 with the situation in 2014.

Capacity development of KMS by ICCO has been rather limited and KMS did not dispose over a lot of other donors in the last years. We therefore decided to focus for our contribution analysis on the capability of KMS to deliver on development objectives. This capability is fed by other capabilities and thus allowed us to look at capacity improvements in rather general terms. Besides, KMS staff have a strong hands-on mentality. It makes them naturally more oriented towards executing activities in a direct manner. This is best captured under the capability to deliver.

## Results

Research Question 1: Provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the five capabilities. If available, provide description of individual indicators in an Annex.

|                                   | Baseline<br>(1-5) | End line |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|----------|
| Act and commit                    | 3                 | 2,5      |
| Deliver on development objectives | 3                 | 2,5      |
| Adapt and self-renew              | 3                 | 2        |
| Relate to external stakeholders   | 2.5               | 2        |
| Achieve coherence                 | 2.5               | 2        |

|                            |   |   |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Overall capacity (rounded) | 3 | 2 |
|----------------------------|---|---|

## 5 Capabilities:

### Capability to act and commit:

*Level of effective leadership*

*Level of realistic strategic planning*

*Level of translation of strategy into operations*

*Level of staff capacity and motivation*

*Level of financial resource security*

The coordinator of KMS is very engaged but in his ambitions and positivism finds it difficult to listen well to others. Participation of other staff members during our workshops was unbalanced. We did not observe any changes in this regard. Although the coordinator is well-aware of desirable donor discourse in terms of accountability and good governance practices, we are not fully convinced that he has internalised this and is consistent in applying this.

A strategic plan is available, covering 2011-2015 and staff claim to work on the basis of this. With limited projects, only a small part of the strategic plan has been put into practice over the last years and planning does not seem to be realistic. Nevertheless, staff still claim to work on the basis of the strategic plan. Project planning can be improved; PRADEP for instance was planned for 15 months, but executed in 12 months because after that money was finished.<sup>28</sup> For PASAK, KMS reported the (re)construction of 6 water points instead of the planned 5 because there was still enough material available for a 6<sup>th</sup> construction.

New staff members receive a short training about the organisation and its strategies at the beginning of their contracts, but the training is limited in scope. Indicatively, one of the new staff members thanked us at the end of the workshop, as he 'did not know much about KMS beforehand'. Generally, people who receive training are supposed to share information with colleagues, but this is not always done in an optimal way. The agronomist who worked in the PASAK project argued that training provided should be for all staff members and not only for some. He illustrated this by referring to Disaster Risk Management as something which was always referred to by the coordinator, but which he himself did not fully capture. It shows that there is room for improvement in this regard and that information is not appropriated organisation-wide.

During our baseline visit, we had the impression that motivation of several staff members was mostly based on remuneration. With reduction of financial means, some people have left the organisation and the ones who still remain of the 'older' members are more driven by internal motivation. This is supported

<sup>28</sup> Interview, KMS1-21092012; Gestion PRADEP KMS UVIRA- Livre de caisse



by the fact that they still continue to work with KMS despite a long interruption in their salaries. For PASAK, KMS has hired some new people with particular capabilities in the field of agriculture. This is a strategy which KMS has applied in other projects as well; to cover a wide range of topics, specific expertise is hired. Core staff members aim at developing themselves more as all-rounders and engage in all of the projects.

At present, KMS continues to carry out limited monitoring of progress in PASAK (i.e. of progress of cooperative and mutual solidarity groups). It is a sign of the motivation of staff. To complement limited donor funding, individual staff members seek complementary sources of income. The coordinator has done so by taking on consultancy assignments, others do so by farming. The coordinator is active in seeking learning opportunities, but often limited by financial means. Nevertheless, he has been able himself in 2013 for instance to attend a training on ICT for development in Brazzaville, and more recently to attend a training on biosand filters in Kenya, together with another staff member. The administrator/finance officer has recently completed a master course at Kampala international university.

#### **Capability to adapt and self-renew**

*Level of effective application of M&E*

*Level of strategic use of M&E*

*Level of openness to strategic learning*

*Level of context awareness*

KMS has started as a grassroots structure working on rehabilitating existing water taps, then started to set up new water systems themselves. Meanwhile, aim is to become more encompassing. The PASAK project is an example of this, and at present the field of health is covered with a new project. The change of name from 'Drinking Water Committee' (KMS) into 'Association for the Development of the South' is illustrative for the openness and eagerness of KMS to adapt and self-renew.

According to the organisational set-up of KMS, the vice-coordinator is the main person responsible for M&E activities. He is based in Swima, which is in the core area of intervention of KMS. This allows him to carry out close monitoring (*suivi de proximité*) and to accompany people intensively. It also enables to correct things that do not work out well immediately. An example that was given of this was related to the construction of the cooperative's depot. He noted that the substance of which the bricklayers were producing the bricks did not have the right mixture. Because of the close monitoring he was able to correct this already in the process. Generally, it was felt among staff that monitoring efforts should be improved.

KMS organises regular meetings to plan and to evaluate. Before and after going to the field, meetings take place to discuss planning, and to present findings afterwards. This is done at the level of the coordination.

M&E findings seem to be used mostly to check compliance with donor requirements, but less so to adjust project design for more successful implementation and to better respond to the needs of the beneficiaries. Another example that was given also relates to the construction of the depot. We were told during the workshop by one of the project officer that people complained in the construction phase that the depot should be bigger, but the size had been agreed upon before with the donor and therefore could not be changed easily. People were then told to wait for the M&E officer to come who explained that the size was prescribed and could not be changed.

Learning efforts are encouraged by evaluating performances of staff on an annual basis. During this exercise all staff members are required to carry out a self-evaluation, which is seen to provide information about the performance of the organisation.

Generally, we have the impression that in its M&E efforts, KMS is mostly oriented towards providing a rosy picture of realisations to satisfy donors. There is less awareness that M&E can and should actually first and foremost be used to improve activities and outputs in order to increase satisfaction of beneficiaries. KMS staff did not agree on this observation, as they do not consider it to be their task to engage on the longer-term with the local water committees and with maintenance of the water systems. For them, their task is simply to construct. There is no concern about sustainability of the constructions. We did not note any considerable improvement in this regard and would like to see KMS acting more towards beneficiaries than towards donors. We also realise however that this is probably easier to do for organisations that are already in the position of attracting enough donor funding. KMS is not/not yet at that stage.

### **Capability to deliver on development objectives**

*Extent to which organisation delivers on planned products and services*

*Extent to which delivered products and services are relevant for target population in terms of the effect they have*

*Extent to which delivered products and services and the effects they have, can be sustained beyond the period of intervention*

*Level of work efficiency*

KMS has an elaborate manual for efficient functioning of administration and finances.<sup>29</sup> The finance officer is experienced and shows to be conscientious about the existence of these procedures and the way in which records of financial and material resources need to be kept. We did not get the impression that all the operational guidelines are fully known and understood by all staff members. Staff explained that a clear manual and a clear operational plan was a condition set by ICCO. Unless KMS would provide an

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<sup>29</sup> Kamati la Maji Safi ; *Manuel de régie, procédures et mécanismes de contrôle interne*, March 2012, 94 pp.

operational plan and a detailed budget (showing expenses and activities per month), no funding would be released.

The water projects carried out by KMS always need a lot of material equipment. Logistics was therefore very important. During our end line visit, the former logistician had left KMS to work for Tearfund. At the time of our end line visit, no projects were carried out that demanded a lot in terms of logistics. KMS did not have a clear strategy to make up for this staff member. If new major water projects will be set up in the future again, KMS will need to find a strategy to strengthen its logistics.

From our visit at KMS we got the impression that staff is more oriented towards checking boxes of donor demands than towards carrying out activities profoundly and with a long-lasting impact on beneficiaries. This was illustrated for instance by the lack of concern of KMS staff about the non-functioning of a large part of the water points; children were to blame for this and people should be able to carry out minor repairs. KMS is only carrying out major repairs and overhauls. Part of this comportment might also be related to the relative short duration of projects carried out by KMS. Setting up a cooperative and two mutual solidarity groups in a period of 8 months cannot be done than in a superficial manner; no solid training, awareness raising and capacity development can be expected within such a timeframe. In a way this encourages KMS to aim for fast results rather than sustainable development.

Although KMS has received training from ICCO on results-based management, focus still seems to be very much on measuring outputs for M&E purposes. During the baseline visit, training was relatively recent and the dominant discourse during our workshop was to emphasise the importance of measuring actual impact of interventions. During our end line visit this discourse had drifted away a bit and staff reported for instance on the construction of a mill for the cooperative rather than on actual usage of the mill.

### **Capability to relate**

*Level of readiness to deal with power relationships*

*Level of involving external parties in internal policy/strategy development*

*Level of engagement of organisation in networks, alliances and collaborative efforts*

*Extent to which organisation is actively engaging with target groups*

*Level of effective relationships within the organisation*

Relationships with beneficiaries are relatively close, due to the presence of the KMS office in Swima. A box of suggestions is available in the office. In this box beneficiaries can leave their comments, critics, suggestions. We were not able to find out whether the box is frequently used. Beneficiaries we met were generally positive about the support they were still receiving from KMS. Members of the cooperatives and the mutual solidarity groups that were founded as part of PASAK, testified that they continue to stay connected to KMS.

Internally, exchange takes place during meetings that are organised on a regular basis, usually before and after field visits. During both baseline and end line workshops however we noted that active participation

is limited for most of the staff members. The coordinator takes a very prominent role and only incidentally seeks complementary input from one of the more senior staff members. We did not observe much change in this, and are strongly inclined to think that staff meetings take place in a similar way.

Relations with other stakeholders active in the field are limited. Staff argued that KMS had been involved in organising different networks, but with limited success, as other parties tended to prefer on their own. No concrete examples could be provided of this. Generally, contacts were presented as occasional rather than structural.

Within the ICCO alliance of partners working in the field of water and sanitation, KMS was in contact with ASED and ADECOP, but this was mostly during training provided by ICCO and not really to discuss content. The food security consortium of ICCO, named COS-PASAK consists of more organisations. KMS continues to attend COS-PASAK meetings as much as possible, despite not receiving funding anymore. This seemed to be more driven by strategic reasons (hope of getting funding) than to receive input on programming.

Because of its origin, KMS has always had contacts with the state department responsible for overseeing management of water constructions. These contacts continue to exist, but do not seem to be used in an instrumental way to advocate more state investments in the water sector for instance. It seems to be taken for granted that this is not something which is provided by the state in the first place.<sup>30</sup>

### **Capability to achieve coherence**

*Existence of mechanisms for coherence*

*Level of coherence of various efforts of organisation*

In order to achieve coherence, vision, mission and aim of the organisation are said to be regularly discussed. All this is described in job descriptions and the contracts of new staff members. Documentation on this is available both in the KMS office in Swima and in Uvira. Yet, we noted that not all staff members have fully taken ownership of the staff's mission/vision and main actions.

Given the broad terms in which the organisation's mission, vision and objectives are phrased in the strategic plan, it is not too difficult to carry out activities that are at least in line with part of the objectives. It is a much bigger challenge for KMS to cover all the objectives that are formulated in the plan, as these seem to be much more encompassing than what is feasible to achieve. No critical reflection seems to take place about this. Adverse times in terms of donor funding is mostly explained as being related to the financial position of donors and not so much connected to achievements of KMS. Indicatively, we were told during the baseline visit that 'different projects we have had, have been identified together by us and

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<sup>30</sup> This is in line with the SLRC survey findings presented above.

the donors, in consultation'. This did not change in the course of the evaluation period. Clearly, different donors set different priorities, which results in various projects that do not necessarily connect well with each other. This can be a challenge in the field for KMS; projects of Tearfund in the past for instance provided material goods for water constructions, whereas ICCO encouraged input from beneficiaries. Such differences between projects can be understood in the light of donor agendas, but are more difficult to provide a coherent image of an organisation and to explain towards beneficiaries. During the end line visit, we noticed that KMS is still struggling to define its own way and has not yet fully transitioned towards becoming primarily a development organisation.

### **Contribution story: capability to deliver on development objectives**

*Research Question 2 and 4: Which plausible causal mechanisms were identified, what evidence was needed to overturn or substantiate these mechanisms? Provide the results; Succinctly describe the major result; did the capacity development interventions reach their objectives? Can the results be attributed to the interventions? If not, why not? Did other factors/causal mechanisms play a role?*

KMS is an organisation that is strongly oriented towards delivering concrete objectives, and this has also been the main focus of the ICCO-funded projects. We therefore decided to look at this capability in our contribution analysis, and asked ourselves the question: *To what extent has ICCO support contributed to the development of KMS' capability to deliver on development objectives?* Under ICCO support we include financial, material and technical assistance that was provided. In this contribution story we discuss some of the objectives that were delivered by KMS and the evidence we found in the field of these realisations. We then look at the actors and factors that contributed to the realisation of these objectives (causal mechanisms), and lastly, we critically discuss the contribution of ICCO and the extent at which ICCO's intervention reached the intended objectives. We look at both PRADEP and PASAK because dynamics of these two projects differed slightly and findings on one project cannot simply be generalised and applied to the other project.

*Which concrete objectives were delivered?*

In the project description we already mentioned reported realisations of PRADEP and PASAK. We recall them here:

PRADEP:

- 27 water supply points rehabilitated
- 18 water committees set up or reorganised and provided of maintenance kits
- 80% of water committees members engage in management
- 11500 inhabitants (est.) have obtained access to drinking water

PASAK:

- 50 households selected, trained on agricultural cooperative
- 1 cooperative set up
- 2 mutual solidarity groups set up
- 5 water supply points rehabilitated (giving access to drinking water for 286 households)
- 1 mill installed and functional (for processing cassava) in Swima
- 1 depot constructed (for storage of cassava produced by cooperative members)
- 1 joint sale of cassava by cooperative members

The overview shows that most of the achievements are concrete and tangible. Elements of civil society strengthening are less prominent. Under PASAK, KMS set up a cooperative, but this is mostly seen as a vehicle to increase agricultural production and not so much as an effort to strengthen civil society at the local level.

*What did we observe in the field (evidence)?*

When we visited the field in 2012 and 2014 we were able to see a number of the water supply points constructed or reconstructed by KMS. We found little concern about sustainability of the constructions; people complained about broken taps or lack of water. During the 2014 visit we noted that KMS has started putting fences around the taps to prevent easy access for children and goats but since the fences were not fully closed, we are not convinced of their use.

The functioning of the water management committees varies. When setting up the committees KMS provides training on how to maintain the water supply points. During our baseline visit (when PRADEP had finished already) beneficiaries complained about the turnover of committee members; especially young members for instance had left for Uvira to seek employment. With their departure the technical knowledge on maintenance was also gone. This poses great challenges to the committees in keeping the water supply points functioning. Another challenge, which was pointed out several times during our end line visit was the low level of payment of user fees. This was also noted by the external ICCO-evaluator.<sup>31</sup> KMS staff argue that it is not part of their approach to ensure that water committees/water supply points function.

The PASAK project had a short duration of 8 months, but KMS is making efforts to continue some of the support to the group. Given the duration of the project, we consider it quite a good result that we were able to find a structured group of people; to see a depot and a functional mill. The cooperative had not yet reached independence, but this cannot be expected in the given period, especially when taking into consideration that KMS had no prior experience on carrying out a project in the field of food security/agriculture.

*What helped KMS to achieve the objectives (causal mechanisms)?*

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<sup>31</sup> Murhambo, D.C. and A.G. Karume, October 2013. *Rapport d'évaluation externe de la COSPASAK*, commissioned by ICCO

During our workshop we discussed this question in detail for both PRADEP and PASAK. We looked at actors and factors that contributed to the realisation of the objectives. It was clear that for PRADEP and the water component of PASAK, KMS could build on **earlier experience with water projects**, especially projects that were funded by Tearfund UK in the past. This has allowed staff to obtain technical skills on setting up water supply systems and on maintenance. Secondly, staff pointed out **training provided by ICCO** on how to improve the functioning of the organisation. Although topics covered by the training were not directly related to actual execution of the project/delivering concrete objectives, staff agreed that it helped to improve organisational capacity in terms of: good governance, results-based management; accountability, communication and reporting. This support was mostly provided as part of PRADEP, but not anymore during PASAK. **Technical and financial assistance** of ICCO was also considered to be of importance. Training and assistance provided as part of PASAK was more oriented towards delivering concrete objectives, but was not all provided directly by ICCO. Part of it was through initiatives by the **synergy of ICCO** partners working in the field of food security. An example that was given on what KMS learnt from ICCO on improving its capability to deliver was the realisation that to mobilise people it is good to use visible action, for instance by constructing a mill, a depot etc. This approach is close to the heart of KMS and was hence easily appropriated. To carry out projects successfully, KMS feels supported by its **collaboration with authorities**; this happens on the local level, but also through contacts with the National Rural Hydraulics Service (SNHR) and with the Provincial Inspectorate of Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock (IPAPPEL). Another element which we noted as a reason why KMS managed to realise the objectives mentioned was that KMS has become more aware of the desirability (partly donor-driven) of setting up development projects instead of humanitarian projects. This is becoming increasingly part of KMS' strategy, but KMS is also working on increasing understanding among the population about this so that **beneficiaries are engaged and committed** to work on a project that does not primarily use the humanitarian approach of distribution of material goods.

A note that can be added here is that KMS' coordinator is active in seeking out learning opportunities for himself and his staff members. The openness and receptiveness of staff to learning helps to make training efforts more effective.

*Which role did ICCO play (contribution)?*

During PRADEP ICCO offered a number of training sessions to KMS staff. These were especially recalled and referred to during our base line visit when they were still fresh in mind of staff, but came up less prominent two years later. Themes that were covered during this training: results-based management, project cycle management, administration and finances, HRM, and good governance. The latter covered topics such as transparency, accountability, and setting up questionnaires.

ICCO's food security program PASAK contained less concrete capacity development elements for KMS. PASAK promotes a programmatic approach in which different stakeholders working on agriculture and food security unite forces and organise events together to discuss experiences, progress but also for mutual learning. Within this framework KMS praised especially its contacts with ASED and ADECOP.

An important change for which we consider ICCO to be responsible is that we noted an increased awareness among staff members about the importance of transitioning from a humanitarian mind-set to a mind-set oriented towards development. Most of KMS' partners in past and present are more inclined towards humanitarian projects in which goods are provided for free to people. On the longer term these projects are not sustainable and we welcome the transition we noticed among KMS staff. Since other partners of KMS are not so much concerned with this transition we consider this to be attributable to ICCO.

*Did the capacity development intervention of ICCO reach its objectives?*

For PRADEP ICCO provided quite some support to develop organisational capacity in terms of project management, but not much in technical terms; KMS already had skills to execute the project. ICCO's capacity development efforts in this project contributed mostly in an indirect way to the concrete objectives that were eventually delivered by KMS.

PASAK was the first food security oriented project carried out by KMS and (training) activities and contacts provided within ICCO's food security synergy were key in enabling KMS to execute the project and to deliver the objectives. Although we feel support was still rather limited, given the lack of experience of KMS in this field, the contribution of ICCO was essential.

#### 1. Discussion

Given your findings, do you think this project (as in: the CFA's strategy for capacity development of the SPO) was well-designed, suitable for the environment in which it was implemented?

Would you advice to fund a similar project in the future (or to continue funding this one)? What changes would you recommend, if any? How could the impact evaluation itself be improved?

*Which causal mechanisms do you consider to be valid beyond this case?*

Until 2012, ICCO invested quite a bit in capacity development of local partners, by offering a wide range of topics in training to partners. KMS benefitted of some of these training activities within the PRADEP project. This project was mostly oriented towards improving access to drinking water. Large part of this is technical: ensuring that water supply points are functional. KMS has experience with this and staff have the necessary technical skills to carry out such an assignment. We therefore consider PRADEP to be a well-designed project. The support provided by ICCO helped KMS to also work on its project management skills. To cover other project elements, such as civil society strengthening, or policy influencing, KMS is a less suitable partner, unless intense training would be provided on how to do this. We are not convinced that staff would be able to pick up these capabilities sufficiently.

From 2012 onwards, ICCO has been investing more in the promotion of a programmatic approach. As part of this approach, ICCO brings together partners working in the same thematic area, such as food security, or gender. In the first years, partners that were included in the approach were partners of ICCO only but from the beginning onwards, it was clear to ICCO that gradually also other stakeholders should be included, such as other NGOs, research institutes, state representatives, and private sector. Initially, ICCO



played a strong role in bringing parties together, but gradually, ICCO is receding and leaving initiative to the partners themselves. Within this synergy, mutual linking and learning is encouraged. KMS is a partner within the consortium of ICCO-partners working on food security, but within the limited time frame, and given that background of KMS is not within this theme, the organisation was not able to play a role of significance within COS-PASAK. Although KMS managed to set up a basic cooperative and two mutual solidarity groups, we did not get the impression that the theme was fully taken up by KMS staff. More intensive capacity development would be needed to gain a good understanding. Within the programmatic approach, ICCO is not able to provide this to partners who are not yet familiar with a certain theme.

We do not consider it realistic to expect KMS to be able to carry out a project in the area of food security without close support and within a short period of time. KMS is an organisation that has only recently developed from a grassroots organisation to an intermediate level NGO. More capacity would be needed to be successful. If ICCO continues working with its programmatic approach, we would recommend investing only in partners with experience working on this specific theme, unless close support can be provided in terms of capacity development, and unless enough time will be granted to take steps towards improving. To set up a viable cooperative, many organisations work with time frames of at least 5 years. If it is not clear that such a time frame can – in principle- be available, we would recommend not starting such a project at all. We therefore do not consider PASAK to be a well-designed project, as it could not provide sufficient capacity support to KMS. KMS was not given a realistic chance to proof itself in this field and would have needed more capacity development. We were not able to get a clear point of view from the side of ICCO on their reason for funding this project.

## **Conclusion**

Provide an answer to the evaluation questions:

1. What are the changes in partner organisations' capacity during the 2012-2014 period?

Our description of the 5 capabilities shows that KMS did not improve its capacity significantly during the evaluation period. Progress that we could note is that the project portfolio of KMS has become more diversified (water, health, agriculture), but this is not a change which we consider necessarily positive; without fully mastering one theme it might be better to first focus on mastering this theme fully before turning to a next theme. Given the limited amount of projects and of funding in the 2012-2014 period we do not consider it to be surprising that KMS has not progressed more. In fact we are positive about the fact that the organisation is still continuing to function with staff members that are motivated even after a period without any funding. The coordinator is active in seeking funding opportunities both for the execution of projects, but also for improving capacity of individual staff members.

2. To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?

In our contribution story we show that interventions undertaken by ICCO did have an impact on the functioning of the organisation. This was especially the case for the interventions under PRADEP that improved organisational capacity. Staff felt this contributed in an indirect way to the objectives realised as part of PRADEP.

Interventions of ICCO under PASAK were less direct as they were mostly implemented through the ICCO synergy on food security but these interventions had a more direct impact on the capacity of KMS to deliver on objectives as they were oriented towards improving concrete project activities. Although in the course of the project interventions might look effective, we do not expect them to be effective on the longer run; without continuation of funding we do not expect the objectives to be sustainable as capacity of KMS and of the project's beneficiaries is not yet strong enough to make the cooperative function autonomously without further efforts.

### 3. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

Limited funding allows for limited improvements only. Given the lack of capacity of KMS in the field of agriculture/food security prior to the execution of the project more capacity support would be needed to be effective.

PRADEP was more effective given the prior capacity of KMS and given the capacity development interventions of ICCO. The bad maintenance condition of a lot of the water supply points however shows that more could be done to help KMS transition towards a grown-up development organisation. This is not yet the case.

## II Civil society strengthening

### 1. Introduction

Briefly describe the purpose of the paper; give outline of the paper; provide a brief summary of the analyses and the findings.

See first part of the report

### 2. Context

Briefly describe the country/local context as far as it is relevant for the evaluated project.

For a general description of context, see first part of the report

### 3. Organisation

For a general description of the organisation, see first part of the report

### 4. Project description

For a general project description, see first part of the report

- describe the projects main civil society/policy advocacy elements
- shortly describe (max 10 lines) the theory of change, to show how the project fits into the general vision of the organisation
- then describe other civil society/policy advocacy activities of the organization (and indicate the projects in the table below)

#### ***Civil society/policy advocacy elements in ICCO-funded projects***

During the PRADEP programme, 15 water management committees were set up and trained.<sup>32</sup> Generally, these committees are successors of previously existing (but not always well-functioning) structures at the local level. After training, they are supposed to be able to manage and maintain the water systems themselves.<sup>33</sup> These local committee members can be seen at the same time as beneficiaries and as members of civil society. In a study of the water committees, Burt and Keiru show how these committees have potential to contribute to better cooperation between and within communities, and ultimately as well to peacebuilding.<sup>34</sup>

Within PASAK, KMS set up a cooperative and 2 mutual solidarity groups. KMS provided training to beneficiaries on functioning of cooperatives, and mutual solidarity groups. Since the end of the project,

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<sup>32</sup> Canevas du rapport contractuel du programme PRADEP

<sup>33</sup> From focus group meeting with beneficiaries in Kaboke-II, 21.09.12

<sup>34</sup> Burt, M. and B.J. Keiru 2011. 'Strengthening post-conflict peacebuilding through community water-resource management: case studies from Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan and Liberia', *Water International*, 36(2): 232-241.

and with limited means, KMS tries to continue some form of support to these structures, as they are not yet mature enough to function completely independent.

Both within PRADEP and PASAK, ICCO encouraged KMS to participate and engage in activities organised for/by other partners within these consortia. During our visits, we did not get the impression that KMS played a major role itself in strengthening other partners. KMS staff were positive about the fact that they could still be part of the synergy without being an ICCO partner at present.

The PRADEP and PASAK projects did not contain any lobby/advocacy activities.

### ***Other civil society/policy advocacy elements***

The USAID-funded project PROSANI has a strong policy influencing component. Within the project, KMS is responsible for monitoring achievements of health care workers, and satisfaction of beneficiaries in the health zone of Nundu. This information is provided to the lead organisations of the project (IRC, OSC and MSH) and feeds into reporting to the government, which should ultimately lead to improvements in policy and practice of health care in DRC.

### ***Theory of change***

KMS wants to contribute to the *improvement of life and dignity of people in the weakest position*. Two main trajectories are working towards realisation of this aim: one focuses on water, sanitation and hygiene and has been core of KMS' activities. The second trajectory focuses on food security. In the field of WASH, KMS provides technical support to improve water infrastructure. The civil society component of these interventions, lies in support to local water management committees. To improve food security, KMS has started to work with cassava producers. The civil society component of this intervention lies in setting up a cooperative and two mutual solidarity groups. Water committees, the cooperative, and the mutual solidarity groups are civil society structures at the grassroots level. By training them on how to manage their groups, KMS contributes to civil society strengthening. Ultimately, creating more cohesion within and between communities can help to build peace.<sup>35</sup>

For ICCO, KMS seemed to be primarily a partner to carry out activities leading to very concrete output in terms of water and sanitation and food security. 100% of PASAK was geared towards direct poverty alleviation. For PRADEP this was 70%, with 20% geared towards civil society development, and 10% towards policy influencing. The civil society component lies mainly in setting up water management committees, the policy influencing component is not very clear, but could lie in the community mobilisation for water protection.<sup>36</sup>

## **5. Data collection and analytical approach**

Describe the baseline and follow-up assessment. If there is one general methodology, that can be described in an Annex. Please present particular choices and data collection problems in the

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<sup>35</sup> For evidence on this, see Burt, M. and B.J. Keiru 2011. 'Strengthening post-conflict peacebuilding' ...

<sup>36</sup> See project plans PRADEP (75-02-14-004) and PASAK (75-02-13-018)

main text. Sampling method and sample sizes; workshop participants and other informants (in Annex).

We followed the general methodology as described in annex X, with the addition that KMS was also included in the capacity development sample. This helped us to gain deeper insight in the indicators of the Civil Society Index that are closely related to the internal functioning organisation, such as the practice of values. KMS was not part of our sample for the civil society contribution analysis because its core focus (WASH) did not fall within one of the key themes on which we based our selection.

## 6. Results

Research Question 1: Provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions. If available, provide description of individual indicators in an Annex.

|                       | Baseline<br>(scale: 0-3) | Endline |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------|
| Civic engagement      | 1                        | 0.5     |
| Level of organisation | 1.5                      | 1       |
| Practice of values    | 2                        | 1.5     |
| Perception of impact  | 1                        | 1.5     |
| Environment           | 1                        | 1       |

**Civic engagement:** *diversity of socially based engagement/diversity of political engagement*

KMS aspires to work with a wide range of target groups, including various marginalized groups. The strategic plan lists the following ones: women, especially widows and victims of gender-based violence; youth; internally displaced, returnees and repatriates; autochthonous pygmy people; smallholders and landless farmers.<sup>37</sup> Within PRADEP, KMS was able to include marginalised as beneficiaries, and this is also the case for other water projects carried out, as well as for the health project. This is much less the case in the ICCO-funded PASAK project. Instead of selecting smallholders, the project prioritized large producers of cassava, based on the size of their fields, and on their farming skills. This was estimated by visiting the fields to assess size, and to check the quality of production. Fields that were infested by insects or the mosaic virus were not included. Selection was based on these data. Because the project foresaw to set up a cooperative with big producers, it makes sense to select beneficiaries in this way, as smallholders are often not or hardly able to produce beyond subsistence level. Although this approach was efficient in

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<sup>37</sup> KMS ONGD, *Plan Stratégique 2011-2015*, no date.

terms of realising project objectives, it has reduced the level of engagement with the most marginalised groups.

At the time of our visit, KMS did not have any active funding for working with beneficiaries of PASAK. Nevertheless, engagement with them was kept, and during our field visit to Swima we met a number of beneficiaries of the cooperative and the mutual solidarity groups. Interestingly, none of them was part or had been part of the water committees that are set up by KMS, which gives at least the impression that selection was not prejudiced. Asked about the involvement of KMS at present, beneficiaries said that they themselves organise their own meetings, and invite KMS to attend. Usually a KMS representative turns up. A positive factor that contributes to engagement of KMS staff, is that several of them live in the targeted communities and have a regular attendance at the office in Swima, also in times without funding.

KMS maintains contacts with the local authorities in its target communities. The minutes of the PASAK kick-off meetings in Ilakala and Swima for instance mention the presence of community leaders.<sup>38</sup> PRADEP and other water projects usually engage local authorities as well as the state's water services. A current project on health care monitoring naturally engages KMS with health authorities.

**Level of organisation:** *organisational level of civil society (infrastructure)/peer to peer communication/financial and human resources*

After ending of the contract with ICCO, KMS staff continue to eagerly participate in activities organised in ICCO's Food Security Consortium. In May 2014 for instance, we noted their attendance in the COS-PASAK workshop. Staff continue to hope that ICCO will take up funding again in the future. This probably also contributes to interest in participating in activities of the consortium, more than actual content of the meetings. Other partners within the consortium hardly seemed to acknowledge the role of KMS; asked about other partners in the consortium, others usually would not mention KMS. It shows to us that KMS has not managed to be seen as a real partner

Some of the other contacts of KMS are more in the humanitarian arena, for instance through the WASH cluster. KMS participates in the sub-cluster in Uvira. Also Tear UK, an early partner of KMS is more oriented towards the provision of humanitarian aid than development. Within the civil society coordination office in Fizi territory, KMS takes the lead in the thematic group of water and sanitation. In principle, KMS participates in the monthly meetings of the civil society coordination office, but staff admitted that it was often tiring to go there as the work is all voluntary. We did not get the impression that participation was very frequent. No examples could be given of engagement with other civil society actors in the field, either working on the same theme, or in the same area. Examples given of contacts with others, were mostly of organisations that shared a donor with KMS, such as COS-PASAK members, or another organisation

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<sup>38</sup> 24-25.10.2012, *PV de visite; rencontre et d'échange avec les notabilités ; les producteurs de manioc et les populations riveraines des points d'eau*

working in the PROSANI health project. Exchanges in these cases primarily take place during joint training sessions, but do not happen at the initiative of KMS itself.

Financial resources of KMS are limited, despite efforts to obtain funding. The coordinator gave several examples of proposals that had been submitted but without success. Staff members have therefore been urged to seek other ways to make a living for themselves and their families; by taking on consultancy assignments (the coordinator) , or by farming for instance. The coordinator is certainly open for opportunities that might arise, but has difficulties in capitalising on this. He is confident that KMS can be a holistic development organisation, but without a proven track record, it is difficult to convince potential donors of this. Most staff members do not think as big as the coordinator, and apart from coordinator, vice-coordinator, and finance officer, staff is hired on a project-basis. This allows KMS to hire people with specific capabilities for specific projects, but it does not contribute to organisational stability in terms of human resources.

**Practice of values:** *internal governance (democratic decision-making and governance/transparency)*

KMS – mostly the coordinator- has produced a large number of documents to set out strategy, Internal regulations, procedures manual, and financial procedures.<sup>39</sup> With limited means available, these documents do not give a real image of the organisation. The strategic plan for instance is more a reflection of the ambitions of the coordinator than of the actual realisations of KMS. The coordinator and the two other senior staff members are well aware of the importance of good governance, transparency etc. and they often refer to these norms. A lot of this seemed to echo donor talk. The coordinator for instance told us: “We need to account to beneficiaries, not only to partners who come to evaluate. We cannot present one reality to ICCO and another reality to our beneficiaries”.<sup>40</sup> KMS acknowledged that training provided by ICCO has helped them a lot in gaining an understanding on internal practices of good governance. This was mostly based on training provided under PRADEP.

Newly hired staff members are aware of some of the internal rules and regulations but to a limited extent only. An example that was given by one of the recently hired staff members (January 2014) was that three signatures are needed for financial transactions; of the coordinator, the vice-coordinator, and the person acting as administrator and finance officer at the same time<sup>41</sup>. When starting the work, they have received a short internal training to learn about the ins and outs of KMS.

Social organs are in place; general assembly (about 50 members), board of directors (7 members), and control commission should exist according to internal regulations.<sup>42</sup> In reality however, KMS struggles to

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<sup>39</sup> See for instance : KMS, 2007. *Manuel du Personnel (Règlement d’Ordre Intérieur)*. KMS, 2012. *Manuel de régie, procédures et mécanismes de contrôle interne*.

<sup>40</sup> Interview1, 20140708

<sup>41</sup> Individual interview, 20140708.

<sup>42</sup> KMS, 2012. *Manuel de régie, procédures et mécanismes de contrôle interne*.

fulfil all the requirements that should be met by the various bodies. To engage its members more and to strengthen its financial position, KMS is trying to raise membership fees from the members, but thus far this has limited effect: “the members of the NGOs here are just as poor as the beneficiaries”, as we were told during our workshop. In June 2014, an extraordinary assembly was called together for which also some village elders were invited because of friction within the board of directors. The president of the board (a professor) is in France for some time already. In his absence, the vice-president wanted to change things at the executive level, out of dissatisfaction with its functioning (little funding, office in Uvira), but the changes suggested by the vice-president were against internal regulations. During the meeting, it was clear that members did not agree with the suggested changes and they could be stalled – at least for the moment.

As part of the PRADEP project, an external audit was foreseen, but did not take place. Amongst ICCO project documentation, we traced one letter from ICCO Bukavu office stating that the audit was going to take place in 2013 as part of PASAK.<sup>43</sup> Yet, according to ICCO’s closing letter of KMS’ PASAK project no external audit was executed, although this was initially foreseen in the agreement with ICCO. Reason given is that no budget line was reserved for this in the project. The closing letter provided by ICCO agreed on dropping the audit requirement because the project budget did not exceed 20 000 EUR, and because the financial report provided a lot of detail. It was pointed out in the same letter however that the financial report was actually too neat (‘trop juste’): all money was spent, and no budget lines exceeded.<sup>44</sup> Interestingly however, we were provided an external audit report of the same project by KMS.<sup>45</sup> This audit was carried out by a consultant and covered with the own means of KMS, but it was after the initial deadline for the audit. At the level of ICCO NL, this audit report was not known.

Overall, we have the impression that the core staff of KMS is well aware of good governance practices, but this is not fully shared within the organisation. Lack of funding for large part of 2013 has filtered out some staff. KMS has now remained with the most determined and motivated people who do not simply leave in adverse times. Early 2014 some additional people were hired for a new project.

#### **Perception of impact: *responsiveness/social impact/policy impact***

Within its new project (no MFS funding; USAID), KMS engages with state actors in the field of health, but this goes mostly in an indirect manner. It is here that some impact on policy level might be felt. Within the water and sanitation projects, impact is more the other way around, as a state body (*Service National d’Hydraulique Rurale- SNHR*) is responsible for overseeing the water constructions that are set up by state and non-state actors. This was also the case in PRADEP and the water component of PASAK.

Within PRADEP, KMS set up and/or revived a number of water committees that are responsible for management and maintenance of the water points. Part of PASAK had the same objective. Overall, it is

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<sup>43</sup> N. Bernard, 29-05-2013. Object : Exécution de l’audit du projet no.75-02-14-004 dans le cadre du programme PASAK de cette année 2013.

<sup>44</sup> ICCO, 20-11-2013, 75-02-13-018 KMS Lettre de clôture

<sup>45</sup> MECM, June 2013. *Rapport d’audit- Projet: PASAK- Soutien à la production et transformation de manioc à Swima, Territoire de Fizi, Province du Sud-Kivu, RDC.*



our impression that KMS is well able to set up the necessary infrastructure for the water constructions, but is much less concerned with sustainability of this and actual use and management. Already during the baseline visit (when PRADEP had ended), we noted that a lot of the constructions were not functional for various reasons; lack of water, or a broken tap for instance. Nevertheless, beneficiaries were relatively positive about the changes in their lives, arguing that access to drinking water has improved their health. During the end line visit however, we heard similar complaints about the conditions of the water points; a lot of them were not functional. Asked about this, the coordinator shrugged his shoulders while blaming the children for playing with the tap and damaging it. To prevent this, KMS has started to put fences around the water points, but the fences are not fully closed off and did not seem to have a major impact. We got the impression that KMS did not feel any responsibility for this. Another problem for the maintenance of the water points, is that community members making use of the water, are supposed to contribute 200 Congolese Francs on a monthly basis. This money is supposed to be used for reparations, but in reality payment is very limited, as the committees do not have any means of enforcement, and also because the most vulnerable are exempted from payment. One of the presidents of an Ilakala water committee for instance, explained that a total of 11 households made use of the water point he manages; 6 of them were paying, 5 others were exempted (3 for being handicapped, 2 for being old).<sup>46</sup>

For the food security component of PASAK project, we noted that also here, KMS has shown its hands-on mentality; together with the members of the newly formed cooperative, KMS has installed a mill for cassava grinding, and built a depot for storage of the cassava flour. Some efforts have been put in teaching cooperative members about the characteristics of a cooperative. The 50 members of the cooperative are subdivided into 2 mutual solidarity groups (MUSOs) in which people can save money for investments. After a relatively short project of 8 months only, we found that beneficiaries take initiative themselves to organise meetings of the cooperative or of the MUSOs. Beneficiaries take some ownership of the project; they are especially appreciative of the saving opportunities they find in the MUSO. The cooperative has not been of great help in improving cassava production, and beneficiaries complained that harvest has not been good because of plant diseases. Although the project title gives the impression PASAK also contributes to improved production, KMS mainly concentrated on transformation of the production.<sup>47</sup>

Generally, we see some progress in terms of impact, but there are also many challenges to overcome which do not all seem to be taken up by KMS staff. This is clearly a point of concern.

## **Environment**

There is a strong feeling among some staff members that they know and understand the local reality as they have grown up in this reality. But growing up somewhere and being 'at home' does not necessarily mean that one fully captures this reality. For more analytical reflection on the local context, it might actually be helpful for KMS to take a bit more distance and put things more into perspective. For PASAK

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<sup>46</sup> Focus group meeting with representatives of water committees from Ilakala, 09-07-2014.

<sup>47</sup> This is supported by an interim evaluation carried out for ICCO by an external consultant. See: Murhambo, D.C. and A.G. Karume, October 2013. *Rapport d'évaluation externe de la COSPASAK*, commissioned by ICCO

for instance, it would have been helpful to have a better understanding of market dynamics and potential. The fact that people consume cassava for instance, does not necessarily mean that there is a lot of market potential for cassava; people might not have enough money to spend in the market, or they might already produce enough cassava themselves for their own consumption.

Strategic documents of KMS, and the discourse of the coordinator all reflect the ambition of KMS to be a holistically-oriented development organisation, but we had the impression that this was not fully internalised, but mainly a convenient way to present KMS as being eligible for a wide range of donor funds; whether donors are interested in working with pygmies, women, children, disabled, farmers etc., and on working in the field of agriculture, water and sanitation, conflict mediation, gender, human rights, HIV/AIDS, or health: KMS claims to be working on everything, whereas in reality the number of projects is limited. Although we think it is laudable to be ambitious and eager to grow, we do not consider this to be realistic. In assessing possibilities, KMS should not only look at donor demands, or at needs at the local level, but also consider its own capacity to respond to donors but foremost to respond to beneficiaries' needs.

Critical reflection about context, possibilities, opportunities and KMS' own potential are not matching, especially not in recent years when funding was very limited.

## **7. Discussion**

Given your findings, do you think this project (as in: SPO interventions towards civil society strengthening) was well-designed, suitable for the environment in which it was implemented? Would you advice to fund a similar project in the future (or to continue funding this one)? What changes would you recommend, if any? How could the impact evaluation itself be improved?

In the course of the evaluation period, ICCO funded two projects carried out by KMS; PRADEP and PASAK. Preceding PRADEP, KMS had already obtained experience with setting up water projects. It was therefore realistic to expect the organisation would be able to carry out the project successfully. For PASAK, project design was much less realistic; without any prior experience in the field of agriculture and with limited capacity building, KMS was supposed to carry out an agricultural project and to set up a cooperative within a period of less than one year.

PRADEP: civil society strengthening impact very limited: water committees are set up or revived at the local level, but ownership is limited and the committees hardly manage to raise user fees from community members. Since its foundation, KMS has mostly carried out projects of setting up water infrastructures. The water committees are supposed to be supportive to this, but after initial training KMS does not seem to be too concerned about their functioning

PASAK: Combined food security and WASH. Before the project, KMS did not have any experience with food security projects. Without a lot of capacity development, it cannot be expected that KMS is able to set up a well-functioning cooperative and two mutual solidarity groups within a period of 8 months. Project documentation does not provide a clear motivation on why the project was set up in this way. ICCO staff we asked about this was not very clear in its motivation either. Basically, it was felt that KMS

(and ASED, another PRADEP partner) should be given the chance to transition to food security. With limited capacity development, and with a time frame of 8 months only we don't consider this a fair chance. If a decision is taken to invest further, a realistic time frame should apply.

KMS staff is more oriented towards technical execution of projects than towards the soft side of projects and programmes (i.e. training people on understanding principles of good governance, civil society etc.). With the limited financial resources at its availability, we feel it is already an achievement that KMS still exist. Water and food security projects are certainly relevant for the context. We consider KMS a viable partner to carry out technical hands-on projects, but without more capacity development, we would not consider funding project elements that go beyond practical execution of tangible projects. We did not consider KMS a strong partner to work on civil society strengthening and/or policy influencing. It is not realistic to expect on organisation with the short history and experience of KMS to carry out projects in this field without close guidance.

## **8. Conclusion**

Provide an answer to the evaluation questions.

- 1) What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?

Most people we talked to in Uvira and Fizi territories felt levels of security had increased in the last two years. During our visits, we also noted that less areas of the territories were inaccessible for security reasons. This is a certainly a positive trend, which makes it less challenging to set up development interventions in this area. At the same time, it is also reducing the number of humanitarian actors that provide emergency aid in the areas. This forces both the population and the NGOs active in the area to make a transition in orientation from emergency aid to development. In earlier years, KMS has been funded by Tearfund UK. This is an actor that is more oriented towards humanitarian aid than towards development. The ICCO-funded PASAK project encouraged KMS to change its approach: to construct the depot, members of the cooperative were asked to contribute building material and labour. This is something which they were not used to in earlier projects and demands a shift in mentality. As long as humanitarian and development interventions continue to overlap in the field, it is difficult to make this shift. As of yet, the security situation and accessibility are still impeding development organisations to become more active in the area. It is therefore likely that this challenge will continue to exist in the years to come in Uvira and especially Fizi territory.

Access to safe drinking water is and continues to be a concern for large part of the population in DRC. In that regard, interventions that aim to improve access and management of the resources that are available continue to be relevant.

As part of PASAK, KMS has also become active in the field of agriculture, by setting up a cooperative and two mutual solidarity groups. This approach is similar to the approach that is used by many other civil society actors working in the field of agriculture. A difference is that many others combine this approach with the introduction of integrated soil fertility management. The intervention of KMS did not have any elements that worked towards increasing agricultural production.

## 2) What is the relevance of these changes?

It is relevant to better prepare both civil society and beneficiaries for a world in which development interventions are current rather than humanitarian interventions. KMS is in the process of transition from humanitarian to development interventions. On the longer term this will make KMS more relevant.

Improving access to safe drinking water is relevant as it contributes to improved health of the population. We have shown that access to drinking water can still be greatly improved and will require further efforts. Improving food security by improving agricultural production and transformation is relevant, especially in areas where the majority of the population is dependent on agriculture.

### List of key documents:

Bashilwango, E.L., 2013. *Projet Pro-Routes: Mise en oeuvre du Plan d'actions prioritaire de développement des peuples autochtones dans les territoires d'Uvira et de Fizi. Rapport final des activités*, BEGES, with support of WorldBank and DFID.

Bernard, N. 29-05-2013. Object : Exécution de l'audit du projet no.75-02-14-004 dans le cadre du programme PASAK de cette année 2013.

Burt, M. and B.J. Keiru 2011. 'Strengthening post-conflict peacebuilding through community water-resource management: case studies from Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan and Liberia', *Water International*, 36(2): 232-241.

ICCO, 20-11-2013, 75-02-13-018 KMS Lettre de clôture

KMS, Canevas du rapport contractuel du programme PRADEP

KMS, *Document de référence de KMS : Comprendre ce qui est KMS*, n.d.

KMS, Gestion PRADEP KMS UVIRA- Livre de caisse

KMS, 2007. *Manuel du Personnel (Règlement d'Ordre Intérieur)*.

KMS, 2012. *Manuel de régie, procédures et mécanismes de contrôle interne*

KMS ONGD- Plan stratégique 2011-2015

KMS, Project plan, 75-02-14-004 PRADEP- Water construction

KMS, Project plan, 75-02-14-018, PASAK- Support to the intensification of cassava crop

KMS, June 2013. *Rapport technique contractuel d'activités : Soutien à la production et transformation de manioc à Swima, Territoire de Fizi*.

KMS, 24-25.10.2012, *PV de visite; rencontre et d'échange avec les notabilités ; les producteurs de manioc et les populations riveraines des points d'eau*

KMS, June 2013. *Projet PASAK- KMS: Soutien à la production et transformation de manioc à Swima/Territoire de Fizi- Rapport technique contractuel d'activités*

MECM, June 2013. *Rapport d'audit- Projet: PASAK- Soutien à la production et transformation de manioc à Swima, Territoire de Fizi, Province du Sud-Kivu, RDC.*

Murhambo, D.C. and A.G. Karume, October 2013. *Rapport d'évaluation externe de la COSPASAK*, commissioned by ICCO

Solidarités International. *Protocole d'Accord dans le cadre du projet : PA 06/GOM/HYD-ECHO 1178/14*

Next to these documents, we made use of other narrative and financial reports, progress reports, correspondence between donor and SPO etc. We collected documents from both ICCO and KMS. A full list of documents is available on request.

#### ABOUT DATA COLLECTION:

| Name  | Position                 | Workshop<br>7-8.7.2014 | CS questions | Individual<br>interview | Focus group<br>discussion |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Eliphaz Bashilwango   | Coordinator              | X                      | X            | 8.7.2014                |                           |
| Itulelo Matiyabu Imaja                                      | Admin/finance officer    | X                      | X            |                         |                           |
| Claudine Neema  | Field trainer            | X                      | X            |                         |                           |
| Fidele Ahil Aseba Mtee                                      | Agronomist               | X                      | X            | 8.7.2014                |                           |
| Yves Amuri Wilondja   | Food security officer    | X                      | x            | 8.7.2014                |                           |
| Oscar Mbuli Ibangu  | Field trainer/enumerator | X                      | X            | 8.7.2014                |                           |
| 8 members of<br>cooperative/muso<br>Swima (incl. president) |                          |                        |              |                         | 9.7.2014                  |
| 5 members of water<br>committee Ilakala                     |                          |                        |              |                         | 9.7.2014                  |

During our field visit to Swima on 9.7.2014 we also met with the vice-coordinator of KMS and had an informal conversation with him. In Swima, we visited the head office of KMS, studied their archive, and visited several water construction points, the cooperative's mill and the storage room.

At the ICCO office in Bukavu we found limited knowledge about KMS as the contract had ended and ICCO staff meanwhile changed.

# Civil Society Strengthening Report Réseau Régional et Interconfessionnel des Leaders Religieux pour la Paix

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Bart Weijs, Patrick Milabyo and Carolien Jacobs

Wageningen University

**Inhoud**

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## List of Acronyms

AU – Africal Union  
CAR – Central African Republic  
CFA - Co-Financing Agency (the Dutch donor organisation)  
CSO - Civil Society Organisation  
CSI - Civil Society Index  
DRC - Democratic Republic of the Congo  
FARDC - Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo  
FFF – Freedom From Fear alliance  
LRA – Lord’s Resistance Army  
MDG - Millenium Development Goal  
MFS II - Mede-Financierings-Stelsel (the Dutch grant system)  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
RRILRP - Réseau Régional et Interconfessionnel des Leaders Religieux pour la Paix  
SPO– Southern Partner Organisation

### 1. Introduction

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening. This report focuses on the civil society strengthening component.

As part of the civil society strengthening component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which development projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society during the evaluation period and the extent to which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and end line study and focuses on a broad sample of 19 partnerships. We conducted observations, workshops, field visits and interviews, during three visits in 2012, 2013 (smaller subsample) and 2014. Core elements of our evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the Civic Civil Society Index<sup>1</sup>, which distinguishes five dimensions to civil society: Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment.

In this report we look specifically at the contribution of *Réseau Régional et Interconfessionnel des Leaders Religieux pour la Paix (RRILRP)* to strengthening civil society. RRILRP is a partner of PAX (formerly IKV Pax Christi) and the Freedom From Fear (FFF) Alliance. RRILRP is an informal network of religious leaders from the four countries where the rebel movement Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) has been active; Uganda, DRC, South Sudan and Central African Republic. For this evaluation we focus on the activities supported by PAX/FFF: a number of international conferences in a three-year period, for which the Network received a total support of EUR 24,492, to jointly analyse the state of affairs

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<sup>1</sup> [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org); see also CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (internal working document)

regarding the LRA in the four countries represented in the Network, and ensure the conflict stays on the international agenda. We find the support to RRILRP to be a timely and strategic intervention; the Network has had a unique and relevant contribution to the lobby on the issue of the LRA.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Context

The Lord's Resistance Army started as a rebel movement in Uganda in 1987, headed by Joseph Kony, and has since had a devastating regional impact, committing massacres, mutilations and mass rapes; abducting thousands of adults and children; and using kidnapped youths for forced marriage and as soldiers. It moved to the South-east of Sudan in the beginning of the 1990s, and survived military operation Iron Fist in 2002. The LRA installed itself across the border in DRC's national park Garamba in 2005, and peace talks commenced in Juba in July 2006. An LRA group moved to Central African Republic (CAR) in the beginning of 2008, with new LRA attacks in Fall. Joseph Kony did not show up to sign the peace agreement in November 2008. A new military operation started in December 2008, Lightning Thunder, only resulting in the splitting up of LRA into small, mobile groups. The same month, the LRA killed over 800 civilians during the Christmas attacks. In small groups, the LRA covered a vast area, causing insecurity in the Haut Uele and Bas Uele districts in DRC, in Yambio county in South Sudan, and in the prefectures of Haut Mbomou and Mbomou in CAR. In 2011, its activities caused around 400,000 refugees in the three countries, in a zone of about 100,000 square kilometres. Since that year, Kony appears to have adjusted his tactics, with the number of civilian casualties dropping, and an increased focus on looting and trade in ivory.

Joseph Kony is wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity.<sup>3</sup> The case of the LRA temporarily made the global headlines in March 2012 when YouTube movie 'Kony2012' by the NGO Invisible Children went viral, denouncing the crimes committed by Kony and his group.<sup>4</sup> Invisible Children claimed that international forces would be able to capture Kony but that political will was lacking. In the wake of the international attention, the African Union Regional Task Force was implemented with the backing of the UN, composed of soldiers from Uganda, CAR, South Sudan and DRC, with the primary objective to protect civilians. The Taskforce is also supported by the European Union. From the start, the Taskforce has run into large difficulties in terms of collaboration between the four countries. President Obama has re-affirmed the elimination of Kony as one of his African goals, and set up an operation with 150 special forces.

The subsequent outbreaks of civil war in South Sudan and CAR, and the M23 uprising in eastern DRC, have severely reduced support for the Taskforce: it now operates with around 1500 troops instead of the 5000 it was mandated. Nevertheless, the activities by mostly Uganda and the US have put LRA under strong pressure, and it was able to commit less atrocities. With crises in the Middle East, Ukraine and the Ebola crisis in West Africa, the LRA has now again moved below the international radar. Though the Taskforce has been unable to capture Kony, the operations have prevented the LRA from re-establishing itself, with it losing up to 20% of its core fighting capacity in 2013.<sup>5</sup> Kony is now said to be

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<sup>2</sup> A draft version of this report was commented upon by Joost van Puijenbroek (PAX) and Arch-Bishop Marcel Utambi (RRILRP). We thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>3</sup> ICC, Warrant of arrest for Joseph Kony issued on 8 July 2005 as amended on 27 September 2005

<sup>4</sup> The movie generated over 100 million views in 6 days. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4MnpzG5Sqc>, viewed 5-12-2014.

<sup>5</sup> LRA Crisis Tracker Annual Brief 2013, <http://lra-crisistracker.com/>

hiding in Kafia Kingi, an area claimed both by South Sudan and Sudan, where he may receive support from Khartoum. In terms of LRA attacks, the crisis has largely lost its regional dimension, with most LRA activity now taking place in CAR.

The presence of LRA, combined with the crises in CAR and South Sudan, impedes humanitarian access to displaced and host communities. Nevertheless, estimated numbers of people displaced from their homes in LRA-affected areas have gone down to 145,000 (versus 443,000 at the end of 2012). The LRA remains active: OCHA counts 108 LRA attacks in DRC, and 40 in CAR between January and September 2014, with a total of 22 deaths and 492 abductions. Many abductions are now adult men, taken as porters, and released within a month.<sup>6</sup> Since 2008, LRA Crisis Tracker has counted 2318 civilian deaths, 5262 abductions, and 2194 returnees.<sup>7</sup> Despite decreased overall levels of violence, many displaced populations have still not returned to their homes, and the 'uniquely brutal and unpredictable nature of LRA violence remains a source of severe trauma and the disruption of basic livelihood activities in an already deeply impoverished region'<sup>8</sup>.

### **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

In this section we briefly describe RRILRP: its history, organisational details, main approach and areas of intervention.

The Interfaith Regional Religious Leaders' Network for Peace is an informal network of religious leaders from the four countries where the LRA has been active: Uganda, DRC, South Sudan and Central African Republic. The birth of the Network was sparked by the Christmas Attacks in 2008, and similar massacres in 2009 and 2010. Following a meeting convened by Archbishop Marcel Utembi of Kisangani (DRC) in the sidelines of the African synod in Rome in October 2009, the Network was established at its first conference in Kisangani in February 2010. After a peak in the early years, the Network now has reduced its activities.

The Network consists of representatives of the Anglican and Catholic churches in DRC, South Sudan, and Uganda, the Catholic and Protestant churches in CAR, and also Muslims from Uganda. Though there has been talk of formalising the Network with statutes and a registration as NGO (at the Nairobi meeting in 2010), this has never been finalised. Archbishop Utembi chaired the Network until October 2013, when Bishop Samuel Peni of Yambio (South Sudan) was appointed as his successor. Bishop Peni now also hosts the secretariat of the Network. The Network is loosely organised in a regional committee composed of one or two representatives per country, and working groups at country level.

RRILRP operates at a transnational level. The Network does not intervene, but focuses on analysing the state of affairs regarding the LRA in each country and influencing national and international agendas. Each of the partners within the network can build on his own connections within the religious organisations they represent and within their country. As the members of the Network have high-level functions within their churches, their meetings have a high profile, granting them access to higher levels of authorities.

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<sup>6</sup> OCHA LRA Regional Update Quarter 3 2012 ; OCHA LRA Regional Update Quarter 3 2014

<sup>7</sup> <http://lra-crisistracker.com/>, viewed 5-12-2014

<sup>8</sup> Joint Statement on LRA - Brussels Oct 2013 - ENGLISH

The mission of the Network is a restoration of peace and stability in the region affected by the LRA. The main activities of the Network to this end are the Network meetings, at which the state of affairs regarding the LRA in each country is analysed and recommendations are discussed for the different actors involved. The results are published as declarations at the end of each meeting, disseminated through the media and among political leaders.

Funding for this Network was not based on a project proposal and contract, but rather the reimbursement of costs related to the meetings of the Network. The Network received most of its support from PAX. The Network has also received incidental support from Cordaid and CAFOD, as well as Conciliation Resources. Data on the financial extent of this support are not available, but it is plausible the support is of a similar nature as the support by PAX, mainly covering conference costs.

Table #: overview of donor support for RRILRP during the MFS II period

| Project  | Donor                             | Aim                            | Period    | Amount of funding (EUR)          |      |          |      |          |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|------|----------|------|----------|
|  |                                   |                                |           | 2011                             | 2012 | 2013     | 2014 | Total    |
| 110029 and 110673 (2013)<br>Reimbursement of travel costs, conference materials, translation, etc. | PAX                               | General support to the network | 2010-now  | € 10,394                         |      | € 14,098 | -    | € 24,492 |
| PAX staff involvement  | PAX                               |                                | 2010-2013 | € 21,168                         |      | € 30,415 |      | € 51,583 |
| Dungu Conference, Advocacy Training in Entebbe (2010) Brussels Conference (2013)                   | Conciliation Resources            |                                |           | <i>Information not available</i> |      |          |      |          |
| Brussels Conference (2013)   | Invisible Children                |                                |           | <i>Information not available</i> |      |          |      |          |
| Brussels Conference (2013)   | The Resolve LRA Crisis Initiative |                                |           | <i>Information not available</i> |      |          |      |          |
| Yambio Conference (2010)   | Cordaid                           |                                |           | <i>Information not available</i> |      |          |      |          |
| Yambio Conference (2010)   | CAFOD                             |                                |           | <i>Information not available</i> |      |          |      |          |

### Theory of change

The goal of the Network is a restoration of peace and stability in the region affected by the LRA. Because of the cross-border aspects and the persistence of the problems, a holistic approach is required. It is necessary for the states involved to cooperate with other stakeholders in order to develop a common approach, and to find methods that will bring an end to the harm this rebel group is causing in the region. To this end, it is necessary that the Network carries out effective advocacy so that 1) the LRA crisis retains the attention of the national, regional and international community; 2) a coherent and effective strategy is adopted. To carry out this advocacy, the Network has to regularly produce a joint contextual analysis and define a joint position regarding the LRA. It is also important to develop strategies and actions to better protect the population, and to advocate with the authorities of the four countries so the LRA issue is placed on the national and regional agendas. Additionally, it is necessary to mobilise support of the international community, to find a durable solution to the LRA.

## **4. Project description**

Here we describe the project and its civil society/policy advocacy elements, in terms of size, budget, duration, major objectives and activities.

The cooperation between PAX (then IKV Pax Christi) and RRILRP started from the beginning of the Network in February 2010, when PAX and Archbishop Utambi jointly organised the Kisangani Conference. As described above, PAX funded the Network through bearing costs related to a number of meetings of the Network.

As a Network aimed at joint context analysis and national and international policy influencing, all Network activities supported by PAX can be considered civil society strengthening activities. Network meetings facilitate the exchange of experience with regards to lobby and advocacy, but also the involvement of other stakeholders. Country-level working groups have developed a limited amount of activities, most notably the Peace Weekends in March 2011, but the regional meetings and related encounters with national and international actors form the core of the activities of the Network. Beyond the Network, the members are part of religious organisations in areas affected by the LRA, which have developed ways to respond to the threat of attacks and to support people who are affected.

Network activities since its creation:

- February 2010, Kisangani (DRC) Conference
- 2010, Dungu (DRC) Diocesan Conference
- September 2010, Yambio (South Sudan) Conference
- December 2010, Nairobi (Kenya) Taskforce meeting
- February 2011, Gulu (Uganda) Regional Committee meeting
- March 2011, Peace weekend with activities in the LRA-affected areas in each country
- June 2011, Kinshasa (DRC) Regional Committee meeting
- September 2012, Kinshasa Regional Committee meeting
- November 2013, Brussels (with Conciliation Resources, The Resolve LRA Crisis Initiative, Invisible Children, PAX, EurAc)

At each encounter, a joint context analysis is realised, and a joint declaration is published, with attention of regional media.

## **5. Data collection and analytical approach**

Here we describe the baseline and follow-up assessment, as well as particular choices and data collection problems. The general methodology we followed can be found in the annex, as well as a list of documents employed, interviewees and other informants.

Due to the unique international nature of this network, we were not able to follow the general methodology. The international nature was prohibitive for organising baseline and end line workshops, as foreseen in the methodology. Nevertheless, our baseline visit coincided with the Network conference in Kinshasa in September 2012. Making use of this, we were able to observe their meeting with civil society organisations and the press, and conduct interviews with the chairman of the Network, as well as the South Sudanese representatives. During the end line visit, there was no

opportunity to visit a Network meeting, as there currently is a pause in Network activities. This means our analysis is based on interviews with Network members during the baseline, interviews during baseline and end line with their Dutch partner PAX, and the documentation of the various meetings.

### 6. Results

In this section, we describe our findings. We provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions (Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment).

|                       | Baseline<br>(0-3) | Endline |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------|
| Civic engagement      | 1.5               | 1.0     |
| Level of organisation | 2.0               | 2.0     |
| Practice of values    | 1.5               | 1.5     |
| Perception of impact  | 1.5               | 2.0     |
| Environment           | 2.0               | 1.5     |

**Civic Engagement** *diversity of socially based engagement/diversity of political engagement*

*Under this dimension we distinguish the diversity of socially-based engagement (taking into account needs of marginalised groups, participation of target groups in the project), and the diversity of political engagement (is there dialogue of local leaders in dialogue with government representatives, are beneficiaries member of sectoral user groups).*

The Network takes into account the need of people affected by the LRA, living in remote regions of South Sudan, Uganda, CAR and DRC: ‘we want to be a voice for the voiceless’. It considers all people that live in the LRA-affected areas as their beneficiaries, and the members of the Network are leaders of the religious organisations in these areas. The local churches form the eyes and ears of the Network, and communicate their needs through the internal communication channels of the institutions. However, the focus of the network lies at the transnational level, so it does not often directly involve the target group (with the activities during the Peace Weekends in 2011 as an exception).

At local level in the LRA-affected areas, there is some contact between the local committees of the Network and other civil society organisations. Nevertheless, for example in South Sudan, the LRA is not a priority for many CSOs, according to members of the Network. This has to do with the lack of attacks since January 2012; also, civil society at national level is generally less interested in the LRA, as it operates in remote areas, far from capital cities.

We conclude that during the evaluation period, there has been little development with respect to Civic Engagement for RRILRP. This is largely due to the fact that the Network focuses its attention to the lobby at the national, regional and international level.

**Level of Organisation:** *organisational level of civil society (infrastructure)/peer to peer communication/financial and human resources*

*This dimension focuses on the organisational level of civil society (the connectedness of SPOs in networks of organisations, the nature of relationships between SPOs and networks, and the degree of representation of interests); peer to peer communication (the strength of the relationships of the SPO with other actors); and financial and human resources (the composition of the financial resource base, availability of human resources).*

As a network, RRILRP itself is an expression of the organisational level of civil society in the countries affected by the LRA. The Network was initiated at the level of high-ranking church leaders, with the aim of making their voice heard in the four countries, as well as internationally. The existence of the Network and the support by international partners has made a series of regular meetings between religious leaders of these four countries possible, bridging their divides and coming to a common understanding of the problems posed by the LRA and the way forward.

Because of the direct involvement of the leaders, RRILRP is well-embedded in churches in the four countries. Formally, there are national committees in each country, which choose a representative to the regional committee, which leads the Network. The activities of the Network focus on the international Network meetings, and the activity at the level of these national committees has varied. As high-level ecumenical organisation in the countries affected by the LRA, the Network is uniquely positioned to collaborate with other national church structures like the Episcopal Justice and Peace committees of the Catholic Church and its equivalent of the protestant umbrella organisation ECC in Congo, as well as with regional church organisations like ACEAC and FECCLAHA.

In terms of financial resources, the network largely depends on PAX for financing its meetings, but also has access to other sources of financing, as the financial overview shows. In terms of human resources, the Network depends on who the member churches decide to send as representatives. Internationally, the Network closely collaborates with PAX. It has also developed ties with several NGOs that focus strongly on the LRA: The Resolve LRA Crisis Initiative and Invisible Children, and Conciliation Resources, which organises a yearly meeting for all stakeholders in the LRA conflict. This meeting includes CSOs, churches, and community leaders and chiefs of the LRA-affected countries. Conciliation Resources has also participated in some Network meetings. Cordaid and CAFOD have also occasionally contributed to the Network.

Overall, for this dimension the financing by PAX has facilitated the establishment and continued meeting of RRILRP. This has not so much resulted in the development of new ties with other regional civil society actors, but has created shared understanding and focus among the religious leaders in the Network. They have also gained access to several international organisations working on the LRA, as well as high-level international fora of the United Nations and the European Union.

***Practice of Values:*** *internal governance (democratic decision-making and governance), transparency*

*This dimension deals with internal governance (the functioning of the social bodies/organs, are they involved in the strategic management of the SPO, and the functioning of lower CSO levels), and transparency (respect of internal written procedures, extent of downward accountability, within the SPO and to lower CSO levels, transparency on finances).*

As an informal international network, RRILRP does not have the internal organizational structure (with members that form a General Assembly and elect a Board) which the Congolese law requires of non-profit organizations. Individually, Network members are accountable to their religious structures. There may also be some downward accountability to the national committees and working groups at local level – but, as explained under the previous dimension, the focus of the Network was on activities at the regional level, and the activity of national committees has been rather limited.

Internally, the Network is governed by non-formalised statutes, which stipulate that presidency of the Network is a three-yearly rotating function. At the last meeting in October 2013, the former president, Archbishop Utembi (DRC), was indeed democratically replaced by Bishop Peni (South Sudan). In terms of transparency: funding was generally aimed at facilitating the meetings of the Network, and reports of these meetings are available.

Thus, due to the nature of the Network, there is not the usual internal organisational structure to monitor the executive committee and ensure democratic governance. This dimension has not played an important role in the relationship with PAX. Nevertheless, since the Network is informal and there is no dominant authority, no-one is obliged to be present; the fact that representatives from the different countries have remained involved over the years, and issued joint statements after each meeting, indicates that all agreed with the direction taken by the Network.

***Perception of Impact: responsiveness/social impact/policy impact***

*Under this dimension we discuss the responsiveness (nature and intensity of SPO's relationship with the public sector and the private sector); social impact (target group satisfaction regarding fulfilment of their primary social concern, perception of public and private sector of quality of delivery of services by SPO); and the policy impact (the level of influence of SPOs in the process leading to major policy changes identified in the sector of the SPO's intervention since 2011).*

The main role of the Network has been to advocate for the development of a regional approach to the LRA, and assistance for the people living in the affected areas. The Network has mainly directed itself at governments (national and provincial in the four countries), as well as relevant international organisations, such as the African Union, the UN and the EU. It has also invited national civil society to its meetings.

In terms of civil society: various national civil society organisations participated in the civil society meeting of the meeting in Kinshasa in 2012, and the RRILRP specifically addressed civil society actors in their final declaration. Media were also present, and the news about the declaration was spread the next day through Radio Okapi. As church leaders, the members of the network have a large visibility, and are able to attract media attention. Since the beginning of the Network, they have made numerous press statements on the issue of the LRA.<sup>9</sup>

As church leaders, the Network meetings have a high profile, granting them access to high-level authorities. To illustrate: after the first meeting in Kisangani, the CAR delegation had a meeting with

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<sup>9</sup> See for example [http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Full\\_Report\\_1227.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Full_Report_1227.pdf), <http://www.digitalcongo.net/article/86993>, <http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2011/06/10/kinshasa-les- eveques- rdc-et-rca-et-du-sud-soudan-proposent-des-negociations-avec-la-lra/>, <http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/201106130994.html>



the CAR president, handing over the declaration. At the Kinshasa conference in 2012, the members had a meeting with various ambassadors, as well as a meeting with parliamentarians and senators. Similarly, the president of the network, the Archbishop of Kisangani, had a dinner meeting with a national Minister. The Monday after the conference, the Archbishop also had a meeting with Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the UN, Mr Meece, to discuss the final declaration of the Network. His position as Archbishop grants him access to the highest political level, the President of DRC.

Internationally, an important moment for the Network was the LRA meeting in Brussels in October 2013. Organised by PAX, in collaboration with The Resolve LRA Crisis Initiative, Invisible Children, Conciliation Resources and Eurac, it brought the members of the Network to ‘the most powerful meeting I have ever experienced on the topic of the LRA’. The activities included a seminar at the European Parliament, a seminar with think-tank Observatoire d’Afrique, a meeting with the International Working Group on the LRA (including e.g. the Special Representative of the AU, the Head of the Bureau for Central Africa of the UN, the regional task force commander, representatives of the State department and of the Pentagon of the US, representatives of MONUSCO, bilateral actors such as France, Britain, Belgium and others, and the World Bank), and a seminar at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. The meeting in Brussels contributed to the decision by the EU to continue funding the Taskforce and consolidated lobby activities of all involved NGO actors, from Europe, the US, and the four involved countries.

The various high-level connections of the Network make this a unique initiative. The Network’s impact should be sought in setting the agenda and giving a voice to the people in the affected areas. As such, it has contributed to shaping national and international policies on the LRA.

### ***Environment/context***

*This dimension takes the wider environment into account. What is the degree of participation of the SPO in defining the civil society interventions of the CFA/Consortium; to what extent is a context analysis of the space and role of civil society in the specific country done as part of the programme /project cycle; to what extent is the SPO involved in studies on civil society?*

The joint analysis of the current state of affairs of the LRA in each of the four countries was an important objective of each of the regional meetings of the Network. This involved reflection on the role of the civil society in seeking a solution, and civil society was invited to participate in parts of the meetings. Nevertheless, the focus of the network was more on influencing political actors, and civil society has not played a large role in this. In its relation with PAX, the Network has operated on a basis of equality, independently developing plans for meetings and lobby activities. The members of the Network have formed important resource persons for PAX and other international NGOs, to support their activities to come to a comprehensive solution to the issue of the LRA.

In all, civil society as such has not been addressed much by the Network. At the international level, members of the Network have played an important role in interventions by international NGOs working on the LRA.

## 7. Discussion

The Network is a unique organisation in the movement working on the LRA, and adds an important voice to the debate. In supporting the meetings of the Network, PAX tailored its support to the need of an informal lobbying network, which is active as long as there is a need for it. Its support allowed the members of the Network to meet regularly, travel costs forming a serious inhibiting factor in the context of the LRA-affected area. In focusing on facilitating the meetings of influential leaders, so that they could jointly make their voice heard, the support to RRILRP was a timely and strategic intervention, which as far as we can see gave value for money. We therefore advise to reserve funds for similar projects in the future. No changes recommended.

With respect to the evaluation itself: measuring impact of advocacy at this international level is a challenge, and it is beyond the scope of this evaluation to draw definite conclusions on the impact of the work of the Network. To truly trace the impact of the Network, the evaluation would need to access a number of key informants at the level of international organisations, able to indicate how policy on the LRA has developed in the past years, and why. However, as an international Network, this partnership was too different from the other partnerships in our sample, and doing such an in-depth evaluation of the Network would have required a disproportionate amount of financial means – also given the relatively limited amount of financial support involved.

## 8. Conclusion

In this section, we provide an answer to the two evaluation questions that are relevant to this organisation:

- 1) *What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?*

The RRILRP brought together religious leaders from the four countries affected by the LRA, which had never been done before. The Network proved a strong voice in the lobby to move the LRA to the top of the agendas of the affected countries, with access to the highest levels of government. The Network also connected to the most prominent international NGOs working on the LRA, and gained access to the government of the US, to the UN, the EU, and the AU. A regional approach to the LRA has been developed and set in motion, with a Taskforce composed of military of the four countries affected by the LRA. Internal conflict in DRC, South Sudan and CAR has drawn their attention away from the LRA, though. Nevertheless, the LRA has been dispersed and activities of the Taskforce have prevented them from regrouping.

- 2) *What is the relevance of these changes?*

Even though it has now been scattered, the LRA continues to threaten the livelihoods of the population in large and remote parts of DRC, South Sudan, Uganda and CAR, with 145,000 displaced who are still not returning to their homes. The Network is a unique actor among the organisations working on the LRA, and therefore adds an important voice to the debate, able to influence policy at the highest levels. It is relevant to develop a network spanning the region to deal with a regional issue as the LRA. Given their access to the national governments, setting up and supporting the RRILRP was a timely and relevant act.

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “not at all” and 10 being “completely”, for this project (as in: SPO interventions towards civil society strengthening), we indicate how much we agree with the following statements:

## List of documents consulted

final report LRA Kisangani english version 2010

Yambio Final Declaration 2010

COMPTE RENDU DE LA REUNION DE NAIROBI 2010

declaration on LRA religious leaders Gulu feb 2011

declaration Kinshasa 2011

RRILRP press statement 2011 : Contre la LRA en Ouganda, RCA, RDC, Sud-Soudan : des Leaders religieux préconisent la négociation...

Declaration finale Kinshasa 2012

Joint Statement on LRA - Brussels Oct 2013 - ENGLISH

Présentation du Réseau des leaders religieux2

PAX LRA-MFS II 2011-2013 (financial overview)

## List of informants

| Name                  | Position  | Date   |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Joost van Puijenbroek | IKV Pax Christi (PAX)   | 8.08.2012, Utrecht   |
| Marcel Utembi         | Former President of the Network, Arch-Bishop of Kisangani, DRC  | 28.09.2012, Kinshasa   |
| Samuel Enosa Peni     | Current President of the Network, Bishop of Yambio, South Sudan | 29.09.2012, Kinshasa, N'djili International Airport (with Mark Kumbonyaki)   |
| Mark Kumbonyaki       | Anglican Church, South Sudan                                    | 29.09.2012, Kinshasa, N'djili International Airport (with Samuel Enosa Peni) |
| Joost van Puijenbroek | IKV Pax Christi (PAX)   | November 2013, email communication   |
| Joost van Puijenbroek | PAX   | 6.11.2014, Utrecht   |

# Civil Society Strengthening Report Réseau d'Education Civique au Congo- Kinshasa

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

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## List of Acronyms

CENI - Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante  
CFA – Co-Financing Agency (the Dutch donor organisation)  
CSO – Civil Society Organisation  
CSI – Civil Society Index  
DRC – Democratic Republic of the Congo  
ETD - entités territoriales décentralisées, decentralized territorial entities  
MDG – Millenium Development Goal  
MFS II – Mede-Financierings-Stelsel (the Dutch grant system)  
NAPO - Noyaux d'Action pour la Participation Populaire  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
NED - National Endowment for Democracy  
OCAP – Œuvres Communautaires pour l'AutoPromotion  
RECIC - Réseau d'Education Civique au Congo  
SPO – Southern Partner Organisation  
TEP – Tribune d'Expression Populaire

### 1. Introduction

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening. This report focuses on the civil society strengthening component.

As part of the civil society strengthening component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which development projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society during the evaluation period and the extent to which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and endline study and focuses on a broad sample of 19 partnerships. We conducted observations, workshops, field visits and interviews, during three visits in 2012, 2013 (smaller subsample) and 2014. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup> Core elements of our evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the Civicus Civil Society Index<sup>2</sup>, which distinguishes five dimensions to civil society: Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment.

In this report we look specifically at the contribution of *Réseau d'Education Civique au Congo-Kinshasa (RECIC-Kinshasa, RECIC in short)* to civil society strengthening. RECIC was a partner of Oxfam Novib

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by Jean Michel Mvondo and Didier Mambune (RECIC), and Amedée Fikirini (Oxfam Novib). We would like to thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org); see also CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (internal working document)

and the IMPACT Alliance. RECIC is a network of civil society organisations that aim to promote equity and popular participation in the management of public affairs. The organisation is mostly active in Kinshasa. For this evaluation we focus on the project with Oxfam Novib/IMPACT: a one-year, EUR 50,000 project to promote participatory governance in five communes of Kinshasa. This project had no dedicated civil society strengthening component, but can be considered an integral civil society strengthening project.

Our analysis reveals that at the level of the communes, the synergy frameworks have become established over the past years. The work of RECIC on participatory governance has resulted in the completion of several community development projects, to which the local population itself has contributed. With the postponement of the local elections, however, RECIC's work on raising awareness on the importance of elections and preparing future candidates has yet to prove itself.

In the following, first we describe the country and relevant local context. Then we give a short description of RECIC and the project with the civil society strengthening/policy influencing elements. Next, we shortly discuss the methodology. We then present the results, followed by a discussion and conclusion.

## 2. Context

In this section, we briefly describe the country and local context as far as it is relevant for the project under evaluation.

The DRC is characterised by a history of rent-seeking dictatorship since the colonial times, followed by a prolonged period of civil war. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups in the east of DRC that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons.<sup>3</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas in the east, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013). The following defeat of M23 and military moves against other armed groups have led to more optimism, though.

While the situation in the east of DRC remains vulnerable and keeps drawing much international attention, the capital city in the west faces its own challenges. On the 2014 Human Development Index, DRC ranked 186 out of 187 (followed only by Niger). Gross national income per head was noted to be at \$444 in 2013, which was lowest of all countries for which data were available. In the same year, 87.7% of the population lived below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>4</sup> Living conditions in neighbourhoods of the communes (municipalities) of Kinshasa where RECIC intervenes are characterized by a lack of (functioning) basic services, inaccessibility (lack of roads and maintenance), insecurity, and a lack of drinking water. People live under semi-rural conditions, and often engage in agro-pastoral activities. At the same time, many people are involved in the urban informal sector.

The DRC has gained a limited experience with democracy. It organised its first democratic elections in 2006 with support of the international community. The second elections were held in 2011, with many

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<sup>3</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel, and the analyses by the Rift Valley Institute

<sup>4</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014



tensions between the opposing political parties and the ruling majority, claims of fraud and cases of intimidation of journalists and members of the opposition. Apart from national elections, however, elections for lower levels of government have yet to be held. Decentralisation was part of the Constitution adopted in 2006, and the decision to put in place a more decentralised system of governance was taken 5 years ago.<sup>5</sup> At the level of the local 'decentralised territorial entities' (*entité territoriale décentralisée, or ETD*), which corresponds with the level of the '*territoires*', many organisations have moved ahead to engage in promoting participatory planning processes. Local elections are considered an opportunity for people to gain experience with the political process and public management, and to restore the social contract at the local level, building new trust. Women's organisations view these elections as a strategic moment for increasing women's participation at the decision-making level. The national electoral commission CENI has recently proposed to organise local elections in August 2015.<sup>6</sup>

Civil society in Kinshasa was actively involved around the 2011 elections. CSOs in Kinshasa have developed into organisations that form an interface between the government and the grassroots level. Civil society in Kinshasa is more and more structured in platforms, for example around the elections. However, civil society has also been divided by a struggle for leadership, as organisations that have the lead will be more visible and attract more funding. There is a strong competition for resources, which negatively influences the working of civil society. Additionally, it is a challenge for civil society to not get caught up in party politics.

### **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

In this section we briefly describe RECIC: its history, organisational details, main approach and areas of intervention.

*Réseau d'Education Civique au Congo (RECIC-Kinshasa, RECIC in short)* was created in Kinshasa on 20 October 1994 as a non-profit organisation. It is in fact a network of civil society organisations that aim to promote equity and popular participation in the management of public affairs. RECIC also aims to promote a culture of peace, reconciliation and conflict prevention.<sup>7</sup> Currently, the Network consists of 26 member organisations that are classified into 5 categories (churches, feminine organisations, development organisations, organisations that promote human rights, and pressure groups).<sup>8</sup>

RECIC-Kinshasa focuses on the 24 communes of Kinshasa Province. In 2011, the network was said to operate in 21 communes; because of limited funding, the Network is now active only with 15 out of 26 member organisations, some of them targeting the same communes.<sup>9</sup> The Network has extended operations to five other provinces: South Kivu, Bas-Congo, Equateur, and the two Kasai.

As network for civic education, RECIC is an organisation active in civil society under the civic education, democracy and elections themes. As such, the Network participates in denouncing human rights

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<sup>5</sup> For more information, see: Cellule Technique d'Appui à la décentralisation, 2010. *La décentralisation au service de la paix, de la démocratie, du développement et de l'unité nationale*.

<sup>6</sup> For more information about the calendar and the latest news about electoral preparations, see the webpage of the national election commission: <http://www.ceni.gouv.cd/>

<sup>7</sup> RECIC, Statuts, Kinshasa, 2005

<sup>8</sup> RECIC, Projet Observation Electorale Nationale Cordaid

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Gerard Bisambu, Secrétaire Exécutif RECIC, 29 May 2014, Kinshasa

violations or any attempt to violate the constitution. Its presence in the capital city Kinshasa gives the Network the opportunity to closely monitor what is going on at the parliament in terms of adoption of laws, what is going on at the national government level in terms of decisions taken; then, RECIC sides with broader civil society to make pressure as a counter power.

Central to the approach of RECIC are the *Tribune d'Expression Populaire (TEP)*. TEPs form a space for interactive dialogue, and to influence public action by the population. It allows the population to monitor the authorities and to make their needs known. In these TEPs, RECIC has been playing the intermediate role between leaders such as the Bourgmestre, parliamentary members, electoral commission officials and the population. These actions aim not only to raise awareness on the side of people but also to call officials to take actions in order to solve some of the problems that local people face.

- TEPs can be organised on public and community goods such as reconstruction of Ferbois market in Malonda street (Kimbanseke commune), and water and sanitation of the Limete commune. Themes discussed in different TEPs are related to water, environment, rental contracts, health, pharmacies. This strategy enables officials such as the Bourgmestre or the Governor of Kinshasa-province to be aware of the problem, and take appropriate action.
- TEPs can also be related to democracy and elections. RECIC organizes these TEPs in 7 out of 24 communes of Kinshasa, and people also discuss with representatives of the Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante (CENI) on issues related to the organisation of elections in the country.
- Anticipating the decentralisation, in which Communes are said to become decentralised territorial entities (ETDs), RECIC engages in participatory budgeting processes to prepare authorities and people to better understand the approach that emphasizes better management of resources and takes into account priority needs of local people, encouraging accountability of those who lead towards their own people. While RECIC is in 6 communes with this activity, another actor (Comité de Droits de l'Homme et Développement, CODHOD) is doing similar activity in other communes of the capital city.

More broadly, the RECIC secretariat supports all of its 26 member organisations, in terms of capacity development, project development, and monitoring and evaluation. These member organisations work with a variety of local grassroots entities, which have been set up by RECIC: NAPOs, local nodes of action for popular participation (Noyaux d'Action pour la Participation Populaire), which have been broadened to *cadres synergiques communaux*, communal synergy frameworks, which include CSOs, public and private actors; ALCs, local citizenship assemblies (Assemblées Locales de Citoyenneté); and CBCs, grassroots citizenship cells (Cellules de Base de Citoyenneté).

In terms of funding during the evaluation period, RECIC has been facing difficulties with the slow-down of election processes, since the local/municipal elections were postponed year by year, from 2013 to 2014 and then to 2015. There is now hope that if these elections are held in 2015, RECIC can resume its activities of awareness raising and advocacy for free, democratic and fair elections, in the capital city in particular, and in the entire country in general. In the past years, the Network in close collaboration with Agir pour les Elections Transparentes et Apaisées (AETA) and the Conseil Régional des Organisations Non Gouvernementales (CRONGD), drafted and even submitted a number of projects to diverse donors among whom the European Union.

Table 1: overview of RECIC funding from 2011 to 2014

| Project   | Donor         | Major objective   | Period                  | Funding in EURO* |           |      |      |
|---|---------------|---|-------------------------|------------------|-----------|------|------|
|   |               |   |                         | 2011             | 2012      | 2013 | 2014 |
| Programme de renforcement du dialogue multi acteur par des actions concertées de gouvernance participative dans les entités locales de Kinshasa   | Oxfam-Novib   | Promouvoir la gouvernance participative dans 5 communes de Kinshasa (Kimbanseke, Limete/Kingabwa, Monqafula, Ngallema, Makala)              | 01/11/2010 - 30/06/2011 | € 75.000         |           |      |      |
| Participative budgeting program   | Oxfam-Novib   | Promote civil (political) participation and participative budgeting in Kinshasa (Kimbanseke, Limete/Kingabwa et Makala, Monqafula, Kisenso) | 01/07/2011- 30/06/2012  | € 50.000         |           |      |      |
| Programme de Mobilisation de l'électorat et l'éligibilité féminins: "femmes, gagnons les élections"   | Cordaid       | Organiser et déployer 200 observateurs à Kinshasa et au Sud-Kivu durant les élections présidentielles et législatives du 28 Novembre 2011   | 21/11/2011 - 31/01/2012 | € 10.860         |           |      |      |
| Appropriation de la gouvernance locale et la démocratie participative dans cinq entités de la ville province de Kinshasa par la représentation effective des communautés de base aux institutions provinciales grâce au contrat social électoral                          | Diakonia      | Promouvoir la démocratie participative à travers l'approche de budget participatif  | 01/01/2012- 31/12/2012  | € 44.019         |           |      |      |
| PROJET d'appui à l'amélioration de la gouvernance locale pour le développement social de la population  | Christian Aid | Promouvoir la gouvernance locale pour le développement social dans les communes de Masina et N'sele   | 01/01/2012- 31/07/2012  | € 23.679         |           |      |      |
| Appropriation de la gouvernance locale à travers des actions concrètes d'amélioration des conditions sociales des populations au sein de cinq entités territoriales de Kinshasa   | 11.11.11      | Promouvoir la gouvernance locale dans les communes de Kintambo, Mont Ngafula, Ngaba, N'Djili et Masina                                      | 01/01/2012- 31/12/2012  | € 52.329         |           |      |      |
| Appropriation de la démocratie et la gouvernance participatives dans cinq entités concernées de la ville de Kinshasa par la représentation effective des populations aux entités décentralisées grâce aux approches de contrat social électoral et de Budget participatif | Diakonia      | Promouvoir la gouvernance participative dans les communes de Limete/Kingabua, Lemba, Ngiri-ngiri, Kinshasa, N'sele/Mpsa et Mikonga          | 01/01/2012- 31/12/2014  |                  | € 128.717 |      |      |
| Projet d'appropriation de la gouvernance locale au sein de trois entités de la ville-Province de Kinshasa   | NED           | Promouvoir la gouvernance locale dans la ville province de Kinshasa   | 2012                    | € 52.677         |           |      |      |
| Projet d'amélioration de la gouvernance locale au sein de quatre entités de la ville province de Kinshasa   | NED           | Promouvoir la gouvernance locale dans les communes de Selembao, Bumbu, Ngiringiri et Maluku dans la ville province de Kinshasa              | 2013                    |                  | € 50.004  |      |      |
| <b>Total amount of funding 2011-2014</b>  |               |   |                         | <b>€ 487.284</b> |           |      |      |
| *Amounts calculated in euros based on OANDA currency exchange rates   |               |   |                         |                  |           |      |      |

## Brief Theory of Change<sup>10</sup>

The 5-year-objective of RECIC is *to improve conditions of life through people's responsible participation in governance of their decentralised territorial entities*. In order to attain this, RECIC identifies a series of conditions related to the capacities of the local population, as well as decentralisation and the capacities of RECIC and its members. It is necessary for the population to identify local leaders and make a responsible choice at the local elections. The populations of the communes should participate in all the steps of planning, implementation and monitoring of the local development plans. For this, a strong appropriation of local governance by the populations is needed. But also, decentralisation has to come into effect, and local and municipal elections should be organised. Commune populations should be educated on their role as citizens. To facilitate this, community leaders need to fulfil their role as social mobilisers. In order for RECIC to play a meaningful role in civic education, setting up meetings, and lobbying for the enactment of local elections, a critical condition is the availability of financial means. Additionally, institutional capacity should be reinforced.

<sup>10</sup> For a more extensive description of the Theory of Change of RECIC, see the Annex.

#### **4. Project description: civil society/policy advocacy elements**

Here we describe the project and its civil society/policy advocacy elements, in terms of size, budget, duration, major objectives and activities.

RECIC and Oxfam Novib have a long history of cooperation, dating back to 1996. The MFS-II funded project 'Plan 2011-2012', which was also the last project of RECIC with Oxfam Novib, ran from July 1, 2011 until June 30, 2012. As the previous overview shows, the project involved an amount of EUR 50,000. It was a phase-out contract, and essentially a continuation of activities developed in previous years, focusing on local governance in a number of communes in Kinshasa. The communes targeted in this project were Kimbanseke, Makala, Limete, Mongafula and Kisenso, involving five member organisations of RECIC: OCAP, FCDD, LDH, ADACO, and RDF/BASE.

The long-term objective of the project was to contribute to democratic governance of the local entities (communes) of the Province of Kinshasa, through supporting the development of participatory development plans, based on the real needs of the communities and on local mechanisms of citizen participation, transparency, accountability and monitoring. There were two direct objectives:

1. Social governance: by the end of the project, the 5 communes will have put in motion the community projects initiated in the previous intervention, on the sewage system (Limete), the rehabilitation of a market (Kimbanseke), electrification (Mongafula), building a bridge (Makala), and access to drinking water (Kisenso), through the contribution of the affected populations and the local commune
2. Elections and decentralisation: 80% of the potential community electorate affected by the interventions in each of the five communes, of which at least 50% women, express a concrete commitment to support credible community leaders in the next municipal elections, who should defend their social interests in the municipal council

In terms of activities, these objectives involved a number of workshops in each of the communes, supporting processes of communal advocacy, supporting discussion meetings for the synergy frameworks in each commune, supporting the organisation of a number of meetings about the elections, awareness raising campaigns on the local elections in the five communes, identifying and training ten candidate councillors. As such, the complete project can be considered to strengthen civil society.

Specific activities are:

1. A 5-day workshop in each commune for 25 members of each of the five communal synergy frameworks for a social analysis and plan for each commune
2. A 2-day workshop in each commune for 30 members of each of the five communal synergy frameworks on setting up and how to explain to others mechanisms of transparency, accountability, monitoring and citizen participation in the community projects that are to be realised
3. A 3-day workshop in each commune for 25 members of each of the five communal synergy frameworks on lobbying for the community projects and community budgets
4. Supporting 5 processes of communal lobbying by the communal synergy frameworks

5. Supporting 10 discussion meetings, 2 per communal synergy framework, on the realisation of the community projects and the implementation of mechanisms for transparency, accountability, monitoring and citizen participation
6. Supporting the organisation of 25 'Let's win the elections' spaces, for the potential electorate of each of the five communes
7. 20-day awareness raising campaigns by the five member organisations in each commune on the importance of elections, especially local and municipal elections, as well as decentralisation, the obligation to vote responsibly, voting procedures, gender and elections
8. 15 meetings on the process of contract elections, the signing of an electoral social contract between the potential electorate and candidates proposed by the communities
9. Supporting a process of community identification of 10 potential candidate councillors, at least 5 women, among the community leaders of the 5 communes involved in the project (2 per commune)
10. An 8-day training for the 10 potential candidate councillors on: local elections and decentralisation, the functioning of decentralised entities, how to become a candidate and organise an electoral campaign, and the elaboration of a society project at the local level.

## 5. Data collection and analytical approach

Here we describe the baseline and follow-up assessment, as well as particular choices and data collection problems. We also explain here which outcomes were selected for the contribution analysis. The general methodology we followed can be found in the Annex, as well as a list of documents employed, workshop participants and other informants.

Generally, we followed the methodology described in the Annex. The endline workshop involved a number of the same people as the baseline workshop, and the commune of Kimbanseke was visited during both the baseline and endline visits. A draft version of this report was discussed with staff of RECIC during a feedback workshop in DRC at the beginning of 2015.

As described in our methodology, we decided to conduct a contribution analysis for a subsample. RECIC was not included in this subsample, mainly for the fact that its partnership with Oxfam Novib had ended by the time that we conducted the baseline for the evaluation in 2012.

## 6. Results

In this section, we describe our findings. We provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions (Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment).

|                       | Baseline 0-3 | End line 0-3 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Civic engagement      | 2.5          | 2.0          |
| Level of organisation | 2.5          | 1.5          |

|                      |     |     |
|----------------------|-----|-----|
| Practice of values   | 2.5 | 2.0 |
| Perception of impact | 2.0 | 1.5 |
| Environment          | 2.0 | 1.5 |

### **Civic Engagement**

*Under this dimension we distinguish the diversity of socially-based engagement (taking into account needs of marginalised groups, participation of target groups in the project), and the diversity of political engagement (is there dialogue of local leaders in dialogue with government representatives, are beneficiaries member of sectoral user groups).*

Through the member organisations and synergy frameworks in the communes, RECIC is well-embedded in the local context. An inventory of needs is done locally by the member organisations, and verified by the RECIC monitoring team. In the synergy frameworks, the local population is invited to analyse its problems and propose solutions, and take initiatives to deal with the situation. The *Tribunes d'Expression Populaires* also play an important role in this. The local population contributes to the community development projects set up through these mechanisms, both financially and in kind. Apart from this, little financial means are available to tend to the development needs of the population. RECIC and its members also attempt to involve other actors such as the local authorities and the private sector in the synergy frameworks, but this remains a challenge.

Locally, collaboration exists with local authorities. Importantly, partnerships have been signed between the communes and the synergy frameworks, such as the agreement between the Kimbanseke commune and the OCAP *cadre synergique* signed on 26 April 2011. The executive secretariat of RECIC is involved in higher-level contacts, such as with the *bourgmestre* of a commune. For its interventions, RECIC is strongly dependent on good relations with authorities, and their involvement in local synergy frameworks.

Nevertheless, lack of funding in recent years has limited the involvement of RECIC at the local level in communes that were not directly targeted in a project. The postponement of the local elections has also limited the potential impact of the activities of RECIC and its members at the local level.

### **Level of Organisation**

*This dimension focuses on the organisational level of civil society (the connectedness of SPOs in networks of organisations, the nature of relationships between SPOs and networks, and the degree of representation of interests); peer to peer communication (the strength of the relationships of the SPO with other actors); and financial and human resources (the composition of the financial resource base, availability of human resources).*

RECIC has regular meetings with other CSOs, through networks as well as bilateral contacts, in order to harmonise interventions, for advocacy activities and for synergetic projects. Staff indicate they are aware of the necessity to join with other organisations in lobbying, as well as to determine a division of roles when organisations intervene in the same area or domain. Nevertheless, there also is a lot of competition within civil society in Kinshasa, which may complicate collaboration. Staff indicate this

also happens in the field: at times, collaboration develops with organisations that target the same beneficiaries; at other times, other organisations take up RECIC beneficiaries into their projects.

For its income, the organisation depends largely on international donors; it is complicated to get access to national sources of funding. As the project overview under the description of RECIC shows, the number of donors has strongly diminished during the evaluation period, and RECIC currently depends strongly on two donors, Diakonia and 11 11 11. During the baseline visit, the organisation was in the process of developing an alternative source of finances, through the development of agricultural activities. We have not received information on how this has proceeded. Member organisations sometimes also receive some local contributions.

### ***Practice of Values***

*This dimension deals with internal governance (the functioning of the legally required internal committees, are they involved in the strategic management of the SPO, and the functioning of lower CSO levels), and transparency (respect of internal written procedures, extent of downward accountability, within the SPO and to lower CSO levels, transparency on finances).*

The legally required organisational structures exist: a General Assembly with representatives of the member organisations, a Coordination Committee (Board), an Audit Committee, and the executive secretariat as the permanently active part of RECIC. The executive secretary was re-elected by the GA in 2011, and is now serving his final four-year term. The executive secretariat views the members as beneficiaries, and is accountable to them through the GA and the Board and Audit Committee. Beneficiaries at the grassroots level are not directly represented in the GA, but indirectly they are, through the member organisations, which each represent a certain area of intervention. However, in recent years, this organisational structure has not been very active. No GA was held in 2013, though the Board, the Audit Committee and the Coordination Committee did meet several times. In the first half of 2014, though, these committees had no meetings. A GA was set to take place in August 2014, but was postponed to March 2015. The lack of activity was related to the funding difficulties by RECIC staff.

Audits are executed upon donor requirement, as well as when required by the General Assembly. RECIC has a procedure for three-yearly institutional audits. For Oxfam Novib, no recent audit has been done. Some member organisations occasionally execute audits.

## **Perception of Impact**

*Under this dimension we discuss the responsiveness (nature and intensity of SPO's relationship with the public sector and the private sector); social impact (target group satisfaction regarding fulfilment of their primary social concern, perception of public and private sector of quality of delivery of services by SPO); and the policy impact (the level of influence of SPOs in the process leading to major policy changes identified in the sector of the SPO's intervention since 2011).*

During the project, RECIC personnel regularly visited intervention areas to monitor project implementation. Now that the project has ended, staff are hindered by the limited means available for transport. The target group have become more aware of civic and electoral education issues. Several commune projects have been executed. At the same time; however, with the lack of local elections, and the still lacking devolution of resources to the communes, an important part of the intended impact has yet to be realised.

The intervention of RECIC generally focuses on the grassroots level, including local authorities, private sector actors, and associations. RECIC has succeeded in developing local synergy frameworks, and in involving local authorities, even certain *bourgmestres*. In some areas the multi-actor synergy frameworks function as communal development structures, with a formal partnership agreement with the commune government. In other areas, however, certain authorities oppose the interventions. Through the TEPs and synergy frameworks, engaging local authorities, RECIC has had reasonable influence on policy and practice of public sector actors – predominantly at the local commune level, there are numerous examples of success, such as the creation of a market place in the Kimbanseke commune and the reconstruction of a road in the Kingabwa commune. With the decreasing amount of donors, however, the reach of RECIC has reduced, and some of its member organisations are no longer active. At the national level, the influence on policies and practices of government officials is small, because interventions focus at the local level.

Interaction with the private sector takes place at the local level, where private actors are invited to participate in the synergy framework meetings. The private sector is not specifically targeted by RECIC, it is involved in certain areas, but generally RECIC does not influence private sector policy and practice.

## **Environment/context**

*This dimension takes the wider environment into account. What is the degree of participation of the SPO in defining the civil society interventions of the CFA/Consortium; to what extent is a context analysis of the space and role of civil society in the specific country done as part of the programme /project cycle; to what extent is the SPO involved in studies on civil society?*

RECIC collects data on socio-economic developments, as well as the political-security context. It uses these data to base new project proposals upon, identifying the opportunities offered by their context. RECIC aims to be a learning organisation, with yearly innovations in the way it engages the local target groups. An example is the adaptation of the NAPOs, to expand these to become the synergy frameworks, which provide room for including authorities and private actors. Nevertheless, due to its specific niche, RECIC is now experiencing difficulties because of the stalling decentralisation process. As network secretariat, it has a prime responsibility to capture the interest of new funding



organisations, but has not been able to do so. By former partners, RECIC is considered an expert organisation on the topic of civic education and elections, and they have been approached to share their expertise in other Provinces.

## **7. Discussion**

Given our findings, the project 'Plan 2011-2012' was well-designed and suitable for the environment in which it was implemented. The project built on the existing activities of RECIC in the communes, and the existing synergy frameworks. It combined the implementation of new mechanisms for accountability, transparency and citizen participation, with the execution of concrete commune development projects, addressing the needs of the local population. As such, the project was a learning experience for the population of the communes, in which they gained a first-hand experience of participatory governance. This means we think it is plausible that the execution of this project contributed to strengthening civil society in the five communes in Kinshasa. Its link to the local elections is a strength but also a weakness, as the postponement of these elections may make a new round of local consultations and trainings necessary. Nevertheless, because of the changes that will come when decentralisation finally happens, and the opportunities this offers for developing a local social contract, we would advise to fund a similar project in the future.

We have no changes to recommend regarding the project. With respect to the evaluation itself: it would have made more sense to only include Southern Partner Organisations that would surely be funded during the entire evaluation period, to maximise the potential effects of the projects under study. This would require a more stringent procedure for selecting the SPOs and projects to be included in the evaluation.

## **8. Conclusion**

Here we provide an answer to the two general evaluation questions:

- 1. What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?*

As the intervention by RECIC targeted the level of the communes, we focus on changes at this level. This project falls under the theme 'good governance and fragile states'. Changes in civil society in the communes during the 2012-2014 period are limited. Through the project activities, awareness of principles for accountability and participatory governance was increased, the local population was informed on upcoming local elections and a number of people were trained to become electoral candidates. Additionally, activities of the commune synergy frameworks were sustained, supporting exchange between people and associations and authorities and the private sector at the commune level, and this has established familiarity and a culture of dialogue between the participants. Nevertheless, the postponement of the local elections means that the actual effects of all preparations remains to be seen, and that the awareness and readiness of people to participate has probably weathered off – though they have remained involved through the TEPs.

## *2. What is the relevance of these changes?*

In a beginning democracy such as DRC, the development of mechanisms for participatory governance at the local level can be considered highly relevant. It is here where people can experience democracy first-hand, where they can hold the local government accountable, and have a say in how the available resources are being distributed. Without experience with democracy, and without experience in forming a municipal council and democratically governing a community, education, training and close monitoring/supervision on these themes is very important. In the long run, projects such as these can contribute to a culture of democratic governance, free and fair elections.

## List of Documents Consulted

RECIC, Statuts, Kinshasa, 2005.

RECIC, Projet Observation Electorale Nationale Cordaid.

RECIC, Rapport de la mission conjointe d'observation des élections présidentielle et législatives du 28 Novembre 2011 en République Démocratique du Congo, Kinshasa et Sud-Kivu.

RECIC, Plan triennal 2012-2014, partenaire financier Diakonia.

RECIC, plan opérationnel 2012, partenaire financier 11.11.11.

RECIC, rapport narratif, projet d'amélioration de la gouvernance locale au sein de quatre entités de la ville province de Kinshasa.

scannedcontract OCA-11-258

20110711 Recic produit I –VF

2011-2012 contract approval form

20110804 Budget réajusté +consolidé 2011 VF RECIC

20110804 Produit II Description du partenaire subventionné 2011 VF

decision file ESynDoc2472012123545

20120120 106779 Rapport d'Activités et Financier 1

37 Organization scan(1)

RAPPORT DE PROGRES NOVIB NOV 2012 (2)

RAPPORT FINANCIER NOVIB 2011-2012

## List of Informants

### Internal to organisation

Baseline visit: September 24-26, 2012

Endline visit: May 28-30, 2014

Feedback workshop: February 4-5, 2015

| Name               | Position                                     | Workshop baseline | Workshop end line | CS questionnaire baseline | CS questionnaire end line | interview baseline | interview end line |
|--------------------|--|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Gerard Bisambu     | Secrétaire Exécutif RECIC                    | X                 | X                 | X                         | X                         | X                  | X                  |
| Jean Michel Mvondo | Chargé des programmes RECIC                  | X                 | X                 | X                         |                           | X                  | X                  |
| Rosette Mputu      | Chargée de l'Administration & Finances RECIC | X                 | X                 | X                         |                           | X                  | X                  |
| DIDIER MAMBUNE     | Rapporteur de coordination                   | X                 |                   | X                         |                           |                    |                    |
| GINI Blandine      | animatrice/equipe de suivi                   | X                 |                   | X                         |                           |                    |                    |

|                        |                                 |   |   |   |   |  |   |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| MUMBALA Roland         | consultat                       | X |   | X |   |  |   |
| KATUNDA Louis Gonzague | Chargé de Suivi                 | X |   | X |   |  |   |
| JEAN LUC MULUBA        | membre de la cellule            | X |   | X |   |  |   |
| MASWAKAY LUNDU F       | Chargé de Projet                | X |   | X |   |  |   |
| Emile Mwamba           | Logisticien RECIC               |   | X |   |   |  | X |
| Parole Mbengama        | Chef de Projet ADACO            |   | X |   | X |  |   |
| Willy Mipanzi          | Vice-président cadre synergique |   | X |   | X |  |   |
| Etienne Lungala        | Chef de Projet OCAP             |   | X |   | X |  |   |

### External to organisation

09.08.2012 Cordaid The Hague, Roos Wilhelm

26.09.2012 focus group Kimbanseke, including participants in the local synergy framework, about 30 people attended

26.09.2012 Chef de quartier, Kimbanseke

13.11.2012 Oxfam Novib, Yvonne Es

14.11.2012 Oxfam Novib Bukavu, Edith van der Spruit and Irene

14.05.2014 Oxfam Novib Bukavu, Rebecca Boyce

29.05.2014 Lemba Nzanza, Chef de quartier Malonda, in Kimbanseke commune, Kinshasa

29.05.2014 Lungela, chef de quartier Ngandu, Kimbanseke commune, Kinshasa

29.05.2014 3 women small scale traders alongside the main road, Ngandu street, Kimbanseke commune, Kinshasa<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Women were approached to investigate whether they were aware of any TEP organized in their area by RECIC staff

# Civil Society Strengthening Report Réseau des Médias Associatives et Communautaires du Bas-Congo

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Bart Weijs, Patrick Milabyo and Carolien Jacobs

Wageningen University

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## List of Acronyms

CENI - Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante  
CFA – Co-Financing Agency (the Dutch donor organisation)  
CSO – Civil Society Organisation  
CSI – Civil Society Index  
DRC – Democratic Republic of the Congo  
FEI - France Expertise International  
FPU – Free Press Unlimited  
FRPC - Federation of Radios of Proximity in Congo  
GA – General Assembly  
MDG – Millenium Development Goal  
MFS II – Mede-Financierings-Stelsel (the Dutch grant system)  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
PU – People Unlimited 4.1  
REMACOB - Réseau des Médias Associatives et Communautaires du Bas-Congo  
SPO – Southern Partner Organisation

## 1. Introduction

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening. This report focuses on the civil society strengthening component.

As part of the civil society strengthening component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which development projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society during the evaluation period and the extent to which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and endline study and focuses on a broad sample of 19 partnerships. We conducted observations, workshops, field visits and interviews, during three visits in 2012, 2013 (smaller subsample) and 2014. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup> Core elements of our evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the Civicus Civil Society Index<sup>2</sup>, which distinguishes five dimensions to civil society: Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment.

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by Leon van den Boogerd (Free Press Unlimited), Léon Nzita and Jean-Luc Kissakanda (REMACOB). We thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org); see also CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (internal working document)

In this report we look specifically at the contribution of *Réseau des Médias Associatives et Communautaires du Bas-Congo (REMACOB)* to civil society strengthening. REMACOB was a partner of Free Press Unlimited (FPU) and the People Unlimited 4.1 (PU) Alliance. REMACOB is a network of associative and community radios in Bas-Congo, which aims to strengthen the capacity of media and civil society organisations, so that they will be better able to serve society. For this evaluation we focus on the project with FPU/PU: a 21-month, EUR 149,955 project to strengthen the capacity of radios in Bas-Congo in managing electoral information and good governance. This project had no dedicated civil society strengthening component, but can be considered an integral civil society strengthening project.

Our analysis reveals that the member radios of REMACOB are still benefiting of the training and equipment they received in the projects with FPU. REMACOB itself has not been able to develop a new long-term partnership after the partnership with FPU ended in 2012, and we encountered the effects of this in several of the CSI dimensions.

In the following, first we describe the country and relevant local context. Then we give a short description of REMACOB and the project with the civil society strengthening/policy influencing elements. Next, we shortly discuss the methodology. We then present the results, followed by a discussion and conclusion.

## **2. Context**

In this section, we briefly describe the country and local context as far as it is relevant for the project under evaluation.

Since the mid-1990s, the DRC has gone through several periods of violence, specifically the eastern part of the country. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups in the East that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons. This has drawn international attention to the East of the country, while other parts of the country are struggling with similar levels of poverty and limited access to basic services, and the common history of clientelism and rent-seeking.

Bas-Congo has not experienced waves of violence as the East, but there were some outbreaks of violence during the 1990s and in 2007 there was a movement for independence. This *Bundu Dia Kongo* was very quickly suppressed by the national government, but drew attention from some international agencies. Nevertheless, not many international organisations are active in the province as the area is seen as relatively peaceful. The last national elections in 2011, which REMACOB put a lot of effort into, passed without violence (and REMACOB claims that the ‘remarkable work of the member radios’ has contributed to this).

Bas-Congo is easily accessible by road from the capital city Kinshasa and from Matadi, the only access of DRC to the Atlantic Ocean. However, roads besides the main road connecting Kinshasa and Matadi are in a bad condition. The economy of the province is strongly related to the port of Matadi, which facilitates international import of goods to the country. However, even though the province is



strategically positioned and several large economic projects are under way, the presence of many badly maintained or no longer operational buildings shows that means to fully rehabilitate the province are still lacking.

Civil society in Bas-Congo is less developed as in other parts of the country. According to REMACOB, a recent EU study concluded that civil society in Bas-Congo seemed non-existent, because it was strongly linked to politics. Nevertheless, SOCICO (Société Civile du Congo), the association of civil society organisations in the province, has recently organized meetings in Mbanza-Ngungu where politicians of the province (including parliamentary members originally from Bas-Congo) were confronted with social problems. Media also see their responsibility to play a ‘watch dog role’, to monitor better functioning of State institutions by providing interesting and credible information to their audience. Many radios are still lacking a professional attitude and the necessary equipment, and this was the focus of the project under evaluation of REMACOB.

REMACOB is the only network of community radios in Bas-Congo; at national level, these networks exist in each province. For media organisations, the authorities are the most problematic actor: during our visits, we heard examples of journalists who were arrested, authorities threatening to close radio stations, or interfering in the activities of radio stations. Media are a very sensitive issue. Additionally, especially during election periods, politicians set up own radio stations, which spread a political message, receive financing, and form a strong competition for the REMACOB member radios. The status of community radios is also not formally recognised, since the latest law related to media in the country dates back to 1996, and this law was developed in the context of a one-party system.

Problematic in terms of funding for REMACOB have been the repeated postponing of local elections. Originally planned to take place after the 2006 elections, they were postponed till 2011, and the national electoral commission CENI has recently proposed to organise the local elections in August 2015.<sup>3</sup> Decentralisation was part of the Constitution adopted in 2006, and the decision to put in place a more decentralised system of governance was taken 5 years ago.<sup>4</sup> Local elections are considered an opportunity for people to gain experience with the political process and public management. Women’s organisations view these elections as a strategic moment for increasing women’s participation at the decision-making level.

### **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

In this section we briefly describe REMACOB: its history, organisational details, main approach and areas of intervention.

*Réseau des Médias Associatives et Communautaires du Bas-Congo (REMACOB)* was created on 17 December 2004, as a network of community radios in the province of Bas-Congo. The Network became active in 2007-2010, with a major project with RTNC called ‘INFORMORAC’. Around the 2011 national elections, REMACOB had a number of projects with international donors. Its aim is to strengthen the

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<sup>3</sup> For more information about the calendar and the latest news about electoral preparations, see the webpage of the national election commission: <http://www.ceni.gouv.cd/>

<sup>4</sup> For more information, see: Cellule Technique d’Appui à la décentralisation, 2010. *La décentralisation au service de la paix, de la démocratie, du développement et de l’unité nationale.*

capacity of media and civil society organizations, so that they will be better able to serve society. REMACOB's main activity is the training of journalists and radio technicians.

As a network organisation, REMACOB is governed by a Board of Directors, elected by the General Assembly in which all member radios are represented. The Board sets up project teams for each project, with Board members also taking part in the execution of activities.

The member radio stations and their staff are both implementing partners and beneficiaries, and as such at the core of the activities of REMACOB. The Network started with 14 member community radios; by 2010 the number of members had increased to 22, growing to 31 at our baseline visit in 2012, and 32 nowadays. In the future REMACOB expects to grow to around 40 members, as other newly created radios want to adhere.

REMACOB had to strongly reduce its staff at the end of 2012, when several main projects came to an end. The organisation experienced some legal difficulties regarding the ownership of the equipment procured under the INFORMORAC project with FPU, as the project administration had not been transferred from the project team to REMACOB. The Network also had to move to a smaller and less costly office, and faced legal charges by their previous landlord who claimed additional rent of the Network. The Network has created 9 sites in the province where trainings are organised for member radios, and most project staff have been decentralised and are now based at member radios. The Network now has 7 trainers available (including the coordinator (the President of the Network), and the deputy coordinator). These trainers have been trained in the past through partnerships with international agencies (Free Press Unlimited, Stem van Afrika, France Expertise Internationale, Swedish and British funding).

As the overview of REMACOB's external funding for the period 2011-2014 shows, it has engaged in various activities. The main activities focused on strengthening the capacity of the member radios with respect to the coverage of elections and good governance, and the strengthening of the relationship between media and civil society. Other projects involved the production and distribution of radio programmes on diverse subjects. The overview illustrates the importance of Free Press Unlimited, as they were involved in the two major projects in 2011 and 2012. MFS-II funding accounts for the largest part of the budget in 2012, and for almost a third of the total budget during the evaluation period. Due to the repeated postponement of local elections, the Network has experienced difficulties in engaging new sources of funding after 2012.

REMACOB does not have own income generating activities, though attempts have been made to develop these. The contribution of membership fees by member radios is insufficient to sustain the Network's activities, with around 40% of the members contributing in 2013 and in 2014.

Table 1: overview of REMACOB's external funding from 2011 until 2014

| Project   | Donor           | Major objective   | Period                        | Funding in EURO* |                  |                 |                 |                  |
|---|-----------------|---|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
|   |                 |   |                               | 2011             | 2012             | 2013            | 2014            | Total            |
| Project to strengthen capacity of radios in Bas-Congo in terms of management of electoral information and good governance | FPU (MFS II)    | Contribute to the access of Congolese citizens to quality and independent information that will allow them to cast their vote based on reliable information and to monitor the activities of the elected officials and the government | April 2011 - December 2012    | € 85.691         | € 64.264         |                 |                 | <b>€ 149.955</b> |
| Clean villages and schools (sector water, hygiene and sanitation)   | UNICEF          | Raise awareness of around 2284265 inhabitants of Bas-Congo on the programme Clean villages and schools  | 2011                          | € 26.100         |                  |                 |                 | <b>€ 26.100</b>  |
| Roles and relations of media and civil society in Bas-Congo   | FEI/FPU         | Contribute to the improvement of the access of civil society in Bas-Congo to the media  | December 2011 - December 2012 |                  | € 199.808        |                 |                 | <b>€ 199.808</b> |
| Raising awareness and coaching of truck drivers and other users of the Route Nationale 1 from Matadi to Kinshasa          | Stem van Afrika | Raise awareness and coach truck drivers on the prevention of HIV/AIDS   | Avril 2011 - October 2012     |                  | € 37.700         |                 |                 | <b>€ 37.700</b>  |
| Support and awareness raising of the villages of the 22 Health Zones  | Unicef          | Prevent water-based illnesses through the promotion of hygiene measures   | July - December 2012          |                  | € 32.310         |                 |                 | <b>€ 32.310</b>  |
| The SIM project   | DAI/ USAID      | Produce 24 broadcasts on 12 radios on "verité de prix"  | Avril - September 2013        |                  |                  | € 13.832        | € 25.555        | <b>€ 39.387</b>  |
| Strengthening the capacity of the professionals of media of Bas-Congo in terms of journalistic questioning                | FEI             | Train 40 journalists of 15 member radios of REMACOB in investigative journalism   | April - September 2013        |                  |                  | € 36.561        |                 | <b>€ 36.561</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>  |                 |   |                               | <b>€ 111.791</b> | <b>€ 334.082</b> | <b>€ 50.394</b> | <b>€ 25.555</b> | <b>€ 521.821</b> |
| Percentage MFS II   |                 |   |                               | 77%              | 19%              | 0%              | 0%              | 29%              |

\*Amounts calculated in euros based on OANDA currency exchange rates

## Brief Theory of Change<sup>5</sup>

The five-year objective of REMACOB is *to strengthen capacity of media and civil society organizations to better serve local communities in Bas-Congo*. In order to strengthen the capacity of radios and CSOs, journalists and CSO workers have to be trained, and they should put into practice the acquired knowledge. Media and CSOs should make their employees available for these trainings. To facilitate the trainings, it is important that materials and logistics are available. It is also necessary to find appropriate sites for the trainings, which will allow the participants easy access. Before this is done, it is essential to select the participants. Meanwhile, the trainers will also be selected, and take part in a refreshment course. The first steps are to elaborate a project plan, including a calendar of activities, identify media and civil society organisations for participation, and identify their needs in terms of training. In order to realise all of this, peace and financial partners are critical. The direct target group, media and CSOs, should appropriate the goal. Finally, the necessary human resources should be available.

## 4. Project description: civil society/policy advocacy elements

Here we describe the project and its civil society/policy advocacy elements, in terms of size, budget, duration, major objectives and activities.

<sup>5</sup> For a more extensive description of the Theory of Change of REMACOB, see the Annex.

The project under evaluation is the *Projet de Renforcement des capacités des radios du Bas-Congo en gestion de l'information électorale et la bonne gouvernance*, 'Project to strengthen the capacity of radios in Bas-Congo in managing electoral information and good governance'. This project was financed by Free Press Unlimited and builds on the INFORMORAC project which lasted from 2007 to 2010. The current project is still referred to by REMACOB staff as INFORMORAC. The project had a total duration of 21 months (including a three-month extension), from April 2011-December 2012, with a total budget of EUR 149,955.

The project was related to the second democratic Presidential elections, that took place in 2011. The main objective was to contribute to the access of Congolese citizens to independent good quality information that will allow them to cast their vote based on trustworthy information and to be aware of the activities of the elected officials and the government.

Specifically, for REMACOB this meant the following: journalists and leaders of media in Bas-Congo increase their capacity to cover elections, they are better aware of their during the electoral period, apply the rules of journalist deontology, and contribute to objective information for the electorate in a climate of peaceful electoral campaigns.

The Presidential elections were held in November 2011. The idea was that local elections should follow afterwards (April 2012) but these were postponed. As a consequence, in 2012 the programmed deviated from the original focus on election reporting. Instead, REMACOB offered training in presentations skills and how to deal with interactive programmes, and a series of trainings on promoting women participation in the radio.

REMACOB aimed to attain the following results:

1. REMACOB is capable of training its members in coverage of elections, deontology, and good governance
2. journalists are better equipped and better able to play their role in terms of their rights and duties with respect to the coverage of elections. They contribute to the prevention of rumours, wrong information, public manipulation and intimidation
3. contribute to the good quality of information and of radio magazines on electoral issues and good governance
4. to make sure that all community radios will work in synergy on the day of the elections

In order to attain these results, REMACOB engaged in the following activities:

- Training of trainers on the basic rules on how to educate the electorate, the different genres of radio broadcasts that can be used to cover the electoral process, and on good governance. The training will be partly given by members of the electoral commission CENI.
- Strengthen capacity of REMACOB in terms of project management and logistics
- Training of journalists on the elections and good governance (9 sessions)
- Training of journalists on ethics and journalist deontology (9 sessions, combine with previous activity)

- Train journalists on round tables and political debate (9 sessions)
- Train journalists on how to make a portrait (9 sessions, with previous)
- Provide equipment and train technicians on digital audio editing (montage)
- Produce and distribute 20 radio magazines on the elections and good governance
- On election day, journalists go to the voting bureaus to report, and the reports are distributed to the whole province. If possible the first results will also be published

In principle, no part of this project has been specifically marked as ‘civil society strengthening’. However, considering the objective of the project to inform Congolese citizens so that they can take a well-grounded decision on whom to vote for, we consider the whole project as aiming to facilitate and reinforce civic engagement, and thus to strengthen civil society.

#### *Other civil society strengthening/policy influencing elements*

Besides the project with FPU, REMACOB has also engaged in other activities that strengthen civil society strengthening or influence policy.

- Activities aimed to strengthen the journalism capacity of the member radios can be seen as strengthening civil society. This takes the form of the provision of adequate equipment, as well as the provision of trainings. These trainings are typically done with groups composed of staff of various member radios, facilitating linkages and exchange between radios. The reach of member radio station varies, the smaller reaching around 20,000 listeners, the larger up to 200,000 or even 500,000.
- Member radios have ‘radio clubs’, groups of listeners, who follow emissions and are in permanent contact with a radio station. REMACOB trained local community radios to form platforms for citizens to express themselves, where they can discuss topics that are relevant to their local situation.
- As member of the national federation of community radios FRPC, REMACOB has worked on modifying the national law on community radios, in the initiative *Loi portant modification de la loi du 22 Juin 1996*, which if passed, will have the important advantage of tax exemption for community radios. REMACOB initiated the Law, but also drafted it with the FRPC, and has found a senator willing to propose the Law.
- The FEI-financed project on roles and relations of media and civil society in Bas-Congo had a focus on reinforcing local civil society organisations, through providing them a place to meet, and training them on what it involves to be ‘civil society’, and how to relate to media.
- REMACOB advocates on behalf of its member radios towards the authorities on the issue of taxation and fraud, when there is opportunity to do so, to prevent them from ‘buying’ the radio for self-promotion.

## **5. Data collection and analytical approach**

Here we describe the baseline and follow-up assessment, as well as particular choices and data collection problems. We also explain here which outcomes were selected for the contribution analysis.

The general methodology we followed can be found in Annex X, as well as a list of documents employed, workshop participants and other informants (in Annex X).

Generally, we followed the methodology described in the Annex. The endline workshop in 2014 involved a number of the same people as the baseline workshop, and several member radios were visited during the endline visit. A draft version of this report was discussed with staff of REMACOB during a feedback workshop in DRC at the beginning of 2015.

As described in our methodology, we decided to conduct a contribution analysis for a subsample. REMACOB was not included in this subsample, mainly for the fact that its partnership with Free Press Unlimited had ended shortly after our baseline visit, at the end of 2012.

## 6. Results

In this section, we describe our findings. We provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions (Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment).

|                       | <b>Baseline<br/>(0-3)</b> | <b>Endline<br/>(0-3)</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Civic engagement      | 2.0                       | 1.5                      |
| Level of organization | 1.5                       | 1.0                      |
| Practice of values    | 2.0                       | 1.5                      |
| Perception of impact  | 1.5                       | 1.5                      |
| Environment           | 1.5                       | 1.5                      |

### ***Civic Engagement***

*Under this dimension we distinguish the diversity of socially-based engagement (taking into account needs of marginalised groups, participation of target groups in the project), and the diversity of political engagement (is there dialogue of local leaders in dialogue with government representatives, are beneficiaries member of sectoral user groups).*

The main beneficiaries for REMACOB are the member radios and their staff. During the FPU project, REMACOB staff visited members once every 3/4 months for training, and they were visited once every 3 months for follow-up and monitoring. Trainings were tailored to the needs of local staff, and modules were developed based on an assessment of needs. Nevertheless, after 2012, when the budget of REMACOB diminished sharply, REMACOB staff have not been able to maintain this close connection with the member radios. A second group of beneficiaries are the listeners to the community radios, as REMACOB produces radio broadcasts on a diverse set of themes.

When the Network executes a project, the member radios are included in the activities in such a way that radio members benefit from available resources, and they are involved in the identification of problems and proposing solutions. Member radios participate in dissemination of broadcasts, and give input for what they need in terms of training. Their financial contribution, in terms of payment for

membership, is weak however. Also in terms of capacity and financial stability, there is much difference between members.

In terms of political engagement, staff generally evaluate this positively, indicating they are regularly in touch with different levels of authorities. Collaboration with authorities ranges from obtaining the necessary legal documents, to their participation in radio broadcasts and community interventions. REMACOB is contacted by government institutions when they want to spread information; however, this often is information that favours the involved institution. Staff also indicate that media are viewed with suspicion by the authorities. One major disappointment for REMACOB staff is the lack of financial support from the side of the government.

During the evaluation period, the levels of civic engagement and political engagement for REMACOB have decreased, as the reduction in financial means has diminished the number of staff and limited the ability of the Network to actively engage with the members and the authorities.

### **Level of Organisation**

*This dimension focuses on the organisational level of civil society (the connectedness of SPOs in networks of organisations, the nature of relationships between SPOs and networks, and the degree of representation of interests); peer to peer communication (the strength of the relationships of the SPO with other actors); and financial and human resources (the composition of the financial resource base, availability of human resources).*

REMACOB is a network organisation, and as such represents a degree of organisation of community radios in Bas-Congo. The 32 member radios and their staff are both implementing partners and beneficiaries, and as such at the core of the activities of REMACOB. REMACOB is also linked to other networks of community radios in other provinces, and a member of the national network of community radios FRPC. These contacts are important for the exchange of experience and information. As mentioned under the previous dimension, with the reduction in financing, interaction with the member radios has decreased.

With respect to other civil society organisations, during the baseline visit, REMACOB actively engaged with CSOs in the *medias et société civile* project. Within this project, REMACOB worked with a number of CSOs for almost a year, which improved the relations between radios and local civil society, increasing the local embeddedness of REMACOB member radios. With the reduction in funding, interaction between REMACOB and CSOs has also reduced. Nevertheless, contacts between member radios and CSOs have remained, as they form a means for local NGOs to gain publicity for their activities. Sometimes radio broadcasts are jointly developed. There are many linkages between local civil society actors and local member radios.

Building durable and healthy relations with government actors remains a challenge for REMACOB. The government should be involved as 'partie prenante', stakeholder, in REMACOB projects, but this is not the case. In terms of legal requirements, radio frequencies etc. the relevant contacts exist (e.g. Ministry of Communication, or the CSAC, Conseil Supérieur de L'Audiovisuelle de Congo). There is also collaboration with the RTNC, the Congolese National Radio and Television. Relations with local authorities, such as the Commissioner of the District of Cataractes and the *Administrateur de territoire*

of Mbanza-Ngungu, are also good. Nevertheless, at the provincial level, REMACOB has so far been unable to get access to governmental support. Relations with politicians are sensitive, as there exist high levels of distrust between media and politics.

The composition of the financial resource base has changed strongly during the evaluation period, as the overview under the SPO description shows. Before 2012, REMACOB worked with one major international donor, Free Press Unlimited. FPU played a crucial role because it gave a great deal of institutional support. In 2012, the Network had several larger international donors. After 2012 however, these projects ended, and REMACOB has not been able to develop new long-term partnerships – though the extension of the SIM project is a promising development.

For the dimension of Level of Organisation, REMACOB has not been able to maintain the level of 2012. The intensity of interaction with the member radios and CSOs in Bas-Congo has decreased to the reduction in budget. The composition of the financial resource base is weak.

### ***Practice of Values***

*This dimension deals with internal governance (the functioning of the legally required internal committees, are they involved in the strategic management of the SPO, and the functioning of lower CSO levels), and transparency (respect of internal written procedures, extent of downward accountability, within the SPO and to lower CSO levels, transparency on finances).*

The legally required Board of Directors and General Assembly exist, but the General Assembly has not been able to hold the required meetings – the last meeting was in 2013, and the meeting before was in 2010. The difficulty in holding the GA is related to the fact that many member radios do not pay their membership fees, because these funds are important for the organisation of Network meetings.

Due to the set-up of REMACOB, the Board was strongly involved in strategic management of the organisation. In fact, members of the Board often also formed part of the project teams that executed projects with donor organisations, which can be considered a threat to the role of the Board to monitor the executive part of the organisation. With the elective GA of 2013, a new Board was installed, and the previous president became the coordinator of the executive committee. The GA was important for determining the strategy for the coming years, and the new executive committee the overlap between Board and executive may have ended.

As the member radios are also considered to be beneficiaries, the beneficiaries are well-represented in the General Assembly. During the evaluation period, there have been no regular institutional audits. Audits are conducted on donor demand. The last external audit was done in 2012, covering 2010 and 2011.

The dimension of Practice of Values shows that the legally required internal committees of REMACOB are struggling to hold the required meetings, and that this is related to the lack of membership contributions by the members.

### ***Perception of Impact***



*Under this dimension we discuss the responsiveness (nature and intensity of SPO's relationship with the public sector and the private sector); social impact (target group satisfaction regarding fulfilment of their primary social concern, perception of public and private sector of quality of delivery of services by SPO); and the policy impact (the level of influence of SPOs in the process leading to major policy changes identified in the sector of the SPO's intervention since 2011).*

The number of member radios has remained constant during the evaluation period. Many member radios have received training in the projects with FPU, as well as professional equipment. The member radios are still benefiting of this project. There are also still many training modules available, which were developed in these projects. The uptake of trainings has been hampered though by frequent changes in staff of community radios, and some radios are still working with limited equipment.

It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to determine the civil society impact of radio broadcasts on elections and good governance. Nevertheless, the 2011 elections passed without major incidents in Bas-Congo, and REMACOB can look with confidence towards the upcoming local elections. Regarding the relations with civil society organisations: as described under the second CSI dimension, the *medias et société civile* project has allowed REMACOB to further develop its relationship with CSOs, and member radios are still benefiting of this.

Relations with public and private sector organisations: REMACOB was sometimes invited to meetings, because they are well-known, and public sector organisations needed them for publicity. REMACOB may potentially influence public policies, rules, regulations, also through its member radios, but there are no examples of this. The relation with authorities is complicated, due to mistrust; however during the evaluation period, staff describe that there is a new sort of openness from senators and parliamentary members towards member radios, as some of them participate in discussions of local issues on REMACOB radios. REMACOB does not aim to develop relations with the private sector, or influence private sector agencies' policies.

The dimension of Perception of Impact has remained constant for REMACOB. Interventions in the beginning of the evaluation period are still having a beneficial impact for the Network and the member radios. At the level of the public sector, a new openness seems to be developing towards the member radios.

### ***Environment/context***

*This dimension takes the wider environment into account. What is the degree of participation of the SPO in defining the civil society interventions of the CFA/Consortium; to what extent is a context analysis of the space and role of civil society in the specific country done as part of the programme /project cycle; to what extent is the SPO is involved in studies on civil society?*

The Network has been actively involved in actions to strengthen civil society, especially the collaboration between CSOs and member radios in order to better inform the population on changes in the politico-security or socioeconomic context. REMACOB is in constant search for new opportunities for funding, drafting and submitting projects to potential donors as the Network is in need of significant donors in order to achieve its objectives, especially people's behaviour changes

related to democracy and good governance. Many of the paid and trained staff have left after the end of the MFS-funded project.

With the closure and reduced financing of donor programmes by the Dutch government, FEI, GRET and Institut Panos Paris, the donor context has become more difficult for REMACOB. Financing by embassies has also become more difficult to access, with the current tendency to support the private sector.

REMACOB developed a new strategic plan in 2013, focusing on training journalists and radio technicians. There is high demand for training of journalists and radio technicians on many issues, as capacity building activities are seen to impact radio members. This resulted in improving the quality of the information provided to the audiences of the member radios, and partnerships among member radios.

We find that the Context dimension has remained reasonably constant during the evaluation period, for REMACOB.

## **7. Discussion**

Our findings show that the project to strengthen the capacity of radios in Bas-Congo in managing electoral information and good governance, funded by Free Press Unlimited, was well-designed and suitable for the implementation environment. The project contributed to the capacity of member radios to monitor election processes and governance in Bas-Congo, as well as contributing to training journalists and radio technicians. In terms of timing, the project linked well to the presidential elections of 2011 and the aftermath. There was also synergy with the project 'media and civil society', in which civil society organisations were trained on their role, and made familiar with the role of the media, thus strengthening the embeddedness of the member radios. We would therefore advise funding a similar project in the future, for example surrounding the local elections that are now scheduled for August 2015.

We have no changes to recommend regarding the project. With respect to the evaluation itself: it would have made more sense to only include Southern Partner Organisations that would surely be funded during the entire evaluation period, to maximise the potential effects of the projects under study. This would require a more stringent procedure for selecting the SPOs and projects to be included in the evaluation.

## **8. Conclusion**

Here we provide an answer to the two general evaluation questions:

- 1. What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?*

The capacity of a number of community radios in Bas-Congo has been developed, in terms of investigative journalism, radio coverage of electoral processes, good governance, technical equipment and training for radio technicians. This allows the radios to present better and more reliable information to their audience. It also allows the radios to better play their watchdog role vis-à-vis the authorities and civil society, holding them accountable.

The relationship between media and civil society organisations has improved, as a number of CSOs have gained a better understanding of their own role and the role of the media, and how to relate to the media. Member radios of REMACOB are still maintaining these relationships.

Tentatively, there seems to be a new space opening up in the relationship with the government, as some senators and members of parliament participate in discussions of local issues on REMACOB member radios.

## *2. What is the relevance of these changes?*

In a context in which people have a low level of confidence in the authorities, the provision of reliable information on their functioning can help re-establish the social contract between the government and its citizens. Thorough investigative journalism can help the population to call the authorities to account. In a sensitive political environment, training for journalists and radio technicians on how to do their job under these circumstances is very relevant. REMACOB staff has worked on monitoring ethical issues as well as regularly informing people on public affairs. This resulted, in turn, in the reduction of cases of arrest of journalists and closing of radios by state officials, as well as in improved collaboration between radio members and state representatives.

## List of documents collected

REMACOB, Renforcement des capacités des radios du Bas Congo en gestion de l'information électorale et la bonne gouvernance.

REMACOB, rapport annuel 2013.

rap 2011- trim 4 REMACOB election

rap 2012- trim 4 REMACOB election

REMACOB, rapport narrative final, Renforcement de capacités des professionnels de médias du Bas Congo en questionnements journalistiques, Banza-Ngungu, 30 Septembre 2013.

Statuts REMACOB

Rapport\_AG\_REMACOB\_Kinzau-Mvuete\_Avril 2013

REMACOB, plan strategique, 2013-2014, approuvé en Assemblée Générale en Avril 2013

Rapport d'audit des états financiers de 2010-2011 du REMACOB

rapport audit remacob page 11 et 36

Convention de subvention n°RDC Médias 13/2011;

Convention de subvention n°RDC Médias 05/2013;

Prolongation contrat projet election 2012

Accounting REMACOB\_Q2\_2012\_FINAL

Comptabilité FEI3 REMACOB - Q2 2012 FINAL

ACTIVITIES PLAN FREE PRESS UNL-REMACOB 2011-2012

Plan actualisé des Activités de 2010

PLAN ACTUALISE DES ACTIVITES 2009

LISTE DU PERSONNEL.PROJET REMACOB

MODULE CADRE DE CONCERTATION

MODULE SUR LE ROLE ET LE FONCTIONNEMENT DES MEDIAS ET ONGS

ORGANISATION ET COMMUNICATION DANS UNE OSC

MANUEL DES PROCEDURES REMACOB

## List of informants

### Internal to organisation

Baseline visit: 27-28 September, 2012

Endline visit: 26-27, 30 May, 2014

Feedback workshop: 4-5 February, 2015

| Name                | Position                | Workshop baseline | Workshop end line | CS questionnaire baseline | CS questionnaire end line | interview baseline | interview end line |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Innocent Bulambembe | Coordinateur INFORMORAC | X                 |                   | X                         |                           | X                  |                    |

|                                  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hugo Maseka                      | Gestion de Bureau,<br>Administration, Financier                                  | X |   | X |   | X |   |
| Patrick Kassongh                 | Formateur  | X |   | X |   | X |   |
| Nadine Mukuba                    | Formateur  | X |   | X |   | X |   |
| Felly Nsungu Mpela               | Technicien   | X | X | X | X |   | X |
| Leon Nzita                       | President Executif   | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Falish Nkanza                    | Vice-President Executif,<br>Formateur  | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Nadia Kapinga                    | Formateur  | X |   | X |   |   |   |
| Pierre Kinsumuna                 | Formateur  | X |   | X |   |   |   |
| Mireille Loundombi               | Formateur  | X |   | X |   |   |   |
| Nancy Nzuzi Khuba                | Secretaire   | X | X | X | X |   | X |
| Jean Jacques Nganga              | Journalist   | X | X | X |   |   | X |
| Jean Luc Kissakanda              | Redacteur en chef  | X | X | X | X |   |   |
| Neron Nkata Mbanza               | Directeur des programmes<br>radio Vuvu kieto (radio<br>membre REMACOB)           |   |   |   |   |   | X |
| Abbé Cyprien Ziola bin<br>Mamena | Directeur général de la Radio<br>Catholique de Kisantu (radio<br>membre REMACOB) |   |   |   |   |   | X |

### External to organisation

District chief Mbanza-Ngungu, introductory meeting, 27.09.2012

Free Press Unlimited, Leon van den Boogerd, 9.11.2012

Free Press Unlimited, Leon van den Boogerd, 9.04.2014

BERDEF, Bazin Bazeybuta, Vice President, Mbanza-Ngungu, 27.05.2014<sup>6</sup>

Terre des Hommes, Matthieu Diankenda Lunyemo (Chargé de l'Administration et Organisations paysannes), Mbanza-Ngungu, 27.05.2014

Terre des Hommes, Jean SITA (Secrétaire Général, also Coordinateur of Société Civile du Congo (SOCICO)), Mbanza-Ngungu, 27.05.2014

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<sup>6</sup>One of the civil society organisations in the training held by REMACOB for civil society organisations of Bas-Congo

FRPC, Rigobert Malalako, Executive Secretary, Kinshasa, 30.05.2014

# Civil Society Strengthening Report Réseau de Femmes pour les Droits et la Paix

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs and Bart Weijs

Wageningen University

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## List of Acronyms

AFEM/SK - Association des Femmes des Médias du Sud-Kivu  
ASF – Avocats sans Frontières  
CAP – Comité d’Alerte pour la Paix (Alerting Committees for Peace)  
CAFCO - Cadre Permanent de Concertation de la Femme Congolaise  
CFA – Co-Financing Agency (the Dutch donor organisation)  
CoC - Communities of Change Alliance  
CSO – Civil Society Organisation  
CSI – Civil Society Index  
DRC – Democratic Republic of the Congo  
FARDC - Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo  
FDLR – Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda  
IMC – International Medical Corps  
MDG – Millenium Development Goal  
MFS II – Mede-Financierings-Stelsel (the Dutch grant system)  
MONUSCO - Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation du Congo  
MUSO – Mutuelle de Solidarité (Solidarity group for savings and loans)  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
OCET – Œuvre Communautaire pour l'Education pour Tous  
SGBV – sexual and gender based violence  
SLRC – Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium  
SPO – Southern Partner Organisation  
RFDP - Réseau de Femmes pour les Droits et la Paix  
VICO – Villages Cobaye / Vision Communautaire

## 1. Introduction

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening. This report focuses on the civil society strengthening component.

As part of the civil society strengthening component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which development projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society during the evaluation period and the extent to which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and end line study and focuses on a broad sample of 19 partnerships. We conducted observations, workshops, field visits and interviews, during three visits in 2012, 2013 (smaller subsample) and 2014. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation,

where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup> Core elements of our evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the Civicus Civil Society Index<sup>2</sup>, which distinguishes five dimensions to civil society: Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment.

In this report we look specifically at the contribution of *Réseau de Femmes pour les Droits et la Paix (RFDP)* to civil society strengthening. RFDP is a partner of Cordaid and the Communities of Change (CoC) Alliance. RFDP is an organisation that aims to contribute to the promotion of rights, to building peace, and equal opportunities for men and women in public management. Established in 1999, the organisation has been a partner of Cordaid since 2009, focusing on projects directed at victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). For this evaluation we focus on the current project with Cordaid/CoC: a five-year, EUR 343,838 (EUR 217,441 MFS II funding) project to reduce vulnerability of women and girls who are victims of sexual and gender-based violence in the territories of Walungu, Kabare and Kalehe in South Kivu.

This project had no dedicated civil society strengthening component, but includes a number of elements that can contribute to strengthening civil society. We have paid special attention to the local grassroots groups that RFDP works with, the *Comités d'Alerte pour la Paix (CAP)*. In our contribution analysis, we seek to establish the extent to which MFS II financing has or has not contributed to strengthening civil society at the grassroots, in the form of the CAPs. Our analysis of RFDP is contextualised by an analysis of the characteristics and capacities of women's civil society in South Kivu, available as a separate report (see the appendix).<sup>3</sup>

We find that that civil society at the grassroots is developing in South Kivu, and that RFDP's interventions through the CAPs are contributing to this. Women members of CAPs have become women of influence, with key positions also in interventions by other CSOs. At a larger scale, RFDP's interventions are part of a larger ensemble of interventions directed at improving the position of women in eastern DRC. During the evaluation period, we find the focus is further shifting from a singular focus on sexual violence to women leadership in general.

In the following, first we describe the country and relevant local context. Then we give a short description of RFDP and the project with the civil society strengthening/policy influencing elements. Next, we shortly discuss the methodology. We then present the results, followed by a discussion and conclusion.

## 2. Context

In this section, we briefly describe the country and local context as far as it is relevant for the project under evaluation.

South Kivu, and eastern DRC as a whole, is strongly characterised by the legacy of repeated conflict and high levels of insecurity. High levels of poverty are coupled with limited access to basic services, in a still young democracy with a history of clientelism and rent-seeking. Eastern DRC is reputed for high

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by Jean-Baptiste Baciyunjuze and Venantie Bisimwa (RFDP). We would like to thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org); see also CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (internal working document)

<sup>3</sup> Hilhorst, Dorothea, and Marie Rose Bashwira, 2015. *The Women's Movement in South Kivu, DRC: a civil society analysis*. Occasional Paper #11, Special Chair Humanitarian Aid and Reconstruction, Wageningen University & Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural de Bukavu.

levels of gender-based violence, including sexual violence against women. At the same time, especially South Kivu has a history of civil society mobilisation, and the eastern DRC has received a great deal of international aid. South Kivu possesses a wealth of natural resources and has a high agricultural potential. The following paragraphs describe these issues in more detail.

### *Conflict, insecurity and poverty*

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons.<sup>4</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas in South Kivu, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013). The Fall of Goma in November 2012 and consequent threat to Bukavu led to the evacuation of the majority of international staff, and drew the attention of the military to North Kivu, with other armed groups taking advantage of the situation ('the FDLR came out of the forests'<sup>5</sup>). The following defeat of M23 and military moves against other armed groups have led to more optimism, though.

In general the security situation in the province was considered as stable, yet unpredictable during the evaluation period. Nevertheless, many people are concerned about the security situation and lack trust in the police and the military. We heard many examples of people that were accused of witchcraft, as well as the practice of Kabanga (in which people are killed with a cord so that the cord gets magical powers). A relatively new trend is the phenomenon of popular justice; dissatisfied with the state of impunity, the absence of the state, and delays of the justice sector, people are increasingly resorting to their own means of justice (often lynching the alleged perpetrators). There is a widespread feeling among the poor that state justice is only for the wealthy: "If you're rich, you don't go to prison".

The decades of insecurity, conflict, and the rent-seeking dictatorship of Mobutu have greatly impoverished the DRC. The country has great potential for agriculture and possesses a wealth of mineral resources. The potential of all these resources however is far from being exploited. On the 2014 Human Development Index, DRC ranked 186 out of 187 (followed only by Niger). Gross national income per head was noted to be at \$444 in 2013, which was lowest of all countries for which data were available. In the same year, 87.7% of the population lived below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>6</sup> In South Kivu, which used to be the granary of DRC, roughly 3 out of 4 people live in rural areas.<sup>7</sup> A survey carried out in South Kivu in 2012 showed that around three-quarters of households in the sampled population make a living primarily in agriculture, either in subsistence agriculture (65%), commercial farming (5%), or by agricultural casual labour (6%).<sup>8</sup> Households within the same sample have access to 2.69 hectares of land, but often not all of this land is held in ownership. Due to various factors, such as insecurity, displacement, and market distortions, agricultural production is low. Food insecurity and poverty remain widespread.

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<sup>4</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel, and the analyses by the Rift Valley Institute

<sup>5</sup> RFDP workshop end line

<sup>6</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014

<sup>7</sup> UNDP (2009) 'Profil Résumé Pauvreté de Sud Kivu 2009'. Kinshasa: UNDP.

<sup>8</sup> n=1259; Miliano, C.W.J, de, A. Ferf, J. Oude Groeniger, and M. Mashanda. 2014. Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study, SLRC.

### *Position of women*

Women in DRC are greatly underrepresented in the decision-making sphere<sup>9</sup>, and still face many challenges. Though the DRC has recognised United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325, enacted a law on sexual violence in 2006, and the constitution provides the basis and legitimation of political equality and equity, women continue to be second-rate citizens in several aspects of the law. Yet the major impediment to women's development is the gap between the law and the culturally dominated institutions and practices that render women's position even lower. With some differences between urban and rural situations and despite some recent developments towards women's empowerment, women's low position remains expressed in different domains, including the political, social and economic domains.

The women's movement in South Kivu has grown in parallel to international development discourses on women and gender, and has from the 1990s onwards increasingly addressed issues related to the war and insecurity. While the number of women's organisations and coordination structures in the province grew, the main point of attention was sexual violence. In recent years the attention to violence has broadened to all kinds of gender-based violence, including for example inheritance issues, and to promoting women's leadership and political representation.

### *Civil society*

Civil society in South Kivu is relatively well-developed, with much variation in terms of organisational capacity. There is a large number of local NGOs, organised in thematic groups and networks, and they are not afraid to speak out against the government. At the same time, civil society is challenged in terms of fragmentation and weak governance. There is also a strong presence of international organisations willing to partner with local NGOs. After many years of a strong humanitarian presence, many organisations are now engaging in development aid. However, a side-effect of the long-time presence of humanitarian aid is an attitude of dependency among parts of the population, which people describe as *attentisme* (wait and see). This is a challenge for organisations attempting to set up development projects, as their beneficiaries are used to free distribution of materials, and changing this attitude is not a short-term process.

The dependency of civil society on foreign aid is high, and almost complete. NGOs derive their funding almost exclusively from foreign funding. Their own initiatives are indirectly derived from this funding, which does allow them a certain institutional leeway. Local grassroots associations are not directly funded, but depend for their operations, seminars, transport and accompaniment on funded NGOs. For the near future, the continuation of the women's movement requires that the international community continues to recognise and support the role of NGOs in promoting women's rights.

### *Governance and decentralisation*

A history of corruption and bad governance is not easily undone, and the size of DRC is not making the process any easier. Governance in DRC faces many challenges, including formal and informal taxation, policies that are not implemented, and a stalling process of decentralisation. Decentralisation was part of the Constitution adopted in 2006, and the decision to put in place a more decentralised system of

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<sup>9</sup> For example, in the first national elections in 2006, women made up the majority of voters, but only a few managed to get elected: 8 percent in the National Assembly and 8.6 percent in the Senate (International Alert (2012) 'Women's political participation and economic empowerment in post-conflict countries: Lessons from the Great Lakes region in Africa')

governance was taken 5 years ago.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, local elections have yet to be held. At the level of the local 'decentralised territorial entities' (*entité territoriale décentralisée, or ETD*), which corresponds with the level of the territories in North and South Kivu, many organisations have moved ahead to engage in promoting participatory planning processes, each with their specific issues in mind. Local elections are considered an opportunity for people to gain experience with the political process and public management. Women's organisations view these elections as a strategic moment for increasing women's participation at the decision-making level. The national electoral commission CENI has recently proposed to organise local elections in August 2015.

### **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

In this section we briefly describe RFDP: its history, organisational details, main approach and areas of intervention.

*Réseau de Femmes pour les Droits et la Paix (RFDP)* was founded in 1999 by a number of women who wanted to express themselves on the effects of the war and contribute to building peace (at the time, eastern DRC was under control of the Rwanda-backed RCD, the Rally for Congolese Democracy). The group of women sought to draw attention of the international community to the needs of the Congolese people and women in particular. Over the years, RFDP has played a leading role in advocating the position of women in South Kivu, being involved in the creation of various networks of women's organisation, and for example the civil society movement for the enactment of the Law on Sexual Violence in 2006. It is led by the Executive Secretary, Mrs Venantie Bisimwa, who was one of the founders. RFDP is registered as a non-profit organisation in DRC, and has a regular organisational structure, with a General Assembly, a Board, and an Executive Secretariat.

The organisation has the mission to contribute to the promotion of human rights, to building peace, and equal opportunities for men and women in public management. RFDP focuses on judicial support to victims of sexual violence, collecting data and raising awareness about human rights and democracy, and increasing women's literacy. This includes support of beneficiaries at grassroots level, as well as a lobby directed at authorities at provincial and national levels.

The core of the approach of RFDP is formed by its network of grassroots groups, the *Comités d'Alerte pour la Paix (CAP)*. These are groups of women who report cases of sexual violence and accompany men and women who have become victims of sexual violence in getting medical and judicial assistance. Many members have themselves been victim to sexual violence and participation in these committees helps them improve their position in the community. Members of CAPs receive training by RFDP in conflict mediation and help RFDP monitor the human rights situation. Through the CAP, RFDP seeks to develop a strong female leadership that can participate in public management of their communities. RFDP has also equipped the CAP to set up savings and loans schemes, called *Mutuelles de Solidarité (MUSO)*. These MUSOs are intended to allow the members of CAPs to develop economic activities and become economically autonomous, but also integrate elements of good governance and reinforce social cohesion.

Besides the CAPs, RFDP also works with other local associations and grassroots groups of women. In supporting SGBV victims, RFDP takes a community approach, involving the members of the family and

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<sup>10</sup> For more information, see: Cellule Technique d'Appui à la décentralisation, 2010. *La décentralisation au service de la paix, de la démocratie, du développement et de l'unité nationale.*

of the community. In this way, the community becomes aware of the damage done to the victim and can reflect on how to care for the victim. This approach involves authorities and community leaders, as well as family elders.

RFDP currently has 9 office staff. Staff are generally well-educated, with 6 out of 7 staff involved in the Cordaid project possessing a University degree. The professional experience of staff ranges from 2 to 20 years. During the evaluation period, there have been no major changes in staff composition.

Geographically, RFDP traditionally focuses on the territory of Walungu, and has extended its interventions to the territories of Kabare and Kalehe.

The major donors for RFDP during the evaluation period were Cordaid and Coopération Suisse (before 2011, RFDP also worked with International Alert and Diakonia). Recently, new partnerships have started with ASF and Louvain Développement (now Louvain Coopération). The table below gives an overview of RFDP's donor-supported projects during the MFS II period, from 2011 until 2014.

The table shows the partnership with Coopération Suisse accounts for more than half the total financing in the 2011-2014 period. RFDP developed this partnership with the help of Cordaid. Together, Cordaid and Coopération Suisse account for 95% of the budget of RFDP from 2011-2014. The project with Cooperation Suisse is largely similar to the projects supported by Cordaid, in its focus on psychosocial and legal support to SGBV victims. An important difference is the support in this project for the development of economic activities by beneficiaries. Geographically, there is no overlap between the projects, and as such they are strongly complementary.

Another important project is the Henri Simonart documentation centre, with support of the Centre Henri Simonart in Belgium. This has allowed for the rehabilitation of a building in the city of Walungu, which now forms an important centre of activities for the project with Cordaid. The centre, which is intended to function as a library (the books have recently arrived after a delay of two years at the Congolese customs authorities), is an illustration of the importance of education and research to the approach of RFDP.

*Table #: overview of donor-supported projects of RFDP during the MFS II period<sup>11</sup>*

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<sup>11</sup> This overview is based on the actual support received by RFDP during the MFS II period. This means the figures may be different from the amounts mentioned in project contracts (this explains the difference between the amounts mentioned in this overview for the projects with Cordaid, and the amounts mentioned under the project description below)

| Project  | Donor                             | Period   | Amount of funding (EUR)* |                  |                  |                  |       |                  |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------|------------------|
|  |                                   |  | 2011                     | 2012             | 2013             | 2014             | Total |                  |
| 106513 - Two-year project to reduce vulnerability of women and girls victims of sexual violence in the territory of Walungu and the periphery of Bukavu                                  | Cordaid (non-MFS: Postcodeoterij) | April 2011-April 2013                                | € 74.817                 | € 42.553         |                  |                  |       | <b>€ 117.370</b> |
| Campain 'Droit pour Tous', Right for All   | Cordaid (non-MFS)                 | August 2012-August 2013                              |                          | € 3.779          | € 4.914          |                  |       | <b>€ 8.693</b>   |
| 106513 - Project extension   | Cordaid (non-MFS: Postcodeoterij) | May 2013-August 2013                                 |                          |                  | € 10.249         |                  |       | <b>€ 10.249</b>  |
| 106513 - Project extension to prevent gender-based violence and provide legal support to victims in the territories of Kabare, Kalehe and Walungu  | Cordaid (MFS)                     | October 2013-October 2014                            |                          |                  | € 79.393         | € 13.419         |       | <b>€ 92.812</b>  |
| Project for psychosocial support and social reinsertion of women and girls victims of SGBV in the sector of Burinyi in Mwenga Territory and the grouping of Kaniola in Walungu Territory | Cooperation Suisse (DDC)          | May 2011-March 2014 (phase 1 of a 12-year programme) | € 119.528                | € 92.634         | € 89.510         | € 93.209         |       | <b>€ 394.881</b> |
| The Henri Simonart documentation centre in Walungu   | Centre Henri Simonart             | July 2011-July 2012                                  | € 13.360                 | € 9.518          |                  |                  |       | <b>€ 22.878</b>  |
| Production of an enhanced variety of bean seeds in the grouping of Burhale in Walungu Territory  | Harvest Plus                      |  |                          |                  | € 414            |                  |       | <b>€ 414</b>     |
| Support to food and livelihood security through improving revenues of vulnerable households  | Louvain Développement             | July 2014-December 2014                              |                          |                  |                  | € 5.831          |       | <b>€ 5.831</b>   |
| Awareness raising in Kamanyola to prepare mobile court hearings of the peace tribunal of Walungu   | ASF                               | 2014   |                          |                  |                  | € 1.295          |       | <b>€ 1.295</b>   |
| Local contribution   | Local contribution                |  | € 427                    | € 610            | € 1.869          | € 3.751          |       | <b>€ 6.657</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>   |                                   |  | <b>€ 208.132</b>         | <b>€ 149.095</b> | <b>€ 186.349</b> | <b>€ 117.505</b> |       | <b>€ 661.080</b> |
| percentage MFS   |                                   |  | 0,00%                    | 0,00%            | 42,60%           | 11,42%           |       | 14,04%           |
| percentage Dutch funding   |                                   |  | 35,95%                   | 31,08%           | 50,74%           | 11,42%           |       | 34,66%           |

\*Conversion to EUR based on exchange rates for the Cordaid funding

### General theory of change

RFDP has as its general objective that *women as well as men participate in management of public affairs and the construction of peace, in an equitable manner*. The organisation focuses on legal and political conditions: a reduction of discriminatory customs, a reinforced female leadership, an increased autonomy of women. In order to attain these conditions, the authorities should be involved, training them on gender so they become sensitive to this and integrate this into their policies. Favourable national and international laws need to be applied. For this to happen, RFDP has to gain allies at all levels of government in order to support the lobby. To build local support and change discriminatory customs, men and women at grassroots level have to be educated about women's rights, including dissemination of key texts and collecting data to do research. The research is key for providing input for a strengthened lobby and advocacy for female leadership and for the application of laws. This should be accompanied by a denouncing of violence by victims, and judicial support. Finally, to increase autonomy of women, they should dispose of own sources of –increasing- income. This means they need support in developing economic activities.

## 4. Project description

Here we describe the project and its civil society/policy advocacy elements, in terms of size, budget, duration, major objectives and activities.

The cooperation between Cordaid and RFDP started in 2007. From 2008-2009 onwards, the projects fell within a holistic approach taken by Cordaid to support victims of sexual violence, involving a number of other Cordaid partners: AFEM (raising awareness and advocacy), OCET (juridical assistance), and CAPES, VICO, and ACODEPA (socio-economic support).

The current project essentially is the next step in a series of projects to support sexual violence victims in Walungu.<sup>12</sup> The project aims to reduce vulnerability of women and girls who are victims of sexual and gender-based violence in the territory of Walungu and the periphery of the city of Bukavu (South Kivu). Originally a two-year project intended to run from April 1, 2011 to April 1, 2013, it was extended three times, until November, 2015. Until November 1, 2013, the project was supported with Postcodeloterij financing (EUR 126,397). The final two extensions of the project were funded with MFS II financing (EUR 96,168 for 2013-2014, EUR 116200 for 2015).<sup>13</sup> This project from 2011-2014 forms the main focus of this evaluation.

In the project, two phases can be distinguished. The objective to reduce vulnerability of women and girls victims of SGBV remains the same, but the emphasis, geographical focus and activities are different. The first phase ran from April 2011 to October 2013 and focussed geographically on Walungu and the periphery of Bukavu. Activities were aimed at strengthening the capacity of women and girls as well as local leaders to respond to gender-based violence, in the form of four broad results:

1. *women and girls, as well as local leaders, are better informed, and claim their human rights more actively*
2. *facilitation of access to justice for SGBV victims*
3. *human rights violations and cases of violence against women are systematically documented and denounced*
4. *women community leaders are better capable of generating changed behaviour of members of their communities vis-à-vis women*

The second phase runs from November 2013 till November 2015, extends geographical focus to Kalehe and Kabare, while shifting emphasis to supporting the judicial process. The aim remains to support SGBV victims, with more focus on enabling the justice sector to respond:

- improving communication between police, judicial actors, and the population
- an increased keeping of procedures with respect to dealing with SGBV by judicial actors
- paralegals, security actors and authorities in the three territories dispose of the national and international legal instruments for the protection of women in case of SGBV
- a lobby at national level for a fund for SGBV victims.

The funding for literacy trainings, legal forums, research and quarterly dialogue was discontinued, as the overview of activities below shows.

At grassroots level, CAPs are instrumental in the collection of data, support to victims, organization of dialogue with authorities, and denouncing human rights violations. Throughout the project, two field workers closely supervised and monitored the CAPs.

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<sup>12</sup> The previous project was project 103052.

<sup>13</sup> Initially, it was intended to fund the complete project using MFS II financing, which is why the project was included in the list of MFS II funded projects in DRC, which we drew our sample from. The decision to shift to a different source of financing was made after the list had been compiled.



| Activity   | Results   |  | Year 2 ('12-'13)  | Extension (2013)   | Year 3 ('13-'14)  |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|
|  | Year 1 ('11-'12)  |  |   |  |   |
| Literacy training with a focus on women's rights                                       | 10 centres, 253 women/1 man   |  | 11 literacy training centres, 294 women and 4 men   |  |   |
| <i>Causeries juridiques</i> (legal forums)   | 22, in total 1035 people reached (671 women), on topics as the electoral process, inheritance, arbitrary arrests, International Women's Day |  | 54, at least 35/40 people per session, 60% women. Themes dealt with women's rights and juridical instruments to protect these             | 13, 1557 participants, 51% women. Themes: women's rights, inheritance, land law, registration of marriage and children |   |
| Radio broadcasts on community radios Neno la Uzima and Shala TV                        | 12, on themes related to women's rights and national and international legal texts  |  | 58, themes: discrimination of women in the <i>Code de la famille</i> , early marriage, stigmatisation of victims of sexual violence, etc. | 16, of which 8 were produced with audio recorded in the field with members of CAPs and MUSOs                           | Produce and animate broadcasts on resolutions 1820, 1880 and 2106, and on sexual violence infractions   |
| Research on access to justice for SGBV victims   | Quick study on access to justice  |  | 4 studies done, available on the website  |  |   |
| Dissemination of information, laws, legal procedures                                   | Reports, flyers and magazine Mama Vision  |  | Reports, flyers and magazine Mama Vision  | Reports, flyers and magazine Mama Vision   | Reports, flyers and magazine Mama Vision, translate into Swahili resolutions 1820, 1880 and 2106  |
| support to the legal treatment of cases of SGBV  | 15 documented cases, 4 are being supported  |  | support to legal treatment of 17 cases by lawyer ( <i>avocat conseil</i> ) of RFDP  | of 32 requests for assistance, 11 have been taken up   | Support and monitor judicial treatment of cases of SGBV   |
| Documenting and denouncing cases of human rights violations and violence against women | 40 cases documented and denounced   |  | documentation and denunciation of cases   | 2 Judicial consultations per month, in the two centres, Henri Simonart in Walungu and the centre Astrid in Cihambe     | Document cases of sexual violence   |
| Trainings for local leaders and CAP members  | 2 three-day sessions, first 25 women on tools for conflict management, mediation techniques, second 30 women on lobby and advocacy          |  |   | accompany the lobby of grassroots women leaders  | Train paralegals on sexual violence laws and legal procedures   |
| Quarterly dialogues  | 3 dialogues organised between CAPs and local authorities, over 200 participants   |  | 6 dialogues held between the women of CAPs and the local authorities  |  |   |
| Training on documenting cases of SGBV, storing and securing evidence                   | 35 people, including CAP members, local associations, community workers and literacy trainers   |  |   |  |   |
| Visits to prisons/detention sites  |   |  |   | 13 visits to three sites   |   |
| Operate <i>cliniques juridiques</i> (legal clinics)                                    |   |  |   |  | 3 legal clinics operational   |
| Lobby  |   |  |   |  | Organise national lobby for the creation of a national fund for victims of SGBV   |
| Support police and peace tribunals   |   |  |   |  | In three territories, to reach remote areas   |
| Train judicial police officers, lawyers and magistrates                                |   |  |   |  | Training on dealing with cases of sexual violence, organise exchange between juridical actors through a film on juridical procedures related to sexual violence |

### *Civil society strengthening elements*

The project does not have a specific civil society strengthening component. However, many activities contribute to raising awareness among citizens of their rights, and to supporting the capacity of the judicial powers to deal with cases of SGBV; as such the activities aim to reduce the distance between the government and its citizens. We highlight the role of the CAPs in these activities, supported by the field workers and staff of RFDP:

- providing orientation and mediation for SGBV victims
- organizing dialogues with the authorities
- documenting and denouncing cases of violation of human rights/SGBV
- organising legal forums on issues related to the position of women, including the participation of women in government

We will go into the role of the CAPs in more detail in our construction of the contribution story.

Importantly, through this partnership, Cordaid also aimed to contribute to an increase in organisational capacity of RFDP. Cordaid involved RFDP in its *synergie* of partners working on sexual violence, and in its capacity development programme. These activities were not part of the project budget, and as such were not the main focus of this evaluation; we do consider them in our analysis where relevant.

## **5. Data collection and analytical approach**

Here we describe the baseline and follow-up assessment, as well as particular choices and data collection problems. We also explain here which outcomes were selected for the contribution analysis. The general methodology we followed can be found in as an Annex, as well as a list of documents employed, workshop participants and other informants.

In our evaluation of RFDP, we generally followed the methodology described in the Annex. Interviews, workshops and focus groups with beneficiaries were conducted during baseline and end line in 2012 and 2014, and additional interviews were held during the midterm visit in 2013. A draft version of this report was discussed with staff of RFDP during a feedback workshop in DRC at the beginning of 2015.

As described in our methodology, we decided to conduct a contribution analysis for a subsample, in which RFDP was included. In November 2013, we did an additional qualitative study on the women's movement in South Kivu (Bukavu and Walungu), in order to gain insight into the role of selected SPOs in policy influencing/advocacy at the provincial level, as well as their influence at local level (Walungu) – see the report on the women's movement in the annex.

For the analysis of contribution of the development intervention of RFDP to the strengthening of civil society, we selected the following main outcome (see also the contribution story further below):

- the strengthening of local civil society, in the form of the *Comités d'Alerte pour la Paix*. We relate this outcome to the first CSI dimension, Civic engagement, and both priority result areas of this dimension.

## 6. Results

In this section, we describe our findings. We first provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions (Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment). This is followed by a contribution story assembling the evidence for the contribution of MFS II funding to a strengthening of civil society, through the development interventions of RFDP.

|                       | Baseline<br>(0-3) | Endline |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------|
| Civic engagement      | 2.0               | 2.5     |
| Level of organisation | 2.0               | 2.0     |
| Practice of values    | 1.5               | 1.5     |
| Perception of impact  | 2.0               | 2.5     |
| Environment           | 2.0               | 2.0     |

### **Civic Engagement**

*Under this dimension we distinguish the diversity of socially-based engagement (taking into account needs of marginalised groups, participation of target groups in the project), and the diversity of political engagement (is there dialogue of local leaders with government representatives, are beneficiaries member of sectoral user groups).*

The primary beneficiaries of RFDP consist of women and girls victims of SGBV: this is a vulnerable group, often marginalised. RFDP mostly works in rural and peri-urban areas, where custom is strong and alternatives for people who have become marginalised are limited. Over the years, many victims of SGBV that were assisted by RFDP joined the local women's groups, the CAPs. The CAPs are a crucial element in the project, as they are responsible for assisting SGBV victims, documenting and denouncing these cases, bringing these to the attention of the local authorities, and educating women and men about women's rights and national and international laws pertaining to this. This means the target group itself is involved in the execution of the project. Leaders of CAPs have also been also involved in evaluating the project, and in consultations for the strategic plan. A number of CAPs undertake activities independently of RFDP (e.g. approaching local authorities). CAPs are also an important way for RFDP to gauge the local needs. Many beneficiaries express the need for economic assistance ('people want something they can sell... justice is secondary to food'), and in response to this RFDP has included the setting up of MUSOs in its approach. This is part of RFDP's efforts to autonomise the CAPs.

The organisation of quarterly dialogues with the local authorities was an important part of the project, though no longer explicit in the second phase. These dialogues were organised by the CAPs, in collaboration with RFDP staff, to discuss the situation of sexual violence, and how to transform the situation. Besides these organised dialogues, CAP members also approach the authorities in case of human rights violations. Our baseline visit to CAP Ciriri and endline visit to the CAPs in Walungu brought up numerous examples of how CAP members engaged local authorities, either directly or through mediation of RFDP. CAPs indicate that authorities now are referring cases to them, and solicit

their expertise. They are increasingly opening up to working with RFDP, including customary authorities.

The dimension of Civic engagement shows progress over the evaluation period. With the support of Cordaid and Coopération Suisse, RFDP has provided a stable support to the CAPs, new CAPs have been created, and old CAPs have been revitalised, engaging them in the execution of the project. Relations with the local authorities have further developed, and CAPs are able to independently engage with the authorities to bring a case to their attention.

### **Level of Organisation**

*This dimension focuses on the organisational level of civil society (the connectedness of SPOs in networks of organisations, the nature of relationships between SPOs and networks, and the degree of representation of interests); peer to peer communication (the strength of the relationships of the SPO with other actors); and financial and human resources (the composition of the financial resource base, availability of human resources).*

RFDP has a history of being involved in the creation of civil society networks, and has remained well-inserted in civil society in Bukavu during the evaluation period. Collaboration with other CSOs is often in the form of a joint lobby or campaign. Since 2012, RFDP has closely worked with Observatoire de la Parité, on the promotion of women leadership. With W-lead, an initiative of IMC, RFDP has lobbied with many women's organisations for the Parity law in the 30% to 50% campaign, and the executive secretary of RFDP was part of a delegation to Kinshasa. RFDP is member of the network of women's organisations CAFCO and other relevant networks/platforms. It is also part of the provincial working group on Resolution 1325. RFDP and the CAPs work with the Bureau de la Coordination de la Société Civile and its local offices when extra clout is needed to advocate for a certain case. RFDP also involved other CSOs in the elaboration of its strategic plan, including Groupe Jérémie, OCET, and Observatoire de la Parité. Many of RFDPs external relations go through the Executive Secretary, who has a large network and is well-known in South Kivu.

At the grassroots level, RFDP also supports local associations, when they request to become partner of RFDP (currently over 30). RFDP trains these on relevant themes and provides documentations. Members of CAP can also be involved in projects of other organisations, such as AFEM or Caucus des Femmes. Many members of the CAPs are also included in the Femme-au-Fone project, in which two other partners of Cordaid collaborate: AFEM and Radio Maendeleo. There is little to no exchange between RFDP and other organisations about which beneficiaries they engage with, or how to complement each other's interventions. The more experienced leaders of CAP are also solicited by other organisations, and may occupy several positions of leadership in different projects. This is not seen as a problem, and it reinforces their position as women of influence.<sup>14</sup>

During the MFS II period, RFDP has depended strongly on two international donors: Cordaid/CoC and Coopération Suisse. It has worked with other donors in the past, and has recently began two new small projects with ASF and Louvain Développement, diversifying its funding base. RFDP has survived a period without external funding in the past, and it has recently reflected on the sustainability of its interventions, with an external consultant evaluating the sustainability (*perennisation*) of

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<sup>14</sup> Hilhorst, Dorothea, and Marie Rose Bashwira, 2015. *The Women's Movement in South Kivu, DRC: a civil society analysis*. Occasional Paper #11, Special Chair Humanitarian Aid and Reconstruction, Wageningen University & Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural de Bukavu.

interventions. In terms of reporting and proposal writing, RFDP generally reports on time, and has responded to our queries in a timely manner. The organisation has a sufficient human resources, with no major changes over the past years, and all staff adequately educated.

In terms of Level of organisation, RFDP remains a reliable organisation and well-embedded in women's civil society in South Kivu. It is involved in networking and joint lobby, has close relations with several peer organisations, and has maintained its level of funding. Its dependence on two international partners is a risk for the post-MFS period.

### ***Practice of Values***

*This dimension deals with internal governance (the functioning of the social bodies/organs, are they involved in the strategic management of the SPO, and the functioning of lower CSO levels), and transparency (respect of internal written procedures, extent of downward accountability, within the SPO and to lower CSO levels, transparency on finances).*

After a lull in activity before 2011, the functioning of the internal governance of RFDP is now more or less in order. The organisation is governed by a General Assembly and a Board of Directors. The GA was held in 2011, 2012, and in 2014 (two GAs planned this year, to make up for the lack of GA in 2013). Reports of the General Assemblies are available; members respond to the presentation of activities and plans for the next year. There are some (former) beneficiaries amongst the members of RFDP, and some active members of CAPs come to the GA as observers. The Board has difficulty in holding the mandatory meetings, as they are volunteers with other obligations. The delay of the GA of 2013 was due to the unavailability of members of the Board.

At the level of the CAPs: CAPs have been trained on good governance, and are led by an elected committee with typically a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and one or two members. The committees are supposed to meet on a monthly basis and report to RFDP. A General Assembly of all the CAPs in Walungu was organised in 2011. As local structures representing the beneficiaries, the CAPs can also hold RFDP accountable – participation in the GA of RFDP as observers is one way to do this. Staff of RFDP also regularly visit the CAPs.

RFDP as executive secretariat has started to hold monthly programming and evaluation meetings (for all RFDP staff). The management meets on a weekly management basis. There is a Manual describing Administrative and Financial procedures, and financial management has been digitised, with yearly consolidated budgets and reports. New staff is engaged through public vacancies. Since 2012, RFDP has taken the initiative to organise yearly institutional audits, instead of project audits. These audits have found no serious issues in terms of financial management, with the projects generally scoring 65% or higher. There is room for a more critical analysis of the respect of internal administrative procedures, however.

In this dimension, RFDP has made some important advances since the start of the MFS II period in 2011: notably, the revitalisation of the internal governance structure, the revitalisation of many CAPs, the creation of a structure of regular staff meetings, and the execution of yearly audits. There remains

room for improvement in terms of the active involvement of the members of the Board in monitoring and guiding the organisation.

### ***Perception of Impact***

*Under this dimension we discuss the responsiveness (nature and intensity of SPO's relationship with the public sector and the private sector); social impact (target group satisfaction regarding fulfilment of their primary social concern, perception of public and private sector of quality of delivery of services by SPO); and the policy impact (the level of influence of SPOs in the process leading to major policy changes identified in the sector of the SPO's intervention since 2011).*

RFDP generally executes activities as planned, and the majority of beneficiaries are happy with the support by RFDP, according to staff. They have high expectations and are disappointed when RFDP is not able to answer to all demands, for example to continue operating the literacy trainings. With focus on economic empowerment, beneficiaries are starting to understand that they themselves are responsible for their own development. It takes time to change the spirit of *attentisme*, wait and see, notably among long-term beneficiaries.

Interventions are mainly directed at the grassroots level, the level of women and girls in the territories Walungu, Kalehe, Kabare, and the local judicial actors (police, lawyers, magistrates). The impact of interventions is most notable with direct beneficiaries, women victims of sexual violence. The recruitment of members of CAPs in projects by other intervening organisations (AFEM, Caucus de Femmes) is a signal of the capacity of these women. Members of CAPs have access to local authorities, to present cases of human rights violations and claim their rights. At the level of authorities and decision-makers, involvement is growing, and a number of positive examples are available. A barrier is the tendency of authorities to require a financial compensation for their participation in activities.

RFDP is regularly involved in lobby activities vis-à-vis the provincial government, and has also been involved in activities at the national level. Relations with public actors have improved through the process of setting up a working group on Resolution 1325, but also through the organisation of the local quarterly dialogues. RFDP is for example invited to participate in the development of themes for International Women's Day. RFDP participates in meetings and activities organised by the authorities, shares information on its activities, but staff is under the impression the government is not very sensitive to the problems of the population. At the provincial level, RFDP interacts most with the Ministry of Gender and the Gender Division.

Thus, regarding perception of impact: services offered by RFDP are appreciated by people at the grassroots, and local judicial actors. The involvement and capacity of members of CAPs is growing, as is the involvement of local authorities. RFDP regularly engages authorities at the provincial level, but impact there has been limited during the evaluation period.

### ***Environment/context***

*This dimension takes the wider environment into account. What is the degree of participation of the SPO in defining the civil society interventions of the CFA/Consortium; to what extent is a context analysis of the space and role of civil society in the specific country done as part of the programme /project cycle; to what extent is the SPO involved in studies on civil society?*

In terms of defining civil society interventions: RFDP directs its efforts towards the beneficiaries and the authorities, through strengthening the local structures of the CAPs. The project documents do not make reference to civil society strengthening as such. Reference is made to other women's organisations in the context of the plans for the lobby on a national fund for victims of sexual violence. Apparently, however, most joint lobbying and campaigning activities at the level of the Province are not considered part of the project – though they do form an integral part of the approach of RFDP. RFDP participated in the meetings of Cordaid partner organisations working on sexual violence, and has been involved in other projects such as the Droit pour Tous Campaign.

RFDP shows its awareness of the context in its extensive context analyses in reports and proposals. In these documents, the organisation refers to previous documents and builds on these analyses. Context analyses form an integral part of the monthly meetings, set out against the strategic plan 2012-2016. Context analyses are also mandatory in reports by field staff, the CAPs and the programme leader. RFDP adapts its activities where required, as can be seen in the shift of focus in the second phase of the project.

RFDP is a knowledgeable organisation in terms of the security and position of women in DRC. During the evaluation period, it has shown its capability to analyse the changing context and changing needs, and adapt the project accordingly. Though it does not explicitly mention strengthening civil society as an objective, our analysis of RFDP and its activities shows it works on strengthening civil society both at the local level in developing the CAPs, as well as at the provincial and national level, through engaging in networks and forming issue-based coalitions.

### **Contribution story: civil society strengthening in *Comités d'Alerte pour la Paix***

For this component of the evaluation, we focus on the contribution of MFS II funding to the strengthening of civil society. In the case of RFDP, we investigate the contribution at the level of the beneficiaries and grassroots groups, *Comités d'Alerte pour la Paix*. We ask the question: how has MFS II funding, through intermediary organisation RFDP, contributed to the strengthening of local civil society, in the form of the CAPs? We will discuss this question in the following contribution story.

First we briefly describe the basic theory of change and activities of the project and the support by Cordaid. Then we assemble the evidence for how the described activities have contributed to strengthening of civil society. We continue with a brief overview of other actors and factors that have played a role. We conclude by assessing the evidence, to what extent it is plausible that the development intervention of RFDP has contributed to strengthening civil society.

#### *Theory of change and activities*

RFDP aims to reduce vulnerability of women and girls that are SGBV victims. To do this, it supports SGBV victims, and it engages with the justice sector to increase its capacity. The CAPs form a pivotal

element in RFDP's strategy: they are the local grassroots structure that SGBV victims go to for support, and provide paralegal assistance, monitor judicial treatment of cases, collect data and denounce cases of human rights violations, organise legal forums, and organise dialogues/open days with the local authorities and the judiciary, monitoring the follow-up of resolutions adopted at these meetings. In order to equip the CAPs for these tasks, RFDP has provided training on management, mediation techniques, on lobby and advocacy, and on sexual violence laws and legal procedures. RFDP field workers regularly visit the CAPs, and co-organise activities. RFDP has introduced the approach of MUSOs, so the CAPs will be able to generate their own income and operate independently.

### *Evidence*

For assembling the story for the MFS II contribution to strengthening civil society at field/grassroots level, in the form of the CAPs, we made use of project documents supplied by RFDP and Cordaid, the testimonies of members of various CAPs, interviews with RFDP and Cordaid staff and our own observations. Information gathered from/with other women's organisations provided additional insights.

The **documents** provide evidence on the number of CAPs, their functioning, their activities and the reports they provide.

There are 19 CAPs involved in the project. In the past three years, 13 of these have developed into 'active' CAPs, according to RFDP. Active CAPs are qualified as those CAPs which 'realise awareness raising activities directed at members of their community on women's rights, organise dialogues with the local authorities even in absence of RFDP, assist SGBV victims and intervene for their reintegration in the community, which have developed income-generating activities, and which regularly transmit their monthly reports'.<sup>15</sup> RFDP works with these active CAPs in the Cordaid project, continuing to

Box #: Examples of advocacy (*plaidoyer*) by CAPs (source: proposition projet RFDP CORDAID 2013 à 2014)

1) in Cishebeye /Kaniola:

At the occasion of international literacy day, it was denounced that:

- The non-involvement of authorities in literacy trainings for the part of the population that had not gone to school
- There was a lack of acknowledgement of the importance of literacy for the development of rural areas and the whole of society

2) in Kamisimbi:

Advocate against the presence and the wandering of primates in communities of the grouping of Kamisimbi through presenting a petition to the interim governor of South Kivu, signed by over 500

support them in terms of structure and helping them to become autonomous. RFDP also includes several weaker CAPs, aiming to revitalise them.

<sup>15</sup> Réponses aux questions projet 106513 phse 2015



A General Assembly of all the CAPs in Walungu was organised at the end of 2011, with 9 CAPs represented. The GA served to remind the CAPs of their function, to allow the CAPs to present an overview of their activities in 2011, and to discuss any issues they encountered.

RFDP keeps an overview of all reports and documents received from the CAPs. The overview demonstrates that CAPs are indeed sending monthly reports. This overview also shows there are no CAPs that indeed report every month. Other documents testify of lobby activities directed at local authorities, and the organisation of legal forums on a number of topics. Project reports confirm the involvement of CAPs in the documentation of new SGBV cases, the participation of CAP members in trainings, and the organisation of dialogues between CAP members and the authorities. The bulletin regularly published by RFDP, '*la messagère*', the messenger, is also based on cases documented by CAPs.

CAP members have participated in the elaboration of the strategic plan and the General Assemblies. CAPs also play a central role in the strategic plan 2012-2016, and RFDP plans to continue support to the CAPs throughout the 2012-2016 period. CAPs also form the starting point for the MUSO approach, and for supporting women to gain decision-making positions.

The financial documents for the Cordaid project show that RFDP employed one field worker (*animateur de terrain*) in the first phase for 14 months, and one legal assistant (*Chargé de l'assistance juridique et judiciaire*) for 24 months. In the second phase, two field workers were employed for 24 months. Additionally, RFDP has two local centres to support the CAPs: Centre Henri Simonart in the city of Walungu, and Centre Astrid in Cihambe/Burhale.

**Members of CAPs** explain the history of the CAPs, their relation with RFDP, activities, what they have learnt, and what has changed as result of the CAPs.

A typical story of how the CAPs started: during the war, women were looking for protection, and 'then we were informed that there was a *maman*, who defended the difficulties of women, I was secretary of the *shirika* [chapel], then I went to search this *maman*.. (...) *maman* came, she helped with food, medication, and we were told, there is *maman* Venantie, who takes care.'<sup>16</sup> The story illustrates the central role of the Executive Secretary, and the important role RFDP has played for the members of the CAPs.

Members of CAPs explained they were taught by RFDP how to organise themselves, to elect a committee with a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and two members (thus strengthening the 3<sup>rd</sup> CDI dimension, Practice of values). Each has role, and one member is in charge of advocacy. The committee meets once a month. RFDP trained them on denouncing, advocacy (*plaidoyer*), mediation, detraumatizing victims of violence. Members also explain how RFDP instructed them to set up MUSOs. Some CAPs have also received support in the form of seeds and fertiliser for their agricultural activities, from another organisation. There is also a dressmaking (*coupe couture*) training for women who have completed the literacy training, at Centre Astrid. There are 6 CAPs that meet at Centre Astrid (Burhale Centre, Centre Astrid, Njove, Cihambe, Mudiri, Muzinzi), which organise

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<sup>16</sup> Group interview with CAP members in Walungu, endline visit

a general assembly 4 times a year to discuss the problems encountered by the CAPs, and the planning of activities.<sup>17</sup>

Important changes: the members of CAPs have now started MUSOs, and now know how to read and write, and how to defend the rights of women. They have learnt to investigate cases and identify false cases of rape, to show reports to authorities, to do mediation, and if there is no solution, to seek advice of RFDP. 'Now we see women who lead the *quartier* (neighbourhood), and understand that women can also do public service.' 'The CAP is an example that sometimes woman can do the same or more as men.'<sup>18</sup> In the relation with the state, there is still much to gain: judicial police still arrest people arbitrarily, asking money to set them free: 'this is my field where I harvest..' Local chiefs, the *admistrateur de territoire*, they turn their backs. But the presence of RFDP does have an effect: 'The commander did not want to listen, then asked if I was RFDP? I said yes. Then the demanded amount went down to 60 dollars.'<sup>19</sup>

The members of CAPs also describe the main difficulties they encounter: a lack of financial compensation for their activities; threats by police/authorities when denouncing cases; perpetrators may get angry; women are not allowed a say in the community security committee (though now the CAPs have gained access to the enlarged security framework, *cadre de sécurité*); a slow legal process; instead of MUSOs, women prefer to get money directly; and the security situation: 'you can still die every day'.<sup>20</sup>

RFDP is important for supporting their lobby. CAPs can denounce misbehaviour by police, engage the *Bureau de la Société Civile*, go see the police commissioner. But if it gets difficult, they can fall back on RFDP: 'We are trained to know at which level we can defend ourselves'.<sup>21</sup> CAPs send their reports to field workers of RFDP, who collect the reports.

There are also other organisations with similar activities, according to CAP members in Walungu: Panzi (Legal Clinic), Justice et Paix (juridical support), Caucus de Femmes, Bureau de la Société Civile, VODER (visit prisons), CAMPS (juridical support), AFEM (for trade), ADAPS (juridical support), SARCAF. 'People imitate RFDP.'<sup>22</sup>

**The staff of RFDP:** how are they involved in the CAPs, and how do they describe the changes?

CAPs may have up to 200 members. As explained above, there are two field workers, who make monthly visits to each CAP, plus extra visits where necessary. RFDP introduced systematic monthly visits in the course of the project, as the CAPs became more central to the organisation of activities at the local level, for example the legal forums. The field workers organise activities jointly with CAPs, and train them on certain themes. But it is the CAPs who mobilise people now, which has as added advantage that when people come, they are not expecting a per diem, because it is not RFDP which does the invitation. Also in dialogues with authorities, the field worker of RFDP may be involved as moderator, or only as '*spectatrice*', but is the CAP which does the dialogue.

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<sup>17</sup> Group interview CAP Burhale, midterm visit

<sup>18</sup> Group interview CAP Ciriri, baseline visit

<sup>19</sup> Group interview CAP members in Walungu, endline visit

<sup>20</sup> Group interview CAP members in Walungu, endline visit

<sup>21</sup> Group interview CAP members in Walungu, endline visit

<sup>22</sup> Group interview CAP members in Walungu, endline visit

According to staff, there have been a number of changes through the CAPs. Women are starting to know their rights, and “these women are audacious”, they are not afraid to denounce violations of rights. Bit by bit, the spirit of *attentisme*, dependency, is starting to change, with RFDP’s approach to organise them in MUSOs. RFDP have engaged an external expert to set up the MUSOs and to train RFDP staff on this approach. Apparently, there is a MUSO which has collected over 1000 USD. Additionally, some CAPs are now independently taking the initiative to take action. RFDP staff are content with the progress, also for example in taking up more problems than just sexual violence cases, such as heritage issues, or witchcraft. Regarding SGBV, people are starting to see that it is not only about rape, but also for example harassment.

Staff indicate these changes have not only been brought about through training and awareness raising by RFDP. It is also through contributions by other actors: CDJP does mediation and sometimes medical assistance, and there also is IEDA Relief. International Alert used to be active.

**Other organisations:** how do they view the activities of RFDP and the CAPs?

The *greffier* of the recently installed Peace Tribunal of Walungu: the difficulty of Walungu is that it covers a large area, which means there are high costs for transportation, for example in dealing with land conflicts. The Tribunal asks parties to pay fees. ‘It is true that RFDP helps with the files, but our means are insufficient. We even write everything by hand...’. Problems are for example that there may be a verdict, but then the victim has to pay fees before the verdict is executed. So even when RFDP monitors the file, there are no means to finalise them. The *greffier* thinks RFDP is a good initiative, because it helps many people whose rights are violated, vulnerable people.

The police commissioner of Walungu: the commissioner indicates he has been in Walungu for over a year, but has not encountered RFDP yet. Nevertheless, he views civil society positively, as ‘our partner’, and very important because of the security information they provide. Insecurity remains an important issue, including armed groups, the proliferation of arms, roadblocks, and homicide. The security council of Walungu is restricted to government actors: the *chef de territoire*, the intelligence services ANR, the Peace Tribunal and the court, the Migration authorities DGM, police, and the military. The council can decide to invite others where relevant.

According to the head of the *division de la justice*<sup>23</sup> in Bukavu, RFDP provides important assistance: if RFDP (and other organisations working on the same theme) would cross arms, the state could also do this, and victims would be kept waiting for assistance. The raised awareness of the population of their rights can be considered an important contribution of civil society. The head of the Justice division welcomes this, indicating the state is in need of this, and also needs to be criticised, to be helped to function well. RFDP has invited the head of the Justice division several times to talk to the members of CAPs about justice and rights. The head of the Justice division is also familiar with the reports of RFDP, the radio broadcasts and the bulletin it publishes.

Cooperation Suisse, one of the international donors of RFDP, indicate they believe that RFDP is one of the stronger organisations in South Kivu working on the theme of SGBV. RFDP is structured well and has a strong mandate; it has improved the psycho-social support it offers a lot, and now with the development of the MUSO, Cooperation Suisse sees a strong synergy developing at local level. Members of CAPs share the same vision. At the same time, the development of women leadership in

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<sup>23</sup> Mme. Berthe Chekanabo, 21.05.2014

rural areas is still wanting: 'it is not normal that after 10 years of activism (...) there are so few women on all levels'. The approach has been too much focused on only the problem of sexual violence, and it is time to move away from this – which is what RFDP is doing in its focus on women leadership and violations of rights more generally.

Cordaid itself indicates it is difficult to evaluate the actual effects for the target group. RFDP's own evaluation shows that women are happy with the project, but this does not convincingly show how the interventions by RFDP have changed their situation. South Kivu is also a challenging area to tackle underlying causes of the problem, as the area is still in conflict. Nevertheless, two important changes that can be noted after several years of supporting projects, are: people are now paying attention to the opinion of women, and women have become aware of their rights (inheritance, etc). RFDP as an organisation is seen to play a key role in the women's movement in the Kivus, even though the movement itself is splintered.

**Capacity development:** how was the organisational capacity of RFDP developed during the evaluation period?

Capacity development activities by Cordaid were much appreciated, as the other major donor Cooperation Suisse did not invest in capacity development activities for the staff of RFDP. Cordaid assessed RFDP and developed an organisational development plan for RFDP. Cordaid also supplied a small budget that RFDP could use for the development of organisational capacity, which was used to revise the strategic plan, and organise a training on monitoring and evaluation. The Cordaid office in Bukavu organised trainings and gave supervision to the financial staff of RFDP.

The role of the Cordaid office in Bukavu in the partnership with RFDP has now become unclear. Initially, the office played an important role in the capacity development activities for the SPOs, but this has changed when Cordaid reduced its focus on capacity development. Financial supervision by the office used to be much appreciated. Now RFDP has to get directly in touch with the head office in the Netherlands when it has questions, and this is working less smoothly.

### *Actors and factors*

Besides the intervention by RFDP, what are other actors and factors that influence the development of the CAPs? We have already mentioned the presence of other Congolese and international organisations, with members of CAPs also taking part in committees and activities organised by these other organisations. Some of these organisations engage in similar activities as RFDP, training people on their rights and how to engage the local authorities. It is likely that the discourse of women's rights has come to local women from multiple sides.

Besides the activities of other organisations, RFDP also has a history of previous interventions with Cordaid. This means that RFDP has already worked with some CAPs for a number of years, and thus that the current development of the CAPs can also be ascribed to these interventions in previous years.

The context of poverty and insecurity is cited by both RFDP staff and beneficiaries as barrier to development: insecurity inhibits trade and investment. In turn, this inhibits the financial independence of the CAPs, which RFDP strives for. The MUSO approach was introduced in response to this, so that

women members of CAPs could gain access to small amounts of credit to develop commercial activities. During the evaluation period, the security context has remained more or less stable, though unpredictable.

### *Conclusion: contribution?*

Considering the evidence above, we consider it highly plausible that the sustained financing by Cordaid has contributed to the strengthening of civil society at the grassroots in Walungu, through the development of the *Comités d'Alerte pour la Paix*. The activities of RFDP have supported CAPs in developing their internal organisational structure, educated the members (literacy and women's rights, collecting information, approaching the authorities). These have contributed to the increased self-confidence of women, getting access to authorities, and getting legal support for SGBV victims.

The logic in the different phases of the project is developed convincingly, and it is clear that the CAPs are central to the approach of RFDP. Various stakeholders and members of CAPs describe change in the past years, often related to claiming the rights of women at the local level. There is also an important synergy between the project supported by Cordaid and the project supported by Coopération Suisse, in which RFDP undertakes similar activities, but in a different area. Coopération Suisse has also financed a vehicle that can also be used for field visits to the Cordaid project sites.

At the same time, there clearly is a plurality of interventions in Walungu, and members of CAPs are also targeted by other CSOs and involved in other groups. This confirms the centrality of these women in local associational life, and the strategy of RFDP to bring these women to decision-making positions. It also shows that the development of local civil society cannot be attributed to the intervention by RFDP alone. Also, during the first half of the evaluation period, the projects were financed with funding from the Postcode Loterij. We therefore conclude that though it is highly plausible that financing by Cordaid has contributed to the strengthening of local civil society, the share of MFS II financing in this is limited to about two-thirds.

## **7. Discussion**

Given our findings, we think the interventions by RFDP to strengthen civil society, as part of the project with Cordaid, were well-designed and suitable for the environment in which they were implemented. The increasingly important role for the CAPs in the interventions by RFDP is proof that these local committees have matured, and can take action independently. The CAPs have provided a space for women victims of sexual violence to find support and to become influential persons in local associational life. The CAPs remain in need of external support, but are suited to deal with the adverse security and economic conditions, and to engage the government at the local level.

In our contribution analysis we find that it is likely that RFDP interventions have contributed to the development of civil society at the grassroots. The issues addressed have to do with the social, cultural and economic position of women, and changing this is a long-term process. We would therefore recommend funding a similar project in the future – of course while taking into account specificities of the context. We endorse the decision of Cordaid to continue funding this project until the end of 2015.

The project could be improved in terms of the communication between Cordaid and RFDP. There have been a number of changes to the strategy of Cordaid during the project, which have affected the execution of the project, but which the staff of RFDP did not understand. Originally, the project with Cordaid was set up as part of a holistic approach to the needs of victims of sexual violence in the territory of Walungu, involving a number of other Cordaid partners, such as VICO for socio-economic support, and AFEM for raising awareness and education about women's rights. During the project, this approach was abandoned by Cordaid. Also, the project began with a strong focus on capacity development by Cordaid, in which the office of Cordaid in Bukavu was strongly involved. During the project, this focus shifted, and RFDP received significantly less support from the Cordaid Bukavu office. Both changes were not well understood by RFDP staff, with ensuing questions about the involvement of Cordaid and the direction the project was to take. This may well have to do with the reorganisation of Cordaid in the Netherlands, as well as the caseload of Cordaid staff.

Additionally, the project proposal still has a rather strong focus on sexual violence, while in fact the majority of the cases supported in the project have nothing to do with sexual violence, but rather with land conflicts, inheritance, theft. Similarly, when cases are referred to RFDP by the authorities, they also often have nothing to do with sexual violence. It would seem relevant to adapt the project description accordingly.

Reflecting on the evaluation itself: there is room for improvement in terms of the selection of the civil society elements under evaluation. At the beginning of the evaluation, we were under the impression that projects would have clearly delineated civil society strengthening goals, since civil society strengthening had been made an explicit goal of the MFS II grants. The fact that this was not the case complicated our evaluation, forcing us to focus on parts of projects in some cases, and this gave confusion during the baseline. Nevertheless, we were able to correct our approach during the evaluation, and in most cases we have been able to single out specific civil society strengthening elements. Predominantly, these elements target civil society at the grassroots, as we find that there are few projects that explicitly include policy influencing or advocacy elements that aim to influence policy at the Provincial or National level.

## **8. Conclusion**

Here we provide an answer to the four evaluation questions:

- 1) What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?*

From the perspective of the general theory of change of RFDP, with the aim of that 'women as well as men participate in management of public affairs and the construction of peace, in an equitable manner', we see sustained development, but no major changes. With the development of the 30-50% Campaign for women representation in decision-making institutions, there is increasing attention for women leadership, and a shift from focusing on women as victims (of sexual violence) to women as potential leaders.

At the grassroots level, numerous interventions directed at women have brought across messages on fundamental rights that are warranted by the constitution of the DRC, as well as different international legal instruments that protect the rights of women. A culture is developing of denouncing every case

of violation of human rights, in particular SGBV cases. In the Territories (our study focused on Walungu, but we believe this is representative for other Territories), we find vibrant associational life. During the evaluation period, this has continued, with many people involved in grassroots groups. Women and men in these groups have been educated on women's rights. Grassroots groups continue to help victims of violence (often women) to access healthcare, judicial and psychological support. The organisation in local groups enables women (and men) to go to the local authorities to advocate for their own position and for the position of vulnerable women and children. In all of this, local grassroots groups continue to depend on nationally or internationally funded NGOs (often based in Bukavu) for many of their operations, seminars, transport and accompaniment.

RFDP has supported the CAPs, and a number of them have become stronger, able to take independent action. RFDP has introduced the MUSO approach to the CAPs, so they can become more autonomous. New CAPs have been created, and many people whose rights have been violated have received support by the CAPs and RFDP.

2) *To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*

There are many organisations intervening at the grassroots level, and many of these interventions constitute a larger rights-based discourse. There has also been strong international attention to SGBV and the position of women in eastern DRC, for a number of years already. Based on our contribution analysis, we find it plausible that RFDP has strongly contributed to changes in terms of structuration, capacity and level of independence of the local committees RFDP works with, the *Comités d'Alerte pour la Paix*. There are many examples of women victims of SGBV that have important positions in these CAPs. The CAPs are central to the approach of RFDP to develop women leadership, increasing the representation of women in decision-making positions. Through its interventions, RFDP has contributed to the strengthening of civil society at the grassroots. Grassroots groups are strongly dependent on external funding for their activities, and as such the intervention by RFDP contributes to the continuation of associational life in the territories of Walungu, Kalehe and Kabare. However, because of the plurality of organisations intervening at the grassroots, as well as the history of promoting a rights-based discourse and improving the position of women in eastern DRC, the changes in civil society cannot be attributed to the intervention of RFDP alone.

3) *What is the relevance of these changes?*

These changes are relevant to the primary group of beneficiaries, women and girls victims of sexual and gender-based violence, because the support they receive prevents them from becoming social pariahs, and the strengthened CAPs and empowered women are better able to support them in getting access to the authorities and legal support. The development of income-generating activities and MUSOs/saving and lending groups is in most places still limited, and as such does not contribute much to the economic needs of beneficiaries.

From the perspective of the Theory of Change of RFDP, changes are highly relevant, as they are in line with the Theory of Change goal that *women as well as men participate in management of public affairs and the construction of peace, in an equitable manner*. The women of the CAPs feel empowered, and act accordingly, increasingly engaging with the local authorities. As local grassroots groups the CAPs provide an important social context for experiencing democracy, and experimenting with democratic

mechanisms for transparency and accountability. In rural areas, the number of women in positions of leadership is still very low; making women aware of their rights and their ability to take decisions, increasing their economic independence, is part of the answer. At the same time, much remains to be done in terms of governance and also cultural changes, for women to truly gain access to positions of leadership. The support of these local grassroots groups, working towards increasing their independence, can be considered a relevant activity for achieving long term changes.

*4) What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

Important factors underlying our findings, as described under the previous questions, are (i) the strong international attention to SGBV and the position of women in eastern DRC during the last decade, (ii) the plurality of interventions directed towards grassroots groups, (iii) the governance context of low accountability and financial means to implement the laws protecting the rights of women, (iv) the adverse social, cultural and economic context for women.



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Douma, N. and D. Hilhorst, 2012. 'Fond de commerce? Assistance aux victimes de violences sexuelles en République Démocratique du Congo', *Disaster Studies Occasional Papers* 03, Wageningen : Wageningen University.

## Workshops, interviews and questionnaires:

Baseline visit: October 3-4, 2012  
Midterm visit: November 12&19, 2013  
Endline visit: May 19-20, 2014  
Feedback workshop: February 4-5, 2015

| Name                      | Position   | Workshop baseline | Workshop end line | CS questionnaire baseline | CS questionnaire end line | interview baseline | interview midterm | interview end line |
|---------------------------|--|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Venantie Bisimwa Nabintu  | Secrétaire Exécutive   | X                 | X                 | X                         | X                         | X                  | X                 | X                  |
| Baciyunjuze Jean Baptiste | Chargé de programme et Coordonnateur du programme                        | X                 | X                 | X                         | X                         | X                  |                   | X                  |
| Laetitia Shindano Mbiya   | Coordinatrice du programme   | X                 |                   | X                         |                           | X                  |                   |                    |
| Rita Likirye Muhanano     | Chargée d'Administration et Finances                                     | X                 | X                 | X                         | X                         | X                  |                   |                    |
| Christelle Salima Sinza   | Assistante au programme  | X                 | X                 | X                         |                           |                    |                   | X                  |
| Doris Ndeko               | Assistant au programme et Chargé de l'assistance juridique et judiciaire | X                 | X                 | X                         |                           |                    |                   |                    |
| Lazare Mugaruka           | Comptable  | X                 | X                 | X                         |                           |                    |                   |                    |
| Mamy Nshombo Bulonza      | Caissière et gestionnaire de bureau                                      | X                 | X                 | X                         |                           |                    |                   |                    |
| Willy Chibalonza          | Animateur de terrain de Burhinyi   | X                 |                   | X                         |                           | X                  |                   |                    |
| Anthelme Mugisho          | Field worker Walungu   |                   | X                 |                           | X                         |                    | X                 | X                  |

Besides our meetings with RFDP staff, we also had a number of meetings with RFDP beneficiaries:

Around twenty members of CAP Cirici, 4 October 2012  
Several CAP members in Walungu, 19 November 2013  
Seven members of various CAPs in Walungu, 20 May 2014

## Contacts

UNDSS-Bukavu , Idrissa Mbaye, 05.09.2012

Cordaid The Hague, Roos Wilhelm, 09.08.2012

Cordaid Bukavu, Bertin Rutega (programme officer) and Annelies Claessens (chargée de mission), 10.09.2012

Centre Olame, Madame Mathilde (coordinatrice), 14.09.2012  
Heritiers de la Jusitice, Therefort, 14.09.2012  
Composant Femme du Bureau Societé Civile, Marie (Coordinatrice), 14.09.2012

Cordaid The Hague, Roos Wilhelm, 02.14.2013  
Cordaid The Hague, Astrid Frey, 06.05.2013  
Cordaid The Hague, Astrid Frey, 29.04.2013  
Radio Maedeleo, Jolly Kamuntu, 23.05.2014  
Cordaid Bukavu, Olivier Chibashimba, 20.05.2014  
Cordaid Bukavu, Deodatte Chisibanji, 01.07.2014

# Capacity Development and Civil society Strengthening Report RÉSEAU HAKI NA AMANI

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs and Bart Weijs, Wageningen University

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## List of Acronyms

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| ACIAR  | Appui à la Communication Interculturelle et à l'Autopromotion Rural |
| CDJP   | Commission Diocésaine Justice et Paix                               |
| CIC    | Centre d'Initiative et de Créativité                                |
| CLE    | Comité Local d'Éveil  |
| CPJP   | Commission Paroissiale Justice et Paix                              |
| ECC    | Église du Christ au Congo   |
| ECDPM  | European Centre for Development Policy Management                   |
| FARDC  | Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo                |
| FOMI   | Forum des Mamans de l'Ituri   |
| ILP    | Initiatives Locales de Paix   |
| ILSC   | Initiatives Locales de Sécurité Communautaire                       |
| MFS II | Medefinancieringsstelsel 2011-2015                                  |
| NGO    | Non Governmental Organisation                                       |
| NPM    | Noyaux Pacifistes des Mamans  |
| RHA    | Réseau Haki na Amani  |
| SPO    | Southern Partner Organisation                                       |
| TFV    | Trust Fund for Victims  |
| UPC    | Union des Patriotes Congolais                                       |

### A) Capacity development

#### 1. Introduction

Briefly describe the purpose of the paper; give outline of the paper; provide a brief summary of the analyses and the findings.

This report is part of a large evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of Southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society development.

In this report, we look at two components of the evaluation; capacity development of the Southern Partner Organisation, and civil society strengthening. As part of the capacity development evaluation, we looked at the contribution of MFS funding to capacity development of SPOs. As part of the civil society component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in organisation's capacity and in civil society in the evaluation period and the extent in which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline in 2012 and an end line study in 2014. In addition, we carried out an interim visit in 2013 for a limited number of organisations. For the capacity development component, we have looked at 5 SPOs. For the civil society component, we focus on a larger sample of 19 partnerships. All organisations included in the capacity development sample are also part of the civil society sample.

The report is based on observations, workshops, field visits, questionnaires, and interviews conducted during visits in 2012, 2013 and 2014, and on project documentation unless otherwise indicated. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup>

Core elements of our capacity development evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the 5 Capabilities framework that has been developed by ECDPM. This framework looks at:

- Capability to act and commit
- Capability to adapt and self-renew
- Capability to deliver on development objectives
- Capability to relate
- Capability to achieve coherence.<sup>2</sup>

We furthermore carried out a contribution analysis to look in-depth at the contribution of Dutch and non-Dutch funding to organisational capacity development. Based on this analysis we construct a contribution story for capacity development.

Core elements of our civil society evaluation approach are also the Theory of Change (but with a different focus than for capacity development) and the Civicus Civil Society Index.<sup>3</sup> Dimensions of this index are:

- Civic engagement
- Level of organisation
- Practice of values
- Perception of impact
- Environment<sup>4</sup>

We carried out a contribution analysis to look in-depth at the contribution of the organisation to civil society development. Based on this analysis we construct a contribution story for civil society development.

In this report we look specifically at Réseau Haki na Amani (RHA); We look at the contribution of Dutch support to the organisation's capacity, and we look at the contribution of RHA to civil society strengthening. RHA is a partner of both Cordaid and PAX and as such part of both the Communities of Change Alliance and of the Freedom from Fear Alliance.<sup>5</sup> RHA is a network organisation striving for peace and reconciliation, security and good governance. Over the last years RHA has availed of high

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was shared with both PAX and Cordaid. We did not receive any comments from their side. On behalf of RHA, Pasteur Katembo and Emile Ndele attended the workshop and provided feedback. Eric Mongo Malolo provided comments in writing. We thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> ECDPM, 2011. *Bringing the invisible into perspective: Reference document for using the 5Cs framework to plan, monitor and evaluate capacity and results of capacity development processes*. Maastricht: ECDPM

<sup>3</sup> [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org); see also *CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (internal working document)*

<sup>4</sup> Please note: In the methodology annex we provide more information about our sampling strategy and about the methodology we used.

<sup>5</sup> When our evaluation started PAX was named IKV Pax Christi. In the course of the evaluation, name changed into PAX. For consistency, we usually refer to PAX in this report, unless we refer to published documents in which the name IKV Pax Christi is used.

amounts of funding provided by Cordaid, PAX, the Trust Fund for Victims (TFV) and Trocaire. The TFV invests little in capacity development of RHA, Trocaire has provided some organisational tools. Cordaid and PAX invest more in organisational support, but we noted little progress in the course of the evaluation period. As a network organisation, the structure of RHA is complex, but little is done to promote communication between the members. Changes for improvement that were suggested already in 2012 were still not put in place in 2014. Overall we found limited evidence of capacity development, despite efforts undertaken by the MFS donors.

In terms of civil society development, we note that the network is an essential vehicle for most of its members to obtain funding and to carry out projects. In the past a lot of training was provided to the member organisations and the network's grassroots structures, but this has been limited in the past two years. Member organisations, grassroots structures, and beneficiaries complained about the lack of interventions and activities. Most of this was ascribed to a lack of funding and to delays in the release of funds. Given the overall budget available to RHA over the last years, RHA's contribution to civil society development at the level of members and at the grassroots level is too limited. Most members are primarily concerned with their own organisation and identify much less with the network. This limits possibilities to achieve cohesion between members.

## 2. Context

The evaluated SPO is active in the district of Ituri, in the Province Orientale in the North East of the DRC. The district borders Uganda and South Sudan. According to the decentralisation foreseen in the 2006 Constitution, Ituri is supposed to become a province. At present, the process is pending, just like the local municipal elections are pending. A calendar for this has been set but is contested.<sup>6</sup>

Ituri district has a long history of conflicts. One of the more severe conflicts took place from 1999 to 2007, with the period until 2003 being most vehement. The district is home to a number of different ethnicities and many of the land conflicts are said to be rooted in ethnically based tensions between the agriculturalist Lendu and the pastoralist Hema. The latter were the favoured group during colonial times. Cycles of violence have been repeated over the past hundred years. In the conflict starting in 1999 other ethnic groups were involved as well, such as Bira and Alur. Instability in the area led the EU to set up the first autonomous EU military mission outside Europe, named Operation Artemis. One of the aims of the mission was to contribute to 'the stabilisation of the security conditions and the improvement of the humanitarian situation in Bunia', Ituri's capital.<sup>7</sup> Thomas Lubanga, leader of the fighting Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) was arrested in 2005 and found guilty for a number of war crimes at the International Criminal Court in the Hague.

Despite the formal end of the conflict, various militia groups continue their presence in Ituri district, but in different constellations that can rapidly change over time, making the militia landscape blurred and difficult to assess. The surrender of M23 in North Kivu end of 2013, and in its wake, the surrender of other armed groups in this province, has not led to increased security in Ituri, at least not in the southern territory of Mambasa that directly borders North Kivu province. With the Congolese army

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<sup>6</sup> For more information about the calendar and the latest news about electoral preparations, see the webpage of the national election commission: <http://www.ceni.gouv.cd/>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/artemis-drc/mission-description/index\\_en.htm](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/artemis-drc/mission-description/index_en.htm), viewed on 28.07.2014.



(FARDC) taking over more control over North Kivu, loose rebel factions are seeking refuge in neighbouring Mambasa. An example of a group that caused a lot of insecurity in Mambasa in recent times, was the Mai Mai Morgan. Having started mainly in poaching, since 2013 the group became more active in violent attacks of several gold mines, pillage, rape and kidnapping. It was often argued that the leader Morgan was only able to relentlessly commit human rights violations because of the protection he enjoyed through his personal connections with high ranking military officers.<sup>8</sup> Shortly after his surrender to the FARDC in April 2014, Morgan was arrested and soon found dead when he was on his way to Bunia, before a trial had taken place. Armed forces claimed Morgan wanted to escape and was therefore shot, but different observers highly doubt the story.<sup>9</sup> The joint civil society organisations of Ituri (coordination office of civil society) expressed their concern about this 'trial', fearing that it would become more complicated to convince rebels to surrender.<sup>10</sup>

The end of the conflict posed new challenges to the communities; that of the reintegration of people who fled; and of finding ways for peaceful cohabitation of ethnically mixed communities. At present people live together relatively peacefully, but rather in mutual tolerance than in real reconciliation, as we were told by RHA staff. Analysis by RHA shows that the population is especially concerned about insecurity issues, land conflicts, and harassment by police and military (usually at road blocks). Land conflicts exist between agriculturalists and pastoralists but also between different farming communities. Another category of conflicts is related to natural resources, such as timber, minerals, petrol, and most importantly gold. Gold mining is mainly artisanal. There is a lot of conflict potential within the mining sector.<sup>11</sup> People who are not well aware of their rights, are often vulnerable and do not benefit from the exploitation of the resources in their environment.<sup>12</sup>

In comparison to the Kivu provinces, Ituri is an area that has a low presence of international organisations and in which civil society is less developed. The area to cover is vast and infrastructure is weak, which is a challenge for organisations operating in the area. It was pointed out however by a staff member of RHA that the more established civil society organisations in Ituri meanwhile have well-trained and experienced executive staff members.

### **3. Description of the Southern Partner Organisation**

Brief description of the SPO: History, nature of organisation, major changes in the org. during the evaluation period, main areas of intervention, geographical focus. Réseau Haki na Amani (RHA) is a network organisation striving for peace and reconciliation, security and good governance. PAX<sup>13</sup> was closely involved in the foundation of the network in 2004. There was a felt need to do more towards

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<sup>8</sup> UN Security Council, *Final report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo*, January 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Radio Okapi : RDC : le chef milicien Morgan est mort de suite des tortures, concluent les premières enquêtes, May 20, 2014, <http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2014/05/20/rdc-le-chef-milicien-morgan-est-mort-de-suite-des-tortures-concluent-les-premieres-enquetes/>, viewed on 28.07.2014

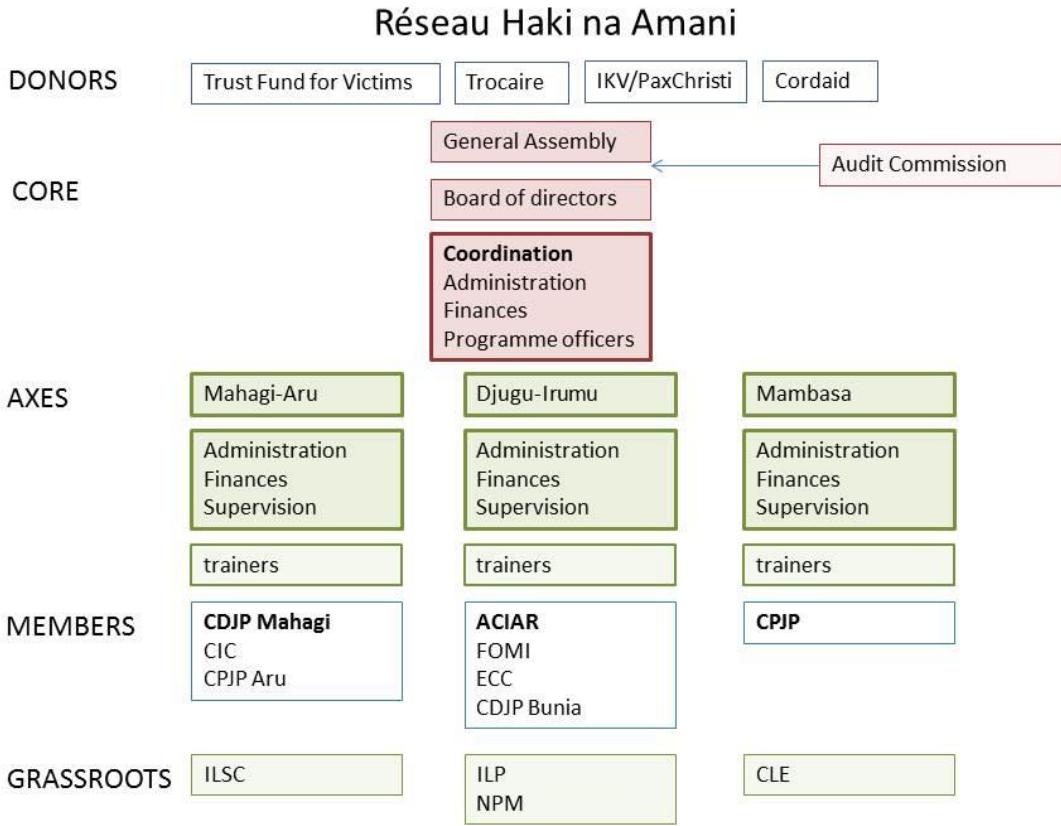
<sup>10</sup> Radio Okapi : Ituri : la mort de Morgan va compliquer la reddition d' autres miliciens, estime la société civile, April 17, 2014, <http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2014/04/17/ituri-la-mort-de-morgan-va-compliquer-la-reddition-dautres-miliciens-estime-la-societe-civile/>, viewed on 28.07.2014

<sup>11</sup> Van Puijenbroek, J., E. Mongo Malolo, and J. Bakker. 2012. *A Golden Future in Ituri? Which perspective for gold exploitation in Ituri, DR Congo?*, Utrecht/Bunia: IKV Pax Christi and RHA, p.100

<sup>12</sup> Based on workshop findings.

<sup>13</sup> At that time, PAX was still known as IKV Pax Christi.

uniting the opposing parties, and that is how the network started. This was largely donor-driven. Local community leaders were targeted in interventions and grassroots structures were created to promote reconciliation. The network operates in the 5 territories that together constitute the district of Ituri. These territories are often referred to as ‘axes’. Each axis has its own member organisations, as shown in the schematic overview below. Besides, each member organisation delegates some of its staff to the network for a certain period, with everybody bringing in specific knowledge and capacities. In practice, the delegates often function primarily as representative of the network itself, rather than as delegates of their own member organisation. The intensity of contacts between the delegates and the member organisation varies. The General Assembly should consist of two representatives of each member organisation. In principle a meeting should take place once a year, but in reality the GA meetings are very irregular. In July 2014 the first ever General Assembly was held, and a board of directors was appointed for the first time. Until then, RHA worked with a more informal board: the consultative council. Checks and balances were limited.



The member organisations of RHA have different backgrounds. This is often emphasised as an advantage of a network; all ethnicities and religions can be addressed and each member brings in its own expertise from which others can benefit. In practice this means for instance that FOMI, the women’s organisation in the network takes the lead when it comes to activities on sexual violence. In 2012 for instance, FOMI received a sum of money to organise a day to raise awareness about the fight against sexual violence. In terms of training, this sort of cooperation is generally limited to the level of the axes and contact between organisations operating in different axes seems to be infrequent. A disadvantage of working with different organisations is that it is more difficult to find general

agreement about the network's approach. Power issues have been pertinent since the foundation of the network.

**Axis Djugu-Irumu**- this is the axis where RHA has most of its members and where most activities take place. To give an indication of this: Funding was requested from the Trust Fund for Victims for activities in 2013 covering 33 localities in Djugu-Irumu, 5 in Mahagi, 3 in Aru, 3 in Mambasa and 3 in the town of Bunia.<sup>14</sup> Djugu and Irumu are two territories in Ituri which have suffered a lot from interethnic conflict between the pastoralist Hema and agriculturalist Lendu tribes. Bunia, located in the territory of Irumu, is the centre of the Ituri District, and the seat of the RHA office.

**ACIAR** (*Appui à la Communication Interculturelle et à l'Autopromotion Rural*) is clearly the organisation that takes the lead within the network; a lot of RHA's activities take place in ACIAR's office rather than at RHA's own office. Both RHA's coordinator and one of the most active members of the management board come from ACIAR. The strength of ACIAR is especially in promoting rural development and in encouraging interethnic dialogue. Rural development is generally not part of the core activities of the network itself. Staff members of ACIAR have a leading role in RHA, partly also because the organisation is based in Bunia and covers the territories of Djugu and Irumu, where conflict has been most intense in the recent past.<sup>15</sup>

**ECC** (*Église du Christ au Congo*) is a platform that brings together the majority of Protestant denominations in DRC. Although the ECC has been involved in the network since its foundation (and in fact worked together with PAX even before that time), ECC does not execute any projects itself with funding provided through the network. This is mainly due to ECC's organisational structure as a platform. Besides, ECC does not have a track record of executing project activities. The most important role of the organisation is to provide human resources to the network by way of delegates who are working as RHA project staff at the office. These staff members identify more with RHA than with ECC. In the future however ECC would like to execute projects as well. Two years ago, ECC has created a commission within its structure called the Commission for Justice, Solidarity, Peace and Reconciliation. This commission could execute projects in the future. ECC has a structure with members throughout the whole of Ituri (and even throughout the whole of DRC), which provides a lot of contacts.<sup>16</sup> During the General Assembly in July 2014, a ECC representative was elected as president of the Board of Directors.

**FOMI** (*Forum des Mamans de l'Ituri*) is a network organisation itself that brings together over 30 women's organisations in Bunia and in Ituri. FOMI advocates the position and rights of women in Ituri.<sup>17</sup> Within RHA, FOMI is the organisation which naturally takes the lead when it comes to women's issues. In the past, FOMI has provided training to other members of RHA and worked together with them in part of the projects. Cooperation is especially sought with Bunia-based members, much less with the other members. Whereas some of the other members of RHA depend fully on the network for funding, FOMI has always had a lot of own funding ever since the organisation has been founded in 2001. Activities for projects related to RHA constitute only a small portion of FOMI's interventions. In

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<sup>14</sup> Based on *Demande d'extension: 5*, RHA (to Trust Fund for Victims)

<sup>15</sup> Based on interviews with Catharine Machozi, 13.11.2013

<sup>16</sup> Based on interviews with pastor Katembo, 12.11.2013, with Emile Ndele on 1.10.2012 and 12.11.2013, and with pastor Louis Bahemuka, 1.10.2012

<sup>17</sup> For an overview of the organisation, see also: <http://www.insightonconflict.org/conflicts/dr-congo/peacebuilding-organisations/fomi/> (viewed on 23.01.2014).

2013 for instance FOMI received 12 000 USD through RHA, whereas FOMI's total budget available that year amounted to 200 000 USD. It was noted however that it has become more difficult to obtain funding, with donors withdrawing from Ituri and shifting focus to the Kivu provinces and to Haut-Uele.<sup>18</sup>

**CDJP Bunia** (*Commission Diocesaine Justice et Paix-Bunia*) is a branch of the Catholic Church that is traditionally involved in peacebuilding and social justice. This coincides well with the mission and vision of RHA. Through the church hierarchy CDJP members sometimes receive training as well, and the CDJP Bunia has its own sources of funding in addition to the resources provided by the network. In 2011 for instance CDJP Bunia coordinated electoral observations in Ituri in collaboration with the Carter Center. Until early 2007 CDJP Bunia was the focal point of the network.

Both FOMI and CDJP Bunia have received funding through RHA.

### **Axis Mahagi-Aru**

Mahagi is a territory that is relatively densely populated in comparison to the rest of Ituri, which puts pressure on the land and is an easy cause for conflicts. Large part of the population in Mahagi is Alur. Aru is located in the northern part of the district, bordering with both Uganda and South Sudan. The war has had less impact in Aru, but it did host IDPs during the war. Mahagi town is located at about 150 kilometers North East of Bunia. Depending on road conditions, it takes about 3-5 hours to get from Bunia to Mahagi and transport on the route is limited and costly. Interaction between Mahagi-Aru axis and Djugu-Irumu is limited.

**CDJP Mahagi** (*Commission Diocesaine Justice et Paix-Mahagi*) is the member organisation that we visited during our interim evaluation in 2013. CDJP Mahagi exists since 1996. It worked together with PAX already before RHA existed. When PAX incited the founding of a network organisation, CDJP Mahagi became one of the member organisations, working on issues similar to the ones of the network. At present, CDJP covers all 8 chiefdoms in the district, as well as the town of Mahagi. Especially the chiefdoms of Djukoth and Panduru were affected by the war some years ago, and as a consequence have known lots of security issues. The 2012 report of CDJP argues that the security situation generally has improved slightly in 2012, with people experiencing less harassments by police, military, and administration. Yet impunity and non-appliance of the law continue to persist.

Apart from the projects financed through the network, CDJP Mahagi does not have any other sources of funding. Yet, there is some institutional stability since CDJP is part of the Catholic church which provides support – albeit limited- at the moment funding is lacking.

**CIC and CDJP:** Aru is part of the diocese of Mahagi and CDJP Mahagi is responsible for overseeing activities in Aru territory. Locally, the CDJP works with a Catholic father who manages the community security projects in Aru (through the local level Justice and Peace Parish Commissions CPJPs). Besides, a local NGO, named *Centre d'Initiative et de Créativité* (CIC) provides the trainers to the program. The role of CIC seems to be rather limited, and during our end line visit we had the impression that the main reason for maintaining CIC as a member, is that it helps RHA to fulfil the legal requirement to consist of at least 7 members, as a member-based organisation. No representative of CIC attended the

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<sup>18</sup> Based on interview with Mme Jacqui, 13.11.2013

GA and hence no representative was elected as member of the CA. Internal problems about leadership constitute a major challenge for CIC's functioning

**Axis Mambasa**

Mambasa is the most remote territory of the district, and by far the most vast, with low population levels. Particular problems in Mambasa are with (often illegal) deforestation and with insecurity (presence of armed groups) We only met a representative of Mambasa during the baseline and end line visit but not during our interim visit. Generally, it is felt by staff members that Aru and Mambasa are laying behind a bit in comparison with the rest of the network in terms of activities employed. RHA staff argued that lack of funding has made it difficult for this axis to progress.

**CPJP Mambasa** (*Commission Paroissale Justice et Paix- Mambasa*) is responsible for coordination of activities in Mambasa. The coordinator of CPJP Mambasa admitted that he felt more should have been done in Mambasa from 2012 until present. He estimated that about 25-30% of activities had been carried out as foreseen, mainly because of funding interruptions. Mambasa has become less stable in recent years due to the presence of various armed groups. In 2012 we heard already about the coordinator's intention to work on capacity strengthening of Mambasa but specific interventions to realise this were still at the level of planning in 2014.

**4. Project description**

*Briefly describe the SPO and the project's capacity development elements; size, budget, duration; major objectives and activities. Project's main capacity strengthening elements, Theory of Change for cap.dev. Other capacity strengthening elements in other projects*

The following is an overview of the main projects of RHA and the funding received. RHA does not work with consolidated budgets for the whole network, nor for the different axes. The amount of funding varies per axis and per organisation, with the largest share of the money available for the axes Djugu-Irumu. Some of the member organisations - most notably FOMI and ACIAR have their own sources of funding to execute projects independently of the network. The church-based member organisations are part of larger organisational structures, and have varying levels of funding through these structures, but this is mostly for institutional support and not so much to execute project activities.

A complicating issue in compiling a table such as the one below, in the case of RHA, is that funding was often released with delay and then added to later budgets. Other funding was not fully released because scheduled activities did not take place. Due to incomplete information, figures used here are based on contracts that were signed rather than on financial reports. The major MFS-funded project is the 3-year program on reconciliation and community security. For a description of main activities, see the civil society section of this report, as most of the activities have a strong focus on development of local civil society.

| Project       | Donor                  | Major objective  | Period         | Amount of funding (in \$, unless indicated otherwise) |        |        |      |
|---------------|------------------------|--|----------------|---|--------|--------|------|
|               |                        |  |                | 2011  | 2012   | 2013   | 2014 |
| Peace Caravan | Trust Fund for Victims | Rehabilitation support to victims of war crimes (psycho- | 2009-June 2014 | 344000  | 385500 | 539000 |      |

|  |                    |   |                                 |  |  |                           |              |
|--|--------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------|--------------|
|  |                    | social, socio-economic, medical), organization of Peace Week  |                                 |  |  |                           |              |
| Bridging program   | PAX (not Cordaid?) | Achieve sustainable peace in Ituri and to assure security for the population                            | Jan-Febr. 2011                  | €1380 <sup>19</sup><br>€1849 <sup>20</sup><br>€10888 <sup>21</sup>   |  |                           |              |
| Transition program   | PAX                | Achieve sustainable peace in Ituri and to assure security for the population. Restructuration of RHA    | Mar-Aug 2011                    | €21310 <sup>22</sup><br>€70800 <sup>23</sup><br>€31862 <sup>24</sup> |  |                           |              |
| Reconciliation and Community Security                      | PAX                | Increase of community security and improved relationships between communities                           | Jan-Jun 2012                    | \$238110   | €11790 <sup>25</sup><br>€39135 <sup>26</sup><br>€36680 <sup>27</sup><br>€10700 <sup>28</sup> | 7291<br>5?(?? from audit) | ??           |
|  | Cordaid            |   | Oct-Dec 2012<br>Oct '13-Dec '14 | ??   | €11714 <sup>29</sup><br>€20000 <sup>30</sup><br>€20000 <sup>31</sup>                         | €160500 <sup>32</sup>     |              |
| Addendum to RHA community security progr: local governance | PAX                | Exchange between customary chiefs Ituri and representative of Dutch municipality                        | Nov-Dec 2013                    |  |  | €4069 <sup>33</sup>       |              |
| Participatory governance of oil in Albertine Graben        | Trocaire           | Raising awareness and help communities to defend their rights over oil resources, monitor interventions | ??                              | 62122  | 69882  | 5680<br>4                 | €3182<br>0?? |

<sup>19</sup> Plan 2011 intérimaire Secrétariat Haki na Amani janvier/février 2011

<sup>20</sup> Plan 2011 intérimaire RHA axe Mambasa janvier/février 2011

<sup>21</sup> Plan 2011 intérimaire RHA axe Irumu-Djugu janvier/février 2011

<sup>22</sup> Plan de transition mars aout 2011 RHA ST, numéro du projet : 3020.11/205.2

<sup>23</sup> Plan de transition mars aout 2011 RHA axe Irumu-Djugu, numéro du projet : 3020.11/202.2

<sup>24</sup> Plan de transition mars aout 2011 RHA axe Mahagi Aru, numéro du projet : 3020.11/203.2

<sup>25</sup> Programme triennal RHA-Coordination, numéro du projet: 110159

<sup>26</sup> Programme triennal RHA- Irumu/Djugu, numéro du projet : 110153

<sup>27</sup> Programme triennal RHA- Mahagi/Aru, numéro du projet : 110155

<sup>28</sup> Programme triennal RHA- Mambasa, numéro du projet : 110155-2

<sup>29</sup> Coordination RHA programme 2012, projet : 108873

<sup>30</sup> Plan annuel RHA, axe Mahagi, projet : 107500

<sup>31</sup> Plan annuel RHA, axe Djugu Irumu, projet : 108851

<sup>32</sup> La paix et justice en Ituri-Haki na Amani, projet : 110486

<sup>33</sup> Contrat gouvernance locale, addendum Community Security programme 2013, project: 110675

|                                      |                            |   |               |       |       |                      |                            |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|---------------|-------|-------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Amnesty International training       | PAX/ Amnesty International | Training on monitoring human rights violations at local level   | March 2014    |       | 14260 | 3278                 | 30 910 (AI)<br>33485 (PAX) |
| Update of 2009 land conflicts survey | PAX                        | Analyse trend in land conflicts, inform stakeholders, assess security risks of conflicts                                  | Nov'13-Mar'14 |       |       | €21142 <sup>34</sup> |                            |
| Research on gold                     | PAX                        | Mapping sector of artisanal gold mining in Ituri  | 2011          | 33500 |       |                      |                            |
| Conference on gold                   | PAX                        | ??  | 2012          |       | 26630 |                      |                            |
| Artisanal gold mining                | PAX                        | Increase knowledge about artisanal gold sector in Ituri, strengthen capacities of miners by informing and organising them | May-Dec 2013  |       |       | €21760 <sup>35</sup> |                            |
| ?                                    | UN-Habitat??               | ?   | ?             | ?     | ?     | ?                    | ?                          |
| Other funding??                      | Amnesty International??    | ?   | ?             | ?     | ?     | ?                    | ?                          |
| Total amount of funding 2011-2014    |                            |   |               |       |       |                      |                            |

Please note: despite repeated efforts we were not able to complete the financial overview. It underlines the difficulties of RHA in being transparent.

*Capacity development of RHA by Cordaid and PAX: 'pushing and pulling'*

In terms of capacity development of the organisation, RHA relies heavily on the co-funding provided by the Dutch donors PAX and Cordaid in the framework of the project on reconciliation and community security. Within this project, Cordaid focuses mainly- but not uniquely- on institutional support, and PAX is mainly –but also not uniquely- involved in the provision of project support. The difference in perception about the role of the donor vis-à-vis RHA was described to us by Cordaid's program officer in terms of 'pushing' and 'pulling', with Cordaid pushing, and PAX pulling to get RHA at a certain level.<sup>36</sup>

Until 2012 Cordaid generally invested in capacity development of its local partners in DRC. This was mostly covered within Cordaid's budget and not visible in the budgets of the partners. Cordaid's internal reorganisation into Business Units has reduced attention to capacity development and there is now a stronger focus on specific themes, reflecting the areas of interest of the various business units. RHA is at present a partner of the business unit Security and Justice, and the Cordaid program officer in charge of RHA explained us to have an interest in working more thematically with RHA, rather than

<sup>34</sup> 2013 Mis a jour de l'enquête foncier 2009 en Ituri, numéro du projet : 110675

<sup>35</sup> Projet d'or coordination RHA Ituri-association, formation et suivi creuseurs, numéro du projet : 110543

<sup>36</sup> 29042014, Cordaid the Hague

on capacity strengthening.<sup>37</sup> An impeding factor for Cordaid in its collaboration is that RHA falls under the Cordaid Bukavu office. This office is more oriented towards the North and South Kivu provinces, where most of its partners can be found. As a result, contacts are mostly indirect; at the time of our end line visit, the responsible program officers of both Cordaid The Hague and Cordaid Bukavu had not yet been able to visit the RHA office or one of its member organisations in Ituri. RHA staff feels that Cordaid support and engagement has always been very limited.

PAX provides less direct capacity development but is generally closer involved with RHA. PAX was involved in the creation of the network in 2004 and for a long time was the main donor of RHA. There was a close collaboration between RHA and PAX, with PAX strongly involved in the development of the network. This collaboration has grown a bit less intimate over the years. Until today, people within the network tend to talk mainly about PAX when referring to the project on Reconciliation and Community Security rather than to talk about PAX and Cordaid. PAX officers undertake regular visits to the office in Bunia and sometimes also to some of the member organisations. This allows PAX to give guidance in a direct way and to take action when necessary. Although this was not presented by Cordaid, PAX, or RHA officers as support to capacity development, we nevertheless feel it is part of it. Through its close engagement PAX is well aware of issues at stake and what is going on, but the proximity and long-term engagement may make it more difficult to assess RHA critically. RHA staff feel that the relationship with PAX has deteriorated over the last years and a lot of complaints can be heard about the lack of support and the delay with which funding is released.

Financial support clearly contributes to a certain level of financial resource security, one of the outcome domains that enables an organisation to act and commit (Capability 1). There is a continuous discussion between Cordaid/PAX and RHA about the institutional support that is needed for the coordination of the network. The donors prefer to keep this small, whereas the network coordination argues that it needs more support to properly carry out its tasks. The network wanted to put in place an intermediate level of coordination at the level of the axes, the donors did not agree on this. Meanwhile, this idea seems to be fading away. Next to (reducing) financial support, a number of capacity development activities can be distinguished in the projects funded by Cordaid and PAX. We discuss them in more detail in our contribution stories.

#### *Capacity development by other donors*

The Trust Fund for Victims (TFV) is a major donor for RHA, but does not invest in direct organisational capacity building. RHA staff explained that the TFV consciously identified partners that were supposed to be strong enough of themselves already to be able to execute projects. In more indirect ways, the generous sums of funding have contributed over the last 5 years to financial resource security, allowing the network to act and commit and to deliver specific products and services (Capabilities 1 & 3). Availability of resources has a positive impact on the execution of projects. Staff illustrated this by explaining that the fuel to power the generator at the ACIAR office is sometimes paid from the TFV budget. Many of the RHA staff work from this office (since RHA's own office is too small) and thus benefit from the provision of electricity.

Trocaire is a much smaller donor in terms of finances than TFV and also does not have clear capacity development objectives. Yet, it has been indicated that Trocaire might be willing to co-fund the

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<sup>37</sup> 06.05.2013, Cordaid The Hague



position of project officer that will be created to make the network more efficient. It shows that also Trocaire is aware that improvements can be made in this field. RHA staff were positive about the capacity development efforts provided by Trocaire.

#### *Theory of change for development of RHA's capacity*

RHA has started a process of restructuring in 2011. In 2012 the aim for the future was formulated as: "RHA will have a general direction in Bunia (coordination) and will constitute of 5 axes, 1 in each territory. The axe of the territory will be constituted by a network. Instead of a strong orientation towards axes, RHA envisions to work more towards having subcontracts with member organisations rather than with axes. This should facilitate assigning responsibilities and make reporting more effective. There is strong awareness that the structure of the network should change to improve functioning but little progress is made to realise this. An important step was taken with the organisation of a General Assembly during which a board of directors was elected. The next step is for all the organisational bodies to become more active and functional and to appoint. There is a strong belief among staff that restructuring will greatly improve organisational strength.

Both Cordaid and PAX monitor the restructuring process. Cordaid has suggested to hire a project officer to support the coordinator. Budget is available for that in the project, a recruitment process had been started but was then put on hold again . It is believed that the officer could help strengthening the coordination office. PAX is more oriented towards the provision of technical support to carry out projects than to organisational capacity development.

## **5. Data collection and analytical approach**

Describe the baseline and follow-up assessment. If there is one general methodology, that can be described in an Annex. Please present particular choices and data collection problems in the main text. Sampling method and sample sizes; workshop participants and other informants (in Annex). *Which key outcome(s) was/were selected for process tracing/contribution analysis, based on which criteria?*

General methodology as described in annex was also followed for RHA. Some remarks:

- To obtain a more complete picture of the network, we carried out an interim visit to RHA and one of its member organisations (CDJP Mahagi) in November 2013. During this visit, we organised a one-day workshop in Mahagi with CDJP staff. We focused especially on the organisational capacity of CDJP and the way in which being part of the network - and hence having access to donor support- contributed to the capacity of the CDJP. The second day of our visit to CDJP we organised a focus group meeting with beneficiaries of the network's projects, and conducted individual interviews with the staff.
- During the interim visit we had foreseen a workshop at the RHA office. This did not work out as planned. Instead we conducted individual interviews with 7 staff members of the network and/or the member organisations. This allowed us to obtain a more complete picture of the position of each of the member organisations and the collaboration and coherence between them.

- The coordinator of the network was hardly available during our visits. We were only able to speak to him briefly (once in Goma, once in the Netherlands, and once in his office) but he was not able to attend any of our workshops for various reasons, despite prior confirmation. We feel this has negatively impacted the information we were able to gather during these workshops. Especially during the baseline workshop, data gathering was hampered, as several of the attending staff members were new and would only refer to the coordinator, arguing that they were not able to respond to questions themselves.
- RHA is a network with a rather complicated structure and it is difficult to get a quick overview of the organisation. Indicative are the overview of contracts and the schematic overview of the structure above. We were not able to visit all member organisations at the different axes, but we are aware that each axis has its own particularities. Through our visits, we are mainly able to capture the dynamics of the axes of Djugu, Irumu and Mahagi. We have talked to representatives of the axes of Mambasa and Aru, but have a more limited picture of the functioning of the network in these areas. In our description of the 5 capabilities we provide a description for RHA as a whole, followed by short sections on the capability of CDJP as an illustration of how capacity of the members is strengthened through the network. Although CDJP Mahagi is not representative for 'the members', it can in many respects be considered as 'average'; not located as close to the RHA office as members based in Bunia, but not as far as Mahagi and Aru; not the strongest, nor the weakest.

*Key outcome selected for contribution analysis:*

The Theory of Change above shows that restructuring is considered to be very important for the future of the network and for setting into motion a number of other processes that can strengthen RHA. It came up prominently during all three visits. We therefore selected this as the first key outcome for our contribution analysis, as it is illustrative for the network's capability to achieve coherence. This is one of the five capabilities of the 5C framework that we analyse in this report.

*Outcome domain: Capability to achieve coherence:*

- Existence of mechanisms for coherence:  
Process of restructuring of the network

## 6. Results

Research Question 1: Provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the five capabilities. If available, provide description of individual indicators in an Annex.

|                                   | Baseline<br>(1-5) | End line |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|----------|
| Act and commit                    | 3                 | 2        |
| Deliver on development objectives | 2.5               | 2        |
| Adapt and self-renew              | 2.5               | 2        |
| Relate to external stakeholders   | 3                 | 2        |
| Achieve coherence                 | 2                 | 3        |

|                            |     |   |
|----------------------------|-----|---|
| Overall capacity (rounded) | 2.5 | 2 |
|----------------------------|-----|---|

In the following we present descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the five capabilities for the network itself, followed by a brief description of the capabilities of CDJP-Mahagi, the organisation in charge of the axis Mahagi, as a case study on the lower level.

### Capability to act and commit

- Level of effective leadership
- Level of realistic strategic planning
- Level of translation of strategy into operations
- Level of staff capacity and motivation
- Level of financial security

Coordinator Eric Mongo is clearly the leader of the network, but his leadership does not go unchallenged. Both from the side of ACIAR (the member organisation which he is also heading), as well as from the side of other member organisations and of RHA staff, people expressed their doubts about Eric being able to keep all the balls in the air. This was acknowledged by Eric himself as well (“the problem is practically with me”), but he also feels that the organisation is not yet mature enough to hand over leadership to somebody else. Leadership could be more effective in providing orientation to member organisations. Positive changes are expected from the restructuration, but the process takes shape only very slowly. It has taken already 3 years before decisions had been taken on how to restructure.<sup>38</sup> The appointment of a project officer should support the organisation’s leadership and make coordination more effective, but this has been pending for more than 2 years. At the level of the axes leadership and management still need improvement, especially in Mambasa and Aru, and to a lesser extent in Mahagi. In Mambasa and Mahagi some progress in leadership has been made in the last two years, Aru remains more difficult. In Mahagi, capacity of financial management is of most concern.

Strategic planning is mainly done by the coordinator, and although other members had participated in a strategic planning workshop, they seemed to have taken little ownership: “*The direction to take is for the coordination to decide, they check reports, validate, and then they provide orientations on how to continue*”, as we were explained by one of the participants during the end line workshop. RHA leans a lot on the skills and expertise available within ACIAR for financing, accountability, reporting etc. A lot of data are available at the level of the organisations, which would allow for a very strong context analysis and subsequent strategy planning. Yet, most of the strategy is developed at the level of the coordination, and does not necessarily make use of all the input available. The coordinator is well conscious of the importance of seeking funding opportunities.<sup>39</sup> During individual interviews, several staff members expressed ideas for potential changes in the organisation, or ideas for projects, but they had not discussed these ideas with the direction for various reasons.

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<sup>38</sup> Please note: more detail about the restructuration of the network will be provided under ‘capability to achieve coherence’, and under the contribution analysis.

<sup>39</sup> Illustrated for instance by his decision to cancel his participation in our end line visit because he had the opportunity to attend a UN/STAREC meeting in Goma where he hoped to find funding opportunities.

About operational planning we were told by a workshop participant: *“Planning is not realistic. They know at PAX [referring to PAX/Cordaid]. We have activities planned but we cannot execute them, only later if we have funding”* Once funding is released, part of it is already absorbed by unpaid salaries for the preceding months. These months usually pass without activities in the field, and once money is available planned activities need to be done in a shorter time span and with less man hours. According to RHA staff the main problem is with the donors who release funding with delay.

Staff turnover is relatively low, partly because alternative options for employment are limited in Ituri (as compared to for instance Bukavu where local NGOs have to compete with the more attractive salary scales of international NGOs). Staff expressed their motivation and dedication, but almost all raised complaints/concerns about the way in which the organisation is functioning. Over the years, RHA has received significant amounts of donor funding, but delays in reporting often caused delays in release of funding. This often causes delays in salary payment for staff, which is demotivating for staff and can urge them to find means to make a living elsewhere (i.e. not coming to the office anymore). Another point of concern of some staff members –and potential cause of frictions- is that different donors pay different amounts of salaries for people who are in comparable functions.

Within the member organisations, especially in the church-based ones, staff turnover depends partly on decisions taken in the church hierarchy. It reduces stability of these organisations and there is generally limited transfer of knowledge at the moment staff changes. Among staff and grassroots committees there is a very strong demand for more training, especially in relation to conflict mediation/peaceful resolution of conflicts. Besides, some technical skills are missing. During the baseline visit, staff seemed to be uniquely interested in training on the domains of intervention covered by RHA. They did not express an interest in obtaining more technical project skills, such as M&E, finances etc. This was probably also related to the fact that staff would attribute this role to the central coordination. During the end line visit this had changed, but only slightly.

**CDJP-Mahagi:** Since early 2012 there is a new CDJP-responsible for the work of RHA in Mahagi. The person is eager to perform his tasks, and open to input from others, but has struggled in taking up his position due to limited introduction and no procedure for transferring knowledge and information by the previous coordinator of the axis. As a result, he has to rely on knowledge and experience of his staff members; input of staff members is well-appreciated and also taken into account when reflecting on future directions. For instance, when we talked about possible projects to develop, the responsible quickly came up with a project promoting the position of women. A project along these lines would fit well with the background of one of the (female) field staff; she has worked on women’s issues before joining CDJP and expressed similar ideas when talking to her in the absence of the responsible. Division of tasks is clear and organisational lines are short. Staff is motivated but feels salary level could improve. Lack of alternative employment opportunities however, make salary acceptable. Field trainers indicated that they had started the work as volunteers in the past, but that receiving a salary was nevertheless important. Also, they explained that they needed to ‘become more scientific’, underlining their need for thematic capacity development.<sup>40</sup>

For strategy development CDJP relies heavily on RHA; RHA coordination is responsible for acquisition of new projects, funding comes through RHA, and CDJP is mainly executing, with little own initiative to

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<sup>40</sup> Field staff interview, 8.11.2013.

attract additional funding (contrary to some of the other members). Embeddedness in the church structure provides some stability, but at the same time limits autonomy.

### Capability to adapt and self-renew

- Level of effective application of M&E
- Level of strategic use of M&E
- Level of openness to strategic learning
- Level of context awareness

During the baseline, it was indicated that a lot of data are collected within the projects, but that little is done in terms of M&E. In Mahagi we observed that detailed information is indeed collected, for instance about local conflicts. This information is an important source for further planning and execution of activities at the level of the axes. Conflict mediation for instance generally takes place at the request of the population. Hence, at the local level context awareness seems to be adequate. Only part of this information is handed over to the level of the central coordination. This could hinder effective application of M&E as project and strategy development largely take place at coordination level. Sense of ownership is limited at the level of the member organisations. We were explained that strengthening staff's capacity in M&E was foreseen in the strategic plan (2012-2014), but that this has not yet materialised. It is unclear to what extent this is still going to happen. Staff are only gradually starting to realise that it could be beneficial to obtain more skills in reporting, M&E and management. One of the interviewees during our interim visit expressed this need very clearly, when he said: *"We, as member organisations, but also as network need training on monitoring. It is capital.[...]. We do monitoring in the field, but not with the appropriate tools. If we had, we could give more relevant information. Secondly, we don't know how to capitalise on the results of monitoring. Maybe because we don't really know how to use the information. I have expressed this problem at the level of the network, but it also a problem of member organisations."* We did not notice any significant change in this regard during the end line visit.

At the level of the axes, weekly meetings take place in which activities of the preceding week and planning for the upcoming week are discussed. At the axe Djugu-Irumu these meetings are most important, since the network here works with different parties. At this axe, the meetings were initiated towards the end of 2013 only. It shows that joint M&E and planning is done more consciously now. Yet, exchange of information between the axes takes place very limitedly and there is little effort for mutual learning, based on each other's experiences.

With the security situation becoming more stable in large part of the district in the course of 2012/early 2013, many beneficiaries started to express the need for different program interventions. During our last visit, the security situation in some parts of the district had deteriorated again, and demands for conflict mediation increased as well. RHA has always had a strong focus on conflict mediation and community security, and despite requests by beneficiaries this is not likely to change. Project activities are adjusted slightly; the number of participants in the community meetings for instance has reduced considerably in the course of the years, but this was more in response to reduction in funding than an outcome of what had been observed in the field. Generally, the sort of activities carried out by RHA

show little change; “our approach has not changed much in the past ten years”, as one of the interviewees admitted.

**CDJP-Mahagi:** CDJP carries out monitoring of both its activities and of the local (security) context. Data are actively gathered and reports are composed, but a lot of the data are kept for internal use only. Local presence of the security committees ensures CDJP of good insights in the local situation.

All the information that is available within the organisation provides great potential for well-informed lobbying. This is done mainly at the local level, and not so much as a joint effort by the different axes. The data collected for monitoring provides great potential for lobbying, for instance to inform other organisations about the needs of their target group, but this is not yet explored. Also, it could feed more into the development of projects and programmes within RHA. During our interim visit of CDJP we received a synthesis report of activities realised in the preceding year. A more detailed report was allegedly also available but could not be traced during our visit and is also not shared with RHA’s coordination. Considering the workload of RHA’s coordination team, it is not likely that – if made available - this detailed information would all be analysed at the level of the coordination. Hence, a lot of the information gets lost already before being used for strategy or programme development. No format for joint reporting exists.

#### **Capability to deliver on development objectives**

- Extent to which organisation delivers on planned products and services
- Extent to which delivered products and services are relevant for target population in terms of the effect they have
- Extent to which delivered products and services and the effects they have, can be sustained beyond the period of intervention
- Level of work efficiency

RHA has access to large sums of donor money, especially for the execution of projects. The largest donor - the Trust Fund for Victims - does not invest in ‘traditional’ forms of capacity building but mostly in projects. Over the last years, delays in release of (Dutch) donor funding has been a serious and recurrent impediment. Partly this was due to the delay in reports provided by RHA to the donor, but partly this was also related to internal issues at donor side. The delay seems to be a vicious circle RHA is not able to overcome: Because funding is delayed, projects start with delay, and activities are carried out late, making timely reporting difficult. Thus, despite having ample access to external funding, RHA often struggles to deliver on planned products and services. We did not note any substantial improvement to overcome this, at least not for the PAX/Cordaid projects. It makes operations little efficient.

In theory, staff are well aware of the desirable way of planning and executing activities and local stakeholders are engaged in this: *“At the local level people know about our planning. Each year we organise a planning workshop with them to discuss the activities which we are going to do, and when. But this year we have not yet done [July 2014]. It is costly. Last year we did. These are meetings with the ones in charge of the structures at the grassroots. We talk about strengths and weaknesses and plan activities.”*

Interruption of activities has serious implications for the strength of connections to the local level, as local trainers/groups become demotivated to continue the work. In 2013, hardly any activities could be organised in the field from January to June, and at the end of this period there was a small 'revolt' of staff, asking for 'technical leave', refusing to come to the office every day without being paid. During our end line visit, we found a similar situation: the money for the 2013 project, that was partly paid only at the end of the year, was used to pay for staff salaries in the first half of the year, but less money was available for project activities. Staff felt that the money available in the project funded by PAX/Cordaid was too little to have a real impact and did not cover costs of visits to all the local structures of the organisation. During field visits in 2012, 2013 and 2014 we heard complaints of beneficiaries that the 'network' was not active anymore. Staff members confirmed being less visible today than in the past. Given the total amount of funding available for the network we are not convinced of the 'lack of funding' argument; even with reduced funding, amounts available are still significant and should have an impact.

Internal communication within the network is limited, especially between the axes. There is little exchange of information, with the exception of the axis Djugu-Irumu; member organisations of this axis all have their offices in Bunia which makes it easier to meet. Lack of communication impedes activities. In the onset of the General Assembly, members received formal invitations only 3 days prior to the meeting (although informally the date has been announced earlier). External communication usually goes through the overloaded coordinator. This causes delays and miscommunication. During our interim visit for instance we had planned a workshop with participants of the member organisations. The programme was shared and agreed upon with the coordinator. Once we arrived, we found that he had forgotten about our visit; he was not available himself and had not informed the members. We agreed to postpone our workshop with one day to allow time for the coordinator to inform at least the Bunia-based members. At the end of the day we found that he had not yet started informing people and the next day it appeared nobody turned up.<sup>41</sup>

During end line we noted more optimism among staff about the functioning of the network in comparison to baseline and midterm visits, but to a large extent this optimism was motivated by the recently held General Assembly and appointment of the Board of Directors. Staff put a lot of trust in the potential for change in the future with a functioning board. It is not clear whether this optimism will be sustained.

RHA staff tries to be conscious in spending; trainers stay in the field for several days instead of travelling back and forth to reduce transport costs for instance, and sometimes participants of a training are all invited together to come to Bunia, where the meeting room of ACIAR can be used. High travel costs are a reason why not the whole district of Ituri is covered. But for the General Assembly and subsequent meeting of the Board of Directors, there was a conscious choice not to meet in Bunia, but in a more remote place, even though costs were higher, as there would be less distraction of daily business for the participant and the quality of the meeting could be higher.

Monitoring and evaluation is done at the local level to assess satisfaction of beneficiaries, but not always feeding into project plans. Each axis is responsible for writing a report to evaluate whether work has some effect, but each axis does so in its own way, and staff expressed the need to have a

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<sup>41</sup> From the perspective of the member organisations this was fully understandable; people were informed about the program only the evening before.

standardized format. It seems this idea came up only during the recent General Assembly in July 2014. Staff did not mention this during earlier visits. It is unclear why this has not been set up long time ago, especially because one of the reasons for delays in reporting, is that the coordination is spending a lot of time in putting the reports together.

**CDJP-Mahagi:** CDJP works with monthly planning schedules, and most activities are ticked off accordingly. CDJP tries to organise meetings with people at the grassroots level without paying motivation costs for attending. This reduces project costs, but also impacts on the effectiveness of interventions as less people are motivated to turn up at meetings. Discontinuation of activities at the time funding is interrupted or delayed has an impact as well; people lose trust in the organisation. During our visit in November 2013 we encountered members of the local security committees who admitted that a number of them has become demotivated and stopped activities of monitoring and mediation in the period it was unclear whether the project would continue.

Considering the monitoring data available, CDJP seems to be well aware of the needs of its beneficiaries. Yet staff members do not fully explore the potential of the data. Generally, we felt that CDJP staff were reasonably able to deliver on planned activities, whereas staff members themselves emphasised being in need of more training to be able to act better. During the workshop and interviews we noted that staff members were not yet very strategic in 'selling' themselves and in promoting their own achievements. When asked about realisations of last year, staff initially mentioned only a few things, whereas it appeared later that much more had been done.

#### **Capability to relate to others**

- Level of readiness to deal with power relationships
- Level of involving external parties in internal policy/strategy development
- Level of engagement of organisation in networks, alliances and collaborative efforts
- Extent to which organisation is actively engaging with target groups
- Level of effective relationships within the organisation

As a network organisation collaboration with other partners is engrained in the structure of RHA. A sense of ownership and responsibility for the functioning of the network is present in all member organisations. Opinions about the level of involvement differ. Representatives of some members feel that they should be more involved in setting up new strategies, whereas others were more indifferent. Generally there is a strong conviction that cooperation between the coordination office and the management board should become more intense. Since the restructuring is taking shape, axes are supposed to first report to the coordination office. The coordinator will then compile reports to send to the donors, whereas in the past, the members of the different axes were in touch more directly with donors. As the coordinator is responsible for all of the axes, it makes sense that information, funding etc. pass through him, but at the same time it also causes delays as the coordinator is overcharged and not fully in control of things going on. Reports that are already delayed when submitting to the coordinator get even more delayed before being submitted to the donor.

The relation with donors varies greatly. PAX is clearly a donor that is close to the organisation, also given its role in the foundation of the network. Cordaid, as co-funder with PAX has a more distant relationship with RHA and seems to be more critical about achievements. Trocaire has regularly



provided a training on how to collect data in the field for M&E purposes. The TFV, despite providing the largest sum of funding, seems to be less involved in capacity building of the staff.

Through the networks and contacts of the member organisations, RHA avails of a very large network that can potentially be mobilised. The church-based members (ECC and CDJP) are part of larger structures that reach up to the national and international level respectively. This provides a lot of potential for lobby and advocacy.

Generally, we have the impression the coordinator is very strategic in seeking contacts with external parties. He is frequently solicited as expert and keen on attending such meetings, but in being oriented towards external parties he runs the risk of losing internal connections, as well as the connections with the local level beneficiaries.

**CDJP-Mahagi:** Relationships of CDJP with local stakeholders are generally good. Despite rainy weather the field staff managed to mobilise a group of 10 men for a meeting with us. They represented various security committees and turned up without receiving ‘motivation fees’. CDJP maintains contacts with customary chiefs and neighbourhood chiefs. It was admitted that CDJP has a more tense relationship with one of the chiefs (out of 9). Staff explained that this is a chief who came into power more recently and therefore might not be well aware of CDJP’s work: “CDJP is a power that has influence. The chief is afraid that people will oppose because of our influence”, as the abbot explained to us. The local administration in Mahagi is felt to be cooperative. When not in the field, staff members stay in touch with people in the communities by mobile phone.

CDJP has limited exchanges with other organisations in the network. In Mahagi CDJP is well-embedded in the local civil society. On the request of other NGOs CDJP was asked to lead the formation of a new Civil Society Coordination Office (*bureau de la coordination*), which can be seen as a sign of trust. Cooperation however could probably be explored further. It was pointed out for instance, that CDJP could benefit from some training/support in the field of finances. One option that was considered was to ask advice from Caritas (which is having its office in the same yard), but thus far Caritas staff were too busy.

### Capability to achieve coherence

- Existence of mechanisms for coherence
- Level of coherence of various efforts of organisation

Over the last years, RHA has been able to secure relatively stable sources of funding for programmes with similar rationales. This allows for the development of a coherent portfolio of project activities. Different programmes of the organisation are closely related and complementary. Member organisations are also complementary, but because they are not all represented in the whole territory, complementarity of members within the programmes is limited, apart from Djugu-Irumu, where there seems to be more interactions. Potential for collaboration is higher in Djugu-Irumu as member organisations are geographically closer to each other and because more activities are carried out.

As part of the restructuration process, discussions have taken place about the vision, mission and strategies of the organisation, but institutional memory does not seem to be widely shared in the organisation. Staff turnover goes with little transfer of existing knowledge. It was not yet clear to

everybody how the restructuring is going to be shaped in the coming years. There was still a lack of clarity about the division of responsibilities between axes and coordination for instance.

The current organisational set-up is delaying progress in realising a new set-up. An example of this is the appointment of a board which should have taken place already long time ago, but which happened only in July 2014. There are a lot of expectations about changes that can be set in motion by the board but since most board members are high in the hierarchy of their own organisations, it was admitted that it would be quite difficult to get them together. A firm leadership calling such meetings is lacking.

**CDJP-Mahagi:** What goes for RHA, goes for CDJP as well; the vision of the organisation seems to be quite clear and is not much discussed as such. Besides, the different projects are closely related and findings/results from one activity can feed into another, as the projects have similar foci. This allows for a great level of coherence in the various efforts of the organisation. The vision and mission of RHA coincides also very closely with the vision and mission of the Justice and Peace commissions in general.

A drawback of the almost taken-for-granted vision, is the limited discussion about it. This makes it more difficult for new staff members or committee members to integrate in the organisation. New staff members do not receive an introduction training or handbook, and have to find their way themselves, leaning on knowledge and expertise gathered by colleagues.

CDJP does not have social organs such as a General Assembly. It is rooted in the society through its local committees.

## 7. Contribution story

*Research Question 2 and 4: Which plausible causal mechanisms were identified, what evidence was needed to overturn or substantiate these mechanisms? Provide the results; Succinctly describe the major result; did the capacity development interventions reach their objectives? Can the results be attributed to the interventions? If not, why not? Did other factors/causal mechanisms play a role?*

*Attribution problem: what does the intervention want to achieve?*

Capacity development interventions by PAX and Cordaid aim to improve the functioning of the network. RHA is a network consisting of different members at different locations. These members constitute various axes. Since its foundation, however, the network has never properly functioned as a network and levels of exchange and collaboration have been limited. Staff admitted that the development of the organisational structure has not held pace with the development of the activity portfolio. In executing their activities, most members certainly label their interventions as 'RHA' and also at the grassroots level beneficiaries are generally familiar with the name of the network. At the same time, all members have their own structures, way of functioning, and constituency. Staff often point out that the network is not a coherent entity. The main challenge is to work with independent axes but while at the same time keeping all stakeholder together. The axes have developed at different speeds and some receive substantially more funding than others. Among members there is discontent about these differences. Aru and Mambasa are often portrayed as being behind. Djugu-Irumu receives

the largest amounts of funding. Communication and coordination between members, and between members and the coordination office are often faltering. This has a negative impact on the network's functioning; reports are delayed, organisational difficulties linger on instead of being solved. The coordination is responsible for overall communication with donors and can be held accountable for the work of axes without fully being aware of what is being done. For a better functioning of the network internal collaboration needs to be promoted and modes of governance need to be strengthened.

*Theory of Change: How can the network become better functional?*

To improve the network's functioning, staff members believe there is a need for restructuring the network. This is supposed to strengthen the coordination, improve communication, and increase transparency and accountability. Before the restructuration can be put in place, a General Assembly needs to be organised. This Assembly serves to elect a Board of Directors. Subsequently, the Board should take its role of monitoring the management. Next to these two bodies, the network should also have a control commission and a coordination. If all these governing bodies are functional it is supposed that the network will get clearer directions on how to function, and internal governance will be strengthened. The different axes will maintain a level of autonomy but have to comply with the general framework that is set out by the network at the level of the coordination/executive secretariat. The general framework and strategy will be monitored by the Board of Directors, composed of members of the network. The general project description and log frame are subdivided in smaller projects per axis. Reports are submitted to the donor through the coordination. At the coordination level, an aggregate report is compiled. The coordination office will be better aware of what is happening at the axes and is better able to explain this to donors. It will be easier to track difficulties and to react. Project activities will carry a more explicit RHA-label, which is beneficial for the network's visibility.

**Restructuration is supposed to improve the network's capability to achieve coherence.** This capabilities is one of the 5 capabilities that are part of the 5C framework. Contracts will no longer be signed between donor and axes/member organisations but between donor and the network. Other donors already agreed on global budgets for a longer time. The different approaches of donors will be more harmonised once the restructuration is in place. If all communication with external parties passes through the coordination office, it will be easier to harmonise reports, proposals, and activities and staff are convinced that this will to more coherence between the axes and members.

*Practice of Change: Evidence of what has been done...*

The restructuration of the network is a long process. RHA's current statutes, adopted November 18, 2012 show that the first restructuration meeting was held in October 2005, followed by 3 workshops in 2011 and 2 other workshops in 2012. During the last 2012 workshop, the statutes were signed by the General Assembly. The statutes set out the main directives on how to restructure the network.<sup>42</sup>

From 2013 onwards, contracts with PAX and Cordaid are signed at the level of the coordination (before, each axis would sign own contracts with PAX and Cordaid). This is seen as a big step forwards as it allows for more coherence in project proposals, contracts, and in reporting. The project overview

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<sup>42</sup> Réseau Haki na Amani Coordination, *Statuts du Réseau Haki na Amani*, November 18, 2012, Ugonjo.

presented in section 4 of this rapport illustrates the complexity of contracts that used to be provided, especially when taking into account that the basis of these contracts was essentially only one general project proposal, covering the period 2012-2014.<sup>43</sup> What appears to be challenging for the coordination office is to put all reports together in an efficient and transparent way. Thus far, reports for instance are not yet fully consolidated; they are mostly put together in one document but no aggregate presentation of data is provided.

Another important step was taken in July 2014 when a General Assembly was organised in Ugonjo. During this Assembly a Board of Directors was finally appointed. A representative from CIC was not yet appointed as nobody from this organisation was able to attend the General Assembly. Next step for the Board is to meet regularly and to become a functional body that is overseeing the functioning of the executive staff. A Manual of Procedures is drafted and needs approval of the board. Once this is done, staff need to appropriate the contents of the manual and also of other legal documents such as the statutes and regulations.

Shortly after our visit Cordaid provided us with a Terms of Reference that were composed by RHA to hire a project officer. This officer is meant to relieve the work of the coordinator. His position is budgeted for the whole of 2014. A recruitment process was started in August 2014, but did not result in a satisfactory candidate and – to our knowledge- the process is stalled until today. It was concluded that the candidate could not be a person from Bunia or close surroundings as the person would be affiliated with a particular ethnicity. This would make it difficult to be seen as an impartial and neutral actor in the ethnically divided landscape of Ituri. A candidate was sought in Kisangani but no satisfactory candidate was found.

*... and what still needs to be done.*

*Functional governing bodies:* The appointment of the Board of Directors was an important step for the network and stakeholders involved all expressed their optimism about the contribution the Board is going to make to the functioning of the network. During our visit in 2014 –the week after appointment of the Board- it was not yet clear to what extent expectations will be met. If both Board and General Assembly manage to meet regularly in the future, and if representatives of all member organisations are truly involved this is likely to increase accountability, transparency and levels of ownership. This will involve a strong change vis-à-vis the way things have been done until now, with the strong dependency on the person of the coordinator, and it will take time and effort to truly implement this new way of working.

*Hiring a project officer.* The idea of appointing a project officer to assist the coordination office already came up during the early discussions about restructuring. In the 2014 budget, Cordaid has accepted to fund the position. The last information we received was that the hiring process was put on hold. Several interviewees explained that they are convinced that the person to be hired will need to be a strong person who is able to speak out when needed, against the members, and against the coordinator. If such a person can be found, she/he can contribute to better coordination and communication with the axes.

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<sup>43</sup> RHA, *Plan triennal 2012-2014 du Réseau Haki na Amani*, Febr. 2012.

*Standard reporting formats and procedures.* A major challenge for RHA is to submit reports on time and in a compiled way. Compilation at present is limited to putting together (narrative and financial) reports of the different axes and of the coordination, but there are no aggregate reports that present a global picture of realisations of RHA. During the 2014 GA, members agreed on the desirability to develop a template for reporting. If reports are submitted according to a set standard, it will most likely be more straightforward to put reports together and delays should be reduced. This is a change that should be relatively easy to implement. It is not clear to us why no such template exists until today.

#### *Contributing actors and factors*

*Money:* lack of funding was a recurrent theme that came up during the workshops and during most of the interviews. Since the start of the restructuration process in 2011 all member organisations have had to cut finances as available budgets have been reduced. RHA had hoped to further develop the central coordination office, to strengthen finances, and to hire a programme officer. Funding reductions obliged RHA to adapt some of the ideas.

*Coordination:* What came out very clearly throughout the evaluation is that the coordinator is overloaded with tasks and does not manage to keep all balls in the air at once. The coordinator is very eager to seek opportunities for additional funding and to be involved in high-level meetings with different stakeholders. The arduousness with which the whole restructuration process is taking place shows that he is much less oriented towards opinions, needs and demands from the level of the axes. In both 2012 and 2014 we heard about his intentions to stay more in contact with the axes of Mambasa and Aru because of difficulties encountered there, but we did not hear about any substantial progress in the course of time. The coordinator is willing to admit some of the shortcomings in this regard but little action is taken to make improvements. This is illustrated by the strenuous process of hiring a project officer to second him.

*Member organisations:* Contribution of members to the process varies greatly. Several parties involved feared a loss of power when delegating more control to the coordination office. Members want to be part of the dialogue with donors about funding. Part of the existing discontent and fear of losing control should be overcome by attributing a central decision-taking role to the Board of Directors, as this Board represents all members. If members were more convinced of the advantages of the restructuration, the process might have developed faster.

ACIAR is certainly the organisation that is most intensely involved in the network, but its proximity makes it difficult to take a critical point of view; the two principal staff members of RHA are both staff members of ACIAR. But decisions that are in favour of ACIAR are not necessarily seen as in favour of other members of the network. The newly appointed Chair of the board comes from ECC. It gives ECC a potentially strong voice in the network. Thus far the voice of ECC has not been very prominent as the organisation does not execute any projects within the network and RHA's staff members that have been delegated from ECC to the network seem to identify themselves primarily as RHA. It still needs to be seen whether ECC – and the Chair of RHA- will take ownership of the network and play a decisive role. Generally we got the impression that the authority of the Chair will be accepted. The Chair is committed but there is a risk of overcharging. At ECC he is also involved in the management of ECC's university branch in Bunia.

*Cordaid and PAX:* Cordaid and PAX have provided guidance and financial support to the process throughout. Budgets of RHA do not reflect a division of funding made available by Cordaid and PAX. This makes it difficult to distinguish the role of Cordaid from the role of PAX, based on concrete figures. Generally, there is an understanding between Cordaid and PAX that the former contributes more to organisational capacity development and the latter to project support, but there is not always agreement between the two donors about actual content of their interventions and the direction to take for RHA. This is known and noticed by RHA's project staff. It is felt that Cordaid is more critical and asks more questions about anything related to the restructuring process and to strengthening the organisation. For instance it took a lot of drafting and redrafting before Cordaid accepted RHA's strategic plan. Concerns were mostly about the global vision of RHA for the future, and on how relations with civil society and the state were going to be developed. Since 2012 Cordaid has made budget available to support the restructuring process. RHA explored possibilities to work with an external expert – financed by Cordaid- to accompany the process, but members were not happy with his way of working, as they felt he too much imposed his view. It was then decided to seek out the strategy internally. PAX has a more intimate relationship with RHA and PAX's project officer visits the network on a regular basis. PAX is a long-term partner of RHA. Funding by PAX almost seems to be taken for granted by RHA. Over the last years funding has usually been delayed, but there always seemed to be confidence from the side of RHA that at some point PAX would contribute anyway. This can provide stability to an organisation and can be beneficial for setting up more sustainable interventions. At the same time it reduces the incentive to improve oneself, to critically reflect, and to take up new challenges.

*Other donors:* The Trust Fund for Victims runs a major multi-annual project with RHA. Capacity development efforts are not taken up in the project budgets, but the TFV regularly sends consultants to the network who then work with staff for some time. Generally it is felt that the network should be strong enough to execute the project TFV envisioned and therefore they provide only project support. Trocaire has shown willingness to contribute to part of the funding of a project officer in support of the coordination office.

### ***Conclusion: contribution and relevance of MFS-support***

A smooth restructuring process and an increase in coherence in the network depends a lot on the strength of the coordination. Thus far this has proven a challenge. Steps taken to hire a project officer have not yet led to the appointment of anyone to the position. PAX and Cordaid are keen on working with a better organised network. In the perception of RHA this can work if the coordination office is strengthened and provided with more financial means. At the same time, the donors want to keep the coordination office as small as possible and focus funding more on the level of the axes where output is being delivered to the benefit of the population. There is a contradiction in aiming at centralisation on the one hand and reduction of the coordination office's budget on the other hand. We noted some progress with the appointment of the Board of Directors and found actors to be slightly more positive about the restructuring process. At the same time, exchange between the member organisations still seemed to be limited and we did not find more coherence during the end line visit.

We conclude that MFS-support (both technical and financial) plays an important role in the process of restructuring; PAX and Cordaid encouraged RHA to reflect more critically about its functioning. Nevertheless, we are concerned about the lack of progress we were able to trace, especially given the

large budget that is available for the network as a whole through its various projects. The whole process of restructuring has started more than 3 years ago, some steps have been taken, but others have not been taken at all, with numerous deadlines not met. Both PAX and Cordaid do not seem to be able to help RHA to overcome some of its issues, despite offering technical and financial support. Challenges that were mentioned during the baseline were still mentioned during the end line. Both donors have repeatedly indicated that improvements really needed to be made. If this is indeed the intention, more efforts will need to be made to turn the network into a good-functioning and effective organisation in which all members are engaged and know how to carry out projects, how to report, and how to manage large sums of funding. Given our findings about progress in the last two years we are not convinced the network will be able to improve its functioning sufficiently to reach a satisfactory level. In the civil society part of our report however we show that a network like RHA is relevant for the population. This is an element that should be taken into consideration as well when deciding about possible continuation of funding.

## **8. Discussion**

Given your findings, do you think this project (as in: the CFA's strategy for capacity development of the SPO) was well-designed, suitable for the environment in which it was implemented? Would you advice to fund a similar project in the future (or to continue funding this one)? What changes would you recommend, if any? How could the impact evaluation itself be improved?

PAX and Cordaid have invested large amounts of money in RHA. The major part of investments were oriented towards improving the network's capability to act and commit and to deliver on development objectives. Since our baseline visit, staff has mentioned the restructuring as a vehicle that would help strengthening the organisation, by increasing coherence, and by improving accountability and transparency. Although both CFAs had a clear intention of improving the functioning of the network, the strategy on how to do this was not very clear from the beginning. Aiming at a leaner coordination office but with more responsibilities is clearly a challenge and something that cannot easily be realised. We noticed a lot of mutual frustration about this process and did not get the impression there was clear guidance from the side of the donors.

We are convinced that successful restructuring has the potential to strengthen the capacity of the organisation. Thus far, the process has not yet been completed and it is therefore difficult to assess at this stage whether capacity will eventually indeed be strengthened.

Given the relevance of the network and the money that is invested in it, we consider it very urgent to put more efforts in proper guidance and support to finalise the restructuring and to strengthen capacity of the network. Issues that are at stake at the moment have a major negative impact on the functioning of the organisation and on the activities that are organised (as we show in the second part of this report). If overall funding for RHA continues, capacity development is essential.

About the evaluation: We are aware that we have only seen part of the network in action; in Bunia and surroundings and in Mahagi. For a more overall picture it would have been good if we had also been

able to visit the axes of Aru and Mambasa, especially since these axes are the ones that are often said to lag behind. Unfortunately we were not able to cover all axes.

*Which causal mechanisms do you consider to be valid beyond this case?*

RHA has been very successful in attracting large sums of funding; the network is active in a region with a relatively low density of civil society actors, but with an ongoing conflict. For strategic reasons many donors want to have at least some presence in Ituri. For donors interested in peacebuilding/conflict mediation/justice RHA is one of the more obvious choices. Because of the long-term engagement of PAX and the established position of RHA, other donors assume the network is strong and experienced enough to execute projects. What is overlooked is that next to project support organisations also need institutional support and capacity development. As long as total funding is relatively low, institutional demands are not very high. But an organisation with multiple donors should be able to act more professionally. This cannot be taken for granted. RHA has grown rapidly and obtains high amounts of funding, but the capacity of the organisation has not grown as fast as the project portfolio. The case shows that donors need to be careful in assuming that bigger organisations have stronger capacities.

## **9. Conclusion**

1. What are the changes in partner organisations' capacity during the 2012-2014 period?

Overall, we are not convinced about progress of the SPO's capacity. A number of challenges that were clear already in 2012 were still not adequately addressed, despite having the financial means available to do so (for instance the recruitment of a project officer). We noted relatively small changes in organisational capacity of RHA. The staff members that were still rather new to the organisation in 2012 had obtained more knowledge and skills in relation to the core themes of RHA. Some of the axes had improved their finances and level of report writing. Other knowledge had disappeared with staff changes, or at the grassroots level with active members ending their engagement.

Organisational challenges that existed in 2012 largely still exist, but we noted some progress in the process towards structuration. Results are not yet convincing enough to note substantial progress in this regard, although interviewees were positive about the potential of this process.

2. To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?

In terms of content RHA staff receives annual training organised by Amnesty International with co-funding from PAX. This helps to familiarize new staff members with the working themes of RHA and to refresh knowledge of older staff. Strikingly, the newer staff members that we met admitted having learnt most from their colleagues within their (member) organisations at the level of the axes. It was felt that more training could be provided. Staff and members of the grassroots structures frequently refer to training that was offered by PAX in the past. More recent training has made less impression.



Although our contribution story shows that progress of the restructuration is slow, we believe that without the ‘pushing and pulling’ by Cordaid and PAX the process would not have started at all. The MFS-support (both technical and financial) plays an important role in the process of restructuration; PAX and Cordaid encouraged RHA to reflect more critically about its functioning. Other donors are not or hardly involved in this. Members need a lot of pressure to set changes into motion.

3. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

The diversity of the member organisations is often depicted as a strength of the network; it enables RHA to reach a wide range of groups within society. For its internal organisation, diversity can also be a drawback; each member has its own particularities, interests, and demands. It makes it difficult to induce change; the more stakeholders involved, the slower such a process can be. This is certainly true for RHA.

Restructuration should lead to a better organised network. Coordination at present is not able to respond to all the exigencies that go with leading a network. A project officer could help to overcome this, but this is taking time to organise. RHA staff felt that the restructuration was to a large extent donor-driven, but not donor-supported

## B) Civil society strengthening

### 1. Introduction

For these section, see the first part of this report.

### 2. Context

For these section, see the first part of this report.

### 3. Organisation

For these section, see the first part of this report.

### 4. Project description

describe the projects main civil society/policy advocacy elements- theory of change, other civil society/policy advocacy activities of the organization

For a brief overview of the projects carried out by RHA in the evaluation period, see first part of this report.

*Main objectives and domains of intervention:*

| <b>Domains of intervention</b>                 | <b>General objectives</b>  | <b>Expected results<sup>44</sup></b>  |
|--|--|---|
| Democracy and good governance                  | Contribute to improvement of citizen participation and consolidation of the rule of law. | Communities know their rights and obligations and they participate more actively in various consultations with authorities to management of their own decentralised entity. |
| Community security                             | Contribute to improvement of community security in Ituri.                                | Strong community structures that participate with the local authorities on securing their own communities   |
| Transformation and reconciliation of conflicts | Contribute to a sustainable reconciliation between the local communities.                | Pacific cohabitation is assured through a reduction of negative perceptions between communities.  |
| Land conflicts                                 | Contribute to diminution of land conflicts.  | Land conflicts are resolved through a mastery of the law, mediation   |

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<sup>44</sup>Plan triennal 2012-2014 du Réseau Haki na Amani, 2012 : 27 (own translation)

|                   |   |  |
|-------------------|---|--|
|                   |   | between communities and greater involvement of the state.  |
| Natural resources | Exploitation of natural resources contributes to sustainable and harmonious development of local communities. | Communities know their rights and duties with respect to management of natural resources and they participate in the management of challenges associated with this exploitation. |

### Description of MFS-funded projects:

There is a long list of contracts between RHA and PAX/Cordaid. Most of these contracts are based on a 3-year plan (2012-2014) on Reconciliation and Community Security. The plan reads more as a strategic plan than as a project proposal. To achieve the objectives presented above, RHA foresaw:

- Mobilisation of community leaders about key themes, such as democracy, good governance, land rights, human rights, conflict resolution. Contributes to policy influencing/advocacy
- Workshops to strengthen capacities of grassroots structures of RHA on key themes.
- Community meetings in which general population and stakeholders are brought together to discuss conflict and security issues in their communities and to reflect on possible solutions (*barza communautaire*).
- Community security meetings to discuss security issues, smaller of scale than the *barza*.
- Monitoring of human rights issues and conflicts by RHA's grassroots structures.
- Conflict mediation. If possible at the local level, otherwise taken to hierarchy of the network.
- Monitoring and evaluation by network of local structures of the organisation

There are minor differences between the various axes. Activities presented are key everywhere. In addition, FOMI organises community meetings (*barza*) with a specific focus on gender. The axis Mahagi engages in radio emissions to raise awareness on key themes.

At the level of the central coordination, some additional activities are scheduled:

- Capacity strengthening sessions for RHA trainers on: good governance and leadership; land, mining and forestry code, gender
- Research and documentation
- (Press) conferences on research projects, monitoring data

During our visits we were repeatedly told that funding has been too limited since 2012 to execute a lot of project activities. At the moment funding is delayed, staff is no longer able to execute activities as foreseen. It reflects in a low number of realisations. It is unclear to what extent funding is nevertheless released (and thus to what extent the financial overview is indicative for the amount of funding received by RHA. For instance, the financial reports of Cordaid/PAX for 2013 show the following percentages of spending in relation to the budget that was available:

- Coordination office: 64% (with out of 6 budget lines foreseen for activities, only 2 budget lines partially spent, and 2 other budget lines added)
- Axis Djugu-Irumu: 55% (with a realisation of 28% of activity budget)
- Axis Mahagi: 26% of budget spent (21% of the activity budget spent)
- Axis Aru: 20% of budget spent (6% of the activity budget spent)
- Axis Mambasa: 33% of budget spent (17% of the activity budget spent)<sup>45</sup>

### *Main civil society/policy advocacy elements and objectives*

Large part of the activities carried out by RHA targets civil society at the grassroots level and/or aims to promote good governance. Members of grassroots structures (ILP, ILSC, CLE, NPM) have been trained on a number of themes related to human rights, conflict mediation.

During our interim visit in 2013 we collected more detailed information about activities carried out by CDJP-Mahagi. It gives a clearer impression of the work that is being done:<sup>46</sup>

In 2012 CDJP-Mahagi organised 18 quarterly meetings (two rounds of 9 meetings in each chiefdom and in Mahagi town) of the local security committees (ILSCs) 10 *community barzas*, 18 community security meetings, one territorial community security meeting, one evaluation meeting to discuss the functioning of the ILSCs, 10 M&E visits during which material support was also provided. The *barzas* are community meetings for which a wide range of stakeholders in a community are invited. The meetings aim at identifying security problems and to come up with suggestions to solve these problems, indicating as well the ones who will be responsible for realisation of the suggestions. Besides, the meetings promote an engaged dialogue between leaders and the people being led. All activities provide information to CDJP to carry out a context analysis. No concrete conflict mediation had taken place. It was noted that it is difficult to mobilise local authorities and state officials to join in the *barzas*. Other challenges are in terms of weather (causing bad road conditions), limited number of field staff, and the delay in funding.

### *Theory of Change*

The long-term aim of RHA is to 'organise a civil society which fully plays its role in relation to pacification, reconciliation, good governance, human rights and the exploitation of natural resources'. Basically, this has been RHA's long-term objective since its foundation. To RHA, civil society can play this role once rights are respected. Therefore, RHA monitors the situation on the ground through its grassroots structures. RHA supports these structures which can then learn others about their rights, how to claim their rights, and how to influence power holders to respect the rights of their citizens. Security is a crucial contextual condition. This is a difficult condition to meet. Promotion of dialogue at

<sup>45</sup> Based on *Rapports financiers RHA ensemble 2013*.

<sup>46</sup> Based on visit November 2013, and on *Synthèse du rapport annuel des activités réalisées, plan 2012*, CDJP Mahagi, May 2013.

the grassroots level is the contribution of RHA to this. It was admitted that the number of activities carried out by RHA has been diminishing since two years because of reduction in funding.

Cordaid and PAX provide joint funding, both covering part of the year. This allows for reaching the grassroots structures, but RHA staff argued that funding was not enough to reach everybody and estimated that about 35-40% of the structures are not really active.

*Other projects of RHA*

Next to Cordaid/PAX, RHA receives funding through two major multi-annual programmes: Peace Caravan (Trust Fund for Victims), and Participatory governance of oil in Albertine Graben (Trocaire). A common denominator of all the activities is the focus on reconciliation and pacification of communities in the different territories of Ituri district. As part of the Peace Caravan project, RHA has worked on collecting testimonies of war victims to compose a history of reconciliation. Psycho-social, medical, and socio-economic assistance is provided to victims. A major recurrent event is the Peace Week. We noticed programming for that week taking place during our interim visit in November 2013. In 2012 no Peace Week had taken place as time and energy had been dedicated mostly to the collection of testimonies of victims.<sup>47</sup> We have not analysed project activities in-depth as they are not the focus of our evaluation.

**5. Data collection and analytical approach**

Describe the baseline and follow-up assessment. If there is one general methodology, that can be described in an Annex. Please present particular choices and data collection problems in the main text. Sampling method and sample sizes; workshop participants and other informants (in Annex). *Which key outcome(s) was/were selected for process tracing, based on which criteria?*

In general we were able to follow the methodology as described in the methodology annex. For specifics we refer to the description provided in the capacity development section of this report.

For our contribution analysis we looked at the *barza*, the community meetings that are organised by RHA; these meetings involve a wide range of stakeholders. They serve to illustrate the relations RHA has on the local level with state and non-state actors and with citizens. This tells us more about the perception of impact of RHA, which is one of the dimensions of the Civicus Index.

**6. Results**

Research Question 1: Provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions. If available, provide description of individual indicators in an Annex.

|  |                          |         |
|--|--------------------------|---------|
|  | Baseline<br>(scale: 0-3) | Endline |
|--|--------------------------|---------|

<sup>47</sup> Based on *Demande d'extension: 5*, RHA (to Trust Fund for Victims)

|                       |     |     |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| Civic engagement      | 2.5 | 1.5 |
| Level of organisation | 2   | 1.5 |
| Practice of values    | 1   | 1   |
| Perception of impact  | 2   | 1.5 |
| Environment           | 2   | 2   |

**Civic engagement:** *diversity of socially-based engagement/diversity of political engagement*

A very important mechanism to identify the needs of beneficiaries is engrained in one of the main activities of RHA. This is the *barza*: a community meeting during which people can raise their concerns in terms of security in their community. RHA used to organise very large meetings (up to 250 participants) but has reduced this to about 50 people only. Amongst these are usually about 10 local authorities and the members of the grassroots structures. These are supposed to represent the communities. Limiting the number of participants self-evidently limits the number of beneficiaries whose concerns can be attended. This should be compensated by the attendance of the grassroots members who are supposed to carry out close monitoring of issues at stake and therefore should have a well-grounded knowledge of beneficiaries' needs. Since it was admitted that not all grassroots structures are well-functioning we are not convinced that enough information is still fed into programming. Interruption of activities and resulting long-term absence in the communities has an impact on the level of trust people put in the network. Under such conditions sensitive issues might no longer be shared with RHA. Another disadvantage of interruption of activities is that erupting conflicts can need urgent action. If activities are on hold, RHA is not able to respond to urgent needs of beneficiaries.

RHA still tries to take into account needs of beneficiaries in planning, strategy development etc., but since 2012 meetings to evaluate and plan have taken place without attendance of representatives of the grassroots. There was a strong feeling that activities in the field have been limited and that not enough has been done to respond to beneficiaries' needs since 2012. Lack of funding was given as main reason for this.

**Level of organisation:** *organisational level of civil society (infrastructure)/peer to peer communication/financial and human resources*

Some of the network members have leading roles in the various Coordination Offices of Civil Society at their locations. All member organisations are engaged with other partners in their respective fields. These contacts can be mobilised for RHA purposes in case of need, and are mostly at the local level. In Bunia, the network itself takes part in the Coordination Office in the thematic group 'governance of administration and politics. Within this group, RHA has the lead of a dozen of organisations which are active in the subtheme conflict resolution. Besides, RHA is active in a Consultation Framework on Natural Resources (*Cadre de Concertation sur les Ressources Naturelles*) and in Ituri's Land Commission (*Commission Foncière de l'Ituri*) in which it meets with other actors active in the field to promote good

management of natural resources and land. These institutions help RHA in exchanging information with other civil society actors.

An observation that was made by several staff members is that a number of members of the grassroots structures have been approached by other organisations to work with their organisations. In certain cases, beneficiaries left RHA to join a project of another organisation. This was not illustrated with clear examples, but given the indolence of the network for prolonged periods of time it is not unlikely that this is happening, also because these beneficiaries have received a lot of training in the past.

The number of donors of RHA has been growing. In the first years of its' existence PAX was the only donor, but meanwhile financial resources have become more diversified. The funded programs are all multi-annual and contracts can be renewed.

***Practice of values:*** *internal governance (democratic decision-making and governance/transparency)*

The process of restructuring which had started already during our baseline visit was still ongoing two years later. In 2012 one General Assembly took place, but none took place in 2013. In July 2014 RHA finally managed to call an Elective General Assembly during which a Board of Directors was appointed. The board should pave the way for making a number of changes that will improve the organisational structure of the network, which should result in better governance practices. Before this, these governing bodies existed only on paper. In practice, the only functioning bodies were the management committee in Bunia and the advisory board. The latter consisted of representatives of the member organisations, and functioned as substitute of the. Board of Directors. It is too early to tell whether the General Assembly and Board of Directors will meet more regularly in the coming years and to what extent they are able to improve the network's mode of governance.

Until 2012 contracts were signed between donors and the axes, but since 2013 contracts are signed between PAX/Cordaid and the coordination office. Finances are then distributed over the axes. This is supposed to bring more transparency. Another change is that since 2013 members are supposed to submit reports to the coordination office, and reports are then compiled for submission to donors, which contributes to upwards accountability. Reports are not consolidated in the sense that an integrated overview is presented of all projects, not of the narrative reports, nor of the financial reports, not at the level of the axes, nor at the level of the coordination. The lack of such reports greatly limits transparency. Reports are written per project and per axis. The only consolidation that takes place is adding all project reports of different axes together in one document. Information used to be shared with beneficiaries (members of the grassroots structures) during evaluation meetings that would take place annually. It was admitted that these meetings did not take place in 2012 and 2013. Beneficiaries do not take part in the General Assembly and their influence is only indirect. Opportunities for downward accountability are limited.

Internal regulations and statutes of RHA were approved in November 2012. In the same year, government at district and provincial government granted authorisation to function. The manual of internal procedures was updated in 2014 to reflect the new structure. RHA makes use of external

auditors to carry out audits of its projects, but this is not always done as planned.<sup>48</sup> In April 2014 an external audit was finalised based on the PAX/Cordaid project and covering the period 2012-2013. The report notes not all contracts were made available and a number of narrative reports were lacking, notably activity reports of Djugu-Irumu, Aru, Mambasa and the Coordination for 2012, and the activity reports of Djugu-Irum and the Coordination in 2013. Another challenge in assessing accountability is in the major shifts that take place within budgets; money is shifted from one project or one axis to another, and certain budget lines are highly overspend, whereas others are not spend at all.<sup>49</sup>

### **Perception of impact: responsiveness/social impact/policy impact**

In terms of impact, we were often told that impact has been much less than in the past because of lack of funding. This was confirmed by our meetings with stakeholders in the field (beneficiaries, members of grassroots structures, local authorities); they all argued that RHA was becoming less visible. Because there is a lot of variation in members, the level and content of contacts varies. Within the project on Local and Moral Governance contacts with local and territorial authorities are intensive, as authorities are the prime targets of the project and in this project it is felt that progress is made in terms of lobby and advocacy. Also at the district and provincial level more interaction is taking place between RHA and state representatives.

Within the Consultation Framework on Natural Resources and Ituri's Land Commission RHA executes joint lobby activities and organises meetings with stakeholders involved in the issues. These activities aim at policy influencing. Incidentally, RHA organises large meetings for which provincial authorities are invited. The last major event that took place in this regard is the conference that was organised together with PAX on artisanal gold mining in June 2012. During this conference, a report was presented. In September 2012 this report was presented in Kinshasa to civil society members and at the Ministry of Mines.<sup>50</sup>

For projects oriented towards the mining sector RHA is in touch with 2 multinationals: Total (about petrol), and AGK. These interactions are meant to promote the position of inhabitants of the areas. Contacts are in an early stage and impact is difficult to assess.

Generally, impact on citizens and grassroots structures is assessed as diminishing, whereas impact on state authorities is assessed as increasing.

### **Environment**

As mentioned earlier, a lot of monitoring data is collected at the local level. This provides the members with a profound understanding of the local context. The community meetings (*barza*) are an important mechanism for this but they have been organised with little frequency in the past years. Normally, information gathered during these meetings should be analysed and used as a basis for setting up further interventions, but staff admitted that little has been done in this regard recently. Monitoring data is collected at the local level and used as a basis to draft reports, but the data are not available in

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<sup>48</sup> Financial reports for projects PAX/Cordaid 2012 and 2013 show that no money is used for audits (despite being budgeted).

<sup>49</sup> AGESFO, March 2014. *Rapport d'audit sur le contrôle des comptes et des états financiers du Réseau Haki na Amani (RHA) pour la période allant du 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 2012 au 31 décembre 2013, close au 31 décembre 2013.*

<sup>50</sup> For the research report, see: van Puijenbroek, J., E. Mongo Malolo and J. Bakker. 2012. *A Golden Future in Ituri? Which perspective for gold exploitation in Ituri, DR Congo?* Utrecht/Bunia: IKV Pax Christi/RHA.



full detail at the coordination office and there is no aggregate analysis of the information collection. Data can thus feed into further programming only limitedly.

Within fora such as Ituri's Land Commission or the Consultation Framework on Natural Resources, RHA engages in joint context analysis, but participation is mostly with the coordinator and not with all staff. RHA has a clear focus in its projects and programmes. Thus far sufficient donors were always found to purchase this path.

## 7. Contribution story

*Research Question 2 and 5: Which plausible causal mechanisms were identified, what evidence was needed to overturn or substantiate these mechanisms? Provide the results; Succinctly describe the major results; Did the SPO interventions reach their objectives? Can the results be attributed to the interventions? If not, why not? Did other factors/causal mechanisms play a role?*

*Research Question 3: How relevant are the results?*

*Attribution problem: what does the intervention want to achieve?*

Ituri has a long history of intercommunal and interethnic conflicts. RHA wants to strengthen social cohesion in communities and promotes peace and reconciliation. RHA applies various approaches that help to bring different stakeholders (state and non-state authorities, civil society actors, community members) together in a constructive dialogue. In doing so, RHA aims to have an impact on better community relations and pave the way for a more sustainable peace. In the following, we look at a specific tool that is used by RHA: the *barza* (community meetings). An exploration of the *barza* allows us to look in more detail at RHA's contribution to one of the dimensions of the Civil Society Index; the perception of impact. Through these *barza* RHA aims to have an impact on community members, state and non-state authorities and on other actors involved in the communities.

*Theory of Change: How to promote cohesion in the communities:*

RHA employs various techniques to promote peace and social cohesion. Community meetings are often organized as a starting point. These *barza* help to bring together a high number of actors involved. This helps to promote dialogue between different actors that normally might not meet. Discussions during the *barza* lead to a long list of issues at stake within/between communities that have a negative impact on the situation of peace and security. The *barza* thus serve as an important mechanism to map problems/conflict and conflict potential. A next step for RHA is then to organise smaller meetings with a number of stakeholders that are directly concerned and to talk about possible solutions to overcome the difficulties. Through the dialogue, authorities are held more accountable by the population, which improves the social contract between rules and citizens. Strong moderation is essential for the *barza*; speaking out sensitive issues can easily lead to more friction between people. It needs to be clear for all participants that intention is to reach reconciliation.

The 3-yearly plan 2012-2014 on which funding of Cordaid/PAX is based, shows a target of 40 *barza* per year: 12 in Djugu-Irumu, 9 in Aru, 9 in Mahagi and 10 Mambasa. In addition, the coordination office, together with FOMI is supposed to organize 12 *barza* per year with a specific focus on gender.<sup>51</sup>

*Practice of Change: Evidence of what has been done...*

The complexity of RHA and the challenges in terms of coordination and coherence, make it difficult to obtain a concrete, clear and specific picture of realisations of the network in terms of activities. The following reflects our efforts to find out more detail about the *barza* that have been carried out. Figures presented in narrative and financial reports, planning, and workshop information do not necessarily coincide.

Djugu-Irumu: During the workshop in 2014, we were told that in the axe Djugu-Irumu 12 *barza* were organized in 2012, and 19 in 2013. The narrative report covering the period January 2012-March 2013 shows that a total of 3 *barza* were organized.<sup>52</sup> For the remaining period no report was made available. The financial report for 2013 however shows that the budget for *barza* (\$3500) has not been used at all for Djugu-Irumu.<sup>53</sup>

Mahagi-Aru: the activity report of Mahagi for 2012 provides extensive summaries of 6 *barza*. The overview shows a list of 9 *barza* organized in 2012 in this territory with a total of 1751 participants. Reports for War Palara, Panduru, and Walendu Watsi were not provided.<sup>54</sup> During a midterm workshop in November 2013, staff of CDJP Mahagi confirmed having carried out 9 *barza* in 2013 as well. This is in line with the three-yearly plan. In 2012 axis Aru organized the 9 *barza* that were foreseen.<sup>55</sup> No data were made available for 2013, but the financial report for Aru 2013 shows that none of the budget (\$3600) for *barza* was used.<sup>56</sup> We were not able to triangulate Aru findings during the workshop.

Mambasa: According to the three-yearly plan, 10 *barza* should be organized annually. Narrative report for 2012 shows that 9 out of the 9 *barza* foreseen for 2012 were organized with a total of 848 participants.<sup>57</sup> Narrative report for 2013 shows that 4 out of 10 *barza* were organized in 2013, with about 40 participants per *barza*.<sup>58</sup> According to the 2013 financial report, Mambasa did not have any budget available for the organisation of *barza* in 2013.<sup>59</sup>

Coordination: Narrative and financial reports by the coordination for 2012 and 2013 do not contain any reference to the organisation of *barza*. During the workshops we did not obtain specific information in relation to the gender-specific *barza*.

Overall, we see that the number of *barza* has reduced over the years and in general does not meet the targets that were initially set in the three-year plan. In the early years, RHA would organise *barza* with up to 300 participants. In 2012 this was already reduced to about 200. By 2014, the number of

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<sup>51</sup> RHA, 2012-2014 Plan Triennial.

<sup>52</sup> RHA, bureau de coordination axe Djugu-Irumu, *Rapport narratif de janvier 2012 en mars 2013*.

<sup>53</sup> Rapports financiers RHA ENSEMBLE 2013

<sup>54</sup> Diocese de Mahagi-Nioka, *2012 Mahagi activity reports, barza meetings- rapport des activités réalisées Mahagi*, October 2012.

<sup>55</sup> RHA, axe Aru, *Rapport synthétique des activités d'Aru en 2012*.

<sup>56</sup> Rapports financiers RHA ENSEMBLE 2013

<sup>57</sup> RHA, projet CPJP Mambasa, *Rapport narratif des activités 2012*. 31.10.2012

<sup>58</sup> RHA, Mambasa. *Rapport narratif des activités janvier-octobre 2013*.

<sup>59</sup> Rapports financiers RHA ENSEMBLE 2013

participants was further reduced to about 40-50 people. This has been a conscious choice by RHA. It makes organisation of *barza* in terms of finances and logistics less challenging and leaves more time to each participant to raise his/her voice.

*...the impact of the meetings...*

Impact of the *barza* is difficult to establish, as the meetings are spread over a large area (about 1.5 times the size of the Netherlands). Looking more closely at the type of problems that are reported during the *barza*, we see little change; insecurity, impunity, harassment, road blocks, land conflicts continue to be some of the main issues that are raised. The security context in Ituri has its ups and downs and is fluid over time and space. On the overall level we therefore do not see major changes. This does not necessarily imply that on the micro-level no changes are taking place. During our focus group meetings in both 2012 and 2014 in Djugu-Irumu we encountered people who testified positively about the *barza* and who set out how the *barza* has helped them to solve a number of issues in their community. A critical recurrent remark by beneficiaries was that *barza* should be organised more frequently, as a number of problems are persisting and not adequately addressed yet.<sup>60</sup>

Normally, *barza* require a follow-up by way of a smaller meeting (security meetings). During these meetings, RHA acts as moderator/mediator to help the parties involved come to a solution. These follow-up meetings are carried out as much as possible and are a key instrument to increase impact of the *barza*.

*...and what still needs to be done.*

RHA staff, grassroots members, local authorities and beneficiaries are unanimous in calling for more community meetings to be organised. Issues that are raised show that there is still a need for these meetings to take place. All parties are convinced of the effectiveness and potential of the meetings, provided they are properly organised. This means meetings need to be regular, inclusive in terms of participants, well-moderated and followed by a meeting during which concrete solutions are sought with the stakeholders concerned.

*Contributing actors and factors:*

*Member organisations/field staff:* The *barza* are mostly carried out by member organisations. They need a good reputation in the field, as they need to mobilise a wide range of stakeholders and find willingness to participate in the meetings. Generally this is well ensured. Not all staff members feel well-trained and capacitated to carry out *barza*. Some of them indicated the need for more training. Good moderation is indispensable to have a positive impact. If moderation is not handled with care, there is a risk of aggravating disputes rather than solving.

*Grassroots structures:* The members of the grassroots structures are the ones who can actively indicate the need to organise a *barza* as they are usually better informed about the local situation than the network. They provide monitoring data that help to determine difficulties and that also show to what extent follow-up is needed. Individuals who have been working with the network for several years

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<sup>60</sup> Field visits, 29.09.2012 and 16.07.2014

usually have a good understanding of their tasks, newer volunteers indicated the need for more training. Peer learning is used as a way to obtain knowledge but does not always give satisfying results.

*Local authorities:* A lot of issues that are raised during the meetings involve security issues, or other problems that need collaboration of local authorities (state and non-state, incl. police, military, intelligence service etc.) to come to a solution. Their participation and engagement is therefore indispensable. During our visit we heard several informants complaining about the lack of participation of local authorities. Indeed, participation can be painful as during the meetings they can be confronted with accusations about abuse of power etc.

*Donors:* For the organisation of *barza*, financial support is needed to provide logistics, to pay restauration and transport of participants etc. Besides, training is needed: for the moderators who intervene and for the grassroots volunteers who monitor the local situation. PAX and Cordaid provide this support, but we found great dissatisfaction among RHA staff about the collaboration with both donors (especially due to reduction of funding, delay of contracts)..

*Conclusion: contribution and relevance of RHA's intervention*

Overall, we were not able to get full clarity about size, extent and impact of the *barza* that were organised by RHA and its members in the last years, as the overview of evidence shows. Additional anecdotal evidence shows that all stakeholders involved are positive about the potential of the *barza* and consider the *barza* an effective tool to start a discussion at inter- and intracommunal level on problems and disputes. Speaking out any tensions paves the way towards seeking a solution. Bringing together different people in a meeting promotes social cohesion. Generally we consider the *barza* therefore as a relevant way to have an impact.

Analysis of the evidence shows that RHA does not meet the targets that were set in the three-yearly plan, not even when taking into consideration only the most positive figures. This is a clear point of concern. Staff argued that annual plans should serve as reference point rather than the three-yearly plan, but contracts are generally based on the three-yearly plan.

Another concern we have is in relation to the reduction of participants in the *barza*. We agree that less participants probably allows more time for each participant to raise his/her concerns, but would like to point out the risk of overlooking certain categories. Participants at present are largely authority figures, civil society or church actors etc. It is unclear to what extent the needs and concerns of 'average' citizens are still sufficiently captured, as it should be taken into consideration that the actors engaged in civil society, and especially the ones leading grassroots structures, can be seen as a sort of 'elite' that is often slightly more educated and in a more privileged position than 'average' citizens.<sup>61</sup>

Support by PAX and Cordaid is key in organising the *barza*. Delays in funding have an immediate effect and lead to interruption of activities.

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<sup>61</sup> See for instance Milabyo Kyamusugulwa, P. 2014. *Community-driven reconstruction in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo: capacity building, accountability, power, labour, and ownership*. Wageningen University, PhD thesis.

*If MDG and CD interventions were evaluated: how did these contribute to reaching civil society objectives.*

Since the beginning of the partnership, PAX has invested in thematic training modules for the network, its members, and its grassroots structures. Participants of these training still benefit from knowledge obtained. From 2012-2014, PAX organised a training jointly with Amnesty International. These trainings are especially effective in improving the CSI dimensions civic engagement and perception of impact. Cordaid has provided organisational support aimed at restructuring, at improving finances etc. These trainings contribute to practice of values.

## **8. Discussion**

Given your findings, do you think this project (as in: SPO interventions towards civil society strengthening) was well-designed, suitable for the environment in which it was implemented? Would you advice to fund a similar project in the future (or to continue funding this one)? What changes would you recommend, if any? How could the impact evaluation itself be improved?

In principle the project is well-designed; clear goals and objectives are set and seem to be realistic. The project is in line with the overall mission of RHA. But design does not match reality and objectives are far from being met. This is not only the case for the *barza* but also for other activities. Lack of consolidated financial and narrative reports and budgets that are not adjusted to the actual situation make it very difficult to assess the success of the project. We have serious concerns about this. It is clear that funding has become more limited, but the total amount available to the network is still significant and should allow for a considerable impact.

Given the fragility of peace in the district, the project could be highly relevant and make a good contribution to strengthening civil society; by strengthening both members and grassroots structures. In practice we mainly heard complaints of people arguing that the network was hardly active anymore. At the same time, people were positive about the things that are still being realised, and about contributions of the projects in the past. This show us that in principle the project is suitable for the environment. Once the security situation is improving, we would recommend some reflection on how to innovative; at present the network is by and large still carrying out the same activities as in its early years. Without major changes in terms of security it can be tempting to continue doing the same thing, but it might be worth to explore other possible intervention strategies in the future.

Among staff there is a lot of trust that the restructuration will make the network more effective and efficient. We have discussed this in the capacity development section of this report. It is certainly important to take concrete steps to improve coordination. The vicious circle of delays in activities- delays in reporting- delays in funding needs to be overcome to make project interventions more effective, efficient, and relevant. RHA staff are inclined to blame especially PAX and Cordaid for this. It is our impression however that both sides are part of this.

About our evaluation: We are aware that we have only seen part of the network in action; in Bunia and surroundings and in Mahagi. For a more overall picture it would have been good if we had also been able to visit the axes of Aru and Mambasa, especially since these axes are the ones that are often said to be behind. Unfortunately we were not able to cover all axes.

*Which causal mechanisms do you consider to be valid beyond this case?*

In the context of a weak state, of interethnic conflicts, and of insecurity it is very important to build mutual trust between citizens, but also between citizens and its power holders. Bringing people together to promote dialogue, to talk openly about issues at stake and to work towards repairment can be effective to strengthen social cohesion. This is a valid strategy that is worth exploring in other contexts, but cautiously; mediators/moderators need to be well-trusted and respected by all parties involved. Solutions have to come up in a participatory way to ensure that all parties take ownership of the path to take towards increased security and peace.

## **9. Conclusion**

Provide an answer to the evaluation questions.

- 1) What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?

Overall, we see limited improvements in Ituri in terms of security, peace and justice. As we describe in the context section of this report, a lot of challenges remain. At the moment the security situation increases in one territory or community, the situation might deteriorate in another area. Surrender of one armed group might lead to dispersal of armed individuals or factions in another area. A police officer that is aware about human rights might be transferred to another province and replaced by somebody who is not aware, etc. It all leads to a continuing need for interventions that focus on good governance, justice, and peace.

At the micro-level it is possible to hear positive examples, e.g. of people who experienced more justice, of people who ended long-lasting conflicts with their neighbours, or of women who feel their rights are better respected. Most of these changes do not have a far-reaching impact beyond the micro-level.

- 2) *To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*

To get an impression of the contribution of RHA one needs to descend to the local level. At this level RHA, its member organisations and its grassroots structures contribute to the promotion of dialogue and to social cohesion throughout the district of Ituri. Because of its presence throughout the district, efforts are fragmented. Contribution of RHA could be more visible if efforts were more concentrated in smaller areas. Beneficiaries at the local level usually referred to realisations of RHA in earlier years than in the evaluation period. Contribution at present is clearly more limited than it used to be.

- 3) What is the relevance of these changes?

Given the fragile context of Ituri changes are relevant as they can contribute to more stability and peace. Beneficiaries expressed an interest in participating in more activities organised by RHA.

4) *What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

RHA is a network that has a presence in all the territories of Ituri through its member organisations. As a result, geographic coverage is large, but intensity of interventions is not very high. Beneficiaries complained that not enough has been done in recent years. Challenges in the field are vast. Civil society actors do not have a presence in Ituri that is as high as that in the Kivus. This makes it more difficult for organisations such as RHA to create a momentum for change. RHA staff feel that a lot of the challenges could be overcome by more cooperative donors.

## List of key documents

AGESFO, March 2014. *Rapport d'audit sur le contrôle des comptes et des états financiers du Réseau Haki na Amani (RHA) pour la période allant du 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 2012 au 31 décembre 2013, close au 31 décembre 2013.*

CDJP Mahagi, *Synthèse du rapport annuel des activités réalisées, plan 2012*, CDJP Mahagi, May 2013.

Diocese de Mahagi-Nioka, *2012 Mahagi activity reports, barza meetings- rapport des activités réalisées Mahagi*, October 2012.

Milabyo Kyamusugulwa, P. 2014. *Community-driven reconstruction in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo: capacity building, accountability, power, labour, and ownership*. Wageningen University, PhD thesis.

RHA, axe Aru, *Rapport synthétique des activités d'Aru en 2012*.

RHA, bureau de coordination axe Djugu-Irumu, *Rapport narratif de janvier 2012 en mars 2013*.

RHA, Contrat gouvernance locale, addendum Community Security programme 2013, project: 110675

RHA, Coordination RHA programme 2012, projet : 108873

RHA, *Demande d'extension: 5*, RHA (to Trust Fund for Victims)

RHA, La paix et justice en Ituri-Haki na Amani, projet : 110486

RHA, Mambasa. *Rapport narratif des activités janvier-octobre 2013*.

RHA, Mis a jour de l'enquête foncier 2009 en Ituri, numéro du projet : 110675, 2013

RHA, Plan 2011 intérimaire Secrétariat Haki na Amani janvier/février 2011

RHA, Plan 2011 intérimaire RHA axe Mambasa janvier/février 2011

RHA, Plan 2011 intérimaire RHA axe Irumu-Djugu janvier/février 2011

RHA Plan annuel RHA, axe Mahagi, projet : 107500

RHA, Plan annuel RHA, axe Djugu Irumu, projet : 108851

RHA, Plan de transition mars aout 2011 RHA ST, numéro du projet : 3020.11/205.2

RHA, Plan de transition mars aout 2011 RHA axe Irumu-Djugu, numéro du projet : 3020.11/202.2

RHA, Plan de transition mars aout 2011 RHA axe Mahagi Aru, numéro du projet : 3020.11/203.2

RHA, Plan triennal 2012-2014 du Réseau Haki na Amani, 2012

RHA, Programme triennal RHA-Coordination, numéro du projet: 110159

RHA, Programme triennal RHA- Irumu/Djugu, numéro du projet : 110153

RHA Programme triennal RHA- Mahagi/Aru, numéro du projet : 110155

RHA Programme triennal RHA- Mambasa, numéro du projet : 110155-2

RHA, projet CJP Mambasa, *Rapport narratif des activités 2012*. 31.10.2012

RHA, Projet d'or coordination RHA Ituri-association, formation et suivi creuseurs, numéro du projet : 110543

RHA, *Rapports financiers RHA ensemble 2013*.

Réseau Haki na Amani Coordination, *Statuts du Réseau Haki na Amani*, November 18, 2012, Ugonjo.

UN Security Council, *Final report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo*, January 2014.

Van Puijenbroek, J., E. Mongo Malolo, and J. Bakker. 2012. *A Golden Future in Ituri? Which perspective for gold exploitation in Ituri, DR Congo?*, Utrecht/Bunia: IKV Pax Christi and RHA, p.100

Next to these documents, we made use of other narrative and financial reports, progress reports, correspondence between donor and SPO etc. We collected documents from both ICCO and KMS. A full list of documents is available on request.

### ABOUT DATA COLLECTION:

| Name                         | Position                              | Workshop<br>8.11.2013 | Workshop<br>14-15.7.2014 | CS questions | Individual<br>interview |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Eric Mongo Malolo            | Coordinator                           |                       |                          | X            | 11.11.2013              |
| Catherine Machozi<br>Ngave   | Finance officer RHA/ACIAR             |                       | X                        | X            | 13.11.2013<br>16.7.2014 |
| Theodore Katembo             | President of board/ECC                |                       | X                        |              | 12.11.2013<br>16.7.2014 |
| Louis Bahemuka<br>Nyarusweka | Programme officer Djugu-<br>Irumu/ECC |                       | X                        | X            | 16.7.2014               |
| Jean-René Kanigine           | Programme officer<br>Mambasa/CPJP     |                       | X                        | X            | 16.7.2014               |
| Fedeline Kambonesa           | Field trainer CPJP Bunia              |                       | X                        |              |                         |
| Emile Ndele A. Tanzi         | Admin officer                         |                       | X                        | X            | 12.11.2013              |
| Gervais Kisananu<br>Macakadu | Coordinator Mahagi/CDJP               | X                     | X                        | X            | 8.11.2013<br>16.7.2014  |
| Jacqueline Dziju Mabosi      | Coordinator FOMI                      |                       | X                        | X            | 13.11.2013<br>17.7.2014 |
| Angele                       | Field trainer RHA/CDJP<br>Mahagi      | X                     |                          |              | 8.11.2013               |
| Emmanuel Kwabonda            | Field trainer RHA/CDJP<br>Mahagi      | X                     |                          |              | 8.11.2013               |
| Chief of group Katoni        |                                       |                       |                          |              | 16.7.2014               |



|                       |  |  |  |  |           |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|-----------|
| Chief of group Bogoro |  |  |  |  | 16.7.2014 |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|-----------|

For our midterm visit we organised a focus group meeting in Mahagi centre with 10 representatives of various grassroots structures of RHA/CDJP in Mahagi territory.

For our end line visit we undertook a field visit to Katoni and Bogoro. At the first location, we talked with 3 representatives of the grassroots structures. In Bogoro we talked with 6 representatives. At both sites we carried out individual interviews with the local chief.

# Civil Society Strengthening Report Réseau pour la Conservation et la Réhabilitation des Ecosystèmes Forestiers

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

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**Inhoud**

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## List of Acronyms

CCT - conseil de concertation territoriale  
CENI - Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante  
CFA – Co-Financing Agency (the Dutch donor organisation)  
CSO – Civil Society Organisation  
CSI – Civil Society Index  
DRC – Democratic Republic of the Congo  
ETD - entités territoriales décentralisées, decentralised territorial entities  
MDG – Millenium Development Goal  
MFS II – Mede-Financierings-Stelsel (the Dutch grant system)  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
RFN – Rainforest Foundation Norway  
RRN - Réseau Ressources Naturelles  
SPO – Southern Partner Organisation

## 1. Introduction

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening. This report focuses on the civil society strengthening component.

As part of the civil society strengthening component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which development projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society during the evaluation period and the extent to which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and endline study and focuses on a broad sample of 19 partnerships. We conducted observations, workshops, field visits and interviews, during three visits in 2012, 2013 (smaller subsample) and 2014. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup> Core elements of our evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the Civic Civil Society Index<sup>2</sup>, which distinguishes five dimensions to civil society: Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment.

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by François Biloko and Floribert Masani (Réseau CREF). We would like to thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org); see also CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (internal working document)

In this report we look specifically at the contribution of *Réseau pour la Conservation et la Réhabilitation des Ecosystèmes Forestiers (Réseau CREF)* to civil society strengthening. Réseau CREF is a partner of IUCN-NL and the Ecosystem Alliance. Réseau CREF is a network of civil society organisations that aim to contribute to the struggle against poverty of local communities that depend on forests, through rational management of forestry ecosystems. For this evaluation we focus on the project with IUCN-NL/Ecosystem Alliance: a two-year, EUR 165,824 project to create participatory eco-development plans in 15 rural Decentralised Territorial Entities in North Kivu. This project had no dedicated civil society strengthening component, but can be considered an integral civil society strengthening project.

Our analysis reveals that at the level of the Decentralised Territorial Entities, the consultation frameworks have become established over the past years. The work of Réseau CREF on participatory planning has resulted in the completion of an eco-development plan for each of the 15 Decentralised Territorial Entities. With the current lack of financing for executing these plans, however, Réseau CREF's work has yet to prove itself.

In the following, first we describe the country and relevant local context. Then we give a short description of Réseau CREF and the project with the civil society strengthening/policy influencing elements. Next, we shortly discuss the methodology. We then present the results, followed by a discussion and conclusion.

## 2. Context

In this section, we briefly describe the country and local context as far as it is relevant for the project under evaluation.

North Kivu, and eastern DRC as a whole, is strongly characterised by the legacy of repeated conflict and high levels of insecurity. High levels of poverty are coupled with limited access to basic services, in a still young democracy with a history of clientelism and rent-seeking. Eastern DRC is reputed for high levels of gender-based violence, including sexual violence against women. At the same time, the Kivus have a history of civil society mobilisation, and the eastern DRC has received a great deal of international aid. North Kivu possesses a wealth of natural resources and has a high agricultural potential. The following paragraphs describe these issues in more detail.

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons.<sup>3</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013). The Fall of Goma in December 2012 and consequent threat to Bukavu led to the evacuation of the majority of international staff, and drew the attention of the military to North Kivu, with armed groups in other parts taking advantage of the situation ('the FDLR

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<sup>3</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel, and the analyses by the Rift Valley Institute

came out of the forests<sup>4</sup>). The following defeat of M23 and military moves against other armed groups have led to more optimism, though.

The rise and demise of M23 and ensuing tensions with neighbouring Rwanda have strongly influenced the security situation in North Kivu during the evaluation period. Many people are concerned about the security situation and lack trust in the police and the military. In South Kivu, we heard many examples of people that were accused of witchcraft, as well as the practice of Kabanga (in which people are killed with a cord so that the cord gets magical powers). A relatively new trend is the phenomenon of popular justice; dissatisfied with the state of impunity, the absence of the state, and delays of the justice sector, people are increasingly resorting to their own means of justice (often lynching the alleged perpetrators). There is a widespread feeling among the poor that state justice is only for the wealthy: “If you’re rich, you don’t go to prison”.

The decades of insecurity, conflict, and the rent-seeking dictatorship of Mobutu have greatly impoverished the DRC. The country has great potential for agriculture and possesses a wealth of mineral resources. The potential of all these resources however is far from being exploited. On the 2014 Human Development Index, DRC ranked 186 out of 187 (followed only by Niger). Gross national income per head was noted to be at \$444 in 2013, which was lowest of all countries for which data were available. In the same year, 87.7% of the population lived below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>5</sup> The majority of the rural population depends on agriculture for making a living. Due to the repeated conflict, the three cities in North Kivu have grown quickly over the last two decades, increasing pressure on the natural resources in the surrounding areas.

Access to natural resources is one of the hot issues in North Kivu, as during the different rebellions, actors controlling the province have been engaged in mineral exploitation in order to sustain their movements and to pay back countries that were said to support them militarily. Access to natural resources refers here not only to mining, but also to oil exploitation, particularly in the Virunga Park, which is located nearby Rwanda and Uganda. These actors include both internally supported rebellion movements and externally led movements, each of them trying to get maximum of what it can from the same resources. As Réseau CREF aims at protecting the environment, it is not easy to accomplish its mission without competition and even confrontation with these other actors operating on the ground.

Civil society in the Kivus is relatively well-developed. In years preceding this evaluation, organisations in North Kivu have started to join forces on certain themes in platforms, and to meet each other in thematic groups under the Bureau de Coordination de la Societe Civile, which is very active in speaking out against the government. At the same time, civil society is challenged in terms of fragmentation and weak governance. There is also a strong presence of international organisations willing to partner with local NGOs. After many years of a strong humanitarian presence, many organisations are now starting to engage in development aid. However, a side-effect of the long-time presence of humanitarian aid is an attitude of dependency among parts of the population, which people describe as *attentisme* (wait and see). This is a challenge for organisations attempting to set up development projects, as their beneficiaries are used to free distribution of materials, and changing this attitude is not a short-term process.

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<sup>4</sup> RFDP workshop end line

<sup>5</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014

The dependency of civil society on foreign aid is high, and almost complete. NGOs derive their funding almost exclusively from foreign funding. Their own initiatives are indirectly derived from this funding, which does allow them a certain institutional leeway. Local grassroots associations are not directly funded, but depend for their operations, seminars, transport and accompaniment on funded NGOs. For the near future, the continuation of the women's movement requires that the international community continues to recognise and support the role of NGOs in promoting women's rights.

The political context in North Kivu is similar to the context in the rest of the country: decades of bad governance cannot be easily erased, and the country is only recently learning to 'do' democracy. Politicians are learning to be accountable, instead of using their position for personal enrichment. During the evaluation period, many activities were being undertaken in North Kivu to prepare for the decentralisation that will come with the local elections now scheduled for August 2015.<sup>6</sup> Decentralisation was part of the Constitution adopted in 2006, and the decision to put in place a more decentralised system of governance was taken 5 years ago.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, local elections have yet to be held. At the level of the local 'decentralised territorial entities' (*entité territoriale décentralisée, or ETD*), which corresponds with the level of the territories in North and South Kivu, many organisations have moved ahead to engage in promoting participatory planning processes, each with their specific issues in mind. Local elections are considered an opportunity for people to gain experience with the political process and public management. Women's organisations view these elections as a strategic moment for increasing women's participation at the decision-making level. Strikingly, however, few of the territorial development plans (if any) appear to have been funded so far.

### **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

In this section we briefly describe Réseau CREF: its history, organisational details, main approach and areas of intervention.

*Réseau pour la Conservation et la Réhabilitation des Ecosystèmes Forestiers (Réseau CREF)*, Network for the Conservation and Rehabilitation of Forestry Ecosystems, was created in May 2003. It aims to contribute to the struggle against poverty of local communities that depend on forests, through rational management of forestry ecosystems. Réseau CREF is a framework for consultation, lobby and advocacy, aiming to strengthen the capacity of its members in conservation and rehabilitation of forestry ecosystems in DRC.

At its beginning, Réseau CREF consisted of 21 member organisations. This number grew to 28 at the baseline visit of the evaluation, and has since has grown to 29. The organisational structure consists of a General Assembly of representatives of member organisations, the Board of Directors, the Audit Committee and the Secretariat (the executive part of the network). Starting with 2 staff in the executive, Réseau CREF nowadays employs 12 staff. There have been no major changes in staff during

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<sup>6</sup> For more information about the calendar and the latest news about electoral preparations, see the webpage of the national election commission: <http://www.ceni.gouv.cd/>

<sup>7</sup> For more information, see: Cellule Technique d'Appui à la décentralisation, 2010. *La décentralisation au service de la paix, de la démocratie, du développement et de l'unité nationale.*

the evaluation period, except for the resignation of the former Administrative and Financial Director. She was replaced on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013.

Member organisations are present in all of the 6 territoires of North Kivu and the 3 major cities Goma, Butembo and Beni. Members differ in terms of organisational capacity. Member organisations are also organised in territorial synergies, which organise *conseils de concertation territoriale*, or CCTs, twice a year. The CCTs' aim is to bring together all stakeholders in natural resource management at the level of the territory or city.

As can be seen in table 1, Réseau CREF partners with a number of international organisations. IUCN-NL is among main donors of the Réseau CREF and has been supporting the Network since the beginning. At the same time, Réseau CREF has received significant funding from several other donors, such as RFN for the annual operation plan and community forestry, and FPP for the REDD+ and human rights.

Table 1: overview of Réseau CREF funding from 2011 through 2014<sup>8</sup>

| Project   | Donor             | Major Objective  | Period                  | Amount of funding in Euros |                   |                   |                   |                     |
|---|-------------------|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
|   |                   |  |                         | 2011                       | 2012              | 2013              | 2014              | 2011-2014           |
| Synergie multi-acteurs gestion écosystèmes          | IUCN NL (MFS)     | Gestion durable des écosystèmes par les entités rurales  | 01.10.2012 - 30.09.2014 |                            | 81.938,00         | 76.437,00         | 7.449,00          | 165.824,00          |
| Gouvernance transfrontalière des RN                 | IUCN NL (non-MFS) | Habiller les communautés locales à influencer les organismes publics et régionaux à respecter leurs besoins et leurs droits humains, sociaux, économiques et environnementaux. | 01.01.2013 - 31.12.2015 |                            |                   | 296.395,00        | 211.156,00        | 507.551,00          |
| Renforcement sécurité des acteurs                   | IUCN NL (non-MFS) | Réduire la vulnérabilité des acteurs de la Société Civile  | 15.07.2014 - 31.08.2014 |                            |                   |                   | 12.963,00         | 12.963,00           |
| Plan opérationnel annuel                            | RFN               | Protection des forêts et Droits de communautés   | yearly                  | 360.000,00                 | 280.633,92        | 288.000,00        | 321.273,00        | 1.249.906,92        |
| Foresterie communautaire                            | RFN               | Sécurisation foncière, gestion biodiversité...   | 01.05.2014 - 01.05.2015 |                            |                   |                   | 68.265,00         | 68.265,00           |
| REDD et Droits humains                              | FPP               | Réduire la pauvreté et promouvoir les droits de communautés  | 01.09.2012 - 31.08.2014 |                            | 80.000,00         | 97.770,00         | 80.000,00         | 257.770,00          |
| Gouvernance et transparence forestier               | Global Witness    | Assurer plus de transparence dans le secteur forestier   | 01.07.2011 - 31.03.2013 | 7.132,00                   | 44.395,20         | 8.628,00          |                   | 60.155,20           |
| Renforcement de la Société Civile                   | WWF               | Gestion durable des écosystèmes par les entités rurales  | 01.02.2012 - 30.04.2012 |                            | 3.360,00          |                   |                   | 3.360,00            |
| Politique et législation forestières                | RRN               | Plaidoyer pour les droits des communautés forestières  | 01.11.2011 - 31.12.2014 | 18.444,00                  |                   |                   | 19.184,00         | 37.628,00           |
| Création de 4 forêts communautaire                  | PPI-IUCN Fr       | Renforcer le processus de foresterie communautaire à Walikale  | 01.10.2011 - 31.12.2013 | 20.000,00                  |                   | 12.000,00         |                   | 32.000,00           |
| Diagnostic sur les flux du bois                     | CIFOR             | Améliorer le secteur de l'exploitation artisanale du bois  | 01.03.2012 - 01.03.2013 |                            | 43.539,20         |                   |                   | 43.539,20           |
| Flux du bois scié sortants et entrants (pro-formal) | CIFOR             | Document les mouvements du bois au Nord-Kivu et PO/RDC   | 01.04.2012 - 31.03.2013 |                            | 26.121,60         | 17.416,00         |                   | 43.537,60           |
| Capitalisation des résultats sur les flux du bois   | CIFOR             | Plaidoyer pour mieux réglementer l'exploitation du bois  | 01.04.2014 - 01.07.2014 |                            |                   |                   | 25.000,00         | 25.000,00           |
| Forêt modèle du Nord-Kivu en construction           | RAFM              | Réseautage des acteurs au sein de la forêt modèle  | 01.04.2012 - 31.12.2014 |                            | 4.000,00          |                   |                   | 4.000,00            |
| Sensibilisation sur la REDD+ et le CLIP             | SSNC              | Faire connaître le processus REDD et le CLIP à la base   | 01.10.2012 - 31.10.2012 |                            | 34.400,00         |                   |                   | 34.400,00           |
| Foresterie communautaire                            | SYNCHRONICITY     | Implanter la foresterie communautaire à Beni-Lubero  | 01.03.2013 - 01.07.2013 |                            |                   | 12.800,00         |                   | 12.800,00           |
| Forum sur la gouvernance forestière                 | SYNCHRONICITY     | Contribuer à l'amélioration de la gouvernance forestière   | 01.05.2013 - 30.06.2013 |                            |                   | 12.800,00         |                   | 12.800,00           |
| Appui institutionnel                                | SYNCHRONICITY     | Promouvoir la gouvernance organisationnelle  | 01.06.2014 - 30.09.2014 |                            |                   |                   | 12.800,00         | 12.800,00           |
| Etude sur le bois scié                              | KEFRI             | Documenter la situation au Nord-Kivu   | 01.09.2013 - 01.02.2014 |                            |                   | 1.222,40          | 1.833,60          | 3.056,00            |
| <b>Total amount of funding 2011-2014</b>            |                   |  |                         | <b>405.576,00</b>          | <b>554.848,72</b> | <b>823.468,40</b> | <b>759.923,60</b> | <b>1.901.017,92</b> |
| Percentage MFS                                      |                   |  |                         | 0,00%                      | 14,77%            | 9,28%             | 0,98%             | 8,72%               |

8 Overview made by the Secretary General of Réseau CREF, October 2014.



## Brief Theory of Change<sup>9</sup>

The five-year goal of Réseau CREF is *to improve the well-being of the local community and autochthonous peoples through good governance of natural resources and the promotion of the green economy*. Conditions identified by Réseau CREF are primarily of a legal nature, but also have to do with the capacity of the member organisations. In terms of the law, two important conditions are the addition of missing elements to the legal texts on natural resources, as well as the harmonisation of different legal texts with respect to natural resources. For this to come about, it is important to set up a lobby for the completion and harmonisation of these texts, and to strengthen CCTs and synergies in the territories and the cities. Additionally, the capacity of autochthonous peoples should be reinforced, in terms of knowing their rights and duties. In order to facilitate these processes, the capacity of the member organisations of the Network should be strengthened. Another important condition is the effective decentralisation of governance. Existing measures or legal texts that deal with natural resources need to be applied, and the lobby for strict application of the law needs to be strengthened. Réseau CREF sees its main role in setting up lobby and advocacy at the provincial level, and institutionally supporting its members in their accompaniment of grassroots populations.

### 4. Project description: civil society/policy advocacy elements

Here we describe the project and its civil society/policy advocacy elements, in terms of size, budget, duration, major objectives and activities.

The relationship between Réseau CREF and IUCN-NL dates back to 2002, when IUCN-NL financed a project which led to the creation of Réseau CREF in 2003. Formal cooperation between Réseau CREF and IUCN-NL began in 2004. During the evaluation period, IUCN-NL funded one project using MFS II financing: ‘Synergie multi-acteurs gestion écosystèmes’ (multi-actor synergy for ecosystem management), which ran from October 2012 to September 2014. It is this project which we will focus on for this evaluation.

According to the project proposal, the project with IUCN-NL focused on the creation of eco-development plans for 15 ETDs (out of the total of 20 ETDs in the Province, 17 chiefdoms and the 3 cities). This project focuses specifically on rural chiefdoms and sectors, in which there are different types of ecosystems such as forests, national parks and lakes. The rationale behind the project is that there is more and more environmental degradation in these ETDs, because of irrational exploitation of resources and weak governance. In this respect, Réseau CREF’s aims were:

- (i) promoting local governance of local natural resources;
- (ii) promoting local community development; and
- (iii) engage in anti-poverty actions.

With these objectives, ETDs were expected to be involved in decision making and processes regarding the management of their local and natural resources. In order to achieve these objectives, project activities were planned along the lines of the objectives:

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<sup>9</sup> For a more extensive description of the Theory of Change of RECIC, see the Annex.

- (i) Promote local development of ETDs through participatory management of natural resources (organize a methodological meeting in order to harmonize views between Réseau CREF and the provincial government, organize workshops in Goma and Beni for launching the participatory planning processes, etc.)
- (ii) Reinforce competencies and technical, institutional and relational capacities of civil society organisations on eco-development in the DRC (train ETD stakeholders on eco-development, hold preliminary diagnoses of 27 NGOs and CBOs in terms of 3 per ETD, etc.)
- (iii) Improve approaches and tools of actors involved in the project process in North Kivu (follow up and advise organisations involved, organise meetings for the members of the synergies involved, hold a sensitisation and exchange of experience workshop on oil exploration and exploitation in North Kivu, monitor lobbying activities)

So the civil society impact lies at three levels:

Firstly, at the ETD level, Réseau CREF accompanied communities to create the eco-development plans, bringing together citizens, traditional leaders, CBO and NGOs representatives.

Secondly, at the provincial level, it was planned that the network (as the provincial platform) would push social mobilization of different stakeholders on participatory and rational management of ecosystems in North Kivu so that communities can benefit from them. This has been taking place through the CCT meetings held in all territories and cities targeted by the project.

Thirdly, at the level of the Network, the executive office of the Network was involved in supervising its member organisations in the implementation of the project, as well as strengthening their organisational capacity.

## 5. Data collection and analytical approach

Here we describe the baseline and follow-up assessment, as well as particular choices and data collection problems. We also explain here which outcomes were selected for the contribution analysis. The general methodology we followed can be found in as an Annex, as well as a list of documents employed, workshop participants and other informants. A draft version of this report was discussed with staff of Réseau CREF during a feedback workshop in DRC at the beginning of 2015.

Generally, we followed the methodology described in the Annex. The endline workshop was conducted by Patrick Milabyo, who was also involved in the baseline visit, and it involved a number of the same people as the baseline workshop, and involved a field visit to Nyiragongo Territory.

As described in our methodology, we decided to conduct a contribution analysis for a subsample. Réseau CREF was not included in this subsample.

## 6. Results

In this section, we describe our findings. We provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions (Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment).

|                       | Baseline<br>(0-3) | Endline |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------|
| Civic engagement      | 2.5               | 2.5     |
| Level of organisation | 2.5               | 2.5     |
| Practice of values    | 3.0               | 3.0     |
| Perception of impact  | 2.0               | 2.5     |
| Environment           | 2.0               | 2.0     |

### ***Civic Engagement***

*Under this dimension we distinguish the diversity of socially-based engagement (taking into account needs of marginalised groups, participation of target groups in the project), and the diversity of political engagement (is there dialogue of local leaders in dialogue with government representatives, are beneficiaries member of sectoral user groups).*

The Network has a special focus on marginalized groups, in the form of autochthonous peoples (*les pygmées*). Since 2012, the dialogue between chiefs who control land and autochthonous peoples has improved to the extent that some of them have acquired pieces of land in the Beni and Nyiragongo territories. In the project under evaluation, the prime beneficiaries are impoverished rural communities. Staff and member organisations generally feel the needs of beneficiaries are taken into account, though obviously the needs always surpass the available means. Beneficiaries are usually consulted by the member organisations in order to identify problems and proposed solutions. Setting up the eco-development plan for each ETD is seen by the staff as a way to foster participation of the target group in local governance processes.

At the level of the ETDs, the project has strengthened the partnership between civil society actors and local communities. The processes of developing the eco-development plans created a space in which residents and their leaders discussed about environmental issues of the area and how people can better benefit from the environmental resources. In addition, Réseau CREF member organisations organise 6-monthly meetings in each ETD, the *Conseil de Concertation Territoriale (CCT)*, in which they invite representatives of local authorities (political, administrative, and customary authorities), CSOs and the private sector. Nevertheless, as the process of decentralisation has yet to be completed, it remains to be seen how these local development plans will be put into practice, and how a transparent and accountable relationship will develop between the local population and the local government.

Overall, during the evaluation period Réseau CREF has maintained its level of engagement for this dimension, notwithstanding the disruption by the M23 rebellion. The project funded by IUCN-NL has played a role in this.

### ***Level of Organisation***

*This dimension focuses on the organisational level of civil society (the connectedness of SPOs in networks of organisations, the nature of relationships between SPOs and networks, and the degree of representation of interests); peer to peer communication (the strength of the relationships of the SPO*

*with other actors); and financial and human resources (the composition of the financial resource base, availability of human resources).*

The Network is, by its nature, in close relations with organisations working on the theme of natural resources. Additionally, it has been leading the environmental thematic group of the Civil Society Bureau in Goma during the evaluation period, and its member organisations also organise the CCTs in the territories and cities, which bring together all kinds of CSOs. The president of the Network is also President of the Civil Society Bureau of North Kivu. Réseau CREF has more than 4 meetings per year with its 29 member organisations. This has enabled the Network to strengthen relations of synergy among actors and to mobilise resources through a common strategic plan. With organisations that are not member, there is some collaboration, mostly when organisations share the same target group.

Réseau CREF also has dialogue with its national and international partners (such as RFN, RRN, CREDDHO, IUCN-NL, FPP, Global Witness, WWF, etc.) between 2 to 3 times a year. It is a member of the global IUCN network. Réseau CREF benefits from technical support from Well Grounded. It meets regularly with the Provincial Ministry of Environment on diverse issues and is part of the sectoral committee 'environmental protection and climate change'.

In terms of finances, the Network receives funding from many international donors, of whom one covers 75% of the institutional costs (RFN, which has covered about 65% of the total budgeted in the evaluation period). This means Réseau CREF is strongly dependent on international donors, but the diversity of donors also shows the Network is able to mobilise and manage resources, and maintain partnerships. The Network has acquired its own property, including its own plot in Goma and the office building. According to the staff, Réseau CREF is in the phase of developing a business plan in order to generate income locally. Member organisations are yearly required to contribute 120 USD, for the organisation of meetings for the internal organisational structure, such as the Board and the Audit Committee of the Network. Because the Network has been relatively successful in getting access to finances in the past years, some member organisations become dependent on the Secretariat for their access to funding.

## **Practice of Values**

*This dimension deals with internal governance (the functioning of the legally required internal committees, are they involved in the strategic management of the SPO, and the functioning of lower CSO levels), and transparency (respect of internal written procedures, extent of downward accountability, within the SPO and to lower CSO levels, transparency on finances).*

As a network organisation, the functioning of the internal organisational structure is of vital importance to Réseau CREF. The member organisations have a say in the day to day affairs of the Network through their participation in the yearly General Assembly, but also through participating in the Board of Directors and Audit Committee. During the evaluation period, the various committees and the GA have continued to operate normally, based on the 2007 statutes. Complications by the security situation in North Kivu were dealt with by several members from more remote parts temporarily delegating their authority to members living in the vicinity of Goma.

The secretariat places strong emphasis on building capacity of the members, which designates member organisations as beneficiaries of the interventions by the secretariat. They are also involved in the planning and execution of activities. This means that in the case of Réseau CREF, beneficiaries are strongly involved in the management of the organisation. However, members of local communities, beneficiaries of member organisations, are not represented: they may find representation in the General Assemblies and Committees of the member organisations, though. Another form of downward accountability for member organisations is through the CCTs, which each organisation is supposed to organise twice a year.

Réseau CREF does an institutional audit every year. Yearly audits for member organisations are also part of the Network code of conduct, with now 90% of the members doing a yearly audit. In case the audit finds irregularities, this may result in expulsion (3 organisations were excluded from the Network during the evaluation period). According to the staff, 'we have developed a culture of self-evaluation'. This has increased credibility of Réseau CREF among its funding partners.

## **Perception of Impact**

*Under this dimension we discuss the responsiveness (nature and intensity of SPO's relationship with the public sector and the private sector); social impact (target group satisfaction regarding fulfilment of their primary social concern, perception of public and private sector of quality of delivery of services by SPO); and the policy impact (the level of influence of SPOs in the process leading to major policy changes identified in the sector of the SPO's intervention since 2011).*

In terms of civil society impact, Réseau CREF's interventions are directed at various levels. The majority of funding is directed at the grassroots level, through the member organisations. In these interventions, the secretariat depends on the member organization, and thus sometimes is limited by the capacity of the member organisations. During the evaluation period, important results of the work of Réseau CREF are the eco-development plans created in most ETDs, as well as the CCTs that have been organised. Impact is still limited, according to Network staff and members, but there are examples of success: for example, there is more debate on oil exploitation in Virunga National Park, and on sustainable management of forests, communities have become more conscious of the importance of sustainably managing their environment, a spirit of being accountable is developing, and there have been a number of reforestation activities (*reboisement*).

At higher levels, interventions succeed at drawing government attention to questions of natural resource governance, and the stakes of autochthonous peoples and local communities. The Network is invited to share information, and it is the secretary of the subcommittee 'environmental protection and climate change'. At national level, through the Réseau Ressources Naturelles (RRN), Réseau CREF has been active in adding elements that lacked to judicial texts on natural resources, for example the National Law on nature conservation (loi sur la conservation de la nature) which was promulgated by the President in February 2014. Similarly, Réseau CREF made propositions to amend the Loi sur les hydrocarbures, and participated in a workshop in Kisangani to elaborate propositions for the mining code (code minier). At provincial level, Réseau CREF has initiated a provincial law (édit) to be passed at the provincial parliament, related to forestry governance, i.e. management of wood cutting and wood trade, REDD+, CLIP. At the national level, the Réseau CREF has acted through the RRN which is based in Kinshasa.

With the private sector, experiences are more mixed: on one hand, they participate in the CCTs at the level of the ETDs; on the other hand, the interests of the private sector are often very divergent. Impact on private sector policies is still very limited; nevertheless, the SOCO oil company has recently decided to end its operations in Virunga National Park, and Réseau CREF was part of the civil society coalition campaigning against this oil exploitation.

### ***Environment/context***

*This dimension takes the wider environment into account. What is the degree of participation of the SPO in defining the civil society interventions of the CFA/Consortium; to what extent is a context analysis of the space and role of civil society in the specific country done as part of the programme /project cycle; to what extent is the SPO involved in studies on civil society?*

Réseau CREF has sufficient access to information on socio-economic development and developments in politics and security, through its embeddedness in North Kivu civil society, but also through the availability of stable internet. It collects data and performs analyses, but this is not done in a regular fashion. Opportunities are explored, in the CCT for instance, and the functioning of the member organisations is evaluated. However, there seems to be no system for doing this regularly, or someone who is in charge of doing this. At the request of the donors, Réseau CREF undertook a self-evaluation of their strategy in 2009, which resulted in a stronger focus on 4 main objectives. For the development of the new strategic plan 2012-2017, the Network also engages in analysis of the context and the opportunities it presents. Threats are common for staff of the Network, and staff have taken precautions such as security rules to follow in the field, in the office and at home.

Réseau CREF is not involved in studies on civil society by its partners. Through its nature as a Network organisation, it has developed a vision on how to develop the capacity of its members, and it is working on contributing to this.

## **7. Discussion**

Given our findings, the project '*Synergie multi-acteurs de gestion participative des écosystèmes au Nord-Kivu en RDC*' was reasonably well-designed. It involved local citizens, civil society and the community leaders in the processes of creating eco-development plans, and managed to do this in 15 of 20 ETDs. At the same time, the M23 rebellion affected to some extent the participatory sense of these plans, as in some areas, it was difficult to mobilize many people for the workshops. Additionally, the implementation of the plans and the participatory mechanisms involved depends greatly on the

decentralisation; if local elections are postponed again, as they have been previously, it is highly questionable whether the plans will really be executed. Finances for the plans also have to be secured, as these were not foreseen in the project with IUCN-NL.

We would advise to fund a similar project in the future/or to continue funding this project, provided attention is paid to how to coordinate with other actors operating in the area in order to prevent competition on the processes of creating similar development plans in the same target areas. Also, it would be worth to pay attention to any possibility of getting the plans funded; the ETDs are only able to raise a limited amount of taxes, and without funding these plans, it is difficult to make sure that citizens are participating actively or have a say in better management of their environment. In case the decentralisation proceeds as planned, and is accompanied by the devolution of the necessary budget to the ETDs, the local population will be able to hold their leaders to account in executing the eco-development plans.

## 8. Conclusion

Here we provide an answer to the two general evaluation questions:

- 1) *What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?*

Changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period can be summarised as follows: (i) people being more and more conscious about the environmental protection need, they can express the ideas about it and can take action. (ii) An alternative language by local communities against resource exploitation such as oil exploitation that affects the environmental protection in the Virunga National Park. (iii) Contribution of Réseau CREF to drafting some texts of law, which are either new or complementary to those that exist. (iv) Sustained interaction between local authorities, CSOs, citizens and the private sector through the CCTs and the eco-development plan processes in the ETDs. To some degree, participatory planning created a space in which residents expressed their needs related to environmental protection and were able to speak to their local leaders in relation to the issue. It is not sure, after the project ends, that awareness raising on sustainable living environment and forests and biodiversity will continue to take place.

- 2) *What is the relevance of these changes?*

As mentioned under the context description in this report, there are issues that are important to people in the area of environmental protection. Environmental degradation somehow affects people's livelihoods, the slowly coming decentralisation could decrease the distance between the local government and the local population, and there is a lack of trust between authorities and people, due in turn to a lack of transparency and accountability between those who are leading and those who are led.

These changes are relevant in the sense that they include activities at community, provincial and international levels and they are related to long term changes in the area of environmental protection. Also, they are relevant as they address the important issues mentioned above by raising awareness of local people on their rights and duties and by strengthening capacity of local actors on good governance of local communities in the area of environmental protection.

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "not at all" and 10 being "completely", for this project (as in: SPO interventions towards civil society strengthening), we indicate how much we agree with the following statements:

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| The project was well designed                                  | 8 |   |
| The project was implemented as designed                        | 8 |   |
| The project reached all its objectives                         |   | 6 |
| The observed results are relevant to the project beneficiaries | 7 |   |



## Documents consulted for the report

*From Réseau CREF*

102324\_Reseau\_CREF\_AE\_Full\_proposal\_Juillet\_2012\_(2012-2014)  
 AE 2011-2015 Rapport financier interimaire au 07 octobre 2013  
 Reseau\_CREF\_EA\_Rapport\_des\_progr\_Septembre\_2013-2  
 Rapport\_eval\_R\_CREF\_ver\_finale  
 Réseau CREF contract final 2012-2014  
 IUCN NL - KM 3B- \_Post\_ Conflict- indiv projects  
 MFSII Evaluation Doc\_RCREF\_IUCNNL\_EA  
 Member audit reports  
 PV notari de la 9 AGO  
 FINAL rapport 1ere Mission novembre  
 Rapport 2ème mission  
 Textes de base du Réseau CREF

*From PIDP*

PIDP\_Eco development du territoire de Nyiragongo  
 Carte\_Lufito\_Draft 1  
 Carte\_Kambushi1  
 Carte\_Kilali\_Draft1  
 attest-occupation-terre  
 croquis, champs Kitwa  
 croquis-champs-Misima

**Baseline visit: 1-2 October, 2012**

**Endline visit: 28-30 April, 2014**

## List of Informants

**Internal to organisation**

| Name                            | Position  | Workshop baseline | Workshop end line | CS questionnaire baseline | CS questionnaire end line | interview baseline | interview end line |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Alphonse Valivambene<br>Muhindo | Secrétaire Général Réseau CREF                      |                   | X                 |                           | X                         | X                  | X                  |
| Francois Biloko                 | Directeur Technique Réseau CREF                     | X                 | X                 | X                         |                           | X                  | X                  |
| Denise                          | Directeur financière                                |                   |                   |                           |                           | X                  |                    |
| Elias Kalondero                 | Directeur Administratif et<br>Financier Réseau CREF |                   |                   |                           |                           |                    | X                  |
| Faustin Ngulu                   | Chargé de la foresterie Réseau<br>CREF              | X                 | X                 | X                         |                           | X                  |                    |

|                           |   |   |  |   |  |   |   |
|---------------------------|---|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| Floribert Masani          | chargé du CIECRA,<br>communication, edu, recherche<br>environmental | X |  | X |  | X |   |
| Alain Bebu                | Comptable   | X |  | X |  | X |   |
| Mochine MWENGE DUL        | Membre du CA  | X |  | X |  |   |   |
| Diel Mochire              | membre du CA/directeur adjoint<br>PIDP                              | X |  |   |  |   |   |
| Thomas d'Aquin MUITI      | President CA/Secrétaire General<br>REID                             | X |  | X |  | X |   |
| Christophe<br>MWIKIZANGAB | Coordinateur CADRE  | X |  | X |  |   |   |
| Roger VUTSORO             | Chargé de communication FOPAC                                       | X |  | X |  |   |   |
| Maurice Nsasé             | Coordinateur FODI   | X |  | X |  |   |   |
| Ephrem Vitia              | Vice president of the Réseau CREF<br>CA                             |   |  |   |  |   | X |

### External to organisation

IUCN Amsterdam, Tina Lain, 28.08.2012

UNDSS Bukavu, Idrissa Mbaye, 05.09.2012

CREDDHO, Goma, meeting with Gautier Muhindo Misonia, coordonnateur; and Jeredie, Charge de programmes, 02.10.2012

FOPAC, Goma, meeting with Etienne K. Mbakulirahi, Secrétaire Exécutif, 02.10.2012

GATT-RN, Goma, meeting with Prince Kiyangi, 02.10.2012

IUCN Amsterdam, Tina Lain, 14.04.2014

PIDP, Nicolas Mukumo Mushumbi, Assistant technique chargé de terrain, 29.04.2014

Nyiragongo Territory, Madiadi Kolu, in charge of rural development, 29.04.2014

Nyiragongo Territory, Louis Semivumbi, Chef de bureau, 29.04.2014

Bokumu chiefdom, Alexandre Ndanyuza, Secrétaire Administratif, 29.04.2014

CREDDHO, Isaac Mumbere and Jean-Baptiste Badesire, Chargés des projets de droits humains, 29.04.2014

Minister of Environment North Kivu, Alex Mutia Mburano, Counselor, in charge of Environment, Tourism and Sport, 30.04.2014

# Civil Society Strengthening Report SOFIBEF

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs, Bart Weijs, Koen Leuveld, Marrit van den Berg

Wageningen University

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## **List of acronyms**

ASMAKU - Association Maendeleo Kujitegemea  
CCAP - Comité de Coordination des Actions de Paix  
CEPROF - Comité pour l'Éducation et la Promotion de la Femme de FIZI  
CF – Congolese Franc  
CFA – Co-Financing Agency (the Dutch donor organisation)  
CGP – Comité de Gestion de Projet  
CSO – Civil Society Organisation  
CSI – Civil Society Index  
DRC – Democratic Republic of the Congo  
DCR –Dutch Consortium for Rehabilitation  
FARDC - Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo  
GA – General Assembly  
GEADES - Groupe d'Etudes et d'Actions pour le Développement du Sud-Kivu  
IFDC - International Fertilizer Development Center  
MDG – Millenium Development Goal  
MFS II – Mede-Financierings-Stelsel (the Dutch grant system)  
MONUSCO - Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation du Congo  
MUSO – Mutuelle de Solidarité (Solidarity group for savings and loans)  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
SGBV – sexual and gender based violence  
SLRC – Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium  
SPO – Southern Partner Organisation  
USD – United States Dollar

## Introduction

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The country study consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of southern partner organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening.

In this report, we focus on one SPO, In the following report we look specifically at the contribution of SOFIBEF (*Solidarité des Femmes pour le Bien-Être Familial*) to the achievement of MDGs & Themes and to its contribution to civil society strengthening. SOFIBEF is a partner of ICCO, and as such partner of the ICCO Alliance. The report is based on observations, workshops, field visits, questionnaires, and interviews conducted during visits in 2012 and 2014, unless otherwise indicated. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup>

In the MDGs & Themes component of the evaluation, we examine the one project in terms of impact on selected MDGs and themes. To this end, we implemented two rounds of data collection (in 2012 and 2014) in the project's intervention area – both in intervention villages and treatment villages. This allows us to estimate a difference-in-difference model to measure the impact of the project.

As part of the civil society component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society in the evaluation period and the extent in which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and end line study. Core elements of our evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the Civicus Civil Society Index.<sup>2</sup> Dimensions of this index are:

- Civic engagement
- Level of organisation
- Practice of values
- Perception of impact
- Environment<sup>3</sup>

SOFIBEF is an organisation that works on the empowerment of women. In the course of the evaluation period a shift was made from a project focusing especially on vulnerable women and girls by supporting them socio-economically, psychologically, and juridically. From October 2012 onwards, SOFIBEF became

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by Louis Guemou Togba (ICCO), and Marie Misukyo Amisi (SOFIBEF) We thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org); see also CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (internal working document)

<sup>3</sup> Please note: In the methodology annex we provide more information about our sampling strategy and about the methodology we used.

the lead organisation in the ICCO synergy of partners working on gender and women leadership. In its own project, SOFIBEF started to focus especially on women leaders and women and girls with the potential of becoming leaders. By promoting women to take leadership positions, SOFIBEF believes that policy will ultimately also become more favourable for women. During our visit, we found that many of the women identified as potential leaders have an active role in civil society. Strengthening the position and capabilities of these women contributes both to strengthening of civil society, but also influences policy. In terms of civil society strengthening and/or policy influencing, we feel the second project has significantly more potential than the first ICCO-funded project. ICCO staff however pointed out that the first project was necessary to prepare the groundwork for the second project. Without economic empowerment, women would not be able to grow into leadership positions.

In the following, we first describe the country and relevant local context. Then we give a short description of SOFIBEF and the project and civil society strengthening/policy influencing elements. Next, we shortly discuss the methodology. We then first discuss the MDGs & Themes component, where we present our data, results and analysis followed by a discussion and conclusion. We then discuss the capacity development component, we present the results and contribution analysis for this component, which is followed by a discussion and conclusion. Finally, we discuss our findings for the civil society strengthening component, including the contribution analysis, and again a discussion and conclusion.

## **Context**

South Kivu, and eastern DRC as a whole, is strongly characterised by the legacy of repeated conflict and high levels of insecurity. High levels of poverty are coupled with limited access to basic services, in a still young democracy with a history of clientelism and rent-seeking. Eastern DRC is reputed for high levels of gender-based violence, including sexual violence against women. At the same time, especially South Kivu has a history of civil society mobilisation, and the eastern DRC has received a great deal of international aid. South Kivu possesses a wealth of natural resources and has a high agricultural potential. In the following paragraphs we describe a number of characteristics of the field of gender and the women's movement, as this is the central focus of SOFIBEF.

SOFIBEF is one of many organisations in South Kivu working on the promotion of the position of women. The emergence of a women's movement is often traced back to the 1990s, roughly the same time in which civil society in general became more active. In a 2012 report, based on research in Kinshasa and the province of South Kivu, International Alert estimates that 90% of the associations for women's rights were created between 1998 and 2004 (International Alert and EASSI 2012). For many years, talking about women in DRC, and especially in the east of the Congo equated to many to talking about sexual violence, committed amidst a violent war; Congo would often be portrayed as the capital of rape. Sexual violence is still a serious concern, and so is the fight against impunity of sexual violence. We found however that this theme has become slightly less prominent within civil society in recent years. Next to the fight against sexual violence, there are many other hurdles to take for the women's movement. Despite receiving a lot of international attention, the position of women in DRC is far from equal to the position of men.

A number of factors are of influence in maintaining the underprivileged position of women in society. At the community and intra-household level, cultural norms play a significant role: a woman who is married, is often less free to take her own decisions, and men often really act as the head of the family. Put bluntly: women are supposed to raise children. A survey carried out by SOFIBEF and other partners of ICCO working on gender gives an impression about a number of characteristics; The survey showed that 75% of respondents ( $n= 1067$ ) had more than 5 children. It is not considered of importance for women to become educated; the same survey showed that 53% of respondents had not finished secondary school (10% no schooling, 10% some years of primary school, 12% finished primary school, 21% some years of secondary school). Asked about their occupation, 44% of women mentioned they were farmers, 28% small business, 10% state agent, 9% nurse/doctor, and 9% other categories. Early marriages continue to be common practice; about 24% of respondents got married at age under 18 (SOFIBEF et al. 2013).

Taken together, the above mentioned cultural practices limit possibilities for women empowerment. One of the ways in which this can be improved, is by creating a more favourable legal framework and ensuring that this framework is also put into practice by means of enforcement. An example of this is the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, adopted unanimously in 2000. The resolution:

*“reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security”<sup>4</sup>*

The resolution has been taken up by many women’s organisations as a means to promote the position of women. But although the DRC has ratified the resolution, the country continues to have legislation at national level which is not really in favour of women. Under the Family Code women are for instance required to have permission of their husband for any legal contract, to open a bank account, get a loan, etc. (Hilhorst and Bashwira 2014). A revision of the Family Code, supposed to make the code more women-friendly is under way (International Alert and EASSI 2012).

Many actors within the women’s movement in South Kivu are positive about the progress that is being made in terms of women’s emancipation and participation in decision-making processes. Out of 10 ministers, 4 are female in the South Kivu cabinet at present, which is higher than the 30% that is often propagated and which is the legally prescribed minimum of women representation. During the 2013 ‘national consultations’ president Kabila referred to this minimum as well and hence gave a clear message to take representation serious (Hilhorst and Bashwira 2014). These national consultations were organised by the presidency to receive input on policy reform from a wide range of stakeholders and organisations nationwide.

A next test case for the level of empowerment of women will be the upcoming local elections. These elections will reveal to what extent the women’s movement has been able to mobilise women candidates, and to raise awareness among the population (and especially among women) to vote for women. Decree

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/>, viewed on 12.11.2014.

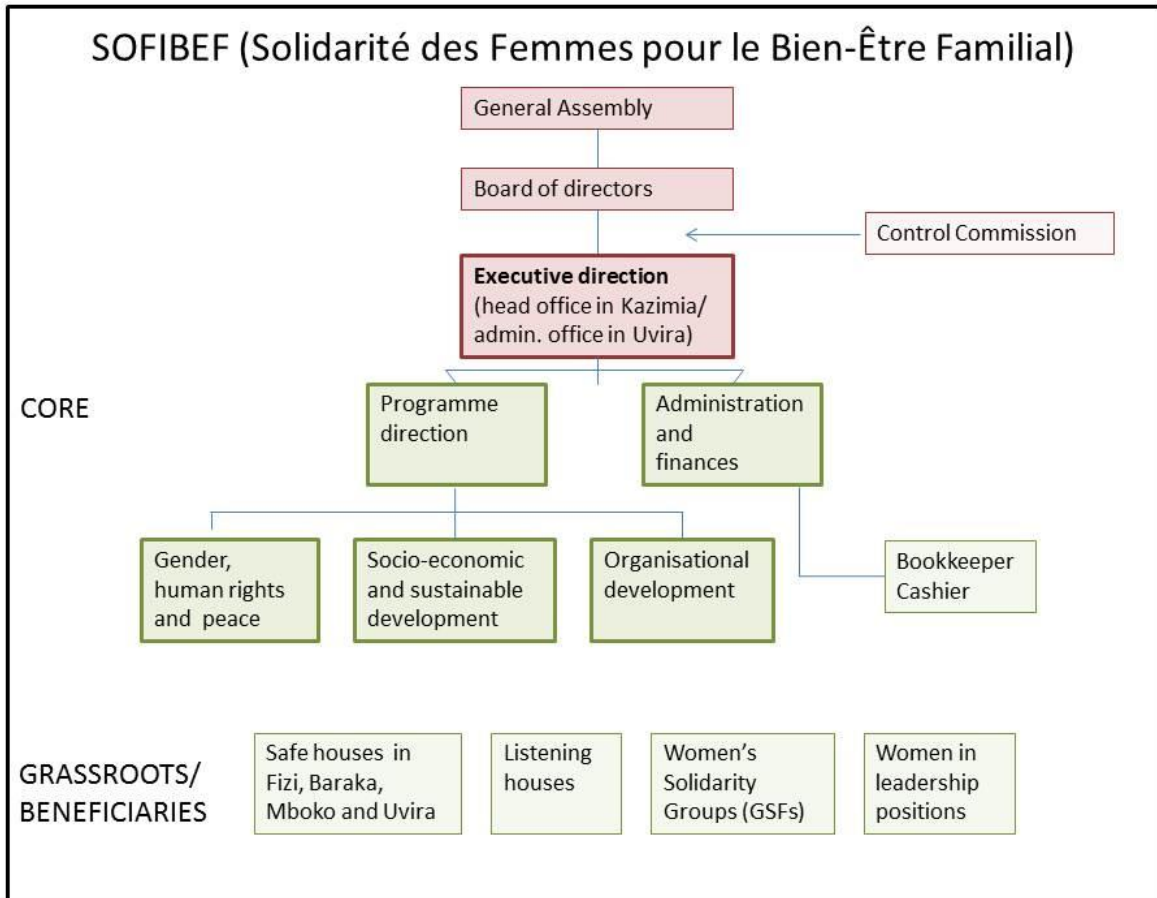


8013 has promoted Uvira and Baraka to the level of towns, which means municipal elections will take place to appoint new members for the governance of the towns. Women's organisations are keen on making this a success.

## **Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

SOFIBEF was founded in 1997 by a group of women working for various NGOs as field trainers in the territories of Fizi and Uvira in the South of South Kivu province. They found that there was a lot of violence against women. NGOs did include gender issues in some of their work, but women did not occupy strategic positions within these organisations. Therefore, the women felt the need to jointly advocate the cause of women; to fight for their rights, and against poverty. SOFIBEF's aim was to contribute to the search for peace, democracy, and the promotion of human rights, especially the rights of women and children. Initially there was resistance against the initiative, but after raising awareness, women got more and more interested. On the local level, SOFIBEF works with women's solidarity groups, the so-called GSFs (*Groupements de Solidarité des Femmes*). SOFIBEF has a holistic approach, offering medical, psycho-social, juridical, and socio-economic support to women, especially women and girls who are victim of sexual and gender-based violence. In recent years, and with support of ICCO, SOFIBEF has started to work on the promotion of women leadership.

The organisational structure of SOFIBEF is as follows:



SOFIBEF has been working on a new strategic plan for the period 2013-2017. During the time of visit (July 2014) the final version of the new strategic plan was still being finalised by a consultant and not yet available. We received a draft version of the plan.<sup>5</sup> The organisational structure set out above reflects the new strategic plan. The section on ‘gender, human rights and peace’ used to be named ‘human rights, peace and democracy’, whereas the section ‘socio-economic and sustainable development’ was formerly known as the section ‘support to economic activities of women’. The plan defines the mission of SOFIBEF as: “To accompany women and other members of the community to defend human rights in general and of women in particular by supporting the efforts of pacification and socio-economic development in Fizi and Uvira territories” .<sup>6</sup>

SOFIBEF has 5 staff members who have a regular presence at the office in Uvira, complemented with 2 psycho-social assistants and a number of volunteers at the community level. A major organisational change was the shift in leadership. In October 2013 the director stepped down. She was replaced by one of the early staff members. The former director had health problems for a longer time already and the change did not come unexpectedly. The finance officer changed as well.

<sup>5</sup> SOFIBEF, June 2013. *Planification stratégique et opérationnel 2013-2017*

<sup>6</sup>ibid.

Over the years, SOFIBEF has been able to diversify its funding sources and attract various international donors. During the endline visit, we found the diversity had reduced. Especially institutional support was said to be more difficult to find. ICCO is a partner of SOFIBEF since 2006.

## Project description

| Project  | Donor                                | Major objective   | Period             | Amount of funding (indicate \$/€) |         |             |          |          |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|-------------|----------|----------|
|  |                                      |   |                    | 2011                              | 2012    | 2013        | 2014     | 2015     |
| Empowerment of women and girls in difficult situations (PAF) <sup>7</sup>        | ICCO                                 | Empowerment of women, especially victims of SGBV  | Oct 2010-Dec 2012  | \$82300                           | \$81150 | -           | -        | -        |
| Gender and leadership by women (PGLF coordination) <sup>8</sup>                  | ICCO                                 | Coordination of synergy between gender partners of ICCO   | Oct 2012-Dec 2013  | -                                 | €25 000 | -           | -        | -        |
| Increasing women's political participation (PGLF) <sup>9</sup>                   | ICCO                                 | Build capacity of women to increase their leadership in political decision-making processes   | Oct 2013-June 2015 | -                                 | -       | € 50 000    |          |          |
| Rights of women through the prevention of sexual violence and other forms of GBV | American Jewish World Service (AJWS) | Address SGBV by advocating for the implementation of laws to protect women's rights, psychosocial support to survivors of violence. | 2013+ 2015         | -                                 | -       | \$20 000    | -        | \$20 000 |
| Mobilising communities against gender-based violence                             | Fund For Global Human Rights (FDHM)  | Working with women's solidarity groups to raise awareness about SGBV, promotion of rights among local leaders                       |                    | \$15 000                          | \$7500  | \$12 500 ?? | \$2500 0 |          |
| Fight against sexual violence  | Medica Mondial                       |   | Jun-Dec '11        | \$7000                            | ?       | -           | -        | -        |
| Mama Tusimame  | Urgent Action Fund-Africa            | Pre-elections project to encourage women to participate in national elections   | Jun-Nov '11        | \$5000                            |         | -           | -        | -        |
| Total amount of funding 2011-2014  |                                      |   |                    | \$ 275450+ €75 000                |         |             |          |          |

### Description of ICCO-funded projects

In 2012-2014 SOFIBEF has had contracts with ICCO for 3 different projects. The first project (PAF) aimed at empowerment of women, especially the most vulnerable. This project was a follow-up of the project

<sup>7</sup> ICCO project 75-03-06-038

<sup>8</sup> ICCO project 75-03-01-004

<sup>9</sup> ICCO project 75-03-01-009

PROCOVISE. As part of PAF, SOFIBEF worked with the local solidarity groups (GSFs) that had been created during PROCOVISE in Fizi and Uvira territories.

Main objectives, activities and results realised as part of PAF in the course of 2011-2012, based on narrative reports:<sup>10</sup>

| Main objective   | Activities  | Results  |
|--|---|--|
| Contribute to culture of peace, democracy, and respect of human rights for women | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training and awareness raising of social leaders on female leadership, peaceful conflict management, gender and human rights</li> <li>- Raising awareness in communities on human rights and equal participation of (wo)men in decision-making</li> <li>- Radio emissions and/or reflection workshops on laws, citizen participation, decentralisation, human rights, fight against impunity, SGBV</li> <li>- Psycho-social assistance to victims of HIV/AIDS and sexual violence</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2011: 162 people achieved, of whom 84 appropriated the message.</li> <li>- 2012: 157 people achieved, of whom 99 well appropriated the message, GSFs more involved in conflict mediation and reconciliation (even between armed groups)</li> <li>- Local authorities and community members are more aware of the position of women in public affairs, shown by testimonies. Some women take up positions</li> <li>- About 60% of target groups has some knowledge about the topics, especially women are more conscious.</li> <li>- 2011: 247 victims identified and supported with individual counselling, 77 have been oriented towards medical structures.</li> <li>- 2012: 201 victims of GBV identified and supported with individual counselling, 66 oriented towards medical structures</li> </ul> |
| Improve socio-economic conditions of women                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Raise awareness among public authorities on the role they can play in supporting women</li> </ul>  | Positive examples can be found, most women feel more supported by people in their surroundings and majority of   |

<sup>10</sup> SOFIBEF, Febr. 2012. *Rapport narrative annuel programme d'appui à l'autonomisation des femmes et filles en situation difficile (PAF) en territoire de Fizi, Sud-Kivu, RDC, période Jan-Déc 2011* ; SOFIBEF, March 2013. *Rapport narratif annuel programme d'appui à l'autonomisation des femmes et filles en situation difficile (PAF), en territoires de Fizi et d'Uvira, Sud-Kivu, RDC, période : Jan-Déc.2012.*

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Raise awareness among people close to the women members of the GSFs about participative economy</li> <li>- Teach women of GSFs about savings and tax system</li> <li>- Support GSFs with agricultural inputs</li> <li>- Provide credit to GSFs</li> <li>- Train members of GSFs on management of micro enterprises</li> </ul> | women in GSFs have improved their economic position.   |
| Strengthen institutional capacity of SOFIBEF and support initiatives of local solidarity groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training of SOFIBEF staff on gender integration</li> <li>- Training of SOFIBEF staff on management and organisation</li> <li>- Training of members of management committees of GSFs on management and organisation</li> <li>- Training for financial staff on SAGE software</li> </ul>  | Training organised in both 2011 and 2012 and messages taken up. Financial training took place in 2012. |

The coordination program 'Gender and Leadership by Women' is the second ICCO-funded project of SOFIBEF during the evaluation period. From Oct. 2012- Dec. 2013, SOFIBEF was responsible for coordination of the synergy between ICCO partners working on this topic (SOFIBEF, SARCAF, DFJ). Program activities covered three major fields: lobby and advocacy; capacity strengthening; coordination of meetings. Main objectives, activities and results realised as part of the PGLF coordination program, based on narrative report:<sup>11</sup>

| Main objective  | Main activities  | Main results  |
|---|--|---|
| Contribute to the emergence of a balanced leadership by women in order to improve living conditions (politically, socio-economically and culturally) of communities in North and South Kivu | - Organisation of coordination meetings  | - Joint action plan composed  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Carry out a survey on the leadership position of women in North and South Kivu.</li> <li>- Organise a debate in Bukavu with civil society and political authorities</li> <li>- Advocacy meetings with provincial authorities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Survey report available<sup>12</sup></li> <li>- 35 participants attended</li> <li>- Meetings took place and authorities took an interest in the issue</li> </ul> |

<sup>11</sup> Rapport narratif annuel : Projet de coordination synergie genre et leadership par la femme. Febr. 2014

<sup>12</sup> Rapport des enquêtes sur la participation de la femme dans les instances de prise de décision en provinces du Nord et du Sud Kivu, October 2013.

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  | - Strengthen capacity of field staff, with aim to make gender and leadership transversal themes | - 21 staff members (of the 3 organisations) trained as enumerators/researchers<br>- 23 staff members trained on gender and balanced leadership<br>- 27 staff members (field workers) have capacities on human rights, gender, resolution 1325, M&E, lobby and advocacy<br>- 240 women leaders trained by trainers in synergy. |
|  | - Raising awareness of women and of authorities on political participation of women             | - 2 missions of lobby and advocacy organised by SOFIBEF, targeting customary authorities  |

The third ICCO-funded project of SOFIBEF was still running at the moment of our endline visit (July 2014). It is a follow-up of the preceding projects and aims at first identifying women who can be seen as potential leaders. Subsequently, the women receive training to make them aware of their capacities, to strengthen their capacities, and to encourage them to take up leadership positions. Targets to realise by mid 2015:

- 220 women identified as potential leaders, and offered training in capacity development
- 9 lobby and/or advocacy initiatives undertaken to influence implementation of national action plans on UNSC Resolution 1820 and 1325.

During our end line visit, only about 80 women had been identified of the intended 220.

Direct effects of the activities:

- 10 women run for elected office positions in local, provincial, or national elections
- 120 customary chiefs have participated in exchange visits and support the development of women in leadership positions
- 2200 youth members of student groups, religious groups and civil society associations are aware of the importance of women leadership in society.<sup>13</sup>

**Main civil society/policy advocacy elements and objectives**

Interventions by SOFIBEF contain many elements that contribute to civil society strengthening, as the overview above shows.

PAF: The interventions directed towards the GSFs contribute especially to poverty alleviation, because strengthening grassroots civil society is used as a vehicle to reduce poverty. In the project plan, 100% of

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<sup>13</sup> Conditions contractuelles spécifiques, project 75-03-01-009.

the intervention strategy is defined as ‘civil society development’<sup>14</sup> Talking to the beneficiaries of the program during our baseline visit, we got the impression that the project was more about poverty alleviation by improving the socio-economic position, than about civil society development.

PGLF coordination: Contractually, 100% of the coordination program was supposed to contribute to civil society development.<sup>15</sup> Efforts were invested at strengthening the contacts with other PGLF partners to carry out joint lobby and advocacy. A large survey resulted in a report that can be used for lobby and advocacy purposes.

PGLF: The program is supposed to work on civil society development (66%) and on policy influencing (34%), according to the contract.<sup>16</sup> We found that a significant number of women targeted as potential leaders, are women who are involved in civil society, as this is the place where their potential leadership capacities become visible. Not surprisingly, both women working in leadership positions in the administration of Uvira had a background in civil society.<sup>17</sup> To reach acceptance of women in leadership positions, SOFIBEF is involved in lobby and advocacy activities, targeting the ones in power. Part of SOFIBEF’s influence is executed through the current director’s involvement in the coordination office of civil society in Uvira (as vice-president). As representative of South Kivu civil society she participated in the national consultations in Kinshasa. This consultation, as mentioned above, was organised by the Kabila government.

## Theory of Change

SOFIBEF aims to contribute to peace, democracy and the promotion of human rights, especially the rights of women and children to improve the living conditions of communities in Uvira and Fizi territories. To achieve this, SOFIBEF has trained grassroots groups (GSFs) on how to mediate in conflicts. Besides, the groups – mainly consisting of women- have received training on economic empowerment (e.g. setting up small enterprises, knowledge about tax system). Victims of sexual and gender-based violence receive individual support from SOFIBEF through psycho-social counselling, juridical advice, and referral to medical structures. On community level, SOFIBEF raises awareness on topics such as human rights, targeting both community leaders and members in meetings, through the GSFs, and through radio programmes. Since end of 2012 a next step has been taken in the promotion of the position of women: SOFIBEF has started to raise awareness and strengthen capacities of women to take up leadership positions in society. This is also reflected in the global objective as formulated in the new strategic plan: The socio-economic conditions of communities in Uvira and Fizi territories in general, and of women and children in particular improve, as a result of the emergence of a leadership by women.<sup>18</sup> The ICCO-funded projects all contribute to the mission of SOFIBEF. The ICCO synergy of partners working on gender and women leadership is especially concerned with the promotion of leadership positions of women. By

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<sup>14</sup> ICCO, project plan 75-03-06-038.

<sup>15</sup> Project plan Coordination Gender Programme

<sup>16</sup> Project plan Increasing women’s political participation

<sup>17</sup> Based on individual interviews with Chef de Cité Jeanne d’Arc Chakupewa, 09.07.2014, and with Noella Nafanga, vice administrator of Uvira, charged with economy and finances, 11.07.2014

<sup>18</sup> SOFIBEF, June 2013. *Planification stratégique et opérationnel 2013-2017* (draft), p. 23

bringing ICCO partners together with other stakeholders, ICCO hopes to contribute to dialogue and awareness, among women, but also among policy makers.

## **Methodology**

Here we describe the methodologies used for baseline and follow-up assessment, from all three components of the research. More detailed information such as a list of documents employed, workshop participants and other informants can be found in the Annex to this report.

### **MDGs & Themes**

The objective of this report is to describe changes in the empowerment of women that could be attributed to participation in the activities of SOFIBEF. To do this, we cannot simply measure the outcomes for the beneficiaries of the project. Many factors affect the outcomes, and there would be no way to isolate the causal effect of project participation from this multitude of other factors. The first step we take is to include a control group to our analysis. However, this still leaves two potential errors in our design: firstly, we can suffer from selection bias. The design of the project might mean that people with certain characteristics are more likely to enroll in the program. Beneficiaries could for instance have been wealthier than non-beneficiaries when the program started or vice versa. Besides self-selection bias, program placement bias is also frequently observed in evaluation studies. NGOs target their projects purposely at specific, often disadvantaged, areas. If the control group's physical, economic and social environment does not match that of the beneficiaries, this will result in differences not caused by the intervention and thus in biased estimates of impact.

To overcome these issues, we would ideally conduct a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) and thus randomize the assignment of the project. Thanks to the law of large number we would have no a priori reason to think that the groups are different, if the project is large enough. This allows us to make a comparison between both groups in order to find the impact of the project.

There are two major constraints that prevent us from adopting this approach: the project had started – and if fact was nearly completed - at the time of the baseline, so there was no way to randomize treatment assignment; and the size of the project is fairly small, as the project is only active in 15 villages out of which our enumerators were not able to reach 4 due to the precarious security situation and difficult terrain, leaving 11 villages. This number is low enough to cause concern regarding the balance.

To get around the non-random assignment, we employed Propensity Score Matching (PSM). Using information provided by UNOCHA and SOFIBEF, we drafted a list of villages comparable to the ones in which SOFIBEF operates. We selected 11 villages at random from this list. To these control villages, we added observations from the control sampling frames from two other projects that operate in the same area. We then estimate the Propensity Score based on as many non-outcome observables as possible. In this way, we can construct an artificial control group and compare each project participant to the most comparable member of the control group.



Since the project had practically ended by the time of baseline data collection, first round of data collection can be considered endline data. Here we rely on PSM to create a control group that is expected to be identical to the treatment group, except for the fact that one group has received SOFIBEF assistance. Therefore the difference between these groups is the measure of impact of SOFIBEF activities.

In order to test for durability of results, we use a difference in difference (DD) model. The assumption here is that both groups undergo the same trends. Any difference in the trends would be caused by the prolonged effects of SOFIBEF intervention.

Econometrically speaking the difference in difference estimator is given by the following expression:

$$Y_{ijt} = \alpha + \beta_1 Post_t + \beta_2 D_j^T + \beta_3 Post_t D_j^T + \varepsilon_{ijt}$$

Where  $Y_{ijt}$  denotes an outcome variable for respondent  $i$  in group  $j$  at time  $t$ ,  $D_j^T$  is a dummy variable equal to one if the respondent belonged to the treatment group,  $Post_t$  is a binary variable that takes the value one if the observation corresponds to the post-treatment time period, and  $\varepsilon_{ijt}$  denotes the error term. Then,  $\beta_3$  in the equation above is the treatment estimate of the intervention's impact on outcome  $Y$ . That is,  $\beta_3$  measures the difference between the treatment and control group in the growth of outcome  $Y$ , and is an unbiased estimate of the average impact on the dependent variable  $Y$  of being assigned to the treatment group provided there is only selection on the observed variables.

In addition to the quantitative analysis, we compare all coefficients with the results of focus group discussions. In these discussions participants are invited to identify the main changes in the central themes for this study. Then, the main drivers of change will be identified. These questions are left as open as possible, to prevent strategic answers since we expect people will provide positive responses to questions on specific NGOs in order not to risk future projects.

## Civil Society

See annex for the general methodology and a list of documents and people we consulted for this report. We were able to follow the general methodology. During the baseline, the focus group discussion targeted mainly beneficiaries of the women's solidarity groups (GSF). During the end line visit, we mainly consulted people involved in the female leadership project of SOFIBEF. The project on women empowerment ended in 2012. The leadership project grew out of the empowerment project and therefore it was a logical focus in the second phase of the evaluation. Although not one-on-one comparable, the findings complement each other and helped to provide a more overall picture of the role SOFIBEF played/plays for its beneficiaries and the direction in which SOFIBEF has developed over these years.

SOFIBEF was not among the organisations sub-sampled for contribution analysis.

## MDGs & Themes Component

This section presents the evaluations of CEPROF's impact on selected MDGs & themes. The focus of the project is on the theme of Fragile States. We answer the following questions:

1. What are the changes in terms of the selected MDGs & themes during the 2012 – 2014 period?
2. To what degree are these changes at target group level attributable to the development interventions of SOFIBEF and its partners?
3. What is the relevance of these changes?
4. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

This section is structured as follows. First we introduce our data, and the way in which it has been collected. We then present the results from our analyses. We then discuss our finding, and provide concluding remarks.

### Data collection

A first round of data collection took place in June/July 2012 by trained Congolese enumerators. The enumerators visited 22 villages (11 treatment, 11 control). In these villages, we had interviews with 335 households, of which 172 were located in control villages and 163 in treatment villages.

The second round of data collection was carried out in June/July 2014, and targeted the same households. To do so, each enumeration site was visited by an enumerator to identify participants to the first round and make sure they would be present when the rest of the team visited the next day. This permitted some time to contact people (e.g. by phone) who were not present. As it was impossible to prevent absentees, enumerators would visit on a pre-determined third day to interview as many of them as could be reached. By spreading out the work over three days, attrition was minimized to the maximum extent possible within our budget, and safety protocols (as no enumerators were allowed to stay overnight).

Despite these measures, enumerators were not able to find 66 households, which translates into roughly 20% of our total sample of 335 households. In light of the turbulent recent past of the area, this is not a surprisingly high number.

Most of our indicators are based on standard survey questions. Details for how these were asked and treated can be found in the appendix. In addition list experiments were done in both the first and second rounds. A standard trust game (sometimes called investment game) and a risk bargaining experiment were done in the second round. Because these instruments are slightly more complex, we briefly introduce them here.

A **list experiment** (Blair & Imai, 2012) involves the enumerator proposing a list of four problems women can face to one of the women in each interviewed household. The respondents are asked to indicate how many of the problems they faced, but not which ones. In one half of the household (randomly

determined) the interviewer adds “sexual violence” as a fifth problem. Since the groups are assigned randomly, we expect to have no other factor driving a difference between the two groups in the number of problems reported other than the incidence of sexual violence. So to calculate the incidence of violence, we just calculate the difference in means of the problems faced in both groups. Since at no point the women are asked directly whether they faced sexual violence, this method is not subject to respondents avoiding sensitive topics. To calculate the difference in incidence of GBV between SOFIBEF beneficiaries and the control group we estimate a diff-in-diff model. To estimate the difference between the two groups over time (first round to second round) we estimate a triple-difference model.

**A trust (or investment) game** (Berg et al., 1995) is played between two people: a sender and a receiver, who do not know each other’s identity. Each participant plays once as a sender, and once as a receiver, using the strategy method in which the participant responds to all possible offers by the sender. The sender is endowed with six tokens, each worth FC 500 so the total endowment is FC 3000, or about 3 euros. He can send any number (or none) of his tokens to the receiver. Any tokens sent will be tripled by the researchers, before they’re given to the receiver. The receiver then has the option to return any or none of the tokens to the sender (they’re not tripled a second time). The more the sender trusts the receiver to return at least some of the tokens he sends, the more he will be inclined to send. Here we report a simple difference in means of the amount sent by the senders in the treatment group vs. the control group. Every participant plays once as a sender, and once as a receiver, so we have this data for all respondents.

**Intra-household bargaining** is measured in the spirit of Martinsson et al. (2009): two members of the couple play a risk game, first separately, then together, and the decisions are compared. However, rather than using the Holt & Laury (2002) risk game, we opt for the Eckel & Grossman (2002) game which is simpler (Dave et al. 2010), resulting in greater comprehension of participants. First, the husband is shown a set of six lotteries, ranging from safe to risky and asked to choose one. Then the wife is asked to do the same. The husband and wife do not know each other’s choice. Finally, the couple makes a joint decision. Here we report the degree to which the joint decision is closest to that of the wife. We order the lotteries from 1 (least risky) to 6 (riskiest). From there we calculate the distance between the decisions. If the wife chooses 1, and the husband 6, the distance is 5 etc. The final bargaining power of the wife is:

$$\text{Bargain} = D_{wc} - D_{hc} / D_{hw}$$

Where D is the distance between two choices:  $D_{hc}$  stands for the distance between lottery chosen by the husband and the one chosen by the couple etc. 0 indicates perfect balance (the couple’s decision is right in the middle of the wife and husband), -1 means the joint decision is exactly the man’s decision. +1 means the joint decision purely reflects the wife’s preferences. It follows that we cannot determine bargaining power if both the husband and wife opt for the same lottery, because  $D_{hw}$  would be equal to zero.

In addition, two rounds of focus groups were done. Our quantitative methodology would not work for the maisons d’accueil (MAs). We would not be able to find a proper control group of women who were

victims of GBV, too afraid to seek help at a MA, but willing to talk to us about it. Even identifying the treatment group was hard. We were dependent on the assistance of SOFIBEF to find these women. This puts us at risk of some biases, as only women with good relations with SOFIBEF are likely to be found by them. The women identified by SOFIBEF were invited to a focus group session (one for each MA), in which several themes were explored, notably the role of women in their villages, and the role of SOFIBEF activities in their lives.

A general round of focus groups was done in targeted communities. In the treated communities, the sampling frame to invite people for these meetings was the same as the one used for the larger scale survey. In control communities, participants were invited using a semi-formal sampling method in which two enumerators walked through the community in a pre-determined pattern, inviting inhabitants of every 15<sup>th</sup> house they encountered. The time implementing a full census of these villages would have taken was not available, and this method ensured at least a geographic spread over the entire community.

Descriptive statistics for our main outcome indicators from the first and second round of data collection can be found in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively. We selected three types of indicators. First, a set relating to the theme “Fragile States”. PAF aims to contribute to a culture of peace for the region. The indicators in this category pertain to the amount of conflicts and violent/criminal incidents a household faces, and trust in community. Second, we add some indicators related to MDG 1. These indicators reflect the degree to which SOFIBEF contributes to increased material well-being through their support of revenue generating activities. Finally, we used the aforementioned indicators for GBV (list experiment) and intra-household bargaining games as indicators for changes related to MDG3.

Yield figures are on the high side. Yields of cassava in Eastern Africa for cassava should be around 8.5 tonnes/ha (Fermont et al. 2009), and we do not expect to exceed this. Our figures do, however, and quite a large margin. The error stems from the fact that both area and production are not known in standard units by the local population. Since both these figures vary wildly, the resulting yield figure carries a large error as well, as seen by the standard error.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for the first round of data collection

| Statistic  | Control |       |          |     |      | Treatment |       |          |     |      |
|--|---------|-------|----------|-----|------|-----------|-------|----------|-----|------|
|  | N       | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max  | N         | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max  |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | 113     | 2.58  | 1.74     | 0   | 6    | 116       | 2.97  | 1.79     | 0   | 6    |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | 117     | 0.5   | 0.5      | 0   | 1    | 118       | 0.55  | 0.5      | 0   | 1    |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | 118     | 0.21  | 0.41     | 0   | 1    | 118       | 0.17  | 0.38     | 0   | 1    |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | 118     | 0.07  | 0.25     | 0   | 1    | 118       | 0.06  | 0.24     | 0   | 1    |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | 118     | 0.17  | 0.38     | 0   | 1    | 118       | 0.15  | 0.36     | 0   | 1    |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                                 | 61      | 13.12 | 26.6     | 0   | 113  | 64        | 24.17 | 40.84    | 0   | 156  |
| Fraction of cassava sold                                 | 46      | 0.27  | 0.29     | 0   | 0.87 | 49        | 0.25  | 0.3      | 0   | 0.91 |
| Used Fertilizer (yes/no)                                 | 113     | 0.01  | 0.09     | 0   | 1    | 107       | 0.02  | 0.14     | 0   | 1    |
| Improved seeds use                                       | 113     | 0.22  | 0.42     | 0   | 1    | 107       | 0.26  | 0.44     | 0   | 1    |

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for the second round of data collection

| Statistic  | Control |       |          |     |        | Treatment |       |          |     |      |
|--|---------|-------|----------|-----|--------|-----------|-------|----------|-----|------|
|  | N       | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max    | N         | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max  |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | 92      | 3.12  | 1.34     | 1   | 6      | 92        | 3.11  | 1.37     | 1   | 6    |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | 108     | 0.55  | 0.5      | 0   | 1      | 109       | 0.46  | 0.5      | 0   | 1    |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | 118     | 0.15  | 0.36     | 0   | 1      | 118       | 0.11  | 0.31     | 0   | 1    |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | 118     | 0.03  | 0.18     | 0   | 1      | 118       | 0.03  | 0.18     | 0   | 1    |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | 118     | 0.08  | 0.27     | 0   | 1      | 118       | 0.09  | 0.29     | 0   | 1    |
| Tokens sent in trust game                                | 109     | 1.65  | 0.81     | 0   | 4      | 111       | 1.65  | 0.82     | 0   | 4    |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                                 | 55      | 20.37 | 93.62    | 0.1 | 695.45 | 52        | 8.48  | 22.43    | 0.4 | 156  |
| Fraction of cassava sold                                 | 84      | 0.25  | 0.26     | 0   | 1      | 81        | 0.23  | 0.25     | 0   | 0.85 |
| Used Fertilizer (yes/no)                                 | 99      | 0.01  | 0.1      | 0   | 1      | 96        | 0.02  | 0.14     | 0   | 1    |
| Improved seeds use                                       | 99      | 0.04  | 0.2      | 0   | 1      | 96        | 0.06  | 0.24     | 0   | 1    |
| Intra household bargaining power                         | 11      | -0.16 | 0.95     | -1  | 1      | 20        | -0.04 | 0.93     | -1  | 1    |

## Analyses and results

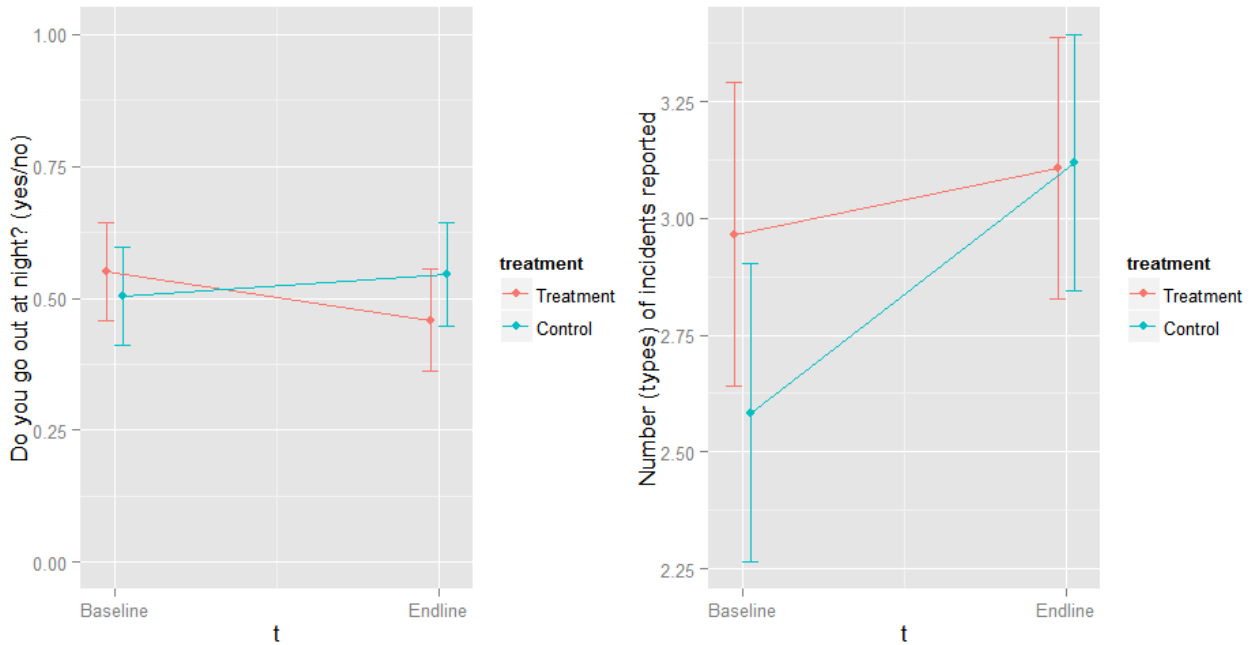
The main findings from our quantitative are presented in Table 3. Results will be discussed by MDG and Theme. The results from our focus groups will be included in this section to give context to the findings. After the discussion of the results, we will focus on our second research question: has the project reached its objectives. After this, the relevance of our findings will be discussed.

Table 3: Results from quantitative survey

| Indicator  | PSM              | DD                  | DD with controls      |
|--|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Fragile States</b>                                    |                  |                     |                       |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | 0.22<br>(0.95)   | -0.392<br>(-1.279)  | -0.462<br>(-1.433)    |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | 0.03<br>(0.54)   | -0.134<br>(-1.518)  | -0.117<br>(-1.258)    |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | 0.04<br>(0.9)    | 0<br>(0)            | -0.002<br>(-0.026)    |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | -0.05<br>(-1.35) | 0.008<br>(0.208)    | 0.017<br>(0.4)        |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | 0.03<br>(0.76)   | 0.034<br>(0.571)    | 0.053<br>(0.851)      |
| Tokens sent in trust game                                |                  | 0.036<br>(0.291)    | -0.052<br>(-0.444)    |
| <b>SOFIBEF Specific</b>                                  |                  |                     |                       |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                                 | 9.92<br>(1.4)    | -22.941<br>(-1.601) | -21.158 *<br>(-1.822) |
| Fraction of cassava sold                                 | -0.03<br>(-0.45) | -0.002<br>(-0.034)  | -0.01<br>(-0.137)     |
| Used Fertilizer (yes/no)                                 | 0 (0)            | 0.001<br>(0.037)    | 0.003<br>(0.111)      |
| Improved seeds use fraction                              | 0.01<br>(0.15)   | -0.018<br>(-0.275)  | -0.025<br>(-0.355)    |
| Intra household bargaining power                         |                  | 0.2<br>(0.658)      | 0.345<br>(0.989)      |
| List experiment  |                  | 0.005<br>(0.893)    | 0.031<br>(0.078)      |

Notes: *t-values in parentheses; Significance levels: \*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; Intrahousehold bargaining and trust games were only played in 2014, the coefficient reported is for a *t*-test comparing treatment and control; a triple difference coefficient is reported for the list experiment; Controls include age, education, status of migrant, roof quality, household size.*

First we consider the theme of fragile states. None of our indicator is associated with a statistically significant coefficient. We do see a large effect on the number of incidents reported. Treatment households report having more incidents in their neighborhoods. However, the result is not statistically significant. If we look at the diff-in-diff results to see whether any possible effect persisted, people in the treatment group report a smaller increase in the number of incidents reported, though they are less



**Figure 1:** Comparison of means of selected indicators for the theme of fragile states. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval

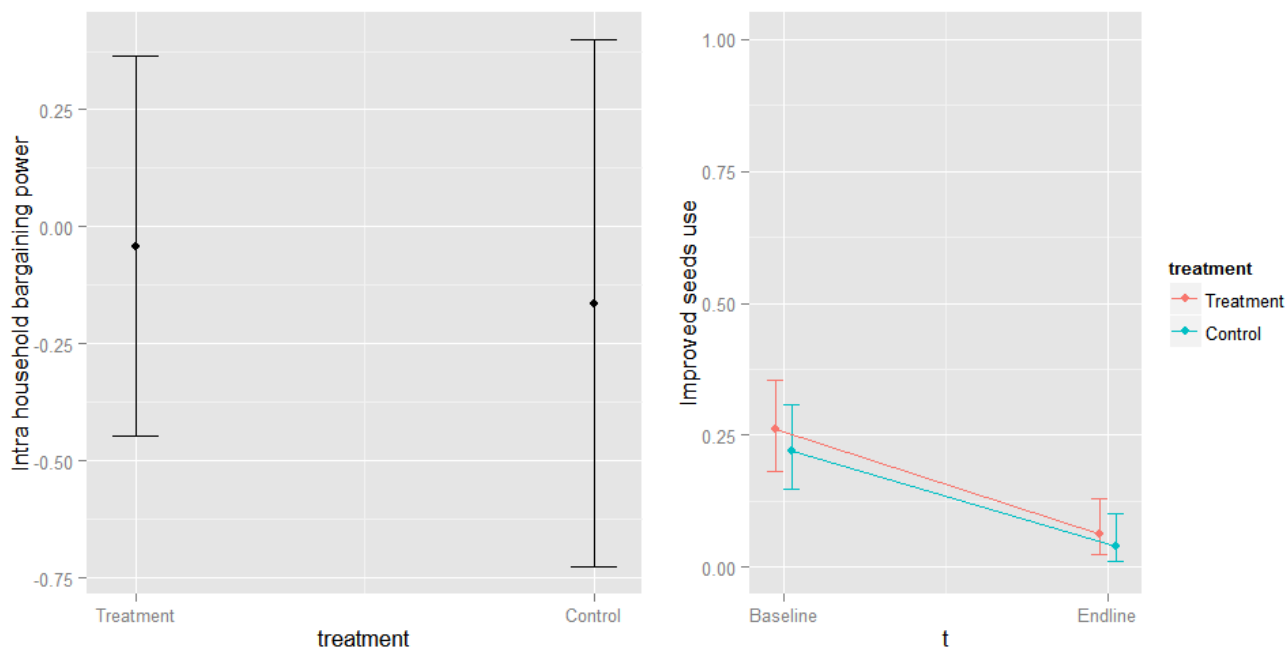
likely to go out at night, relative to the control group. When we examine these indicators graphically in **Figure 1**, no clear trend emerges with respect to the tendency of people to go out at night. With respect to the number of incidents reported, we do see a striking increase in the control group, which is not present in the treatment group.

The participants to our focus groups largely confirmed these findings. While the security situation in Fizi might have stabilized in terms of the activities of armed groups, crime is widely reported as a large problem. The civil society, which NGOs like SOFIBEF, is seen by our panel members as a contributing factor to security.

We also see little impact in terms of the MDG indicators related to poverty and gender. The coefficient on the indicator for intra-household bargaining power is fairly large (the indicator ranges from -1 to 1), but so is the standard error. **Figure 2** shows these standard errors. We do see that women in the treatment group are slightly closer to parity with their husbands in terms of decision making power than



the women in the control group. This larger power does not translate in more productive investments in agriculture, as is evidenced by the right panel of **Figure 2**.



**Figure 2:** Comparison of means of selected SOFIBEF specific indicators. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval

The finding described above are reflected in the outcomes of our focus group discussion to a certain extent. Women in villages with SOFIBEF activities report that they are getting more and more decision making power in the household. Furthermore, women can now do the same work and have the same positions as men, according to these discussions. This is a trend that is mostly attributed to activities by NGOs, SOFIBEF among them. As for changes in the general economic and agricultural situation, participants in treatment and control groups are equally pessimistic.

One group in particular need of economic empowerment are the victims of Gender Based Violence (GBV). The women interviewed as part of the series of focus groups in MAs generally express that their lives would have been extremely different had they not received the assistance from SOFIBEF. Being the victim of GBV still carries great social stigma, and is valid ground for divorce. Though a lot of work is still needed to alleviate these sufferings, the women all expressed that the support that was offered to them helped them to reintegrate into society.

Our quantitative data fails to provide evidence that the SOFIBEF activities have led to an empowerment of women in the area. A lot of the trends observed were parallel in treatment and control villages. Women are not shown to have more decision making power, communities face the same conflicts, economic investments are not higher. We do see an improvement in the position of women in our two

rounds of focus group decisions. The acceptance of victims of GBV has been improved, and women have more economic power. However, these results can not merely be attributed to SOFIBEF. These effects are reported throughout the research area. The fact that it is reported more strongly in treatment villages might simply be due to the fact that these women are strongly involved in SOFIBEF, and thus care strongly about the fates women.

## Discussion

As stated in our introduction, there is ample scope in the Eastern DRC to improve the position of women, both economically as politically. SOFIBEF follows a multilevel approach: at the base they work with groups of women to improved revenue generating activities. At the same time lobbying is done at higher levels to accept women as equals. This follows the literature. For example, Doss (2013) finds that when women have a larger share in household revenues, this increases their decision-making power in the household as well as in the community. This could be the start of a virtuous cycle, as that political engagement of women increases as women are better represented in positions of power (Barnes and Burchard, 2012).

The problem here is that it is hard to measure the effects of advocacy at community and territory level after two years. We cannot be sure whether money spent here has reached its intended objective. The fact that SOFIBEF certainly is not the only NGO active in this domain exacerbates this: even if we could have measured changes, it would have been impossible to attribute them to SOFIBEF.

Even when looking at GSF members, where impact should be more straightforward to measure, we find little impact. This might partly be due to the way these groups are organized and supported by SOFIBEF. SOFIBEF contacts a focal point in each area, who know the leaders of the women groups. This very indirect way of operating makes monitoring of what happens in the GSFs. In fact, enumerators have come back from Fizi reporting difficulties finding the GSFs.

The fact that complicated our evaluation the most is that the project had nearly ended by the time the research had begun. This means a: that the project was undertaken in a way that makes evaluation difficult (e.g. non-randomized), b: that the first round of data collection was not a baseline. We have addressed these two issues to the extent possible using PSM.

## Conclusion

This section has presented the findings from field research in the Eastern DRC to assess the impact of the activities carried out by SOFIBEF for the Programme PAF. We collected quantitative data on a number of indicators relating to the theme of fragile states and several indicators specific to the project. We collected this data both among beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in the research area. Additionally, we organized focus groups discussions in these two groups.

Though some evidence was found of an improved position for women was found in our focus group discussions, no statistically significant evidence to corroborate this was found in the quantitative studies. Though women did have larger more bargaining power in the treatment group, this effect was

not statistically significant. Furthermore, the trend of an improving position of women is found throughout the research area, and can thus not be attributed to SOFIBEF. This is possibly due to the large number of national and international NGOs active in the domain. While the improvement of women's right is very relevant, it is thus hard to say the same for SOFIBEF's activities.

The changes that are measured – whether or not they can be attributed to SOFIBEF - are very relevant to the population. Women have been, and despite recent progress still are, a marginalized group in the region. Creating more opportunities for women to participate in the economy and community decision making will strengthen the position of women which will increase their welfare.

Unfortunately, the area remains fragile. Reported incidents are up slightly, in the control group as well as the treatment group. Both Fizi and Uvira suffer the activities from armed groups, though Fizi has been relatively quiet in 2012-2014. This state of fragility remain one of the most important drivers of development outcomes in the area. Impacts of NGOs on this state affair cannot be expected to be measurable over the space of two years. But when asked, most of our participants have indicated that changes in this situation are due to increased government and army efforts to ensure safety in the region.

Table 4: Summary of evaluation findings

|  | <i>Rating</i> | <i>Comments</i>  |
|--|---------------|--|
| The project was well designed                                      | 5             | The project could have benefitted from more focus on core areas of expertise   |
| The project was implemented as designed                            | 4             | Due to the various levels involved in the project – the office in Uvira, different focal points, and finally GSFs at the grassroots, it was not always clear what was implemented. |
| The project reached all its objectives                             | 5.5           | There is evidence of an improved situation for women.<br>No evidence of improved livelihood opportunities was found.   |
| The observed results are attributable to the project interventions | 4             | There is a large number of NGOs active, both in the region as in the specific domain of women’s rights.  |
| The observed results are relevant to the project beneficiaries     | 5.5           | Although there are many alternative drivers of change in the area, the p   |
| The project was implemented efficiently                            |               |  |

## Civil Society Component

In this section, we describe our findings for the Civil Society Component. We first provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the s (Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment). This is followed by a contribution story assembling the evidence for the contribution of MFS II funding to a strengthening of civil society, through the development interventions of SOFIBEF. We then discuss our findings, and conclude by providing an answer to the evaluation questions for this component of the evaluation.

### Results

|                       | Baseline | Change |
|-----------------------|----------|--------|
| Civic engagement      | 2.5      | 2      |
| Level of organisation | 2        | 2      |
| Practice of values    | 2        | 1      |
| Perception of impact  | 2        | 2.5    |
| Environment           | 1.5      | 2      |

### Civic engagement

#### *Diversity of socially based engagement/ Diversity of political engagement*

The ICCO-funded project on economic empowerment targeted women who were marginalised. Part of them had been victim of sexual or gender-based violence. By empowering the women, they became less marginalised, up to the point that some of them started to raise their voices more in public spheres. Interventions here were based on needs of beneficiaries. Some beneficiaries participated in reflection days to draft the new strategic plan.

The project to promote women leadership takes empowerment a step further. In the initial stages of the project it was up to SOFIBEF to identify potential female leaders. In this case, demands did not primarily come from beneficiaries; the women first had to be made aware of their own potential to raise their voice in public decision-making processes. In comparison to many other women, the women targeted in this project cannot be seen as marginalised (at least not as much as the women targeted in the empowerment project); they already occupy positions that enable them to stand up and raise their voice. In comparison to men these women can still be seen as marginalised in society, as they often meet a lot of resistance towards change. During our visit we talked for instance to the administrative chief of the town of Uvira; a woman who has been in this position for 2 years now. Previously, she had led a network of women organisation and she had worked as the first female provincial minister. Despite her experience, she still encounters men who feel that women are not appointed/elected on their real merits, but by seducing men. She -and other women who participate in the women leadership project of SOFIBEF- all emphasised

that the support by SOFIBEF was greatly encouraging. It helps them to see their own potential and gives them confidence not to give up when meeting societal resistance. For SOFIBEF, these women serve as role models for other women who have not yet reached this stage of leadership.

SOFIBEF is strongly determined to change politics and governance. The women leadership project prepares women to stand as candidates in the upcoming local and regional elections. A limited number of beneficiaries already occupies position in government. It gives SOFIBEF entry points into local authority structures. Next to this, SOFIBEF maintains relationships with (male) government officials and raises gender awareness among them. Involvement in the Civil Society Coordination Office in Uvira provides access to political actors. Relations with local government in the territories vary over time; 'sometimes the authorities take us to be enemies or opponents, but at present they collaborate without any problems and understand the importance of collaboration to come to a positive change', as somebody described in our questionnaire.

### Level of organisation

*Organisational level of civil society (infrastructure)/ Peer-to-peer communication/ Financial and human resources*

SOFIBEF is in close collaboration with other civil society actors. SOFIBEF's director is the first female board member of the Civil Society Coordination Office. This was seen by staff as a sign that gender sensitivity is gaining more prominence in civil society. Next to personnel support SOFIBEF sometimes provides material support to the Coordination Office, e.g. by lending out its car for activities.

SOFIBEF has a relatively long history in civil society in Fizi and Uvira (active since 1997) and has a good reputation. As a result, staff is often consulted by new civil society organisations and asked for support. For SOFIBEF new organisations do not mean competition. Ideally, different organisations/initiatives can complement each other to strive for the common cause of improving women's position. One of the organisations SOFIBEF has trained recently for instance focuses especially on reproductive health. Another organisation is concerned with children and youth.

Staff of SOFIBEF is generally convinced of the importance of networking, and working in synergy with other NGOs. SOFIBEF is an active member of various NGO networks (e.g. CRONGD-SK, CCAP). Under the ICCO funding SOFIBEF has obtained experience in working together in synergy with other ICCO partners: PROCOVISE, PAF, and – at present- PGLF. Contacts with some of the partners in previous programs still exist. For more than a year SOFIBEF was the lead organisation in the ICCO synergy of partners working on women leadership. SOFIBEF was responsible for coordination of activities. It shows that the organisation is trusted as a leading civil society actor. Staff members expressed their satisfaction about the programmatic approach.

Although SOFIBEF had various sources of funding over the last years, staff complained that less and less funding is available for institutional support. ICCO for instance used to pay office, but since 2013 only part of the year is covered. Also other donors are reducing/ending contracts. SOFIBEF actively seeks new opportunities, but is not willing to compromise on its mission and core objectives. The organisation only seeks donors with a sincere interest in its programmes. Staff illustrated this by setting out how certain

donors had approached them and expressed interest in working with them, but how they felt other organisations possessed better skills to execute the sort of program the donor had in mind, and they referred the donor to this other organisation. It underlines both that SOFIBEF has a strong intrinsic motivation to work towards realising its objectives, and that it considers other civil society organisations not as competitors, but as complementary.

In terms of human resources, it can be noted that SOFIBEF has had a smooth shift in leadership. Most of the organisations visited during our evaluation have strong leaders who cannot easily be replaced. In the case of SOFIBEF the resigning of the previous director did not come as a big surprise due to long-term health problems. Yet, also during her absence the organisation continued to function, submitted new project proposals to donors and generally responded promptly and adequately to e-mails. Ownership of the organisation is not only with the director, but shared more widely. Nevertheless, staff would love to have more funding for strengthening its organisational capacity: “We are managing, but the problem is that strengthening is needed”<sup>19</sup>, as was pointed out during the endline workshop. ICCO’s efforts to develop organisational capacity takes often place through bilateral exchanges at the ICCO office. For us as evaluation team it was difficult to get a clear impression of these exchanges as they take place in an informal setting and are not necessarily documented, but the importance of contacts was acknowledged by SOFIBEF’s director. ICCO staff argued to have noted significant progress in capacity due to periodic feedback provided by ICCO’s technical staff.

## Practice of values

### *Internal governance (democratic decision-making and governance)/ Transparency*

In the course of 2013 SOFIBEF started working on a new strategic plan, including minor changes to the organisational set up. A final plan was pending in 2014. An external consultant was supposed to finish this.

As mentioned before, SOFIBEF changed the executive director in 2013. According to the internal regulations of SOFIBEF, the Generally Assembly has mandated the Board of Directors to nominate a new director and to appoint the executive staff of SOFIBEF. Next to this, a new finance officer was appointed after departure of the previous one. The new officer already worked at the finance department of SOFIBEF as bookkeeper, and had attended the same training in the field of finances as the finance officer (on accounting software, provided by ICCO). SOFIBEF aims at always strengthening capacities of its staff, and carries out internal evaluations to assess the needs and capacity of all staff members. It was therefore decided that the bookkeeper could take over the position of the finance officer.

Over the last years, SOFIBEF has had some difficulties to organise the annual meetings of the General Assembly as the statutes prescribe. In reality meetings took place in 2010, 2011 and 2014, but not in 2012 and 2013. Two main reasons were given by staff for not organising the GA in 2012 and 2013; firstly, the lack of security in the territories made it difficult to invite members to turn up at a meeting in a central

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<sup>19</sup> Nous nous débrouillons, mais le problème est qu’il faut renforcer.

location. Secondly, there was lack of money to organise logistics of the assembly. During the last GA, held in 2014, SOFIBEF invited a number of beneficiaries to represent the local solidarity groups. These members were invited in an advisory capacity. During one of the GAs, SOFIBEF realised that some members would be eligible to become beneficiaries of the organisation's project, and it was decided that they could indeed become beneficiaries. Staff is confident that GAs will be more regular again in the future with a more stable security situation. The meetings of the Board of Directors have been held with regularity over the last year, i.e. annually. Among the board members are some of the founding members of the organisation, others are women who are involved in their own NGO.

SOFIBEF usually compiles not only project reports (narrative and financial reports), but also consolidated reports that provide an overall picture of the organisation. External audits are carried out annually. The audit of 2013 was available during our visit.<sup>20</sup> It was funded by ICCO but also covered other projects. The new finance officer told us that they try to follow up on recommendations of audits as much as possible. To make up for deficits in capacities, she has been in contact with friends and former colleagues working in the field to get advice on how to tackle certain issues. Putting together a consolidated financial report is a skill that the new finance officer still needs to acquire. As a result, no consolidated report was available for 2013, whereas such reports were available in preceding years. The audit report 2013 pointed out that – despite contractual agreement, SOFIBEF does not have separate bank accounts for its different projects.<sup>21</sup> Some of the other recommendations mentioned in the audit are only feasible at the moment more funding is available, like the recommendation to appoint different staff members within the finance department to ensure transparency and control.

### Perception of impact (internal and external)

Through its interventions, SOFIBEF aims at providing support to women who have been victim of SGBV, and works towards changing mentality and cultural norms regarding women's participation in economic and public life. An example of an achievement by SOFIBEF as part of the empowerment project (PAF), is that SOFIBEF managed to get an agreement with local authorities to reduce tax burdens for the small enterprises that were set up as part of the local women initiatives. In DRC small businesses often have little opportunity to make a profit, as they pay high amounts of (formal and informal) taxes. With the ending of the funding for PAF, SOFIBEF continues to do some monitoring of the GSFs, but is not able to provide a lot of support and guidance anymore. Some of the women who were/are part of the GSFs have also been identified as potential leaders and are included in the leadership project. Other women felt disappointed about not being targeted anymore. Nevertheless, most of the GSFs continue to function in some way or another, which shows some impact at the level of local civil society. It is difficult to establish to what extent this is due to PAF, or due to other projects. In the course of 2013 for instance, the GSFs were still targeted as part of a project on women's rights funded by AJWS, and as part of a project on community mobilisation on GBV funded by FDHM. As part of the latter project, 7 GSFs were targeted.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> BERCCO, 2014. *Rapport d'audit. Projets: Programme Genre et Leadership par la femme/Coordination*

<sup>21</sup> PGLF rapport d'audit SOFIBEF ICCO 2013.

<sup>22</sup> SOFIBEF, March 2014. *Rapport narratif annuel global, periode du rapport: Janvier-Décembre 2013.*



Both women occupying leadership positions within public administration in Uvira expressed that they felt greatly supported by the women leadership project of SOFIBEF. They are not only involved as role models, but also feel encouraged by SOFIBEF to continue their work. We also talked to women who occupy leadership positions within civil society. They similarly encountered resistance, within civil society and within their families. Beneficiaries praised especially the strong engagement of SOFIBEF, advocacy efforts, and the meetings organised to strengthen capacities. “With their help, we stay”, as one of the beneficiaries explained.<sup>23</sup> During the meetings, women learn to think about their ambitions, and are encouraged to express these ambitions and work towards achieving them. Among the beneficiaries identified thus far are quite some women working in civil society, either heading their own NGO, or working as staff member. By strengthening capacities of these individuals, SOFIBEF contributes to civil society development; some of the women might eventually end up working in government structures, but others will use their capacities to strengthen civil society.

The impact of SOFIBEF on policy level goes along different lines. As set out above, SOFIBEF supports women who obtain leadership positions. But these women do not always find their voices heard. “Sometimes men stifle our problems, even if I come up with suggestions that are useful for the communities,” explained the female vice-administrator of Uvira. She sometimes informs SOFIBEF about problems. Subsequently, SOFIBEF, through the Civil Society Coordination Office in Uvira, carries out advocacy at the higher administrative level, where the same message is taken up by her chief.<sup>24</sup> It is especially the participation of SOFIBEF’s director in the Coordination Office that provides entry points into policy influencing. Besides, SOFIBEF is in regular contact with local authorities in Fizi and Uvira to talk about gender and rights of women and children. SOFIBEF is one of the few civil society organisations we visited that had relatively easy access to government structures. It is illustrated by the attendance of the director in the national consultations organised by president Kabila in Kinshasa. These consultations were to set a pathway for the future for the country. SOFIBEF participation in this is criticised by some who feel it jeopardises impartiality of civil society, and they suspected voices would not really be taken into consideration. Partly however, we felt feelings could also be motivated by jealousy. Thus far, the impact of the consultations is not yet clearly visible. We agree that being too close to the government can be a risk for civil society actors in losing independence. At the same time it provides opportunities for being heard. Our visits to SOFIBEF convincingly showed us that staff members do not refrain from being critical (and even receive a lot of threats because of it). In general, it is our impression that SOFIBEF is well able to combine a critical position with a constructive comportment aimed at influencing policy of statutory and customary authorities.

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<sup>23</sup> 9.7.2014

<sup>24</sup> Individual interview, 11.07.2014.

## Context dimension (external environment)

The project on women empowerment was set up to respond to needs expressed by women on the local level. With the women leadership project, this is less straightforward. Partly, this project aims at raising awareness among women about their potential to become leaders. Women are often not well aware of this and thus cannot express their needs in this regard. It is remarkable to note that, before the project started some doubts existed within SOFIBEF about the desirability of having a project on women leadership. When we talked about the project during our baseline visit (when the coordination project was about to start), staff argued that it was still too early to promote women leadership. Less than 2 years later this had changed greatly. The project had started off with the coordination of a large research in North and South Kivu to assess the level of involvement and participation of women in different spheres of decision-making. The survey ( $n= 1067$ ) and focus groups were organised by SOFIBEF, together with the other synergy partners: DFJ and SARCAF, and with the support of ICCO and an external consultant (SOFIBEF et al. 2013). The research has helped SOFIBEF to increasing its understanding of the context. After that, SOFIBEF now works on the identification of women who have the potential to take up a role in decision-making processes. With the early results of these efforts, staff are confident that the project is well-suited and timely given the present context.

The project on women leadership responds to the changing political context; in 2010 Baraka and Uvira were decreed to obtain the status of 'town'. To re-organise the administration of these new towns, elections are needed. Until present they are pending. SOFIBEF is taking up the challenge to mobilise as many women as possible to postulate their candidacy for one of the positions, and for other women to vote for them.

Since 2012, SOFIBEF works with a development plan and a diagnostic tool to assess the functioning of the organisation. This allows for more control on what is actually being done and what still needs to be achieved. Before that time, ICCO already implemented the O-Scan as a tool to assess the organisation and give suggestions on how to improve. It can be of help in better assessing the position and strengths of SOFIBEF in relation to other actors in civil society.

## Contribution

Empowering women economically helps them to become less dependent on their husbands. They get more self-esteem and confidence and dare to speak out their voice in public, making also men aware of the position of women. Indirectly, economic support thus contributes to women emancipation and possible changes in policy (men accepting women more easily). Besides, the organisation of women in grassroots groups contributes to civil society development.

## Discussion

*Given your findings, do you think this project (as in: SPO interventions towards civil society strengthening) was well-designed, suitable for the environment in which it was implemented? Would you advice to fund a similar project in the future (or to continue funding this one)? What changes would you recommend, if any? How could the impact evaluation itself be improved?*

As ICCO has funded three projects of SOFIBEF in the course of the evaluation period, it is difficult to provide a singular answer to this question. Although the projects can be seen in connection, they all have their own particularities and their own contribution to civil society strengthening.

Project proposal PAF argued that 100% of the project was relevant for civil society strengthening. Support to the GSFs can be seen as strengthening grassroots civil society, but we feel the project is more oriented towards poverty alleviation, with development of the grassroots structures serving as a means to reach the aim of poverty alleviation. At the end of the project, GSFs were generally not yet strong enough to become autonomous without further institutional support. Hence, in terms of civil society, the project was not well-designed. We are convinced that PAF, aimed at empowering women is suitable for the environment in which it was executed. But because of the presence of humanitarian actors in the same area, the project might have come too early, as people are too much used to material assistance without return payments. This has reduced the motivation of people to take initiative themselves. A shift in mentality is required for that, but this shift becomes visible only gradually. More efforts are probably needed to make this shift sustainable and visible throughout the area, and to make an intervention like PAF both suitable and timely.

The women leadership projects have selected beneficiaries who are less vulnerable than the ‘average’ participants in PAF. Although staff expressed doubts about the set-up of the project during the baseline, they were much more optimistic during the end line visit, as they had found that women were actually ready to take up leadership positions. Identification of the women started in the beginning of 2014, and was not yet completed during our end line visit. It was therefore early to really assess results. Potentially, these women can make a big difference. If they manage to raise their voices further and obtain positions in decision-making, this group can accelerate change. Firstly because they can then help to set wider societal changes into motion, making it more acceptable that women participate in decision-making. Secondly, because these women can serve as role models to others, who can become stronger as well. If the institutional environment is favourable, the process can speed up further. Changes will be visible on the longer term only. Nevertheless, at this stage we consider the project to be well-designed as it is based on a sound context analysis carried out during the coordination project. Given the engagement of women we consider the project suitable for the environment.

A general recommendation is that a longer-term focus on a specific project might be more effective in terms of realisations. ICCO has invested a lot in the GSFs but they still do not seem to be autonomous. We agree that the new projects are in line with PAF and follow-up logically, but hope to see that the PGLF will be given sufficient time to achieve its objectives.

What should be noted here is that the project design of the women leadership project engrained a shift in focus from the most marginalised women to women who already have reached certain positions. This will probably be beneficial for strengthening civil society, and as such the changes in focus can be seen as positive. Obviously, this shift is less positive for the most vulnerable people in the short term, as the trickle-down effect of women leadership will take time and might be hampered by the institutional environment.

*About the evaluation:* Having to deal with 3 different projects was a challenge in terms of our evaluation design. We could have chosen to continue looking at the PAF project, but felt that the new projects were more relevant in terms of civil society strengthening/policy influencing. We therefore decided to also cover these in our evaluation. They reflect the development in thinking within SOFIBEF about the position of women. We did not cover the new projects more in-depth during the baseline because definite contractual arrangements still had to be signed during this visit.

## Conclusion

Provide an answer to the evaluation questions.

- 1) What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?

Within the field of gender, focus used to be predominantly on the fight against sexual violence and support to victims; a lot of NGOs cover this theme and the topic raised a lot of interest from the international community. Our analysis of developments within the women's movement shows that attention is gradually shifting; focus is broadening and increasingly incorporating gender norms, rights, women leadership and other pertinent concerns (Hilhorst and Bashwira 2014). A lot of this is driven by international actors, which are involved in funding, in agenda-setting and in the promotion of cooperation between women's organisations. The ICCO synergy on gender and women leadership is an example of such a cooperation. A drawback of this more encompassing focus, is that organisations find it more difficult to attract funding for it.

Representation of women in decision-making processes is often still below the desired – and legally required – level of 30% and although there is awareness that there is still a long way to go, we also noted optimism and energy to make things happen. This confidence that change will ultimately take place, was less visible during our baseline visit. The current project of SOFIBEF makes a contribution to this.

At the grassroots level, we noted that the women's movement in general has a strong presence and manages to raise its voice. Many associations are active, with or without connections to international actors through Congolese NGOs. These local associations are the backbone and constituency of the NGOs and it is at this level that the UN resolution 1325 is translated in very tangible interventions that aim to empower women.

2) What is the relevance of these changes?

The position of women in Congolese society is still much weaker than the position of men. Shifting attention from a one-sided focus on sexual violence to a much broader focus on gender and the promotion of women in society is more encompassing. In itself this already contributes to empowerment of women; instead of being seen as victims, they are encouraged to take matters in their own hands. Changes are relevant and suitable for the environment in which they take place. This is also supported by DRC's ratification of international treaties such as Resolution 1325, and by the statutory framework that requests a representation of women in public positions of 50%.

## **Concluding remarks**

In this section we briefly summarize the findings of the two components of this evaluation: impact on MDGs & themes and civil society strengthening. We then discuss the relationship between these components.

In terms of MDGs & Themes we find little impact of programme PAF. We argue that this is not necessarily due to failure of the project, since the power of our study is small. Moreover, programme PAF is a multi-faceted project that aims to make contributions in diverse ways: by engaging local leaders, by organising sensitization activities, and by supporting GSFs among others. This makes finding impact very difficult. We also address the fact that this makes monitoring hard, since a lot of steps are needed to reach the final beneficiaries of the various activities.

In terms of Civil Society we see a gradual shift in attention within the field of gender. Where focus used to be predominantly on the fight against sexual violence and support to victims, focus is broadening and increasingly incorporating gender norms, rights, women leadership and other pertinent concerns. By focusing on women's leadership SOFIBEF contributes to this shift in thinking.

A general recommendation is that a longer-term focus on a specific project might be more effective in terms of realisations. ICCO has invested a lot in the GSFs but they still do not seem to be autonomous. We agree that the new projects are in line with PAF and follow-up logically, but hope to see that the PGLF will be given sufficient time to achieve its objectives.

Clear complementarities exist between impact on MDGs & Themes and Civil Society. Empowering women economically helps them to become less dependent on their husbands. They get more self-esteem and confidence and dare to speak out their voice in public, making also men aware of the position of women. Indirectly, economic support thus contributes to women emancipation and possible changes in policy (men accepting women more easily). Besides, the organisation of women in grassroots groups contributes to civil society development.

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## List of key documents

BERCCO, 2014. *Rapport d'audit. Projets: Programme Genre et Leadership par la femme/Coordination PGLF rapport d'audit SOFIBEF ICCO 2013.*

Hilhorst, D. and M.R. Bashwira. 2014. *Civil society capacity of women's organisations in South Kivu, DRC.* Wageningen University, Occasional paper n.11

ICCO project plan, conditions, and considerations 75-03-06-038

ICCO project plan, conditions, and considerations 75-03-01-004

ICCO project plan, conditions, and considerations 75-03-01-009

International Alert and EASSI, July 2012. *Women's political participation and economic empowerment in post-conflict countries: Lessons from the Great Lakes region in Africa.* [www.international-alert.org](http://www.international-alert.org).

SOFIBEF, Febr. 2012. *Rapport narrative annuel programme d'appui à l'autonomisation des femmes et filles en situation difficile (PAF) en territoire de Fizi, Sud-Kivu, RDC, période Jan-Déc 2011*

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SOFIBEF, DFJ and SARCAF, with facilitation by Kadzunga, J.N. 2013. *Rapport des enquêtes sur la participation de la femme dans les instances de prise de décision en provinces du nord et du Sud Kivu.* ICCO/BGL : Programme Genre et Leadership par la Femme.

SOFIBEF, June 2013. *Planification stratégique et opérationnel 2013-2017*

SOFIBEF, Febr. 2014. *Rapport narratif annuel : Projet de coordination synergie genre et leadership par la femme.*

SOFIBEF, March 2014. *Rapport narratif annuel global, période du rapport: Janvier-Décembre 2013.*

Next to these documents, we made use of other narrative and financial reports, progress reports, correspondence between donor and SPO etc. We collected documents from both ICCO and SOFIBEF. A full list of documents is available on request.



## Civil society data collection

| Name                           | Position   | Workshop<br>8.7.2014 | CS questions | Individual<br>interview | Group<br>interview |
|--------------------------------|--|----------------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Marie Misukyo Amisi            | Director   | X                    | X            | 9.7.2014                |                    |
| Giresse M. Obed                | Programme officer  | X                    | X            | 8.7.2014                |                    |
| Crispin Wakati Issa            | Programme assistant  | X                    | X            | 11.7.2014               |                    |
| Yvette Furaha Kakozi           | Admin/finance officer  | X                    | X            | 8.7.2014                |                    |
| Liliane Kasibu<br>Byamoneka    | Cashier  | X                    | X            |                         |                    |
| Francine Furaha                | Psychosocial assistant   | X                    | X            |                         |                    |
| Noella Nafranga                | Finance and development officer,<br>Uvira territory administration |                      |              | 11.7.2014               |                    |
| Jeanne d'Arc<br>Chakupewa      | Chief of Uvira town  |                      |              | 9.7.2014                |                    |
| Bernadette Ntumba              | Coordinator AMCAV  |                      |              |                         | 11.7.2014          |
| Aimee Djamburu                 | Coordinator IFDAP  |                      |              |                         | 11.7.2014          |
| Godelieve Lugambo              | Coordinator UPF  |                      |              |                         | 11.7.2014          |
| Nadine Bunana                  | Coordinator CCPF   |                      |              |                         | 11.7.2014          |
| Eugenie Barhaluga<br>Chiragane | ICCO Bukavu programme officer<br>gender/women leadership           |                      |              | 23.5.2014               |                    |

## Village list MDGs & Themes

| Village Name       | Treatment |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Sange (gr 2)       | 1         |
| Mboko (gr1)        | 1         |
| Mboko (gr3)        | 0         |
| Baraka (gr 1)      | 1         |
| Baraka (gr 2)      | 0         |
| Fizi Centre (gr 1) | 1         |
| Fizi Centre (gr 2) | 0         |
| Lwenge             | 1         |
| Nundu (gr 1)       | 1         |
| Mnguli             | 1         |
| Kabondozi (gr1)    | 1         |
| Mwemezi            | 1         |
| Kalundja           | 1         |
| Uvira (gr1)        | 1         |
| Uvira (gr 2)       | 0         |
| Musenga            | 0         |
| Mulongwe           | 0         |
| Mwatembo           | 0         |
| Lutete             | 0         |
| Bakeci             | 0         |
| Lusambo            | 0         |
| Kingwena           | 0         |
| Mukangi            | 0         |

## Data sources MDG & Themes

The following table provides additional information on the construction of variables. All data cleaning, construction of variables and analysis was done in R, the scripts for these procedures are available on request.

The questionnaire is attached as a separate document.

| Variable Label   | Description  |
|--|--|
| <b>Fragile States</b>                                    |  |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | Module 5.2: Asked if there were any of the following types of insults, in the community: theft,abuse,rape,witchcraft,land conflict, other. Number of yes reported. |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | Module 5.1: Do you go out at night? 1 = yes; 0 = no  |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | Module 6.1: Did you discuss security with members of the community 1 = yes; 0 = no.  |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | Module 6.1: Did you discuss security with an NGO 1 = yes; 0 = no.  |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | Module 6.1: Did you discuss security with the authorities? 1 = yes; 0 = no.  |
| Tokens sent in trust game                                | Number of tokens sent in the trust game (electronic questionnaire)   |
| <b>SOFIBEF Specific</b>                                  |  |
| Revenue from cassava (\$)                                | Module 3.3.: Revenue of all cassava sold   |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                                 | Module 3.3: Cassava produced on all fields   |
| Fraction of cassava sold                                 | Module 3.3: Cassava sold / cassava produced  |
| Used Fertilizer (yes/no)                                 | Module 3.4 Did you use fertilizer 1= yes; 0 = no   |
| Improved seeds use                                       | Module 3.4 Did you use improved seeds 1= yes; 0 = no   |
| Intra household bargaining power                         | Results from intra-household bargaining game (electronic questionnaire)  |
| List experiment  | Module 8: List experiment  |

# Civil society Strengthening Report UPDI

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs and Bart Weijs

Wageningen University

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## List of Acronyms

ACDI- Action Communautaire pour le Développement Intégral  
ADECOP-  
ADI-Kivu - Actions pour le Développement Intégré au Kivu  
ASED- Action pour la Santé, l'Environnement et le Développement  
AVUDS- Action des Volontaires Unis pour le Développement et la santé  
COOCENKI  
COOPABU- Coopérative agropastorale de Burhanga  
COS-PASAK – Consortium de la Sécurité Alimentaire  
CRS - Catholic Relief Services  
CSI- Civil Society Index  
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation  
FONAPAC- Fédération Nationale de Producteurs Agricoles au Congo  
FOPAC SK - Fédération des Organisations de Producteurs Agricoles au Congo/Sud Kivu  
GAMF - Groupe d'Acteurs de Microfinance  
GIFS – Integrated Soil Fertility Management  
ICCO – Interchurch Development Cooperation  
IFDC - International Fertilizer Development Center  
INERA - Institut National pour l'Étude et la Recherche Agronomiques  
IPAPPEL - Inspection Provinciale pour l'Agriculture, la Pêche et l'Élevage  
ISDR - Institut Supérieur pour le Développement Rural  
LOFEPACO- Ligue des Organisations des Femmes Paysannes au Congo  
NGO- Non-governmental Organisations  
M&E – suivi et évaluation  
MDG– Millenium Development Objectives  
MFS II – Co-Financing Programme of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Mede-Financieringsschema)  
SARCAF- Service d'accompagnement, renforcement des capacités et d'autopromotion féminine  
SENASAEM - Service National de Semences  
SPO– Southern Partner Organisation  
UPDB - Union Paysanne pour le Développement du Bushi  
UPDI - Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral  
VECO- Vredeseilanden Congo  
UEA - Université Evangélique en Afrique

### 1. Introduction

This report is part of a large evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of Southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society development.

As part of the civil society component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society in

the evaluation period and the extent in which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and end line study and focuses on a large sample of 19 partnerships. The report is based on observations, workshops, field visits, questionnaires, and interviews conducted during visits in 2012 and 2014, unless otherwise indicated. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup>

Core elements of our evaluation approach for UPDI are the Theory of Change, contribution analysis and the Civicus Civil Society Index.<sup>2</sup> Dimensions of this index are: Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the external dimension Environment.<sup>3</sup>

In the following report we look specifically at the contribution of UPDI to civil society strengthening. UPDI is a partner of ICCO, and as such partner of the ICCO Alliance. UPDI is the lead organisation in the ICCO Food Security Consortium COS-PASAK. This synergy was initially set up by ICCO and is gradually becoming more autonomous.

UPDI is a farmers' union that is especially active in the field of agriculture, working with cooperatives and mutual solidarity groups. The union was founded in 1994 and has meanwhile become active in the territories of Kabare, Walungu, Idjwi, Kalehe and Uvira, serving about 14 000 members. Agriterra, Oxfam Novib and ICCO are all relatively long-term donors of UPDI. UPDI is transitioning from working with farmers' collectives at the local level to working with more professionally organised cooperatives. During the evaluation period, a number of collectives have been transformed into cooperatives with varying levels of success. Others still have not even started the transition. In general, projects do not have a specific civil society strengthening component, except for the COS-PASAK project in which UPDI has the lead; this consortium was set up by ICCO to encourage a programmatic approach in which different stakeholders get together with the joint aim of professionalising the agricultural sector in the Kivu provinces. UPDI has organised several workshops, but thus far, engagement seems to come mostly from other civil society actors (especially from other ICCO partners). More efforts need to be undertaken to engage state institutions and private sector parties.

For composing the contribution stories, we looked firstly at the way in which cooperatives are set up and the elements that are needed for this and then distilled the role of UPDI in this process for a specific cooperative; COOPABU. We find that an important role can be attributed to UPDI in organising this cooperative, but that next to UPDI another NGO played an important role as well. Secondly, we looked at the way in which UPDI takes the lead in the COS-PASAK activities and the achievements of this consortium.

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by Louis Guemou Togba (ICCO), Urbain Bisimwa and Peter Mulagizi (UPDI) We thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> *CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012*

<sup>3</sup> Please note: In the methodology annex we provide more information about our sampling strategy and about the methodology we used.

## 2. Context

Briefly describe the country/local context as far as it is relevant for the evaluated project.

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons.<sup>4</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas in South Kivu, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013). At present, pockets of insecurity continue to exist and waves of violence continue to bring havoc to the east of the country. In their struggle to make a living, people are not only faced with this insecurity, but also with an exploitative governance system that continues to act largely in line with the Mobutu-adagio of 'make for yourself' (*débrouillez-vous*).

The majority (just over 60%) of DRC's population live in rural areas according to the latest data available from the National Statistics Institute.<sup>5</sup> In the province of South Kivu roughly 3 out of 4 people live in rural areas.<sup>6</sup> The country has great potential for agriculture and possesses a wealth of mineral resources. The potential of all these resources however is far from being exploited. On the 2014 Human Development Index, DRC ranked 186 out of 187 (followed only by Niger). Gross national income per head was noted to be at \$444 in 2013, which was lowest of all countries for which data were available. In the same year, 87.7% of the population lived below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>7</sup> A survey carried out by SLRC in South Kivu in 2012 ( $n=1259$ ) showed that around three-quarters of households in the sampled population make a living primarily in agriculture, either in subsistence agriculture (65%), commercial farming (5%), or by agricultural casual labour (6%).<sup>8</sup> Households within the same sample have access to 2.69 hectares of land, but often not all of this land is held in ownership.<sup>9</sup> Due to various factors, such as insecurity, displacement, and market distortions, agricultural production is low. Food insecurity and poverty remain rife. Land issues are often seen as one of the main sources of conflicts in DRC; there is a lack of arable land in densely populated areas; displacements causes competition; regulatory frameworks overlap and statutory law is not considered as matching with rural reality.<sup>10</sup>

Humanitarian and development organisations intervening in the field of agriculture are well represented in eastern DRC. Typically, humanitarian organisations often provide food aid, seeds, or small livestock, whereas development organisations are often more involved in the provision of small loans, in setting up cooperatives, or in organising mutual solidarity groups. The SLRC survey carried out in 2012, showed that

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<sup>4</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel ([christophvogel.net](http://christophvogel.net)), and the elucidating analyses by the Rift Valley Institute ([www.riftvalley.net](http://www.riftvalley.net))

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/drc/overview>, viewed on 06.10.2014

<sup>6</sup> UNDP (UN Development Programme) (2009) 'Profil Résumé Pauvreté de Sud Kivu 2009'. Kinshasa: UNDP.

<sup>7</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014

<sup>8</sup> Miliano, C.W.J, de, A. Ferf, J. Oude Groeniger, and M. Mashanda. 2014. Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study, SLRC.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Vlassenroot, K. (ed). 2012. *Dealing with land issues and conflict in eastern Congo: Towards an integrated and participatory approach*, Ghent: CRG. Van Leeuwen, M., and G. van der Haar. 2014. *Land governance as an avenue for local state building in eastern DRC*, IS Academy Occasional Paper, Wageningen University.



21% of all households had received food aid, 12% seeds and tools, 4% material aid (for construction) and 2% financial loans.<sup>11</sup> The survey did not cover participation in cooperatives or saving groups.

As part of our evaluation, we visited several NGOs working in the field of agriculture. We noted three dominant approaches in this regard. Firstly the introduction of integrated soil fertility management (ISFM, the French acronym that is used in DRC is GIFS). This strategy was first introduced and promoted by IFDC from 2006-2012. IFDC defines ISFM as ‘a set of agricultural practices adapted to local conditions to maximise the efficiency of nutrient and water use and improve agricultural productivity’.<sup>12</sup> According to IFDC, the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa has the highest negative soil nutrient balance in the world. All three agriculture organisations in our sample (VECO, UPDI, and ADI-Kivu) have obtained experience in the past working with this strategy and many of the farmers we met would refer to ‘GIFS’ when explaining how they are working towards higher agricultural production.

A second dominant approach consists of setting up cooperatives, which is seen as a vehicle to promote agriculture by many NGOs. Collective commercialisation of agricultural products is supposed to make operations more cost effective. Joint material investments allow for intensification of production. Besides, organising people in cooperatives can be beneficial for community building and for strengthening social bonds. This is also the case with the mutual solidarity groups (MUSOs) that are set up by many development organisations. A number of people is brought together in these groups to save money. With the money saved, small loans can be taken that allow for agricultural investments. Besides, small contributions are reserved for supporting members in urgent needs, in case of funerals, illnesses etc. A potential risk of the popularity of the support for cooperatives, is that subsistence farmers or people without land titles might lose out; they are generally not included in cooperatives because their production is too limited to sell at the market, or because they do not have stable access to land. The rationale is that once the cooperatives are successful, the whole local economy will benefit and thus also the small farmers that were not included (though there is debate about whether this trickledown effect really exists, and to what extent).

Particular challenges in agriculture since a couple of years are plant diseases that affect cassava (mosaic virus) and banana trees (banana bacterial wilt). In the fight against the mosaic virus, efforts have been made to introduce a resistant variety of cassava (named Sawasawa), but meanwhile the resistance of this variety is already reducing. Given that cassava and bananas are staple foods in DRC, these plant diseases are a serious source of concern for the agricultural sector.

### **3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

The *Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral* (UPDI) is a farmers’ organisation that works in the province of South Kivu since 1994. Until 2006 UPDI was named UPDB (Farmers Union for Development of Bushi), but since the organisation wanted to grow bigger and embrace other areas as well, the name shift was proposed. The vision of UPDI is to be an economically strong farmers’ union, able to defend the

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> From: <http://www.ifdc.org/Expertise/ISFM/About-ISFM/>, viewed on 06.10.2014

interests of its members. Its mission is to support the collectives/cooperatives in their activities of improving living conditions of their members that are organised in grassroots organisations.<sup>13</sup>

The organisation is based in Bukavu and is active in the territories of Kabare, Walungu, Idjwi, Kalehe, and Uvira. The 2013 budget shows that 13 staff positions are paid. In addition, there are two paid staff members responsible for running the cooperative's shop. Besides, UPDI regularly hires external experts for training, moderation of workshops, or for carrying out research.<sup>14</sup> Over the last years, UPDI has had a relatively stable number of donors. No major changes took place in terms of staff composition, office, or area of intervention.

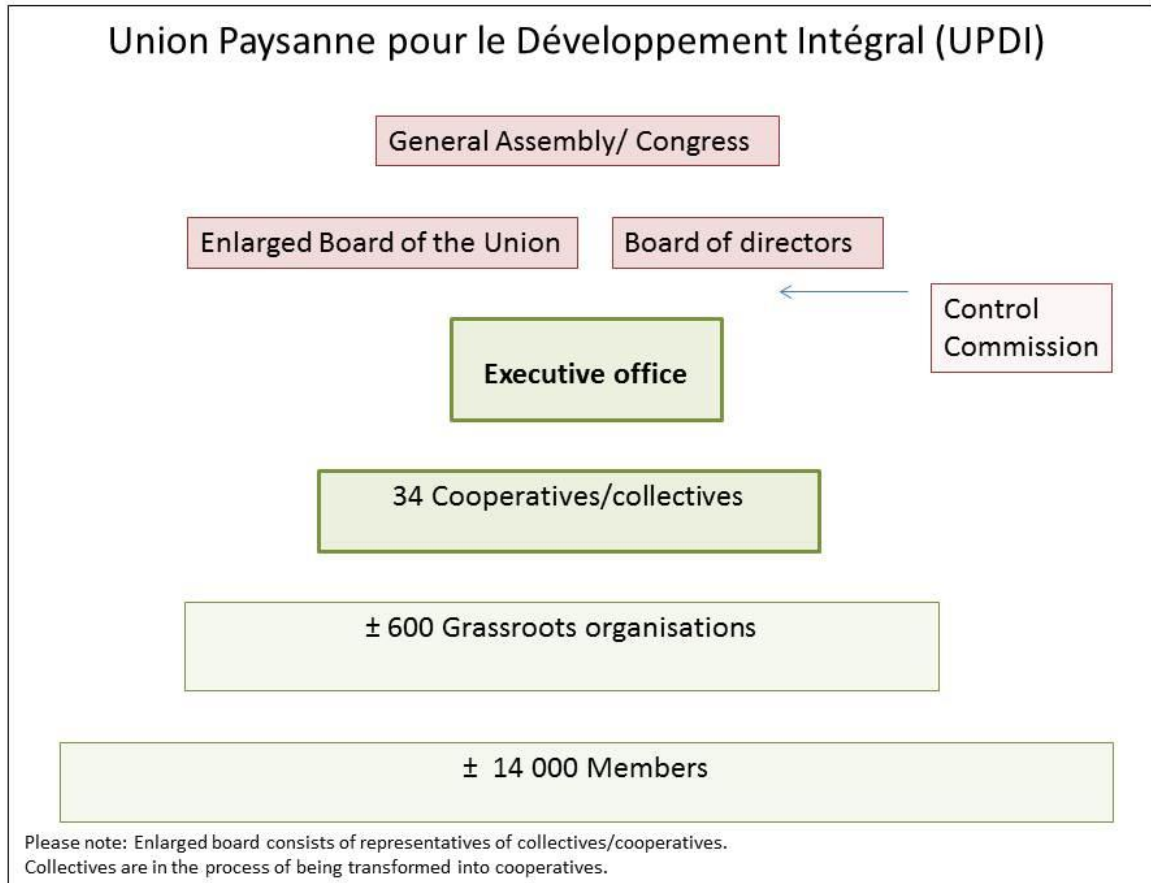
UPDI staff emphasise not being a (development) NGO but a farmers union. This is also reflected in the organisational structure of the organisation. UPDI carries out various projects, mostly aimed at professionalising agricultural value chains such as potato, rice, soya, vegetables, rabbits. A small part of the organisation also looks at conflict dynamics. Members were organised into grassroots organisations, which were then structured into collectives. For some years now, UPDI has been restructuring this and gradually transforming collectives into cooperatives. This is a development that was set in motion after an evaluation carried out by Agriterra in 2009. During our baseline visit in 2012, this restructuring was still in an early phase. In 2014, during our end line visit, staff felt that 16 out of 34 collectives were now well structured as cooperative. The 2013 report showed that 7 already received formal recognition from the provincial division of rural development. According to that same report, 6 others had received provisional recognition.<sup>15</sup> The shift from collectives to cooperatives entails a stronger focus on strengthening capacities of farmers to become professional producers, whereas at present about 60% of UPDI's members do not own their land. The other 40% are small producers. The members of the cooperatives are those producers who have some potential to become more professional and oriented towards the market. It will make the grassroots structure more homogeneous, as only small producers are targeted. At present, UPDI is reflecting on how to support the 60% without land. They will need to be encouraged to organise themselves differently. UPDI is thinking about ways in which to help this group obtain more secure access to land. Staff do not consider it their task to carry out direct lobbying and advocacy. This is seen to be more a task of FOPAC SK (*Fédération des Organisations de Producteurs Agricoles au Congo/Sud Kivu*) of which UPDI is one of the founders and still a member. FOPAC itself is member of FONAPAC, which is the nationwide federation that carries out lobby and advocacy at the national level in Kinshasa.

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<sup>13</sup> [http://www.agro-info.net/?view=project&menu=projects&project\\_id=24766#](http://www.agro-info.net/?view=project&menu=projects&project_id=24766#), viewed on 14.10.2014. own translation

<sup>14</sup> Budget consolidé UPDI 2013 JAN

<sup>15</sup> UPDI, Jan. 2014. *Rapport consolidé des activités de l'Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral, 1<sup>er</sup> janvier-31 décembre 2013.*



#### 4. Project description

UPDI receives funding from the Netherlands through various channels: ICCO, ICCO-Kerk in Actie, Oxfam Novib and Agriterra. Agriterra is a long-term partner of UPDI which has been involved for more than 10 years already and which has invested a lot in organisational capacity strengthening. In our evaluation, we have looked mainly at the contribution made by ICCO through MFS-funding. UPDI's relation with ICCO dates back to October 2010. The following table shows the various projects carried out by UPDI. All projects, apart from the project funded by the Life and Peace Institute, have a focus on the agricultural sector and target agricultural smallholders.

| Project   | Donor | Major objective   | Period             | Amount of funding    |      |      |      |
|---|-------|---|--------------------|----------------------|------|------|------|
|   |       |   |                    | 2011                 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
| PASAK- Support to Irish Potatoes sector (nr. 75-02-13-004 | ICCO  | Ensure the household economy and food security in Kivu through the potato sector by developing potato seeds | Oct 2010- Dec 2011 | €40694 <sup>16</sup> |      |      |      |

<sup>16</sup> Total project budget (incl. 3 months of 2010) amounts to € 60 694.

|  |                           |   |                       |                       |            |         |                       |
|--|---------------------------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|---------|-----------------------|
| PASAK- Support to the intensification of Irish Potatoes Crops (nr. 75-02-13-013) | ICCO                      | Intensification of the potato sector by making seeds available  | Jan-Dec 2012          |                       | €35 000    |         |                       |
| Coordination of PASAK synergy in Kivus (nr. 75-02-13-016)                        | ICCO                      | Contribute to improved interventions in programmatic approach for more impacts that will bring an added value for PASAK program's beneficiaries               | Jan-Dec 2012          |                       | € 25 000   |         |                       |
| Agricultural recovery in South Kivu through value chain maize                    | Oxfam Novib (no MFS)      | Intensification of maize production at the Ruzizi plain and structuring producers (in cooperatives)   | Nov. 2011- Nov 2014   | €45 000               | \$93769    | ??      | € 106 046             |
| Economic strengthening of producers  | Agriterra (no MFS)        | Improve living conditions of members by professionalising the value chains soya, banana, rabbit and potato  | 2011-2014             | €395808 <sup>17</sup> |            |         |                       |
| Sustainable energy program   | VECO                      | Reforestation by distributing seedlings   | Jan 2011-2012         | \$28882 9.71          | \$19773. 4 |         |                       |
| DRM- Agricultural risk management for Irish potato products (nr. 75-02-13-023)   | ICCO- KIA (no MFS)        | Improving operational capacity of Irish potato producers in fighting against natural disasters and those created by men                                       | July 2012- June 2013  |                       | €10 000    | €11 743 |                       |
| Economic strengthening of rice producers at the Ruzizi plain (nr. 75-02-13-029)  | ICCO                      | Assure stable and consistent revenues by promotion professionalization/rural entrepreneurship through economic strengthening of rice producers                | July 2013- Dec 2014   |                       |            | €29 000 | €12 000               |
| Coordination of PASAK synergy (75-02-13-031)                                     | ICCO                      | Restoring food security and increasing farmers' revenues through the improvement of agricultural and livestock sectors and marketing of high quality products | Sept.2013-July 2014   |                       |            | €20 000 |                       |
| Consortium UPDI- COSPASAK- ASOP (nr. 75-02-13-034)                               | ICCO                      | Contribute to improvement of living standards of farmers by reducing the impact of malnutrition and food security risks                                       | Febr. 2014- Dec. 2014 |                       |            |         | €30 000 <sup>18</sup> |
| Analysis of impact of socio-security context                                     | LPI (co-funding for UPDI) | Promote participation of women in conflict transformation and   | May 2013-             |                       |            | ?       | \$5398 5              |

<sup>17</sup> Based on [http://www.agro-info.net/?menu=projects&view=project&project\\_id=24766](http://www.agro-info.net/?menu=projects&view=project&project_id=24766), viewed on 14.10.2014

<sup>18</sup> The total project budget amounts to €42534. The remaining amount is for ASOP.

|   |            |                                |                          |     |  |  |  |
|---|------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-----|--|--|--|
| on women and the implication of this for conflict transformation processes in Uvira territory | and SOFAD) | promote women's access to land | May 2014<br>Jul-Dec.2014 |     |  |  |  |
| Total amount of funding 2011-2014   |            |                                |                          | N/A |  |  |  |

As a farmers' union, UPDI is primarily concerned with the promotion of agricultural production and entrepreneurship in order to improve living conditions. This is reflected in the majority of projects carried out by UPDI. Two exceptions that can be observed in the table above, are: the project on sustainable energy, funded by VECO, and a project to analyse the security context and conflicts in Uvira, funded by the Life and Peace Institute and carried out together with SOFAD. In the past, UPDI has carried out some other projects on this theme, and one of the senior staff members seems to be very interested in the topic. Collaboration with LPI has led to the creation of a conflict transformation unit within UPDI. Obviously, security is an indispensable contributing factor to the success of agricultural projects, yet the project does not fall directly within the general mission of UPDI.

#### **About ICCO-MFS funding:**

ICCO projects are generally well in line with the overall focus of UPDI and aim at improving food security. The programmatic approach is seen by UPDI staff as particular to the involvement of ICCO. The approach aims at bringing together a wide range of stakeholders involved in food security. The ICCO-KerkinActie-funded project on Disaster Risk Management can be seen as a small deviation from this. In practice however, UPDI has phrased the project very much along the lines of agricultural risks.

#### **ICCO civil society/policy advocacy elements**

The six ICCO-projects singled out in the table below are MFS-funded. The table shows the focus of the projects, as set out in the project plans.

| Project nr   | Poverty alleviation | Civil society development | Lobby and advocacy |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 75-02-13-004 | 70%                 | 20%                       | 10%                |
| 75-02-13-013 | 100%                | -                         | -                  |
| 75-02-13-016 | 70%                 | 20%                       | 10%                |
| 75-02-13-029 | 100%                | -                         | -                  |
| 75-02-13-031 | -                   | 100%                      | -                  |
| 75-02-13-034 | 33%                 | 67%                       | 0%                 |

Although most projects have a civil society and or lobby/advocacy component, these elements are not spelled out in the project plan and need to be distilled from general project activities. Specific civil society/policy advocacy elements which we distinguished in the project plans are:

75-02-13-004:

- 6 cooperatives have been set up for potato producers from among 10 groups in different locations. Next to technical support, they received institutional support. Close monitoring and evaluation was carried out by UPDI staff.
- Community meetings have been organised to raise awareness about the program and to get local leaders behind the initiative.
- One of the producers was part of an exchange visit to Butembo to a more experienced association. Information was afterwards shared with others.<sup>19</sup>

75-02-13-013/016:

- 9 cooperatives become operational and 15 technicians have been trained on how to create and manage an agricultural cooperative
- 4 partners of the COS-PASAK synergy have met to harmonise their viewpoints about mutual solidarity groups
- 6 new partners have joined the COS-PASAK synergy<sup>20</sup>

75-02-13-029: No specific focus on civil society development and/or lobby and advocacy

75-02-13-031:

For this project, final reports were not yet available at the time of visit. The following is therefore based on the initial project plan:

- Various workshops were planned to bring together stakeholders involved into agricultural value chains. These stakeholders include other COS-PASAK members (and previous members), the ICCO Bukavu representative, FOPAC, ministry of agriculture, and various state services such as SENASEM (*Service National de Semences*), INERA (*Institut National pour l'Étude et la Recherche Agronomiques*), IPAPEL (*Inspection Provinciale pour l'Agriculture, la Pêche et l'Élevage*) research and education institutes such as ISDR (*Institut Supérieur pour le Développement Rural*), UEA (*Université Evangelique en Afrique*). The workshops cover themes such as value chains, the programmatic approach, conflict transformation and land security, nutrition, and gender.
- For some of the workshops, a number of producers is invited as well. They will serve as trainers of trainers and share information with other project beneficiaries.
- Monitoring and evaluation by UPDI of other COS-PASAK members.<sup>21</sup>

75-02-13-034:

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<sup>19</sup> Based on: UPDI, *ICCO rapport final*, doc. 12\_019674. Please note that this project started in October 2010 and not all realisations fall within the MFS-period.

<sup>20</sup> Based on: UPDI, *Realisations rapport annuel consolidé 2012*

<sup>21</sup> Based on: UPDI, *Project plan 75-02-13-031* and *Project plan- Considerations*

This project was also ongoing at the time of visit and activities mentioned here are based on the initial project plan:

- Organisation of workshops for COS-PASAK members on nutrition and risk management, amongst others on assessing malnutrition, on market information systems, early warning, programmatic approach
- Ensure that information is returned and shared with producers on the local level.

Generally, realisations of UPDI in terms of civil society building, can be divided into two broad categories, as is clear from the above.

1. Firstly, UPDI engages in building civil society at the grassroots level by providing support to farmers to set up cooperatives.
2. Secondly, UPDI is an important member of the synergy COS-PASAK that is promoted by ICCO in an effort to encourage collaboration between its various partners working on food security, but also to promote dialogue between these partners and other actors involved in food security and agricultural value chains. Among these actors are state institutions, but also private actors. This dialogue opens up space for dialogue that can be effective for lobby and advocacy activities. It still remains to be seen to what extent such lobby and advocacy activities are taken up. UPDI staff explained that lobby and advocacy was initially foreseen to be carried out by FOPAC within COS-PASAK but when ICCO had to reduce funding, this element was dropped from the project.

### **Other civil society/advocacy elements**

With funding provided by other donors, activities and outcomes are very much in line with the ones described under the ICCO projects. In addition to this, the following are examples of other activities undertaken, based on consolidated narrative report 2013:

Oxfam Novib:

- UPDI has organised activities to inform farmers about the content of the new agricultural law
- Workshops, e.g. on management and prevention of conflicts in cooperatives, on Resolution 1325

Life and Peace Institute:

- Conflict mapping and analysis of socio-security situation in Uvira territory
- Use participatory action research with aim to integrate women into the conflict transformation process

Agriterra:

- Provision of legal advice to parties in conflict.

### **Theory of Change**

UPDI wants to be a farmers union that is made up of professional agricultural cooperatives spread over the province of South Kivu. This is traceable within most projects carried out by UPDI and different donors provide support to the development of different value chains. In the past, UPDI used to work with grassroots groups that were organised into collectives. In order to transition to cooperatives, people need to get a better understanding of entrepreneurship. Within the collectives this is not necessarily the case, and some of them are led by people who are not 'real' farmers. UPDI supports the cooperatives by providing technical knowledge about farming (for instance about integrated soil fertility management), by making available improved seed varieties, by constructing storage rooms), by structuring the cooperatives (support with obtaining legal documents, organising elections to appoint board members), etc. Within the food security synergy initiated by ICCO, UPDI tries to engage other stakeholders that are involved in various value chains to advocate for a favourable climate that can help cooperatives to flourish.

To support UPDI in its efforts, ICCO staff are in regular contact with UPDI staff to discuss progress and to provide feedback. This often takes place through bilateral exchanges at the ICCO office. For us as evaluation team it was difficult to get a clear impression of these exchanges as they take place in an informal setting and are not necessarily documented.

## **5. Data collection and analytical approach**

In general, we were able to follow the methodology as outlined in the methodology annex. We were able to visit the same field site (Buhanga) as we did in 2012. A complicating factor was that it appeared that our workshop with UPDI staff was planned in the same week as UPDI was organising a COS-PASAK synergy meeting. We therefore had to improvise a bit in our planning and carried out the workshop with a relatively small group of people. Although this was a drawback, the synergy meeting at the same time provided us the opportunity to get further insights in the actual functioning of the synergy, to talk to a good number of stakeholders involved in it, and to observe exchange between participants, as we were able to attend part of the workshop. Some talks with others took place already during and after the meeting. With other participants we were able to set another meeting time.

For our contribution story, we decided to look at two different elements:

Firstly, we tried to further unravel the way in which UPDI sets up its cooperatives, which tells us more about civil society development at the grassroots level. We talked about this in general during the workshop and interviews, and zoomed in further during our field visit to the COOPABU, the cooperative that is set up in Buhanga. We use this cooperative as a case study that provides us more insight into the satisfaction of beneficiaries (perception of social impact) and to what extent the cooperative provided for the needs of the beneficiaries (socially-based engagement). Besides, it showed us more about the way in which UPDI is able to organise people in a well-structured organisation in which norms of governance, democracy and transparency are adhered to (practice of values). We talked about the contribution of UPDI and other actors in the functioning of the cooperative during the workshop, during interviews with other stakeholders, and zoomed in further during our field visit to Buhanga.



Secondly, we were able to get insight into the way in which the COS-PASAK synergy is organised and functioning. UPDI has had the lead in coordinating this synergy in 2012 and from September 2013-July 2014. In our contribution story we analyse the role of UPDI in achievements of the synergy. Promoting these synergies has been an important intervention strategy of ICCO (and in fact, other thematically organised synergies exist, e.g. the synergy ‘gender and women leadership’). The peer-to-peer communication that exists between organisations, networks, and consortia; and the organisational level of civil society, are seen as an important element of the CSI dimension. Participation and engagement of other actors, from outside civil society, tells us something about the impact the synergy has on policy makers and/or private sector.

## 6. Results

Research Question 1: Provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions. If available, provide description of individual indicators in an Annex.

|                       | Baseline | Endline |
|-----------------------|----------|---------|
| Civic engagement      | 2        | 1.5     |
| Level of organisation | 2        | 2       |
| Practice of values    | 2.5      | 2       |
| Perception of impact  | 2        | 2.5     |
| Environment           | 2        | 2.5     |

**Civic engagement:** diversity of socially-based engagement/diversity of political engagement

UPDI is a farmers’ union with about 14 000 members. Through the grassroots structures and the collectives, these members are represented during general assemblies and planning meetings. Farmers have been involved themselves in setting up the grassroots structures. By working with cooperatives, UPDI has selected a more limited number of beneficiaries, taking into account economic opportunities; not all members are felt to have enough potential to be/to become farmers beyond subsistence level (because they have another profession next to farming, because they don’t own land etc.). People had to fill in forms that were then used to select beneficiaries that could become part of a cooperative. This means that with the shift from collective to cooperative, UPDI has become a bit less all-embracing and currently does not have a lot to offer to the most marginalised. During the end line visit, staff argued that they were in a phase of reflection and trying to find a way to also support the more marginalised to improve their livelihoods. One of the ideas was to do more lobby and advocacy to improve the position of landless people. Yet, UPDI considers lobby and advocacy more a task of FOPAC and it does not seem to be likely that this will change a lot. There were no other concrete examples of ideas on how UPDI could continue support to this group of people. One of the arguments often used to explain why focus is first on the more

professional farmers, is because of the expected spill-over effect: farmers who are able to produce more, will have a positive impact on the local economy; purchasing power will increase, and they might hire labourers, from which other people can benefit as well. This effect will not be directly noticeable for the more marginalised and they might therefore feel abandoned.

With cooperatives becoming increasingly independent, monitoring visits are reduced from 4 per month to 2 per month. In-between information is sought from selected members of the cooperative who carry out monitoring tasks. It reduces the intensity of contact and hence possibilities to get input from beneficiaries on their needs. UPDI however seems to be serious about engaging cooperatives in its planning; representatives of the more mature cooperatives are invited to attend planning sessions. This was also illustrated by the fact that the president of one of the cooperatives attended the COS-PASAK workshop.

The other side of increasing autonomy of the cooperatives, is that members have more freedom to carry out their own evaluations, and take their own decisions on which direction to take as cooperative; which seed variety to buy, how much to sell and when etc. Although UPDI might be less aware of what is going on, more independence can also lead to decisions that are more in line with what beneficiaries need. An example of this is that the members of one cooperative (COOPABU) changed to a different seed variety on their own initiative, whereas in the past, seed would be provided by UPDI and the selection of seed was also done by UPDI.

**Level of organisation:** organisational level of civil society (infrastructure)/peer-to-peer communication/financial and human resources

UPDI is a well-known organisation in South Kivu. Next to one-to-one contacts with other civil society actors, there are two main ways in which UPDI is connected to other (civil society) actors working in the field of agriculture. Firstly, UPDI is one of the founding members of FOPAC SK, the federation of farmers' organisations. At present, UPDI still maintains a strong connection with FOPAC. Internal struggles have limited the impact of FOPAC in recent years, which is disadvantageous for UPDI as well, as lobby and advocacy tasks delegated to FOPAC are hardly carried out. Potentially, membership of FOPAC can be beneficial, as this federation is also part of the national federation of farmers' organisations (CONAPAC), which can help to provide entry points for lobby and advocacy at the level of Kinshasa. Secondly, UPDI has important connections to other actors through its participation in the food security consortium COS-PASAK. UPDI is the lead organisation of the consortium and hence an important player in bringing together stakeholders from civil society, and public and private sectors. UPDI serves as example for some of the other, less experienced partners in the network. A representative of one of these organisations set out to us that he considered UPDI (and ADI-Kivu) as their *mzees*; respected elders. A challenge within COS-PASAK is that not all partners are at the same stage. This makes it difficult to set up joint activities and to reach the desired synergy between partners involved.

Financial resources of UPDI are diversified and have been relatively stable over the years, but there is strong orientation towards Dutch donors. General shifts in Dutch donor policy could have far-reaching

influence for UPDI. Staff of UPDI is well able to distinguish different sources of funding and to set out what activities are being carried out under which program. Since 2012 reflections take place about how to be less dependent on external sources of funding. With this in mind, UPDI has started to set up a store/warehouse in Bukavu where agricultural products of the cooperatives can be sold, but this is still in an early stage. Cooperatives as well are encouraged to generate their own financial resources (e.g. by financial contributions of members, by farming on collective fields).

A particular type of contacts that UPDI has, is through exchange visits that are mainly set up with support of Agriterra. Through these visits, UPDI is connected to farmers organisations in neighbouring countries such as Rwanda and Burundi, but also in neighbouring North Kivu. Members of UPDI's cooperatives or grassroots structures are sometimes invited to participate in these visits as well. These visits are considered very valuable by UPDI staff as they enlarge their view and help them to see examples of how things can work.

UPDI sometimes takes part in meetings of the humanitarian coordination cluster on food security, but staff express little interest in it. The cluster, which is led by FAO, is felt to be too much oriented towards emergency aid, whereas UPDI favours sound and sustainable development. At the side of the FAO we also encountered little knowledge and interest about the work of UPDI. The M&E officer we talked to for instance argued that setting up cooperatives would be a good idea in the future (in 4-5 years), but that the grassroots structures were not yet strong enough to be transformed into cooperatives. He seemed to be hardly aware that a significant number of cooperatives was existing already.

**Practice of values:** internal governance (democratic decision-making and governance)/transparency

As a membership organisation, UPDI has a large constituency. Below the level of the collectives/cooperatives, is the level of grassroots structures (*organisations de base*), and individual members. Participation of member representatives is ensured not only through the general assembly but also by the 'enlarged board of the union' that exists next to the board of directors. Representatives of the collectives/cooperatives participate in this enlarged board. The recent shift in focus however is not in the interest of part of the constituency. Unfortunately, we were not able to trace the opinion of members of collectives that are not considered strong enough to be transformed into cooperatives.

Next to the already mentioned organisational bodies, UPDI has a control commission in place. Staff was generally positive about the functioning of these bodies; meetings are held according to schedule, and members of the control commission have the skills to perform their task, which they carry out regularly. What is more difficult is to organise meetings of the executive staff, as many of them spend a lot of time in the field. A less positive point that came up during our visit is that not all members of the organisational bodies fully understand their task, some are too passive and take a wait-and-see stance. Engagement of all the members could still be improved, expressed for instance by the timely payment of the membership contribution. At present, only a small part of the members pays its contribution fee.

UPDI staff seem to be aware of the importance of transparency. Aggregated budgets, narrative and financial reports are composed. Yet, we found that for instance this aggregated budget did not reflect a clear overview of actual costs and incomes. For certain budget lines amounts available were much higher than the actual costs presented, whereas other budget lines did not seem to be covered at all. Adjustments to this would be helpful in increasing transparency. The UPDI finance department makes use of the bookkeeping program SAGE. External audits take place regularly on the request of donors, usually with the support of Agriterra. Since 3 years, general audits take place that cover the different projects together. UPDI launches the call for an auditor, Agriterra will receive different offers and decide on which auditing office to select. ICCO is considered as less prescriptive by UPDI staff in this regard.

Generally, UPDI staff strive to realise good governance practices. An example was given by one of the staff members who explained that he was surprised having been invited for a job interview, despite not knowing anybody within UPDI personally. He considered this to be quite exceptional. Talking to members of one of UPDI's cooperatives, we also saw that good governance practices had clearly been encouraged by UPDI. Members were well able to set out their organisational structure and emphasised the importance of democratic decision taking.

**Perception of impact:** responsiveness/social impact/policy impact

There is strong coherence between the various projects carried out by UPDI. Most of them have a strong focus on cooperatives and aim to professionalise the agricultural sector. Knowledge obtained in one project can help to strengthen another project, which helps to increase the impact on beneficiaries. Over the last years, UPDI has been able to offer various ways of support to the cooperatives; train people on the use of Integrated Soil Fertility Management, offering seeds and fertilisers, supporting the structuration of the cooperative etc. Beneficiaries we talked to are generally satisfied with the support; several of them testified how their production has increased since being part of the cooperative, and how they are now able to pay school fees of their children. During our visit to one of the cooperatives, we observed changes were indeed taking place and tangible; the cooperative now had a storage building for the potato seeds, and a shop was constructed for the sale of agricultural inputs (such as fertiliser, pesticides etc). UPDI staff however felt that production could still increase much more. Some years ago, farmers would produce 8 tonnes of potatoes/ha. This has meanwhile increased to 18 tonnes, but farmers in neighbouring Rwanda (under comparable climatological and soil conditions) manage to produce 25 tonnes. It is felt that 16 cooperatives at present have reached an acceptable level in terms of organisation and professionalization (In February 2015 this has increased to 24 cooperatives). Others will need more support. UPDI noted that in some communities, impact of projects is even extending beyond UPDI beneficiaries: arguably, also others in the community have adapted some of the farming methods promoted by UPDI such as sowing in line, and integrated soil fertility management. Unfortunately we were not able to verify this. It should be noted here that these farming methods are promoted by a number of other farming organisations as well.

From the side of the state, staff feel there is little interest. UPDI does not have a specific focus to carry out lobby and advocacy activities directed towards state actors but UPDI does actively invite state authorities

to attend meetings organised within the framework of COS-PASAK for instance. Impact of this is still rather limited, as we show in contribution story 2.

On the local level, UPDI is involved in a project on conflict mapping –in collaboration with the Life and Peace Institute. Through this project, UPDI also aims at a more favourable politico-security conditions. Having an influence on policy is a task that is delegated to FOPAC (at provincial level) and to FONAPAC (at the national level).

Contacts with the private sector are limited but exist to some extent, most notably with GAMF (*Groupe d'Acteurs de Microfinance*) to discuss possibilities for farmers to obtain microcredits.

### **Environment/context**

UPDI tries as much as possible to take contextual conditions into consideration and tries to intervene if this is felt necessary. This is also a reason why a small part of UPDI's projects is concerned with conflict mapping/transformation; a climate of insecurity negatively impacts on realisations that can be achieved. In a context of conflict, trust between people is lower and there is less willingness to work together. Since this is essential for a well-functioning cooperative, UPDI aims to work on this. At present, engagement in conflict transformation is mostly in the Ruzizi plain where recurrent conflicts take place between two different groups. Some years ago, UPDI has also been involved in a conflict analysis with support of the same donor.

To support cooperatives in setting up a viable business plan, UPDI collects information about the local markets. Since access to markets was seen to be a challenge for many of the producers, UPDI has decided to start setting up a central cooperative store in Bukavu, where access to consumers is easier to ensure.

Another example of a shift in focus that was based on context analysis, is that during a General Assembly in 2012 members expressed the need to also include the value chains of maize and rice in programming of UPDI. Based on this demand, UPDI wrote a proposal to ICCO to include these value chains as well. Since July 2013, UPDI has started working with rice farmers in the Ruzizi plain with the aim of setting up a professional cooperative. This is done with the support of ICCO.

The wait-and-see attitude of many people is considered by staff as a major obstacle in setting up successful cooperatives, as it reduces people's own initiatives and willingness to invest time and energy in an activity. It is felt that this is hard to overcome as long as the prolonged humanitarian presence remains in South Kivu.

## **7. Contribution to Story**

### **Contribution story I: Professionalising a cooperative**

Since UPDI's shift in focus, setting up cooperatives is one of the main objectives of various projects. These cooperatives are supposed to help to professionalise the agricultural sector. Efforts directed towards the cooperatives can be seen as strengthening civil society at the grassroots level. In the following we will first look in more general terms at UPDI's approach towards working with cooperatives. We will then zoom in on the case of the potato cooperative of Buhanga (COOPABU), which has received UPDI support. We will then analyse actors and factors that contributed positively or negatively to the cooperative. This case sheds light on different dimensions of the civil society index. Firstly, it shows us the impact the cooperative has on the beneficiaries, and to what extent this coincides with their needs. Secondly, it tells us more about the way in which UPDI helps to strengthen civil society at the grassroots level, as we look at the strength of the cooperative as an organisation and to what extent certain values are put into practice.

*Which 5 elements are most crucial to become a mature cooperative, according to UPDI?*

- Cohesion: People need to work together to realise economic activities. This requires mutual acceptance and confidence. To achieve this, trust and leadership are needed. In the Congolese context, where continuing conflicts have reduced trust between people, mutual trust is often limited, and people are afraid of robbery for instance. It requires trust to convince people to store their agricultural products collectively and to function as a real cooperative. UPDI staff feel that cohesion can be promoted within a group by setting up mutual solidarity groups (*MUSOs*) and community-based health insurance schemes (*Mutuelles de Santé*)
- Business plan: UPDI has a clear vision in working with cooperatives; farmers need to become more professional and for this they need an understanding of production costs, benefits, accessibility of markets, possibilities to obtain agricultural credit etc. Therefore, UPDI encourages cooperatives to set up a business plan that can provide guidance, helps to assess viability of economic activities, and identify market potential.
- Organisational structure: Cooperatives need to organise themselves; members have to elect a board that is responsible for taking certain decisions etc. The functioning of a cooperative involves money matters, which means members need to trust each other. It is therefore important to democratically agree on leadership etc. Once this is all realised, a cooperative can focus on becoming more professional as agricultural producers.
- Access to land: UPDI feels cooperatives are most viable if its members have secure access to a plot of land that has a considerable size.
- Legal recognition: An official agreement is needed from the provincial ministry of agriculture to function as a cooperative. In many cases, such recognition is at first provided provisionally, for the period of one year, after which the final recognition can be provided. In the context of DRC is it important to obtain this recognition. As long as a cooperative does not have this, members are for instance more prone to informal taxation. Before being able to obtain formal recognition, cooperatives need to ensure that they have the required legal bodies in place, as well as statutes, internal regulations etc.

*How far is COOPABU in becoming a mature cooperative and what has UPDI contributed to this?*

COOPABU, the *Cooperative Agro-Pastorale de Buhanga (Coopabu-Mbasa Kuguma)* is a cooperative located in Kabare territory, not very far from the provincial capital of Bukavu. Members of the cooperative produce potatoes, but most of them also produce a number of other crops, some of which are also sold at the market. UPDI has started working with the community already in 2000, providing training with financial support by Agriterra. By 2009 material support was provided in the form of (3 tonnes of) potato seeds. The idea of setting up a cooperative came in 2010. Before that, people were organised in a farmers' collective. There are different stories about which organisation set up the cooperative. UPDI claims to have done this, but we found the same claim is made by ASOP. This organisation has been working with 'development families' in Buhanga already since 1993. During our baseline visit, beneficiaries referred mainly to UPDI, although ASOP was mentioned as an actor that was also active in the community. During the endline visit the story was more balanced and cooperative members referred to both organisations when setting out the support they had received.

In general, the community of Buhanga has been generally peaceful throughout the war, and in recent years agricultural production has been good which was beneficial for levels of nutrition.

- Cohesion: Both members of COOPABU and UPDI staff praise the cooperative for having a solid level of cohesion. According to UPDI staff, a lot of this can be contributed to the former president of the cooperative; a woman with great leadership skills. Unfortunately she has passed away. A peaceful context is beneficial for unity. The cooperative is home to two mutual solidarity groups, and starting up a third one, also with people who are not cooperative members. People pay \$0.5 monthly as a contribution to the social part of the cash box. This is meant to support members who are ill, or who face high costs because of funerals etc. For the green cash box, people contribute \$2/month, but in the harvest period the amount can be higher. UPDI has provided support (training) to promote the introduction of the mutual solidarity groups, but ASOP also claimed ownership over this. We were able to check the cash register and could see that considerable amounts of money are being saved and lent.
- Business plan: The president of the cooperative explained that it was an idea of the members themselves to set up a business plan. They had then asked technicians of UPDI and ASOP to come and attend a General Assembly during which a business plan for 5 years was developed together.<sup>22</sup> Some of the plans include: electrification of the community (not yet done); cattle breeding (being done), improving health care (slowly advancing, ARC is constructing a health unit); water construction (working on it). Non-members from within the community will also benefit of some of these plans. Members feel it is good to set an example to others of what can be achieved within the community. To raise money, the cooperative sometimes sells agricultural inputs (fertiliser, seeds) to other community, and there is a community field, rented from a plantation owner. Members cultivate this plot together and use the profit for the benefit of the cooperative.
- Organisational structure: Next to the general members, COOPABU has 3 social bodies in place: a management committee, a control commission, and a credit commission. Besides, there is a

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<sup>22</sup> Members of the cooperative presented their business plan as something which was set up on their own initiative. At the same time, it is also an aim of UPDI to encourage cooperatives to develop their business plan. Both probably contributed to this idea.

manager. The members elect the committees. At present, they are in their second mandate. There was a clear understanding of the functions of the different bodies. The General Assembly meets 3 times/year, and organises extraordinary meetings. Both UPDI and ASOP claimed ownership over this structuration.

- Access to land: Next to the individual fields of the members, COOPABU has access to two other plots of land. Firstly, there is a plot of land within the community on which the cooperative's building has been constructed. This plot was reportedly bought from the neighbourhood chief for 1 000 000 Congolese Francs by ASOP. The building was also constructed by ASOP, of which a panel on the outside wall testified. Interestingly, we visited the same building during our base line visit, but at that time, no panel was attached to the wall and cooperative members did not mention ASOP. At that time, people mentioned ASOP as an organisation that was also active in the community, but not within the potato value chain. The second plot of land (30 ares) is rented from a plantation owner in the area. The person is not able to exploit the whole concession and has therefore agreed on renting out part of it. Members of the cooperative had taken the initiative themselves to organise this. The land is used for collective farming of potatoes. Part of the first harvest was given to the concession owner. Last year, profit from the field amounted to \$500. It was used to buy new seeds for multiplication and subsequent distribution to members. With another part of the money, goats were bought for distribution to the women of the group on a rotative scheme.
- Legal recognition: COOPABU was granted provisional agreement to function in March 2014. This agreement is valid for 12 months and renewable. Previously, the cooperative had some texts in place already, but had not legalised these. Cooperative members felt this recognition to be important as it will help them to get their seeds certified by the national seed service (SENASA), or to get permission to export or import goods. They explained that it was thanks to UPDI and ASOP that they had been able to obtain this. UPDI staff argued that they had observed the need for the cooperative to obtain legal recognition; "So it was our accompanying, combined with their initiative". ASOP staff argued that they had been the ones to support the process to obtain legal recognition.

#### *What helps to further strengthen the cooperative?*

- Willingness of local leaders to engage: Can help to convince people to adhere to the cooperative, and to facilitate things locally. At the time of our endline visit, we were told that 72 local authorities had adhered to one of UPDI's cooperatives. These authorities can help to convince others of becoming a member, and also act as facilitator, by making community land available for collective farming or to construct a building. The latter happened in the case of COOPABU.
- Engagement of members: Members of the cooperative need to adhere to the idea of a cooperative, and need to be willing to put the knowledge and skills obtained through training into practice. In the case of COOPABU this seems to be well ensured. Members have received training on several issues and are well able to reproduce this information in discussions. Integrated Soil Fertility Management is seen as a very important way to increase production. It is an often used



example of training that has been taken up by people, also in Buhanga. Another sign of engagement is that members pay to the savings for the solidarity groups.

- Strong leaders: In the case of COOPABU the previous president was especially praised for having set in motion a lot of things and for having contributed a lot. She passed away some years ago, but members and UPDI staff still recalled her as having been key to the development of the cooperative. The present president is assessed by UPDI as having strong management skills and the ability to convince people of his ideas. He is often invited by UPDI to share his experiences with others. This happened for instance during the COS-PASAK meeting that was organised in May 2014, and which we attended.
- Climate and favourable geographic conditions: Buhanga is in an area with favourable conditions for agriculture. People in the community explained to us that fields are generally fertile and that there is usually enough production. Proof of this is that the area attracts new residents from other areas: “They come here in a bad state, but if you see some of them now, you will find that they don’t want to leave anymore and they eat *lenga-lenga* (amaranth leaves)”.
- Exchange visits to show positive examples: positive examples of other cooperatives in the surroundings or elsewhere can help to convince people to adhere to a cooperative or to organise one’s own cooperative in a certain way. UPDI regularly organises such exchange visits with farmers’ cooperatives in neighbouring Rwanda, Burundi, or to North Kivu province. It is argued that cooperatives in these areas are generally more advanced and can serve as an example. Some of the COOPABU members have participated in these exchanges. They have been organised with support from Agriterria and Oxfam Novib.
- Management tools and committee: A mature cooperative will have agricultural produce in stock of its members. It is important to keep track of exact amounts, about who owns what, about money that is being paid, and money that is lent etc. This all requires meticulous bookkeeping which has to be done by a management committee that is well trusted by its members. A certain level of literacy is needed to be able to fulfil the task. COOPABU management members were able to show us proof of their bookkeeping.
- Storage building: As soon as production grows, members need to be able to put products in storage. This will enable them to sell at the market at a time prices have increased already and is more beneficial than selling right after harvesting. It means a secure place is needed for storage, without running high risks of crops being stolen, being eaten by animals, or getting wet and rotten. During the baseline visit, COOPABU had one cooperative building, that was partly used for storage and partly as a meeting room (constructed by ASOP). During the endline visit, two other storage buildings were added and an agricultural shop. The latter had a sign of ICCO/COS-PASAK on the outer wall.

#### *What affects negatively?*

- Spirit of wait-and-see (*attentisme*): Presence of humanitarian organisations is often blamed by NGOs for inactivity of people and unwillingness to engage in agricultural projects. As long as humanitarian organisations continue to provide material goods, such as seeds, or food for free, it is difficult to change the attitude/behaviour. In eastern DRC humanitarians have a prolonged

presence (referred to as *les humaine durable*), and some people meanwhile count on their continued presence. In the case of COOPABU this did not seem to be a major problem.

- Taxation: This was mentioned by UPDI staff as possibly having a negative impact, but it did not play a major role in Buhanga. Taxation (and over-)taxation is more prevalent on the Ruzizi plain.
- Plant diseases: Potatoes are quite vulnerable to plant diseases, especially in times of abundant rain. Crop rotation and a variety of seeds are important. COOPABU has received seed donations from UPDI in the past and more recently from ASOP. Part of these seeds have been sold locally to other interested producers. As a result, COOPABU sometimes ends up with lack of seeds itself.
- Large concession owners: In some areas of South Kivu concession owners occupy large plots of land, sometimes dating back to colonial times. Not all of this land is in use, yet it limits the land available to local producers. To overcome this, COOPABU has convinced a plantation owner to rent out part of his land, but this does not always work as easily. A farmers' union like UPDI could do more in terms of lobby and advocacy to change this practice, but this is not done in a very active manner thus far.
- Lack of possibilities to obtain credit: Thus far no reliable credit providers operate in South Kivu province. Few providers exist but demand extremely high interest rates or take very severe measures at the moment somebody is not able to reimburse on time. A lack of credit opportunities limits possibilities for investment. Lobby and advocacy efforts in this regard thus far are limited.

#### *What do others say and do about it?*

UPDI is certainly not the only organisation that promotes cooperatives as a way to strengthen the agricultural sector. Several of the partners in the food security consortium of ICCO are also active in the field of agriculture. In the following, we will provide a brief overview of some other organisations and show the role they have.

ASOP (*Action Sociale et d'Organisation Paysanne*) is a more holistic organisation than UPDI, and fights against poverty and injustice. Strengthening rural entrepreneurship is one of the ways in which this is done. COOPABU receives support from both ASOP and UPDI. UPDI staff felt this joint funding/collaboration can be an asset but can sometimes also lead to competition. Staff members of both organisations explained how they would sometimes go to the field with an intended activity and then encounter the other partner having planned an activity at the same time, or how they would go to the field to carry out a training and then find that a training on that topic had been given already by the other partner. Ideally, different organisations could work together for mutual strengthening and to increase the impact for beneficiaries, but in this case it seemed coordination between the two partners was lacking. Although animosity was outspoken, it was clear that some levels of resentment exist between the two about the extent to which each of them could claim ownership of the realisations made by COOPABU. ASOP staff showed little awareness of the ICCO Food security consortium, although the organisation is involved in ICCO's disaster risk management program as a consortium partner of UPDI since February 2014.

ADI-Kivu (*Actions pour le Développement Intégré au Kivu*) is an organisation that has a long history of working in agriculture in South Kivu. ADI-Kivu has put a lot of effort in setting up Mutual Solidarity Groups, and has also provided training on this for UPDI staff. In recent years, ADI-Kivu has started to work more with cooperatives, especially in the manioc (Kabare, Idjwi) and rice sectors (Ruzizi). In the rice sector, efforts of ADI-Kivu are close to the efforts of UPDI. Some competition was felt by ADI-Kivu staff members. Partly, this might also be related to the fact that ADI-Kivu has difficulties in finding sufficient funding, whereas UPDI seems to be able to mobilise funding with more ease.

VECO (*Vredeseilanden Country Office-DRC*) is another organisation in our evaluation that also works with cooperatives, mainly in the Ruzizi plain. Usually, the Congolese NGOs do not work with the same grassroots partners at the same time, unless it is clear that focus of the interventions differs. What happens more often is that a cooperative is taken over by another partner at the moment no funding relation exist; if a structure exists already, it will take less efforts for the new partner to achieve certain results. In this way, VECO has also taken over COOSOPRODA, which used to be a partner of ADI-Kivu.

Among Congolese NGOs working in the field of agriculture, cooperatives seem to be fashionable, just like mutual solidarity groups. Many organisations combine these two approaches. SARCAF is an example of another organisation which we encountered that works in similar ways. An organisation that has a different approach is IFDC (International Fertilizer Development Center). This is an international research organisation that promotes agricultural intensification. The Integrated Soil Fertility Management approach which was widely taken up by NGOs and producers we met, was introduced by them. COOPABU members testified how this approach helped them to increase production. Usually IFDC works through Congolese partners like UPDI to reach beneficiaries. Other international organisations we talked to such as FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) and CRS (Catholic Relief Services) showed remarkably little knowledge about the work of Congolese NGOs.

#### *Conclusion: contribution of UPDI*

Generally, we found that UPDI is becoming more established and known in South Kivu. UPDI has a large constituency that is organised in grassroots groups. These groups have not all been created by UPDI, but are also formed on the local level by farmers. Subsequently, these farmers have solicited membership from UPDI. UPDI represents them at the higher level. Members were enthusiastic about the cooperatives and explained how the cooperative has changed their view on agricultural production.

The impact of the cooperative was clearly visible: the cooperative has been able to expand, new buildings were constructed, more potatoes were produced and kept in storage. Newcomers express their interest in adhering. Mutual solidarity groups are being formed as spin-offs of the cooperative itself. The cooperative manages to organise members for joint cultivation in the cooperative's rented field and profits taken from this field are used as joint investment. It shows that members have confidence that the cooperative will deal with benefits in a way that is good for them.

Practice of values: COOPABU has a solid organisational structure. Members were able to explain the way in which the cooperative was managed. This revealed that principles of good governance to a large degree were internalised.

COOPABU has received donor funding from both UPDI and ASOP. In practice, it is difficult to disentangle these contributions. A visitor who is being introduced by UPDI will automatically hear more about this side of the story. It is clear that through the efforts of both UPDI and ASOP members have received a lot of support, both in material ways, as well as through knowledge-sharing. Stories presented by members are well in line with usual donor talk; they know how to present their good governance, accountability and transparency for instance. Close and long-term involvement of two NGOs increases the likelihood of hearing desirable stories, especially because both NGOs have had access to various sources of international funding. This has to be taken into account when judging the statements of the COOPABU members. It is clear however that the cooperative is very well organised in comparison to many other cooperatives. It makes it likely that receiving support from two partners has a positive impact on realisations.

### **Contribution story II: COS-PASAK**

#### *The attribution problem:*

COS-PASAK is the ICCO-induced coordination of partners working on food security in the Kivu provinces (*COordination de la Synergie du Programme d'Appui à la Sécurité Alimentaire au Kivu*). In the following, we look at the extent at which the synergy indeed functioned; whether participants take ownership of the programme and whether the synergy manages to indeed include a wide range of stakeholders in the field of food security with the aim of improving food security. We discuss evidence of concrete activities that have been organised under COS-PASAK and show to what extent participants feel COS-PASAK is contributing to stronger relations among them (anecdotal evidence). Finally, we discuss the contribution of UPDI, of ICCO, and of other stakeholders in bringing on change.

#### *Theory of Change:*

ICCO created a synergy, with the idea to take a programmatic approach and to include all stakeholders in the field of food security and to determine mission and objectives together in a participatory manner. The synergy was at first initiated by ICCO, but ICCO staff have a strong conviction that the synergy should not be led by ICCO. The role ICCO sees for itself within the synergy is more of a strategic advisor; "ICCO will not be here for eternity. [...] We want them to appropriate the programme. So that when ICCO leaves, it does not fall apart," as their food security officer explained to us.

Content and objectives of the programme were discussed jointly between ICCO and partners. The global vision was formulated as: "Until 2015, farmers in North and South Kivu, organised around different food sectors, have sustainably improved their food situation and their incomes".<sup>23</sup> The *raison d'être* of the

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<sup>23</sup> *Termes de référence, Journée de réflexion sur l'intégration d'autres partenaires au sein de la synergie COS-PASAK*, 03.05.2014

synergy was seen as: “to learn from each other and strengthen each other”.<sup>24</sup> This is supposed to contribute to capacity development of the partners involved.

ICCO and partners agreed that it would be more effective to also engage non-NGO actors in the synergy, to connect all parties at the local level and make use of expertise and contacts available. By organising reflection meetings, training sessions and workshops, the synergy is supposed to be strengthened.

The core partners participating in COS-PASAK all have their own food security projects that are funded by ICCO. Generally, the projects are all in line with the global vision of COS-PASAK but focus can vary slightly; some work more on structuring farmers in cooperatives, others contribute more importance to intensification of agriculture, or in supporting farmers by setting up community savings schemes in mutual solidarity groups. Different value chains are covered; rice, maize, beans, cassava, and different geographical areas; mostly territories in South Kivu, but also some in North Kivu. Projects are supposed to be complementary and to contribute to the common aim of increasing food security. The consortium has formulated 12 intervention strategies. Two of the strategies can be seen as contributing to civil society development and/or policy influencing: 1) organisation of the value chain (an important mechanisms to achieve this is setting up cooperatives), and 2) lobby and advocacy.<sup>25</sup>

#### *Practice of Change: How is COS-PASAK organised in practice...?*

First reflection meetings to set up the consortium took place in 2010. From January 2011 onwards, the synergy really got started with four ICCO partners (ACDI, ADI-Kivu, SARCAF and UPDI). These four were later joined by six others: (AVUDS, ASED, ADECOP, ASED, COOCENKI, and LOFEPACO). Generally, partners recall this as a very participatory process.

To avoid being too much donor-driven, ICCO made available funding to local partners to coordinate the collaboration activities within the synergy. For most of the evaluation period, UPDI was the lead organisation for coordination of the synergy, with SARCAF having the administrative lead. This means that SARCAF was responsible for submission of reports and other administrative tasks and UPDI was responsible for moderation, and for organising joint activities. Obviously, not all partners in the synergy are at the same level; mutual learning and exchange of experiences are supposed to take place and to give an added value to the partnership.

Gradually, the synergy has started to invite non-ICCO partners (or former ICCO partners) for activities that are organised. This is in line with the multi-actor approach that the synergy is supposed to follow. A number of other organisations (9) has expressed interest in joining the synergy. Although it was not clear whether this was because of funding expectations or because sincere interest in the synergy, it shows that the synergy is meanwhile becoming known to others in the field.

#### *...and which activities have been carried out?*

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<sup>24</sup> UPDI interview baseline, 03.10.2012

<sup>25</sup> *Termes de référence, Journée de réflexion sur l'intégration d'autres partenaires au sein de la synergie COS-PASAK*, 03.05.2014

As mentioned previously, each PASAK partner has its own food security project to carry out with different beneficiaries/partners at the local level. Meanwhile, ICCO has offered joint contracts to some of the partners (for instance ASED and ADI-Kivu), with the aim of encouraging mutual exchange. We were not able to trace any concrete realisations that resulted from this joint contracting; partners basically took their part of the budget and carry out their part of the project. Generally, exchange is taking place between partners about their projects during monthly meetings that are organised by UPDI as lead organisation of the synergy. Some of the partners referred to the meetings when asked about the benefits of being part of the synergy, but most of them did so only in rather general terms, referring to exchange of information/experience, but without being able to give clear examples of benefits derived from the meetings.

Although the set-up of COS-PASAK already has started in 2010, the official launch of *joint* activities of COS-PASAK took place only in July 2012.<sup>26</sup> Until May 2014, three workshops had taken place; the first one was on nutritional education and land tenure, the second one on Disaster Risk Management. The third workshop took place in the same period as our evaluation visit (May 2014) and we were able to attend part of the programme. The main objective of this workshop was to integrate multi-sector actors in COS-PASAK. Therefore, also other stakeholders were invited, apart from the COS-PASAK members. Some of these stakeholders (such as e.g. representative of the ministry of agriculture) have been invited for previous activities as well, but UPDI staff admitted that most stakeholder institutions (especially the state institutions) do not have a permanent person that is delegated to attend COS-PASAK meetings. Hence, each workshop has to start from scratch in setting out the agenda of COS-PASAK. Apart from the PASAK partners, the attendance list of the workshop showed presence of representatives of FOPAC/SK (*Fédération des Organisations des Producteurs Agricoles du Sud Kivu*), SENASEM (*Service National de Semences*), IPAPEL/SK (*Inspection Provinciale de l'Agriculture, Pêche et Elevage*), INERA (*Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique*), Coordination of the Environment, Provincial Division of Planning, UEA (*Université Evangélique en Afrique*), and ISDR (*Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural*).

Stronger involvement of non-ICCO partners in COS-PASAK led to a discussion on how to structure the synergy in the future. This was one of the issues that came up during the workshop, but about which no clear agreement was found yet; should it become a network organisation in itself? Should there be a partnership agreement to ensure stronger and more sustainable involvement of other partners? Feelings about this were mixed; on the one hand it was felt that it would be good to engage others, including non-NGO actors as much as possible; if they would be formally part of COS-PASAK, they would probably take more ownership. On the other hand, it was felt that COS-PASAK would no longer be a civil society structure, which could endanger its role of acting as a watchdog of the state and private sector. It was also emphasised that a risk in formalising the structure further was that COS-PASAK would become a sort of NGO by itself (as other network initiatives have shown). Eventually, it was decided not to take steps towards formal registration of the synergy; but instead work with registered members in a consultation framework.

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

### *Opinions of stakeholders involved*

Next to the concrete activities carried out under COS-PASAK, we gathered anecdotal evidence from stakeholders involved; we asked them about their opinion, looked at their level of engagement, and observed their interactions during a workshop we attended.

During our visit, we had exchanges with representatives of seven of the COS-PASAK partners (ACDI, ADI-Kivu, ASOP, AVUDS, KMS (former partner but still participating in workshops), SARCAF, and UPDI. In addition, we observed them participating in the workshop. It was clear that all partners had a good idea of what COS-PASAK was about; its objectives, vision, and strategy. Generally, but with some exceptions, projects carried out by the partners are in line with the overall goal of COS-PASAK. Exchanges exist through regular meetings, data on agricultural production are compiled in one database, and further learning opportunities are provided in workshop events. Joint efforts in terms of programming are much more limited: although ICCO has provided joint contracts to various partners, no joint activities take place in the field, not towards beneficiaries, nor to carry out lobby and advocacy. For the latter, UPDI refers mostly to FOPAC. Nevertheless, UPDI was able to give an example of how contacts with the state sector had helped the functioning of COS-PASAK; during an exchange visit with Rwanda, UPDI was provided a potato seed variety. IPAPPEL created an exemption to import the variety, and SENASEM certified the seeds after one season. Normally, this process would have been more complicated but thanks to COS-PASAK good contacts existed to facilitate.

As mentioned before (under CSI dimension Perception of Impact), it is even more difficult to convey the goal and objectives of COS-PASAK to non-civil society actors, such as the state institutions. We noted little intrinsic interest in the topic during our conversations with representatives of two state bodies. UPDI staff is critical about this participation and lack of engagement from the side of the state. One of the staff members argued: “They only participate in meetings because they know there is a per diem, an envelope, but they don’t care about what is done afterwards”. Strikingly, when we went to talk to an officer of the provincial division of planning who had attended part of the COS-PASAK workshop, the first thing he mentioned was that UPDI was still owing him \$10 for his participation in the workshop. He was not able to tell about the work carried out by UPDI, but expressed the desire to be more involved in coordination of activities by NGOs. After our conversation, he joined us to the office of UPDI to demand his participation fee.

### *And what remains a challenge?*

We realise that there are challenges in getting state institutions and private sector on board of COS-PASAK initiatives, especially because this type of connection is not commonly sought, and because there is a common perception that synergies should be the sole domain of NGOs. People need to get used to the idea of getting together with different stakeholders. This is complicated by the fact that the different bodies can send different representatives to subsequent meetings. No institutional memory is kept and information needs to be provided repeatedly. The reaction of the state official mentioned above is telling for the challenges that go with working in a context of state fragility. UPDI staff however was not fully negative about the state and well aware of the importance of seeking collaboration and maintaining good

relationships: “We may still have a weak state, but we cannot do without them. Everything is regulated through the state”, as one of UPDI’s staff members pointed out.<sup>27</sup> Another staff member acknowledged that also within the state certain capacity and experience is available from which COS-PASAK could benefit.<sup>28</sup>

Generally, UPDI’s secretary explained that in the beginning of the synergy, all NGOs had the tendency to work in isolation (*en vase clos*), without engaging other NGOs, and with engaging other stakeholders only limitedly. The secretary admitted that they would invite other actors such as the local chief, but mostly to observe, and to legitimise activities, but not to seek real collaboration: “so often they only come to the opening ceremony of a project, have a short speech, then leave, and all are satisfied”.<sup>29</sup>

#### *Contribution of UPDI, contribution of ICCO, contribution of others*

Although the programmatic approach was already a central element at the start of COS-PASAK, it is remarkable to note that only the third workshop, organised almost 2 years after the formal launch dealt explicitly with the integration of other partners in the synergy. This can be defended by arguing that the first step was to create sufficient synergy between the food security partners of ICCO. Yet, one might also wonder whether the initial aim was not overly ambitious.

ICCO has initiated a synergy that is gradually taken over by Congolese partners. Funding continues to come from ICCO. Without this, the synergy would have little chances of surviving at present. There would be no means available to organise activities, and organisations might not see the added value of engaging in it. Although there is potential for achieving more, if the strategies are further developed and put into practice, partners might see more benefit in adhering to COS-PASAK.

Thus far, UPDI has been in charge of coordinating the synergy. UPDI is certainly among the stronger organisations within COS-PASAK and therefore well up to the task.<sup>30</sup> Initially, the coordination was supposed to be rotating on an annual basis. Meanwhile, UPDI has had two coordination contracts and as such the organisation has had a strong role in realisations of COS-PASAK; other partners acknowledged that UPDI takes the lead in organising meetings and events. A more permanent leadership can be productive for continuity of COS-PASAK. At the same time, we noted some remarks of other partner organisations hinting at their desire and ambition to also take leadership. It was not clear to what extent this desire was driven by a true desire to make a contribution to realisations of the synergy, or by a desire to obtain additional funding next to the project funding.

Generally, COS-PASAK contributes to more intense relations within civil society, but this is not the only initiative that is taken within civil society to bring together different parties. The already mentioned FOPAC is a network organisation that is primarily concerned with carrying out lobby and advocacy directed at

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<sup>27</sup> UPDI interview02 16.05.2014

<sup>28</sup> UPDI interview01,14.05.2014

<sup>29</sup> UPDI interview01,14.05.2014.

<sup>30</sup> This is also supported by Murhambo, D.C. and A.G. Karume, October 2013. *Rapport d’évaluation externe de la COSPASAK*, commissioned by ICCO



other stakeholders. UPDI is a member of FOPAC. Another initiative is the Agri-Hub that is set up in DRC by AgriProFocus; an international network with Agriterra roots. This network aims to promote farmer entrepreneurship. UPDI is a member of Agri-Hub. It shows to us that also without COS-PASAK, UPDI is able to find entry points into the larger civil society and to play a role in collaboration with the aim of improving food security.

## 8. Discussion

Given your findings, do you think this project (as in: SPO interventions towards civil society strengthening) was well-designed, suitable for the environment in which it was implemented? Would you advice to fund a similar project in the future (or to continue funding this one)? What changes would you recommend, if any?

It is difficult to provide a straightforward answer to these questions. In the evaluation period, UPDI carried out various projects with MFS-funding. In the following, we will mainly focus on the elements that were also elaborated in the contribution analysis: the promotion of the cooperatives, and the synergy COS-PASAK.

About the cooperatives: The ICCO-funded project was not the only UPDI project that aimed at promoting cooperatives. Before organising the beneficiaries in this way, UPDI has always worked with collectives at the grassroots level. There is a lot of know-how available within UPDI to carry out agricultural projects. Experience and training obtained through other projects (with Agriterra, Oxfam Novib) contributed to the sound design of the project. The project was suitable for most of the former beneficiaries of projects carried out by UPDI, but not for all; subsistence farmers were excluded from the project. At present, many of the cooperatives supported by UPDI are not yet at a level at which they can become fully independent. We would therefore recommend continued funding until maturity is reached.

In the particular case of COOPABU, we are convinced that UPDI played an important role, but we also noted an important role for ASOP. Without very clear coordination between the two intervening actors, there is a high risk of duplicating efforts. We did not get the impression that this coordination exists. We would recommend avoiding this situation as much as possible.

About COS-PASAK: The idea of setting up an inclusive dialogue between all stakeholders involved in food security is good; there is certainly a lot to win in joining forces. The progress that has been made in engaging non-civil society actors shows that the initial design was too ambitious. Engagement of these actors is still very limited and little ownership is taken. It also raises the question of how to structure their involvement. The discussion about this during the reflection workshop reveals that this has not been well thought out in the beginning. We observed some progress in terms of contacts between COS-PASAK partners, but did not find clear examples of joint achievements.

### **How could the impact evaluation itself be improved?**

To improve our impact evaluation, it would have been better if we had paid more attention to COS-PASAK during the baseline visit already. At that time, COS-PASAK did not turn up frequently during the workshop and we were not yet aware of the role UPDI played in this. For comparison, it would have been helpful if we had been able to obtain more information at this stage already.

***Which causal mechanisms do you consider to be valid beyond this case?***

In terms of causal mechanisms, we note that the approach of working with grassroots groups is common among SPOs. Members of cooperatives generally need a certain level of income security that goes beyond subsistence level. This makes the approach of cooperatives not suitable and reproducible everywhere. A challenge which cooperatives in DRC face is that of the institutional context; high tax burdens, high transport costs and difficult market access are some of the conditions that hamper the development of the agricultural sector. A cooperative is not a miracle product that can solve this complex of challenges and expectations of what can be realised should therefore be rather modest.

In relation to COS-PASAK, we note a number of ongoing initiatives to promote joint activities/projects/exchanges etc. Most of these initiatives are highly donor-driven and have limited viability without donor support. We are convinced that there can be a benefit in promoting synergies but they need to go beyond incidental meetings to really make a difference. As long as participants do not have a direct and clear benefit in engaging in synergies, it is difficult to motivate people and synergies are likely to remain donor-driven. This is a general challenge for all initiatives that promote collaboration.

## **9. Conclusion**

Provide an answer to the evaluation questions.

- 1) What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?

A lot of initiatives are taken to strengthen civil society. At the local level, NGOs (including the SPOs in our sample) work with grassroots structures. These structures are often well-trained on good governance principles; they have functional boards, organise meetings in which members can democratically raise their voice etc., but the majority of these structures does not function without support from an NGO, often with international funding.

At the level of SPOs, we see an increasing number of initiatives to promote collaboration, but these initiatives are generally still largely donor-driven and donor-dependent. Donors themselves hardly seem to set good examples, as their own levels of interaction are often limited as well.

As set out in the context description, we have noted two major trends in civil society in the field of agriculture: Farmers' cooperatives and Mutual Solidarity Groups. Many NGOs have initiatives to set up or promote cooperatives and/or mutual solidarity groups. This is done with varying levels of success and impact. Especially the MUSOs can be seen as contributing to civil society development at the grassroots

level. Most of the initiatives are not yet in a stage of maturity. This makes it difficult to assess to what extent they will make a sustainable contribution to civil society and the realisation of a more viable agriculture.

2) *To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*

Just like other organisations in our sample, UPDI works with grassroots structures and helps these structures to reach maturity and on the longer term autonomy. Through COS-PASAK UPDI is involved in a synergy that is meant to strengthen the food security sector.

UPDI has been involved in the promotion of the two changes in the field of agriculture mentioned above. UPDI attaches more value to the cooperatives than to the mutual solidarity groups. The organisation has a strong reputation in working with farmers' groups at the grassroots level. Setting up cooperatives is a next step which helps to professionalise the farmers' collectives. The fact that UPDI was attributed a leading role in COS-PASAK underlines the position UPDI has among other farmers' organisations.

Generally, we conclude that UPDI is an important player in the field of agriculture. Through its large membership base, it is able to reach many beneficiaries. As a lead organisation in COS-PASAK, UPDI also plays a role in more collaboration between food security agents.

3) *What is the relevance of these changes?*

Cooperatives are helpful in increasing production, in getting access to markets, and in producing more professionally; people become aware of commercialisation, setting up a business plan etc. By doing this jointly, social cohesion within a community can increase. Cooperatives are mostly relevant for people who already have a certain standard of living/income and who are able to produce a market surplus. The changes are less relevant for the most marginalised part of the population: they are excluded from becoming cooperative members, as they are not able to produce beyond subsistence level. UPDI wants to be a farmers union that is made up of professional agricultural cooperatives spread over the province of South Kivu. At present, UPDI is thinking about strategies to also target the more vulnerable people, but no concrete activities are carried out for this at the moment.

Mutual solidarity groups help people further to save money. The groups constitute social safety nets to people, which increases security. Generally, beneficiaries were positive about the changes. By increasing agricultural production beyond subsistence level, people can increase their household income and improve their living conditions. This is certainly relevant, given the figures presented in the context description at the beginning of this report: 87.7% of Congolese people live below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>31</sup> Most of them make a living out of agriculture. This makes interventions aimed at strengthening the agricultural sector relevant for a very large part of the population.

4) *What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

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<sup>31</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014

Many civil society actors in the field of agriculture work towards realising the changes mentioned above, and there seems to be a momentum to achieve things. People see examples of success in neighbouring communities and become motivated to join initiatives themselves. Roughly, the elements mentioned in the contribution story for the cooperative can all be seen as actors and factors that explain the findings. Main ingredients needed to set up a cooperative are: involvement of an NGO with access to international donor funding; beneficiaries that are engaged, determined and with certain agricultural skills. Working together in a cooperative and/or especially a MUSO helps people to experience social cohesion, and to increase mutual trust. To make cooperatives successful, beneficiaries have to adhere to principles of good governance.

COS-PASAK helps organisations in mutual learning, and in exchanging ideas. This can help to improve interventions, as organisations can avoid to repeat each other's mistakes. Although donors are active in encouraging collaboration and mutual learning between SPOs, there is not yet a strong momentum and examples of success are limited.

### **List of key documents:**

Murhambo, D.C. and A.G. Karume, October 2013. *Rapport d'évaluation externe de la COSPASAK*, commissioned by ICCO

UPDI, *Project plan and considerations 75-02-13-004*

UPDI, *Project plan and considerations 75-02-13-013*

UPDI, *Project plan and considerations 75-02-13-016*

UPDI, *Project plan and considerations 75-02-13-023*

UPDI, *Project plan and considerations 75-02-13-029*

UPDI, *Project plan and considerations 75-02-13-031*

UPDI, *Project plan and considerations 75-02-13-034*

UPDI, *ICCO rapport final*, doc. 12\_019674

UPDI, *Realisations rapport annuel consolidé 2012*

UPDI, *Rapport consolidé UPDI 2013*

UPDI, Jan. 2013. *Budget consolidé*

UPDI, *Budget et chronogramme 2014*

UPDI, Jan. 2014. *Rapport consolidé des activités de l'Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral, 1<sup>er</sup> janvier-31 décembre 2013.*

UPDI, *Termes de référence, Journée de réflexion sur l'intégration d'autres partenaires au sein de la synergie COS-PASAK*, 03.05.2014

Next to these documents, we made use of other narrative and financial reports, progress reports, correspondence between donor and SPO etc. We collected documents from both ICCO and UPDI. A full list of documents is available on request.

## ABOUT DATA COLLECTION:

| Name                              | Position                                      | Workshop<br>12.5.2014 | CS questions | Individual<br>interview | Group<br>interview |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Urbain Marius Bisimwa             | General secretary                             | X                     | X            | 14.5.2014               |                    |
| Jean Pierre Mirimba               | Analysis officer                              |                       | X            | 16.5.2014               |                    |
| Olivier Mutabazi<br>Mulumboderhwa | Programme officer                             |                       |              |                         |                    |
| Peter Mulagizi                    | Field supervisor                              | X                     | X            | 16.5.2014               |                    |
| Martin Mushagalusa                | Field supervisor                              | X                     | X            |                         |                    |
| Aimé Lundjwire Kasole             | Field supervisor                              | X                     | X            |                         |                    |
| Cedric                            | Financier                                     |                       |              | 16.5.2014               |                    |
| Willy Mulimbi<br>Byamungu         | Catholic Relief Services (CRS),<br>agronomist |                       |              | 21.5.2014               |                    |
| Felicien Zozo                     | ASOP, coordinator                             |                       |              |                         | 16.6.2014          |
| Jean Marie                        | ASOP, programme officer                       |                       |              |                         |                    |
| Delphine Mpendu                   | ASOP, field trainer                           |                       |              |                         |                    |
| Solomon Kilongo                   | ACDI, coordinator                             |                       |              | 13.5.2014               |                    |
| Emmanuel                          | AVUDS, coordinator                            |                       |              | 13.5.2014               |                    |
| Laurent Ikundji                   | FAO, M&E officer                              |                       |              | 16.5.2014               |                    |
| Moussa Mahamane                   | IFDC, DRC representative                      |                       |              | 20.5.2014               |                    |
| Gaspard Zamu Haizuru              | IFDC, economist                               |                       |              | 21.5.2014               |                    |
| Nono Mwavita                      | SARCAF, coordinator                           |                       |              | 24.5.2014               |                    |

|   |  |  |  |           |           |
|---|--|--|--|-----------|-----------|
| Mireille Mihigo Nabintu                     | FOPAC, lobby and advocacy officer  |  |  | 13.5.2014 |           |
| Dieudonné Bakulikira Nguma                  | UPACO, vice-president  |  |  | 23.5.2014 |           |
| 7 staff members, incl. provincial inspector | IPAPPEL (provincial inspection for agriculture, fisheries and livestock) |  |  |           | 21.5.2014 |
| Netlyn Bernard<br>Moïse Foki                | ICCO Bukavu  |  |  |           | 14.5.2014 |
| Thierry Kalimira                            | ICCO Bukavu, agronomist  |  |  | 14.5.2014 |           |
| Bilubi Meschac                              | ISDR lecturer, consultant  |  |  | 21.5.2014 |           |

COOPABU members were met during a field visit to Buhanga on 13.5.2014. Descending in the field allowed us not only to talk to them, but also to observe realisations in the field and to see the interaction between them and the agronomist of UPDI.

With some of the people listed above we talked directly about UPDI. Others were consulted to provide us deeper insight into what is going on in the food security sector in South Kivu, which enriched our contribution story.

Next to the people listed above, we obviously also talked to ADI-Kivu and VECO staff members (as part of their evaluation). These organisations are working in the same field and some of the information gathered from them fed into our understanding of UPDI. For a complete list of people consulted at these organisations, please see organisation reports. Besides, we attended one day of a workshop organised by UPDI as part of the ICCO synergy COS-PASAK. Participants in this workshop were representatives of the food security partners of ICCO (and some former partners), as well as some other NGO representatives, and representatives of state institutions such as IPAPPEL (provincial inspection of agriculture, fisheries and livestock), INERA (national institute for agronomic study and research), SENASEM (national seed service), and the ministerial divisions of planning and environment.

# Civil Society Strengthening Report Vredeseilanden Congo

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Carolien Jacobs, Bart Weijs, Koen Leuveld, Marrit van den Berg

Wageningen University



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## List of acronyms

CAB - Comité AntiBwaki  
CFA – Co-Financing Agency (the Dutch donor organisation)  
CFC - Common Fund for Commodities  
CoC - Communities of Change Alliance  
COOPA Ruzizi - Coopérative Agricole de la Plaine de la Ruzizi; groupements of Kilomoni, Kiliba, Sange and Runingu  
COOSOPRODA - Coopérative de Solidarité pour la Production des Denrées Agricoles, Luberizi  
CSO – Civil Society Organisation  
CSI – Civil Society Index  
DGD – Belgian Development Cooperation - La Cooperation Belge Au Développement  
DRC – Democratic Republic of the Congo  
FARDC - Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo  
FOPAC-SK - Fédération des organisations des Producteurs Agricoles du Congo – Sud-Kivu  
GA – General Assembly  
IFDC - International Fertilizer Development Center  
MDG – Millenium Development Goal  
MFS II – Mede-Financierings-Stelsel (the Dutch grant system)  
MONUSCO - Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation du Congo  
MUSO – Mutuelle de Solidarité (Solidarity group for savings and loans)  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
SARCAF - Service d’Accompagnement et de renforcement des Capacités d’Autopromotion de la Femme  
SPO – Southern Partner Organisation  
UPDI - l’Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral  
VECO – Vredeseilanden Country Office

## 1. Introduction

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of southern partner organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening.

In this report, we focus on one SPO, for all three parts of the evaluation.

The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in terms of selected MDGs & Themes, the SPO’s capacity and in civil society during the evaluation period and the extent to which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and endline study and focuses on a broad sample of 19 partnerships, 5 of which are included in the capacity development component. We conducted large n surveys, focus group discussions,

observations, workshops, field visits and interviews, during visits in 2012, 2013 (smaller subsample) and 2014. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup>

In the MDGs & Themes component of the evaluation, we examine the project “*Building peace in eastern DRC through the development of promising and environmentally sound agricultural value chains*” in terms of impact on MDG 1 and the theme of fragile states. To this end, we implemented two rounds of data collection (in 2012 and 2014) in the project’s intervention area – both in intervention villages and treatment villages. This allows us to estimate a difference-in-difference model to measure the impact of the project.

In the capacity development component, we looked at the contribution of MFS II funding to strengthening the capacity of SPOs. Core elements of our evaluation approach for the capacity development component are the Theory of Change and the 5 Capabilities framework that has been developed by ECDPM. This framework breaks down organisational capacity into five capabilities: Capability to act and commit, Capability to adapt and self-renew, Capability to deliver on development objectives, Capability to relate, and Capability to achieve coherence.

In the civil society strengthening component, we looked at ways in which development projects have strengthened civil society. For the civil society strengthening component, the core elements of our approach are the Theory of Change and the Civicus Civil Society Index<sup>2</sup>, which distinguishes five dimensions to civil society: Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment. We furthermore used contribution analysis to take an in-depth look at the contribution of Dutch MFS II funding to the development of organisational capacity and strengthening of civil society.

In this report we look specifically at *VECO Bukavu*, the Bukavu office of *Vredeseilanden Country Office RDC*, the DRC office of Belgian NGO *Vredeseilanden*. We look at the contribution of Dutch support to the development of organisational capacity of *VECO Bukavu*, and at the contribution of *VECO Bukavu* to strengthening civil society. *VECO Bukavu*, through its organisation *Vredeseilanden*, is a partner of *Cordaid* and the *Communities of Change (CoC) Alliance*. *Vredeseilanden* is an organisation that aims to contribute to viable livelihoods and empowerment of organized family farmers, male and female, in South and North. The organisation has been a partner of *Cordaid* since 2001 (in Indonesia); in DRC the partnership began in 2011. For this evaluation we focus on the first of two projects with *Cordaid/CoC* during the evaluation period: a three-year, EUR 400,000 project to build peace in eastern DRC through the development of the rice value chain in Ruzizi Plain (2011-2013). The project is currently followed by a 18-month, EUR 189,819 project to strengthen the rice value chain (2014-2015).

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of this report was commented upon by Ron Delnoye (*Cordaid*), Ivan Godfroid (*VECO RDC*), and Louis Tchuma (*VECO Bukavu*). We thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org); also Centre for Development Innovation, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (unpublished MFS II evaluation working document)

Due to the fact that VECO Bukavu is in fact part of an international NGO, Cordaid had no intention to contribute to the development of its organisational capacity. Nevertheless, the institutional support VECO Bukavu received can be considered a support to its capacity, and we analyse the contribution of MFS II financing to the organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu accordingly. With respect to strengthening civil society: this project had no dedicated civil society strengthening component, but includes a number of elements that can contribute to strengthening civil society. We have paid special attention to the two cooperatives that VECO Bukavu works with, COOPA and COOSOPRODA. In our contribution analysis, we seek to establish the extent to which MFS II financing has or has not contributed to strengthening civil society at the grassroots.

Our analysis shows that, because of the international character of VECO Bukavu, Cordaid undertook no activities to contribute to the development of its organisational capacity. Nevertheless, institutional support by Cordaid was crucial for the office in Bukavu to continue to exist in 2013, as there were no other donors during this period. Capacity development in this project is targeted at the two cooperatives COOSOPRODA and COOPA, which we consider under our analysis of the contribution of this project to strengthening civil society. We find little impact in terms of increased agricultural production and revenues of the members of the cooperatives. Though we cannot conclude that no impact was achieved as the power of the study is low. Furthermore, we find that the development of the capacity of the cooperative COOSOPRODA is had limited impact, and thus that the contribution of this intervention to civil society strengthening at the grassroots was limited.

In the following, we first describe the country and relevant local context. Then we give a short description of VECO Bukavu and the project with capacity development and civil society strengthening/policy influencing elements. Next, we shortly discuss the methodology. We then first discuss the MDGs & Themes component, where we present our data, results and analysis followed by a discussion and conclusion. We then discuss the capacity development component, we present the results and contribution analysis for this component, which is followed by a discussion and conclusion. Finally, we discuss our findings for the civil society strengthening component, including the contribution analysis, and again a discussion and conclusion.

## Context

In this section, we briefly describe the country and local context as far as it is relevant for the project under evaluation.

South Kivu, and eastern DRC as a whole, is strongly characterised by the legacy of repeated conflict and high levels of insecurity. High levels of poverty are coupled with limited access to basic services, in a still young democracy with a history of clientelism and rent-seeking. Eastern DRC is reputed for high levels of gender-based violence, including sexual violence against women. At the same time, especially South Kivu has a history of civil society mobilisation, and the eastern DRC has received a great deal of international aid. South Kivu possesses a wealth of natural resources and has a high agricultural potential. The following paragraphs describe these issues in more detail.

### *Conflict and poverty*

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons.<sup>3</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas in South Kivu, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013). The Fall of Goma in December 2012 and consequent threat to Bukavu led to the evacuation of the majority of international staff, and drew the attention of the military to North Kivu, with other armed groups taking advantage of the situation ('the FDLR came out of the forests'<sup>4</sup>). The following defeat of M23 and military moves against other armed groups have led to more optimism, though. In general the security situation in the province was considered as stable, yet unpredictable during the evaluation period. In their struggle to make a living, people are not only faced with this insecurity, but also with an exploitative governance system that continues to act largely in line with the Mobutu-adagio of 'help yourself' (*débrouillez-vous*).

The decades of insecurity, conflict, and the rent-seeking dictatorship of Mobutu have greatly impoverished the DRC. The country has great potential for agriculture and possesses a wealth of mineral resources. The potential of all these resources however is far from being exploited. On the 2014 Human Development Index, DRC ranked 186 out of 187 (followed only by Niger). Gross national income per head was noted to be at \$444 in 2013, which was lowest of all countries for which data were available. In the same year, 87.7% of the population lived below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>5</sup>

### *Civil society*

Civil society in South Kivu is relatively well-developed, with much variation in terms of organisational capacity. There is a large number of local NGOs, organised in thematic groups and networks, and they are not afraid to speak out against the government. At the same time, civil society is challenged in terms of

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<sup>3</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel, and the analyses by the Rift Valley Institute

<sup>4</sup> RFDP workshop endline

<sup>5</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014

fragmentation and weak governance. There is a strong presence of international organisations willing to partner with local NGOs. After many years of a strong humanitarian presence, many organisations are now engaging in development aid. However, a side-effect of the long-time presence of humanitarian aid is an attitude of dependency among parts of the population, which people describe as *attentisme* (wait and see). This is a challenge for organisations attempting to set up development projects, as their beneficiaries are used to free distribution of materials, and changing this attitude is not a short-term process.

The dependency of civil society on foreign aid is high, and almost complete. NGOs derive their funding almost exclusively from foreign funding. Their own initiatives are indirectly derived from this funding, which does allow them a certain institutional leeway. Local grassroots associations are not directly funded, but depend for their operations, seminars, transport and accompaniment on funded NGOs. For the near future, the continuation of the women's movement requires that the international community continues to recognise and support the role of NGOs in promoting women's rights.

### *Agriculture*

In South Kivu, which used to be the granary of DRC, roughly 3 out of 4 people live in rural areas.<sup>6</sup> A survey carried out in South Kivu in 2012 showed that around three-quarters of households in the sampled population make a living primarily in agriculture, either in subsistence agriculture (65%), commercial farming (5%), or by agricultural casual labour (6%).<sup>7</sup> Households within the same sample have access to 2.69 hectares of land, but often not all of this land is held in ownership. Due to various factors, such as insecurity, displacement, and market distortions, agricultural production is low. Food insecurity and poverty remain widespread. Land issues are seen as one of the main sources of conflict in the DRC; there is a lack of arable land in densely populated areas; displacement causes competition; regulatory frameworks overlap and statutory law is not considered to fit rural reality.<sup>8</sup>

Humanitarian and development organisations intervening in the field of agriculture are well represented in eastern DRC. Typically, humanitarian organisations often provide food aid, seeds, or small livestock, whereas development organisations are often more involved in the provision of small loans, in setting up cooperatives, or in organising mutual solidarity groups. The SLRC survey carried out in 2012 showed that 21% of all households had received food aid, 12% seeds and tools, 4% material aid (for construction) and 2% financial loans.<sup>9</sup> The survey did not cover participation in cooperatives or saving groups.

In agricultural interventions, three complementary approaches are dominant: integrated soil fertility management; setting up cooperatives; and setting up mutual solidarity groups. The introduction of integrated soil fertility management (ISFM, or the French acronym in DRC: *GIFS*) was promoted by IFDC between 2006 and 2012. The second dominant approach consists of setting up cooperatives, which are

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<sup>6</sup> UNDP (2009) 'Profil Résumé Pauvreté de Sud Kivu 2009'. Kinshasa: UNDP.

<sup>7</sup> n=1259; Milliano, C.W.J, de, A. Ferf, J. Oude Groeniger, and M. Mashanda. 2014. Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study, Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

<sup>8</sup> Vlassenroot, K. (ed). 2012. *Dealing with land issues and conflict in eastern Congo: Towards an integrated and participatory approach*, Ghent: CRG. Van Leeuwen, M., and G. van der Haar. 2014. *Land governance as an avenue for local state building in eastern DRC*, IS Academy Occasional Paper, Wageningen University.

<sup>9</sup> n=1259; Milliano, C.W.J, de, A. Ferf, J. Oude Groeniger, and M. Mashanda. 2014. Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study, Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

seen as key to the development of commercial agriculture. Mutual solidarity groups (MUSOs) form the third approach. These are savings and loans groups, in which a number of people get together to jointly save money and then disburse a loan to one of the members.

Particular challenges in agriculture are plant diseases that affect cassava (the mosaic virus) and banana trees (banana bacterial wilt). In the fight against the mosaic virus, efforts have been made to introduce a resistant variety of cassava (called Sawasawa); however, the resistance of this variety is already decreasing. Given that cassava and bananas are staple foods in DRC, these plant diseases are a serious source of concern.

With respect to the policy context, recent years are seeing slow improvement after the enactment of the Agricultural Law (*Loi agricole*) in 2011. The national Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development has announced plans for a tax exemption of the agricultural sector (now taxes amount up to 26% of the price of agricultural inputs, according to one of our respondents). In addition the government is working on a Fund for Agricultural Development, provided for in the Agricultural Law, to be funded by a levy on imported foodstuffs. This would make local rice more competitive vis-à-vis imported rice. The business climate in DRC is challenging, the country ranks 184 (out of 189) on the World Bank's Doing Business Index. Many potentially positive policies exist, but still have to be put into practice.

#### *Ruzizi Plain*

The project under evaluation is located in the Ruzizi Plain (*Plaine de la Ruzizi*), in the territory of Uvira, one to several hours south of the provincial capital of South Kivu, Bukavu. The Plain lies on the borders of the DRC, Rwanda and Burundi. It is well suited to the cultivation of rice, due to the rivers that flow down from the Itombwe plateau in the west to the Ruzizi river. Production of rice in the Plain probably started in the 1920s, and the Chinese built an irrigation system in the 1970s, which is suffering from lack of maintenance. Rice is a cash crop, and many producers rent the land – typically between .5 and 2ha. The potential of the Plain has not been realized since the start of violent conflict in the 1990s. Production fails to meet demand, making the province a net importer of rice. Demand for rice is increasing, due to a growing population but also changing eating habits. Most rice is now imported from Tanzania or Pakistan.

Market access is decent in the Plain. The Route National 5 connecting Bukavu to Uvira is paved and in relatively good condition. It runs through the entire plain, from the Kamanyola border crossing with Rwanda in the North to the city of Uvira in the South. The same route connects the plain to densely-populated Rwanda and Burundi, where the capital Bujumbura lies nearby (+/- 30 km). This means that crops of export quality can easily be transported to large markets, both domestically and internationally. Combined with the good conditions for sugar and rice cultivation, this illustrates the great potential the area has for commercial agriculture.

In terms of security, there have been ethnic tensions between the Bafuliro and the Barundi communities for well over a century. While the situation appeared relatively calm, tensions flared up in 2012 when the Mwami (customary king) of the Barundi was assassinated, on April 25, 2012. This Mwami held quite some power in the area, and the Bafuliro and the Barundi community wanted the successor to be from their respective communities. The death of the Mwami led to a series of violent acts, some of which are labelled

as cattle theft, or bringing cattle thieves to justice. Violence is ongoing; on June 6, 2014 at least 30 civilians were murdered in the church of Mutarule, located centrally in the Plain. So far, MONUSCO and FARDC forces present have failed to completely prevent violence, though revenge killings did not happen after the Mutarule massacre.

## **Description of Southern Partner Organisation**

In this section we briefly describe VECO Bukavu and the cooperatives: their history, organisational details, main approach and areas of intervention.

VECO Bukavu (VECO in short) is the South Kivu office of VECO RDC, which is the DRC Country Office of the Belgian NGO Vredeseilanden. Vredeseilanden and one of its preceding parent organisations COOIBO<sup>10</sup> started activities in DRC in 1987, and it has been actively engaged in agricultural development in eastern DRC through the opening of a country office in 2005. The country office in DRC is based in Butembo, North Kivu. VECO RDC has gained experience in collaborating with local NGOs and networks, increasing agricultural production, structuring farmers' organisations and increasing revenue of farmers.

Vredeseilanden/VECO RDC<sup>11</sup> aims to enable and support smallholder farmers to take up their role in rural poverty alleviation and to contribute to feeding a growing world population in a sustainable way. In its 2014-2019 strategy, the organisation redefines its focuses on value chains, putting more emphasis on access to markets: 1) supporting farmers and their organizations to take part in markets that continue to restructure and modernise; and 2) investing in supporting different chain actors and governments to work towards supplying their basic food markets with competitive and sustainable food crops. VECO RDC specifically aims to:

1. promote the business case for chain actors and smallholder farmers (and their organisations) to engage with each other and establish linkages;
2. support smallholder farmers to organise themselves and build the necessary capacities to create economies of scale, guarantee quality, food safety and sustainability;
3. contribute in creating an enabling environment for smallholder farmers.

The target group of VECO RDC is formed by smallholder farmers that are organised in farmers' organisations, with sufficient access to land for a viable commercialisation. VECO RDC considers these to be key to agricultural development. In DRC, VECO RDC now focuses on two value chains: rice and coffee. Besides the farmers' organisations, VECO RDC also targets other chain actors, to facilitate their engagement and contribute to an enabling environment for smallholder farmers.

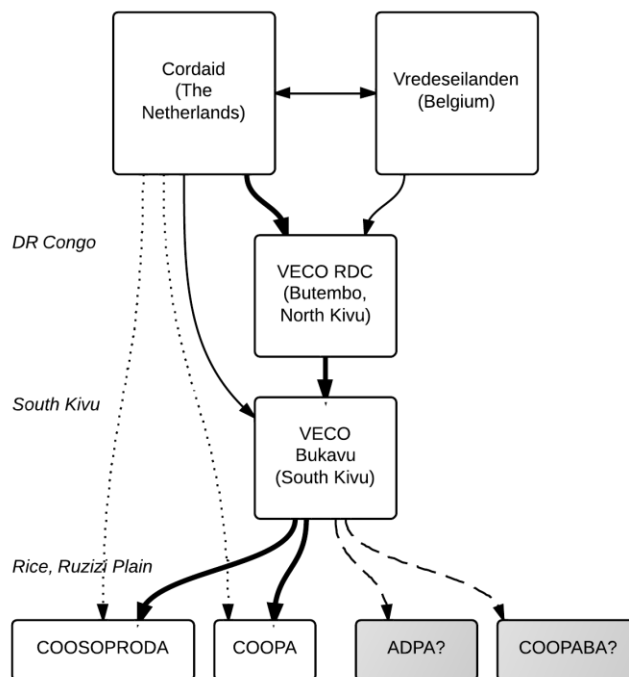
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<sup>10</sup> Vredeseilanden was formed through a merger of various Belgian organisations on 1 January 1998.

<sup>11</sup> We generally refer to Vredeseilanden as 'VECO RDC', as this how Vredeseilanden is commonly referred to in DRC.



This evaluation mainly looked at the office of VECO RDC in Bukavu, which manages the rice value chain project with Cordaid. This small office was established in 2010, when VECO started a project with IFDC in Walungu and Kabare. In 2013, the office had to reduce its staff from 4 to 2 core staff, as the IFDC project ended. As the project portfolio expanded again in 2014, the number of staff grew accordingly. An important change in staff at country level was the change in Regional Representative (country director) in the beginning of 2013; the change had no repercussions for the Bukavu office. The core staff is well-educated, and have extensive experience in working for NGOs. VECO pays competitive salaries, as it is part of an international NGO.



As the Cordaid project specifically targeted two smallholder farmers' cooperatives in the Ruzizi Plain, we also shortly describe these here. Both cooperatives are governed by a Board (*conseil d'administration*) and a Monitoring Committee (*conseil de suivi*), elected by the General Assembly formed by the members. The Board and Monitoring Committee oversee the work of the employees of the cooperative, who run daily operations: each cooperative has a general manager (*gérant*), a secretary/bookkeeper, and an agronomist.

COOSOPRODA, *Coopérative de Solidarité pour la Production des Denrées Agricoles, Luberizi*, was set up as a cooperative of rice farmers in 2008, to join forces in production, transformation, and commercialisation of rice. Before they entered into a partnership with VECO, COOSOPRODA collaborated with ADI-Kivu, a Bukavu-based NGO then funded by IFDC. The last General Assembly was organised in 2012; over the past three years, the staff and Board have not changed. Since 2012, the cooperative has 316 members (56 women), of whom 65 pay membership fees (10 USD to become a member, then 10kg/rice per season as well as communal work – but the level of contribution is still weak).

COOPA RUZIZI (COOPA in short), *Coopérative Agricole de la Plaine de la Ruzizi; groupements of Kilomoni, Kiliba, Sange and Runingu*, was created in March 2010 as an organisation for rice producers in Ruzizi Plain. The project with VECO is their first partnership. COOPA was formed by people from a number of local associations in various neighbouring *groupements* (groupings). Before they formed the cooperative, COOPI Kivu, one of the associations, received funds from Fonds pour la Consolidation de la Paix for building a storehouse. The last General Assembly was organised in 2012; over the past three years, the staff and board have not changed. In 2012, COOPA had 302 members (112 women), of whom 116 paid

the membership fee of 10 USD (but all but one failed to pay the required membership share (*part social*) of 300 USD, required to supply the cooperative with start-up capital).

As the overview below shows, Cordaid is one of the major partners of VECO Bukavu. Until the end of 2012, IFDC financed a 3,000ha agro-forestry project in Walungu and Kabare, which VECO executed through intermediary organisations CAB, UPDI and SARCAF. From 2014 onwards, VECO has started work on the coffee value chain in Idjwi, with financing by CFC. There is synergy between these projects as it allows for more flexibility in terms of field visits and staff.

*Table 1: overview of donor-supported projects of VECO Bukavu during the MFS II period*

| Project   | Donor                | Period                         | Expenditure/budget (EUR)* |                    |                  |                  |  |
|---|----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|--|
|   |                      |                                | 2011                      | 2012               | 2013             | 2014             | 2015 Total                             |
| 104320 - Pacification of Eastern DRC through the development of sustainable agricultural value chains with respect for the environment                        | Cordaid (MFS II)     | January 2011 - December 2013   | € 89.331                  | € 136.970          | € 158.392        |                  | <b>€ 384.693</b>                       |
| 110934 - Project to strengthen the rice value chain   | Cordaid (MFS II)     | September 2014 - December 2015 |                           |                    |                  | € 189.819        | <b>€ 189.819</b>                       |
| Sustainable energy programme - reforestation  | IFDC                 | 2010- December 2012            | € 908.642                 | € 894.558          |                  |                  | <b>€ 1.803.201</b>                     |
| Kawa Kenja Qualitative and quantitative rehabilitation of coffee with the aim of improving living conditions of coffee farmers afflicted and displaced by war | CFC/DGD cofunding ** | 2014-2017                      |                           |                    |                  | € 108.180        | € 62.283<br><b>€ 170.462</b>           |
| Strengthening the rice value chain (cofunding Cordaid project)  | DGD                  | 2014-2016                      |                           |                    |                  | € 68.662         | € 56.675<br><b>€ 125.337</b>           |
| <b>Total</b>  |                      |                                | <b>€ 997.974</b>          | <b>€ 1.031.528</b> | <b>€ 158.392</b> | <b>€ 176.841</b> | <b>€ 308.777</b><br><b>€ 2.673.512</b> |
| Percentage MFS II   |                      |                                | 9%                        | 13%                | 100%             | 0%               | 61%<br>21%                             |

\*For 2011-2013 the figures are based on actual expenditure. For 2014-2015 these are based on budgets.

\*\*Total CFC grant USD 1368990, plus 242457 VECO contribution. Source: CFC financial tables final 130926. Part for VECO Bukavu is an estimation.

## Project description

Here we describe the project and its capacity development/civil society strengthening elements, in terms of size, budget, duration, major objectives and activities.

During the evaluation period, VECO Bukavu has been involved in two projects that were supported by Cordaid/CoC, with MFS II financing:

1. Building peace in eastern DRC through the development of promising and environmentally sound agricultural value chains (2011-2013)
2. Project to strengthen the rice value chain (2014-2015)

Formally, the cooperation is between Cordaid and Vredeseilanden, with the local office in Bukavu executing the project (under close supervision of the Country Office in Butembo). Both of these projects were implemented in the Ruzizi Plain.

Both projects aim to contribute to the pacification and stabilisation of eastern DR Congo by revitalising pro-poor agriculture, in which women have real economic and political power. Though the second project is a follow-up of the first, there are some important differences, which we will briefly describe below. As

the second project had not yet started by the time of the endline evaluation visit, we focus on the first project in this evaluation.

*1. Building peace in eastern DRC through the development of promising and environmentally sound agricultural value chains (2011-2013)*

The theory of change of the project revolves around the notion that peace can be promoted through the development of agriculture. Farming is the most obvious alternative to fighting, and perhaps vice versa, so the logic behind the intervention is that when people have a high yielding rice field to tend to, they will have no interest in fighting.

The main objective is that organised smallholder farmers (both men and women) see their revenues and level of food security increase, through the development of the local rice value chain, with a strong participation of women. The project had a number of specific goals/projected results, as outlined in the logical framework:

1. The production of rice is intensified in South Kivu
2. The collection, transformation and commercialisation of rice are realised and guaranteed
3. Smallholder farmers' organisations in the rice sector are organised in a federation
4. VECO establishes partnerships with local organisations, ensuring the role of VECO as supervisor of the project
5. An operational participatory monitoring system to measure quality through monitoring indicators and progress regarding impact and change

Activities for the project centre on two rice growing cooperatives in the Ruzizi Plain: COOPA and COOSOPRODA, as described previously. These cooperatives are active in 8 villages. VECO cooperates with these cooperatives to undertake the following activities:

- Improving access to improved seed varieties. Improved rice seeds have been made available, and depots have been constructed to create seed banks which promote the diffusion of seeds;
- Rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure. Irrigation canals, dams and weirs have been rehabilitated in several communities in the plain;
- Technical training of farmers. Farmers receive training on rice cultivation. In addition, workshops were organised for women on rice parboiling, to increase the value added;
- Construction of depots to facilitate storage and joint sale of rice;
- Improving the quality of rice by buying rice hulling machines
- Increasing access to small credit, through starting rotating credit schemes (*Mutuelles de Solidarité or MUSOs*);
- Improving the links between large traders and smallholder farmers by organising meetings between them; for example with the Heineken-owned Bralima brewery in Bukavu, which is a large local buyer of rice.
- Strengthening capacity of the cooperatives, in terms of governance and management, monitoring, etc.

The project faced some unexpected difficulties:

- As described in the context description, the conflict in the plain flared up during the implementation period.
- There were problems at COOPEC Imara, the bank where the two cooperatives had their bank accounts. These issues were completely outside of VECO's control, but resulted in funds being frozen in the COOPEC accounts until today, which prevented some of the planned activities from being implemented.

Other than these issues, the project was implemented as foreseen.

## *2. Project to strengthen the rice value chain in Ruzizi Plain (2014-2015)*

The follow-up project retains the focus on the rice value chain and the cooperatives, with the general objective to contribute to a rice value chain and institutional framework in the eastern DRC that are sustainable and inclusive for organised smallholder farmers, both men and women. Concretely, the project aims that organised producers of rice in Ruzizi Plain sustainably supply the rice market for consumption by urban households in South Kivu. In order to achieve this, VECO works on the following results:

1. The competitiveness of rice in the Plain is increased
2. The cooperatives have transformed into viable enterprises which are managed democratically
3. The rice market in the plain is organised according to the needs of consumers
4. National and provincial agricultural policy reinforces food sovereignty in the rice value chain

With additional financing of DGD, this project targets 8 cooperatives in Ruzizi Plain. Important differences with the previous project are: 1) cooperatives will no longer be approached by VECO, but VECO will launch a competitive call for partnerships instead, and cooperatives can submit their propositions in response; 2) an increased focus on markets and bringing the actors in the rice value chain together.

### *Capacity development*

Importantly, as VECO Bukavu is part of the international organisation Vredeseilanden, Cordaid did not aim to contribute to an increase in organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu. In fact, capacity development in this project is very specifically targeted at the two cooperatives COOSOPRODA and COOPA, which we consider the contribution to civil society strengthening of this project (see under 'civil society strengthening elements').

Cordaid did provide significant institutional support to the VECO Bukavu office in the first project:

*Table 2: Project 1 Institutional support 2011-2013 (source: budget approuvé Cordaid Congo)*

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Office rent (VECO Bukavu)                      | 16,800 |
| Salary Team Leader VECO Bukavu (two years 40%) | 8,400  |

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Salary Programme Officer (39 months)                | 29,250        |
| Communications, fuel, consumables (VECO RDC Bukavu) | 9,000         |
| Yearly audit (three years)                          | 10,500        |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>73,950</b> |

Besides this support, VECO Bukavu also received institutional support from IFDC, and currently from CFC in the coffee value chain project. As VECO Bukavu is part of an international NGO, Vredeseilanden and the Country Office in Butembo bear primary responsibility for capacity development.

#### VECO Theory of Change on capacity development<sup>12</sup>

VECO aims to be an organisation capable of supporting the development of a strong and sustainable rural entrepreneurship, at the service of organised smallholder farmers. VECO focuses on three areas: acquisition of additional funds and expanding activities, developing staff capacity and internal organisation, and increasing embeddedness in Bukavu civil society and with authorities. In terms of resources, it is necessary to seek new sources of funding, in the form of donors, but also through capitalising on existing resources, such as the warehouses at the cooperatives. It is important to capitalise on the acquired results in the intervention context, and to become more visible. It is necessary to strengthen the capacity of staff and cooperatives, through identifying needs and supplying training, and monitoring organisational capacity. Good cooperation between all offices and the regional office is important, facilitated by the development of management tools by the regional office. Staff furthermore underline the importance of developing collaboration with other CSOs in the same area of expertise, increasing ties to wider civil society in Bukavu, and maintaining good relations with the authorities.

#### *Civil society strengthening elements*

The project does not explicitly address strengthening civil society. Nevertheless, the strong focus on working with cooperatives of smallholder farmers, and further developing these organisations, can be considered a contribution to strengthening civil society at the grassroots. Additionally, VECO's activities to connect the different value chain actors, including the authorities, can contribute to influencing policy and strengthening the network of actors involved in the rice value chain in Ruzizi Plain.

Specific activities that we consider to be strengthening civil society are (numbering referring to the logical framework):

- 1.2.1 A study of the rice value chain, mapping localities, farmer's organisations and principle actors
- 1.2.6 Facilitating linkages between small producers and large producers/buyers, through visits and exchange
- 1.2.7 Training grassroots groups of producers and their union/federation on participating actively in the organisation of the rice value chain, entrepreneurship, management, strategies to get access to credit and specific lobbying activities

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<sup>12</sup> A more elaborate Theory of Change on capacity development is available as an Annex.

- 1.2.8 Set up a platform of stakeholders to support the development of the rice value chain and strengthen lobbying activities by FOPAC-SK and the grassroots groups
- 1.2.9 Organise lobbying activities by FOPAC-SK and grassroots groups on themes related to land security of smallholders, export tariffs, taxation within the rice value chain
- 1.3.1 Organising rice producers in cooperatives for production, transformation and commercialisation, through existing farmers' organisations, and supporting them in the development of their business plans
- 1.3.2 Training smallholder organisations on the cooperative movement as well as structuring a cooperative, leadership, communication, management, good governance
- 1.4.2 Organising a framework for joint consultation, monitoring, planning and evaluation
- 1.5.3 Capitalising the achievements (successes, failures, challenges) and assuring sharing and exchange between executing and strategic partners, authorities and other stakeholders

### VECO Theory of Change on civil society strengthening<sup>13</sup>

In their 2013 strategic planning process, VECO RDC further developed their Theory of Change. The process included the definition of a number of global strategic objectives (SOs). The project with Cordaid contributes to the SO *'Agricultural food chains are sustainable and inclusive for smallholders'*. VECO explicitly pursues a two-sided strategy in order to achieve this objective, and this emphasis constitutes the major change vis-à-vis the baseline theory of change: 1) Sub-sector development (developing value chains of staple foods) and 2) Inclusive modern markets (linking smallholders to modern markets). All activities undertaken by VECO Bukavu in relation to the cooperatives aim at developing the value chain and inclusive modern markets, in order to sustainably secure the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. The strategy entails concentrating efforts on two value chains, rice and coffee, because these have most potential to contribute to food security. VECO takes a long-term approach, aiming to closely support cooperatives for at least 6 years, to allow them to change from the dependent attitude of a non-profit association, to an independent, commercial farmers organisation.

## **Methodology**

Here we describe the methodologies used for baseline and follow-up assessment, from all three components of the research. More detailed information such as a list of documents employed, workshop participants and other informants can general methodology can be found in the Annex to this report.

## **MDGs & Themes**

The objective of this component is to describe changes in the livelihoods of beneficiaries that could be attributed to participation in the activities of VECO. To do this, we cannot simply measure the difference in terms of outcome for the beneficiaries of the project between 2012 and 2014. Many factors affect the outcomes, and there would be no way to isolate the causal effect of project participation from this multitude of other factors. The first step we take is to include a control group to our analysis. However,

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<sup>13</sup> A more elaborate Theory of Change on civil society strengthening is available as an Annex.

this still leaves two potential errors in our design: firstly, we can suffer from selection bias. The design of the project might mean that people with certain characteristics are more likely to enroll in the program. Beneficiaries could for instance have been wealthier than non-beneficiaries when the program started or vice versa. Besides self-selection bias, program placement bias is also frequently observed in evaluation studies. NGOs target their projects purposely at specific, often disadvantaged, areas. If the control group's physical, economic and social environment does not match that of the beneficiaries, this will result in differences not caused by the intervention and thus in biased estimates of impact.

To overcome these issues, we ideally would conduct a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) and thus randomize the assignment of the project. Thanks to the law of large number we would then have no a priori reason to think that the groups are different, if the project were large enough. This would allow us to make a comparison between both groups in order to find the impact of the project.

There are two major constraints that prevent us from adopting this approach: the project had started at the time of the baseline, so there was no way to randomize treatment assignment; and the size of the project is fairly small, as the project is only active in eight villages. This number is low enough to cause concern regarding the balance if we would rely solely on randomization.

To get around the non-random assignment, we employed Propensity Score Matching (PSM). Using information provided by UNOCHA and VECO, we drafted a list of villages comparable to the ones in which VECO operates. We selected eight villages at random from this list. To these control villages, we added observations from the control sampling frames from two other projects that operate in the same area. We then estimate the Propensity Score based on pre-treatment non-outcome variables. The control and treatment groups are selected from the area of common support.

Furthermore, even though PSM should produce a good balance, rather than assuming these two groups were completely identical, we only assume both are subject to the same trends. This allows us to use a double difference (DD) model. Rather than measuring a difference ex-post, we measure the difference in the differences of the groups.

Econometrically speaking the double difference estimator is given by the following expression:

$$Y_{ijt} = \alpha + \beta_1 Post_t + \beta_2 D_j^T + \beta_3 Post_t D_j^T + \varepsilon_{ijt}$$

Where  $Y_{ijt}$  denotes an outcome variable for respondent  $i$  in group  $j$  at time  $t$ ,  $D_j^T$  is a dummy variable equal to one if the respondent belonged to the treatment group,  $Post_t$  is a binary variable that takes the value one if the observation corresponds to the post-treatment time period, and  $\varepsilon_{ijt}$  denotes the error term. Then,  $\beta_3$  in the equation above is the treatment estimate of the intervention's impact on outcome  $Y$ . That is,  $\beta_3$  measures the difference between the treatment and control group in the growth of outcome  $Y$ , and is an unbiased estimate of the average impact on the dependent variable  $Y$  of being assigned to the treatment group provided there is only selection on the observed variables.

## Capacity development and civil society

In our evaluation of VECO Bukavu, we generally followed the methodologies for the capacity development and civil society strengthening components described in the Annex. We combined the data collection for the capacity development and civil society strengthening components. Interviews, workshops and focus groups with beneficiaries were conducted during the baseline, midterm and endline visits in 2012, 2013 and 2014. A draft version of this report was discussed with staff of Cordaid and VECO during a feedback workshop in DRC at the beginning of 2015.

For the civil society strengthening component, as described in our methodology, we decided to conduct a contribution analysis for a subsample, including VECO Bukavu. VECO Bukavu falls under one of the three themes in civil society which we further investigated: agriculture. For this theme, we conducted additional interviews with a range of stakeholders, including government services, other CSOs and international organisations, and some representatives of private sector organisations.

Outcomes selected for contribution analysis:

For the analysis of the contribution of the capacity development support of Cordaid to the organisational capacity development of VECO, we selected the following main outcome (see also the contribution story under the results of the capacity development component):

- the financial resource security of VECO Bukavu, related to the Capability to act and commit.

For the analysis of the contribution of the development intervention of VECO to the strengthening of civil society, we selected the following main outcome (see also the contribution story under the results of the civil society strengthening component):

- the strengthening of local civil society, in the form of the development of the cooperative COOSOPRODA. We relate this outcome to the first CSI dimension, Civic engagement, the third dimension, Practice of values, and the fourth dimension, Perception of impact.



## MDGs and themes

This section presents the evaluations of VECO's impact on selected MDGs & themes. The focus of the project is on MDG 1 - the eradication of extreme poverty and the theme of Fragile States. We answer the following questions:

1. What are the changes in terms of the selected MDGs & themes during the 2012 – 2014 period?
2. To what degree are these changes at target group level attributable to the development interventions of VECO and its partners?
3. What is the relevance of these changes?
4. Were the development interventions of VECO and its partners efficient?
5. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

This section is structured as follows. First we introduce our data, and the way in which it has been collected. We then present the results from our analyses. We then discuss our finding, and provide concluding remarks.

### Data collection

Baseline data collection took place in June/July 2012 by trained Congolese enumerators. The enumerators visited 16 villages (8 treatment, 8 control). In these villages, we had interviews with 241 households, of which 123 were located in control villages and 118 in treatment villages.

The follow-up was carried out in June/July 2014 and targeted the same households. To do so, each enumeration site was visited by an enumerator to identify participants to the baseline, and make sure they would be present when the rest of the team visited the next day. This permitted some time to contact people (e.g. by phone) who were not present. As it was impossible to prevent absentees, enumerators would visit on a pre-determined third day to interview as many of them as could be reached. By spreading out the work over three days, attrition was minimized to the maximum extent possible within our budget and safety protocols (as no enumerators were allowed to stay overnight).

Despite these measures, enumerators were not able to find 41 households, which translates into roughly 17% of our total sample of 341 households. In light of the turbulent recent past of the area, this is not a surprisingly high number.

Most of our indicators are based on standard survey questions. Details for how these were asked and treated can be found in the appendix. In addition, we organized a standard trust game (sometimes called investment game) in each village. This game is played between two people: a sender and a receiver, who do not know each other's identity. The sender is endowed with six tokens, each worth FC 500 so the total endowment is FC 3000, or about 3 euros. He can send any number (or none) of his tokens to the receiver. Any tokens sent will be tripled by the researchers, before they're given to the receiver. The receiver then has the option to return any or none of the tokens to the sender (they're not tripled a second time). The

more the sender trusts the receiver to return at least some of the tokens he sends, the more he will be inclined to send. Here we report a simple difference in means of the amount sent by the senders in the treatment group vs. the control group. Every participant plays once as a sender, and once as a receiver, so we have this data for all respondents.

In addition, a general round of focus groups was done in targeted communities. In the treated communities, the sampling frame to invite people for these meetings was the same as the one used for the survey. In control communities, participants were invited using a semi-formal sampling method in which two enumerators walked through the community in a pre-determined pattern, inviting inhabitants of every 15<sup>th</sup> house they encountered. The time implementing a full census of these villages would have taken was not available, and this method ensured at least a geographic spread over the entire community.

Descriptive statistics for our main outcome indicators from the baseline and the endline can be found in Table 3 and Table 4 respectively. The last column in Table 3 presents the results from a simple t-test for the difference in means between the treatment and control groups. It should be noted that the PSM failed to balance on several indicators. Three of these indicators pertain to agriculture (use of improved seeds, irrigation and fertilizer). This is likely to be related to the fact that VECO operates in unique villages. Their area of interest has been selected so they can work with the only functioning rural cooperatives in the area. Since there are no other such cooperatives, the sample is so unbalanced that PSM cannot correct it. This is not necessarily a problem when using DD models though, if the trends between the two groups are the same, apart from NGO intervention that is. This is a flaw that is inherent to the way the MFS II evaluations have been set up, and this topic will be discussed further in the discussion.

Another large worry in the quality of our data is the data on agricultural yields. While the structure of this data appears simple – all that is needed is a production figure in kgs and a surface area in hectares to create it – in practice there are some complicating factors. Farmers are not always well aware of the size of their fields, or are unable to express these in a unit of measurement that is comparable across farmers. Likewise, they do not measure their yield in kgs. Often local volumetric measures are used. While we went to markets to obtain the weight of typical volumetric units, this conversion will never be precise. All these steps make the chain leading from farmer answers to usable data a very long one and prone to errors. If a farmer reports a value that is an outlier or otherwise unusable in one part in the chain, all the other answers are unusable. This leads to a low number of observations, and a high variance.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for the baseline

| Statistic  | Control |        |          |      |        | Treatment |       |          |      |        | Diff      |
|--|---------|--------|----------|------|--------|-----------|-------|----------|------|--------|-----------|
|  | N       | Mean   | St. Dev. | Min  | Max    | N         | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min  | Max    |           |
| Credit use (fraction)                                    | 99      | 0.42   | 0.5      | 0    | 1      | 100       | 0.51  | 0.5      | 0    | 1      | 0.044     |
| Non food expenditure (\$)                                | 99      | 26.27  | 22.44    | 1.33 | 114.22 | 93        | 34.91 | 26.64    | 0.83 | 128.22 | 4.434 **  |
| Rice yield (Tonne/Ha)*                                   | 6       | 196.64 | 377.39   | 0.67 | 950.5  | 13        | 81.61 | 218.49   | 0.33 | 800    | -539.186  |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)*                                | 45      | 2.71   | 10.99    | 0    | 72     | 53        | 4     | 18.07    | 0    | 127.5  | 5.125     |
| Fraction of rice sold                                    | 8       | 0.19   | 0.26     | 0    | 0.64   | 10        | 0.24  | 0.33     | 0    | 0.9    | 0.069     |
| Fraction of cassava sold                                 | 22      | 0.34   | 0.34     | 0    | 0.9    | 17        | 0.13  | 0.27     | 0    | 0.8    | -0.026    |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year                    | 97      | 0.75   | 0.43     | 0    | 1      | 99        | 0.76  | 0.43     | 0    | 1      | 0.005     |
| Often suffered from hunger last year                     | 97      | 0.46   | 0.5      | 0    | 1      | 99        | 0.47  | 0.5      | 0    | 1      | 0.013     |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | 98      | 2.08   | 1.63     | 0    | 6      | 94        | 2.95  | 1.7      | 0    | 6      | 0.103     |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | 99      | 0.52   | 0.5      | 0    | 1      | 99        | 0.61  | 0.49     | 0    | 1      | 0.078 **  |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | 100     | 0.13   | 0.34     | 0    | 1      | 100       | 0.2   | 0.4      | 0    | 1      | 0.038     |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | 100     | 0.02   | 0.14     | 0    | 1      | 100       | 0.03  | 0.17     | 0    | 1      | 0         |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | 100     | 0.1    | 0.3      | 0    | 1      | 100       | 0.15  | 0.36     | 0    | 1      | 0.027     |
| Used Fertilizer (yes/no)                                 | 97      | 0.08   | 0.28     | 0    | 1      | 98        | 0.52  | 0.5      | 0    | 1      | 0.128 *** |
| Use Irrigation (yes/no)                                  | 97      | 0.21   | 0.41     | 0    | 1      | 98        | 0.54  | 0.5      | 0    | 1      | 0.097 *** |
| Improved seeds use                                       | 97      | 0.12   | 0.33     | 0    | 1      | 98        | 0.36  | 0.48     | 0    | 1      | 0.177 *** |

\*Yield figures are unreliable, see text.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics for the endline

| Statistic  | Control |      |          |     |       | Treatment |       |          |     |       |
|--|---------|------|----------|-----|-------|-----------|-------|----------|-----|-------|
|  | N       | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Max   | N         | Mean  | St. Dev. | Min | Max   |
| Credit use (fraction)                                    | 99      | 0.61 | 0.49     | 0   | 1     | 81        | 0.48  | 0.5      | 0   | 1     |
| Non food expenditure (\$)                                | 94      | 21.1 | 20.81    | 0.1 | 88.89 | 74        | 22.39 | 20.38    | 0.9 | 90.11 |
| Rice yield (Tonne/Ha)*                                   | 13      | 3.66 | 2.39     | 0.8 | 8.33  | 29        | 2.7   | 2.53     | 0.3 | 11.9  |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)*                                | 46      | 6.46 | 6.38     | 0.1 | 31.88 | 41        | 7.25  | 7.93     | 0.4 | 30.36 |
| Fraction of rice sold                                    | 18      | 0.59 | 0.29     | 0   | 1     | 45        | 0.66  | 0.28     | 0   | 1     |
| Fraction of cassava sold                                 | 65      | 0.19 | 0.26     | 0   | 0.83  | 67        | 0.22  | 0.22     | 0   | 0.72  |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year                    | 99      | 0.9  | 0.3      | 0   | 1     | 81        | 0.85  | 0.36     | 0   | 1     |
| Often suffered from hunger last year                     | 99      | 0.72 | 0.45     | 0   | 1     | 81        | 0.62  | 0.49     | 0   | 1     |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | 82      | 3    | 1.37     | 1   | 7     | 75        | 3.13  | 1.38     | 1   | 7     |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | 99      | 0.48 | 0.5      | 0   | 1     | 81        | 0.56  | 0.5      | 0   | 1     |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | 100     | 0.22 | 0.42     | 0   | 1     | 100       | 0.29  | 0.46     | 0   | 1     |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | 100     | 0.04 | 0.2      | 0   | 1     | 100       | 0.03  | 0.17     | 0   | 1     |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | 100     | 0.13 | 0.34     | 0   | 1     | 100       | 0.2   | 0.4      | 0   | 1     |
| Tokens sent in trust game                                | 99      | 1.72 | 0.76     | 0   | 3     | 81        | 1.75  | 0.87     | 0   | 4     |
| Used Fertilizer (yes/no)                                 | 86      | 0.1  | 0.31     | 0   | 1     | 80        | 0.28  | 0.45     | 0   | 1     |
| Use Irrigation (yes/no)                                  | 86      | 0.06 | 0.24     | 0   | 1     | 80        | 0.32  | 0.47     | 0   | 1     |
| Improved seeds use                                       | 86      | 0.03 | 0.18     | 0   | 1     | 80        | 0.08  | 0.27     | 0   | 1     |

\*Yield figures are unreliable, see text.

## Analyses and results

This section presents the main findings for the MDGs & Themes component. We first discuss the findings from our survey, where possible the results from our focus groups will be included in this section to give context to the findings. We then discuss the relevance of the project, and its efficiency.

### Findings

Our quantitative analysis are presented in Table 5. In the **MDG 1 indicators** there are large gains in yields. Even though these are enormous, they are insignificant and likely to be caused by the measurement error in our yield figures discussed above. A better indicator of project success would thus be hunger. We see a fairly large but insignificant negative coefficient for the indicator of hunger. This could indicate that hunger increased less in the treatment group than in the control group, but our power is too low to detect the effect. This difference in trends is clear from Figure 1: hunger has become more prevalent between baseline and endline in both groups, but the increase seems to be less severe in the treatment arm of our sample. Interestingly, while we see an increase in share of produce marketed – for cassava the increase is stronger in the treatment than in control, while for rice the trend is the same between the two groups - this does not seem to lead to an increase in cash consumption expenditures. We could theorize this is because more is invested as our survey picks up on consumption items more easily than investment items. We do however find very strong negative impacts in terms of seed and fertilizer use. From Figure 1 it is obvious that there is a lack of balance in this respect. Farmers supported by VECO had higher rates of adoption of these technologies in the baseline, and both VECO and control farmers converge to roughly the same level, which is about the baseline of the control farmers for fertilizers and even lower for seed use.

Table 5: Results

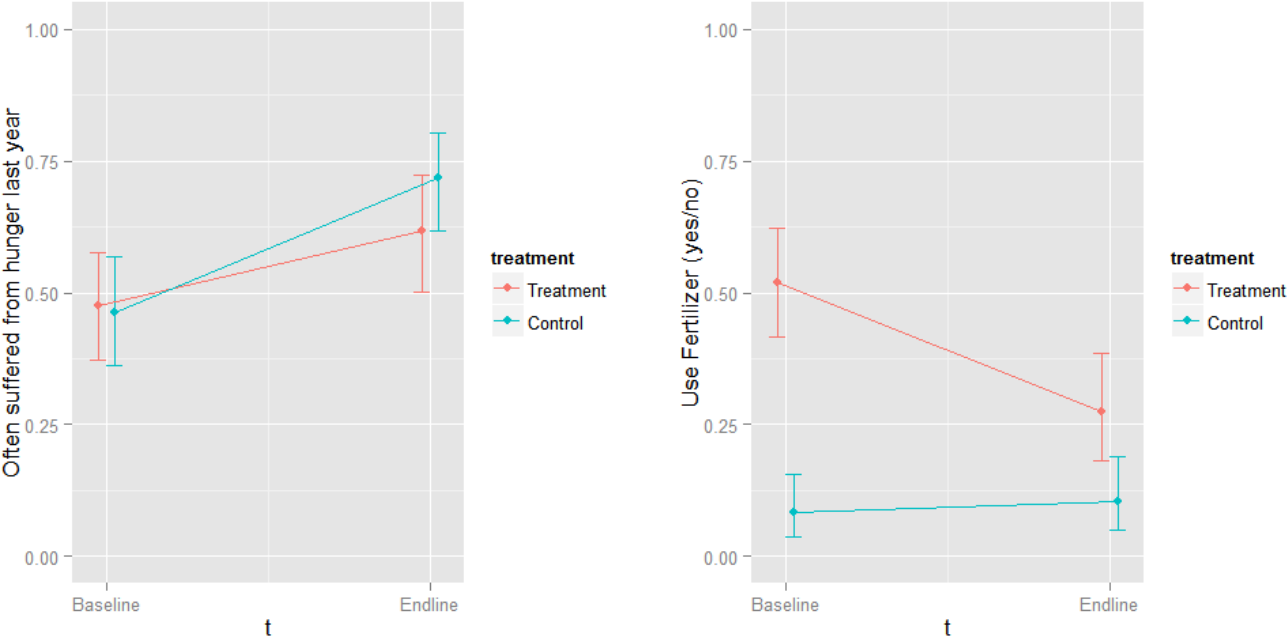
| <b>Indicator</b>   | <b>DD</b>              | <b>DD with controls</b> |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>MDG 1</b>   |                        |                         |
| Credit use (fraction)                                    | -0.21 *<br>(-1.926)    | -0.191 *<br>(-1.659)    |
| Non food expenditure (\$)                                | -7.351 *<br>(-1.688)   | -6.139<br>(-1.34)       |
| Rice yield (Tonne/Ha)                                    | 114.061<br>(0.723)     | 66.906<br>(0.444)       |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                                 | -0.501<br>(-0.152)     | -0.257<br>(-0.084)      |
| Fraction of rice sold                                    | 0.015<br>(0.095)       | 0.044<br>(0.251)        |
| Fraction of cassava sold                                 | 0.244 **<br>(2.41)     | 0.25 **<br>(2.457)      |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year                    | -0.052<br>(-0.635)     | -0.049<br>(-0.569)      |
| Often suffered from hunger last year                     | -0.111<br>(-1.095)     | -0.102<br>(-0.954)      |
| <b>Fragile States</b>                                    |                        |                         |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | -0.732 **<br>(-2.358)  | -0.736 **<br>(-2.176)   |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | -0.02<br>(-0.205)      | 0.008<br>(0.074)        |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | 0<br>(0)               | -0.023<br>(-0.273)      |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | -0.02<br>(-0.575)      | -0.023<br>(-0.603)      |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | 0.02<br>(0.288)        | 0.005<br>(0.067)        |
| Tokens sent in trust game                                | 0.036<br>(0.291)       | 0.067<br>(0.504)        |
| <b>VECO Specific</b>                                     |                        |                         |
| Use Fertilizer (yes/no)                                  | -0.268 ***<br>(-3.64)  | -0.27 ***<br>(-3.375)   |
| Use Irrigation (yes/no)                                  | -0.068<br>(-0.866)     | -0.078<br>(-0.966)      |
| Used Improved Seeds (yes/no)                             | -0.193 ***<br>(-2.747) | -0.225 ***<br>(-3.056)  |

Notes: *t-values in parentheses; Significance levels: \*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; The trust game was only played in the endline, the coefficients for a *t*-test comparing treatment and control and OLS with controls are reported; Controls include age, education, status of migrant, roof quality, household size.*

These findings are consistent with the discussions in the focus groups organized in villages around the Ruzizi Plain. Focus group participants indicated that agriculture in the area suffers from a wide arrange of challenges, of which plant diseases (cassava cultivation is affected by the mosaic virus) and insecurity are often mentioned. The conflict in particular affects productivity of fields that are further

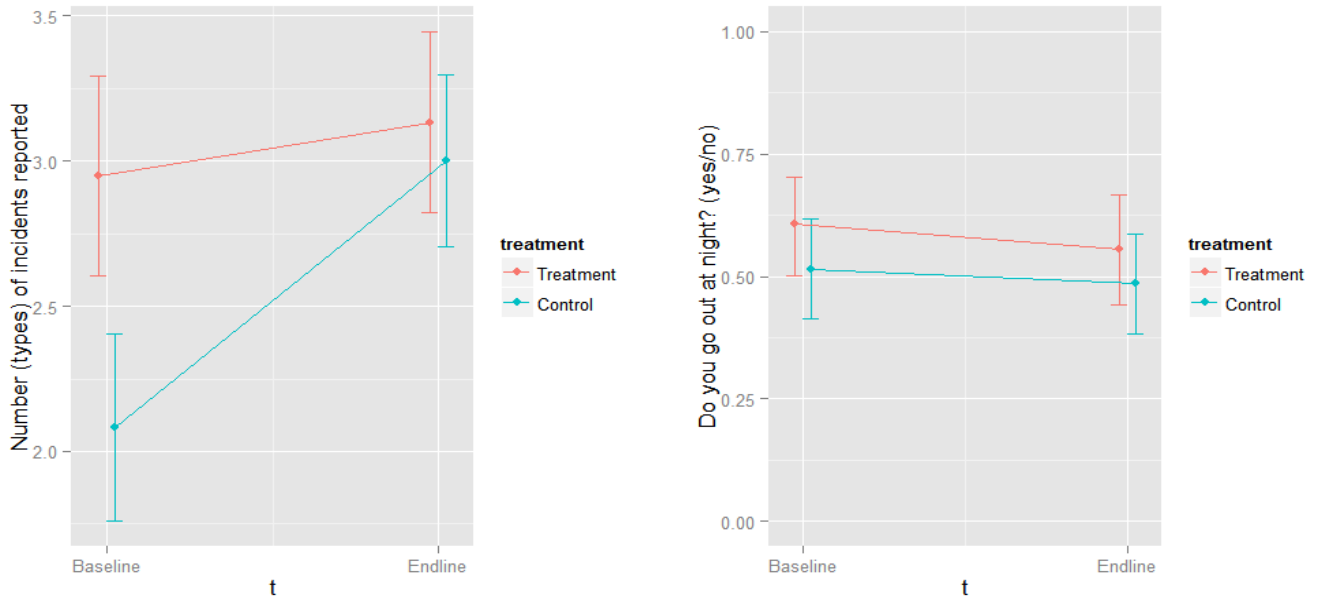
away, as people are afraid to go there. Moreover, it has had an adverse impact on the access to markets, again because people are afraid to leave the house. This would explain the large negative effect that we measure above for input use. If, due to the increase in violence, it has become harder to use inputs, this would hit those who use a lot of inputs harder than those who don't. These negative drivers of change are beyond the control of VECO: The conflict has deep historic roots and finding a solution for plant diseases like the mosaic virus requires a research effort into new varieties. On the positive end of the spectrum, focus groups participants expressed that they have easier access to inputs because of NGOs and easier access to output markets because of the COOPA and COOSOPRODA cooperatives, both of which are supported by VECO. This would explain our (non-significant) result of VECO mitigating negative impacts on food security: while the biggest drivers of change remain conflict and crop diseases, on the positive side among the few positive ones are the cooperatives, resulting in a smaller loss of food security in treatment villages.

When we look at the *fragile states* data, we don't see a lot happening. We see what looks like a drop



**Figure 1:** Comparison of means of selected indicators MDG 1. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval

in types of incidents reported in the treatment villages. Judging from Figure 2 it is more a case of control villages “catching up”. What this means for VECO’s objective to add to a stable environment by promoting agricultural development will be elaborated on in the discussion section below. As said above, fear to leave the house or village is a factor often mentioned as detrimental to agricultural productivity. Interestingly, judging from Figure 2 however not much change is visible when people are asked whether they do go out at night.



**Figure 2:** Comparison of means of selected indicators for the theme of fragile states. Whiskers indicate the 95% confidence interval

In our focus groups, the security situation was discussed. VECO aims to contribute to a more stable environment by promoting agricultural productivity. In our open questions about the drivers of change in the security situation people did not mention agricultural productivity as driving force behind the increasing insecurity. This speaks more to the relevance of the findings, which will be discussed below. However, VECO’s objective is to contribute to a stable Eastern DRC, and we see very little evidence of increasing stability either in our survey or in the focus group discussions, even when measured on the local scale.

Overall, the project seems to have had modest impact in mitigating the negative changes in food security due to the conflict and plant diseases. We found no statistically significant evidence for this, but the coefficient is so large that is most likely due to a lack of power in our sample. There is no evidence for increased income, or increased stability. We therefore cannot say that the project has reached its goal.

It is clear that some of our findings are driven from a lack of balance in our sample. While we can be reasonably certain that our two groups are fairly comparable over many of the factors influencing development outcomes and should thus be subject to the same trends, there is a source of selection bias that we cannot exclude as possible driver of our findings. Our matching has happened primarily at the individual level. While it might very well be possible to identify individuals that are similar on a large number of observable characteristics, the same is not possible on a community level. VECO selected their communities to work with well-functioning cooperatives. This makes a good propensity score match difficult.

### Relevance

We find that the cooperatives are among the few drivers of positive change in the area. According to our focus group participants the support from VECO helps these cooperatives provide more services to their members, increasing productivity. Our quantitative analysis fails to find any significant



evidence for this. Our quantitative data shows hunger increased in both groups, and there are indications that it has increased less in the treatment group.

The driver of the negative change in terms of agricultural productivity seems to have been the increasing conflict in the region. Conflict entails the risk of losing all investments and efforts put into a field through plunder or forced displacement. It also increases the risk associated with simple activities as visiting one’s fields and bringing produce to the market. This raises the important question of how relevant an agricultural project can be in the context of inter-ethnic violence. Even if the cooperatives had a positive impact, it has not prevented the conflict from increasing hunger in this potentially productive agricultural area. While VECO aims to stabilize the East by improving agriculture, all our evidence suggest that it is the instability itself which forms a major hurdle to improving to the market.

**Efficiency**

When considering the efficiency of the project, we are limited in the fact that not all activities can be compared across settings. Most project expenses are inherently incomparable: building a small village rice storage facility in a remote area is significantly different from building a larger one next to a major road. The costs of labor and transport of raw materials and the amount of all inputs used will differ to such an extent that any comparison would be next to meaningless. Here we present selected budget lines that can be easily compared across projects in the DRC and abroad. All information was readily available from the project documents, supplied to us by CORDAID and VECO.

First we consider the project overhead. Out of total costs of € 384,693.47, €59,944.12 was spent on overhead, or 15%.

Next we consider several budget lines. Some outputs are achieved at extremely low cost. Rehabilitating a hectare of irrigated land at slightly over thirty euro compares well to the potential benefits. We have not seen an increase in farmers reporting irrigating their fields, so most of the benefit seems to be in the form of better irrigation for the fields that were already irrigated. Since we do not know how well these fields were irrigated before, it is difficult to say by how much the quality of irrigation has improved and how much this contributes.

Even though anecdotal evidence suggests that the DRC is an expensive place to organise a venue, the amounts paid for training sessions are only slightly above the range of what would be paid internationally. The standard benchmarks for farmer trainings used for the MFS evaluations show a considerable range of possible prices. From \$105 per cooperative for credit training to \$37.30 - \$49.20 per model farmer trained (Tearfund 2013; Harper 2002; Isern 2007; Quizon, et al. 2001).

When we look at the prices paid for seed rice, these seem very high. The DRC is a landlocked country, so imported seeds need to pass through several other countries in order to arrive in the Plain. Nevertheless, these figures seem out of line with what is reasonably to be expected. Kudi et al. (2010) report a price around €0.40/KG for Nigeria.

*Table 6: Efficiency indicators*

|                                       | <b>Total cost</b> | <b>Units</b> |              | <b>Cost per unit</b> |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|-------|
| Rehabilitation of irrigated area      | € 22,387.78       | 700          | Hectare      | €                    | 31.98 |
| Technical training in rice production | € 13,271.97       | 144          | Participants | €                    | 92.17 |

|   |             |      |                            |          |
|---|-------------|------|----------------------------|----------|
| Traning in rice processing (hulling)                          | € 625.96    | 3    | Workshops                  | € 208.65 |
| Workshop to promote links between producers and agri-business | € 2,324.29  | 50   | Workshop participants      | € 46.49  |
| Traning for market links                                      | € 4,710.37  | 50   | Workshop participants      | € 94.21  |
| Exchange trips  | € 5,840.60  | 45   | Trips (15 people, 3 times) | € 129.79 |
| Nerica rice   | € 6,407.14  | 3040 | KG                         | € 2.10   |
| Rice seed   | € 11,607.14 | 1625 | KG                         | € 0.93   |

Overall, prices paid seem slightly elevated compared to what is to be expected from the DRC.

## Discussion

The theory of change of the project is not without merit. Here we consider two crucial steps: the first that strengthening farmer organizations increases market access and thus farmer welfare. The second that increased agricultural welfare contributes to the pacification of the region.

The first step is fairly straightforward. Shiferaw et al. (2011) note in a review on the evidence on the subject of farmer organizations that transparency and market orientation can help these organizations be more successful in increasing agricultural productivity. Both of these are crucial elements in the current project, so there is no reason to criticize the design of the project in this respect.

As for the second step considered here, there is strong reason to believe that a link exists between economic – and in particular agricultural – performance and violent conflict. Theoretical literature (as well as common sense) suggests that if productive activities are more profitable more resources will be allocated to these activities compared to destructive activities, with the caveat that it might increase plundering (Grossman and Kim, 1995; Dal Bó and Dal Bó, 2011). Blattman (2014) reports that cash transfers to high risk youth reduces the chance of violence as they will be engaged in productive activities. Burke et al. (2009) find the opposite side of the coin: climate change leads to decreased agricultural yields and more conflict. In practice however, our concerns are different. We are dealing with an agricultural sector that is depressed by years of conflict. Lecoutere et al. (2005) argue that the conflict in the Eastern Congo has led to a crisis in food security. In order for farmers to be more productive it might be needed to stabilize the region first. Well-functioning organizations are in place in the Ruzizi Plain, but we have seen decrease in input and credit use in the face of increasing inter-communal conflict.

It should be noted that the fact that conflict erupted in 2012 is not necessarily a design flaw for the project. The project logframe explicitly mentions the lack of an outbreak of violence as one of its assumptions. The project was not designed to stop the conflict, but to consolidate the peace. However, the conflict escalated well before the project got well under way. Moreover, it is unrealistic to expect for a project to achieve stabilization of the region within two years. VECO has a larger vision, with a long-term presence in the area, and this project is seen as a part of that vision.

If a project like this one is to be funded in the future clear ideas exist to make a possible impact evaluation better. One of the key issues facing this study has been the severe imbalance in the sample, as VECO opted to work only with the most capable organizations. From a development perspective this makes sense. The selection of COOPA and COOSAPRODA has enabled VECO to effectively identify bottlenecks in rice production and address them.

A Randomized Controlled Trial would allow us to avoid the selection bias in the current study (Duflo et al. 2008), however a far larger number of cooperatives would need to exist in order for this to be a realistic option. The small number of cooperatives is an issue right now, as prevents the evaluation from addressing questions about the difference between the two cooperatives. Splitting the sample between COOPA and COOSOPRODA would further diminish the power of the study. In fact there is strong reason to believe that there are strong differences in impact between the cooperatives. VECO has frozen cooperation with one of them due to “deeply rooted institutional flaws”. VECO now has developed a much more “à la carte” approach, tailoring support to each cooperative. Again, this make sense from a development perspective, but from an evaluation perspective it makes it hard to distinguish between impact the cooperative would have had without support and the impact of VECO.

## Conclusion

In this section we address the research questions outlined above by MDG and Theme. Question 4 is somewhat separate as it looks at the efficiency of the combined efforts of the SPO. Then we present a table summarizing our findings.

In terms of MDG1, the main changes in the Ruzizi Plain have been that the number of households reporting hunger has increased. At the same time, the fraction of rice sold has increased. Farmers who are member of VECO-supported cooperatives have seen a smaller increase in hunger than those in control groups, suggesting that while the cooperatives have not helped increase food security, they have at least reduced the decline of it. The fraction of rice sold has increased both in the treatment, as in the control arms, and these results are thus not attributable to VECO.

The biggest driver of change in the region in terms of food security has appeared to be the increase in violence the past years. In face of this conflict, market access has become more problematic, perhaps limiting the relevance of a market based solution to food security such as proposed by VECO.

In terms of the theme of fragile states, the situation has escalated beyond VECO's control. Incidents are up and feelings of security have not improved. There has been a massacre very close to VECO's intervention area. So overall the situation got drastically worse. Our results might seem to be somewhat suggestive of VECO having a positive impact on this, as the number of incidents reported in the treatment communities has increased less sharply than in control communities. We are reluctant to exclude the possibility of selection bias here though, due to the limited number of communities.

The main driver of change in the area in terms of fragility has been the assassination of the Mwami in 2012, which was not long after VECO started the project. This event has set in motion ethnic tension between the Barundi and the Bafulero which persists until today. In light of this, it is no surprise that VECO has apparently failed to deliver on contributing to a "stable and peaceful DRC". In our discussion above we briefly discussed the relevance of agriculture as a driver of change. Conclusions are hampered by the chicken-and-egg nature of the link between stability and agricultural productivity.

Question 4 deals with efficiency. We find that expenses are somewhat high compared to similar project in other settings, but this is to be expected as the DRC is a notoriously expensive place to run projects in.

Table 7: Summary of results

|   | <i>Rating</i> | <i>Comments</i>  |
|---|---------------|--|
| The project was well designed           | 8             | The targeted cooperatives were well functioning organizations, in an agriculturally promising area.                            |
| The project was implemented as designed | 7             | The project was unable to do everything as planned, due to unforeseen consequences, such as violence and problems in the bank. |

|  |     |   |
|--|-----|---|
| The project reached all its objectives                             | 4.5 | Some evidence exist of a positive impact on markets and food security.  |
| The observed results are attributable to the project interventions | 7   | Results are stronger in treatment communities than in control communities. Though selection bias remains a possibility, and there is a lack of significance in the quantitative part. |
| The observed results are relevant to the project beneficiaries     | 5   | Food security has changed slightly. And it hasn't improved so much as decreased less than it otherwise would have.  |
| The project was implemented efficiently                            | 7   | Some prices seem high, but rehabilitation of infrastructure was done at low cost, and overall prices seem in line with expectations.  |



# Capacity development component

## Results Capacity Development

In this section, we describe our findings for the capacity development component. We first provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the five capabilities (Capability to act and commit, Capability to adapt and self-renew, Capability to deliver on development objectives, Capability to relate to others, Capability to achieve coherence). We do this for VECO Bukavu, as well as for one of the beneficiary cooperatives, COOSOPRODA. This is followed by a contribution story assembling the evidence for the contribution of MFS II funding to the development of organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu, through the intervention of Cordaid.

|   | VECO           |            | COOSOPRODA     |         |
|---|----------------|------------|----------------|---------|
|   | Baseline (1-5) | Endline    | Baseline (1-5) | Endline |
| Act and commit                                    | 4.5            | 4.5        | 2.5            | 2.5     |
| Deliver on development objectives                 | 4              | 4          | 2.5            | 2.5     |
| Adapt and self-renew                              | 3.5            | 3.5        | 1.5            | 1.5     |
| Relate to external stakeholders                   | 3              | 3.5        | 2.0            | 2.0     |
| Achieve coherence                                 | 4.5            | 5.0        | 2.0            | 2.0     |
| <b>Overall capacity (rounded to nearest half)</b> | <b>4.0</b>     | <b>4.0</b> | <b>2.0</b>     |         |

### Capability to act and commit

*Effective leadership, realistic strategic planning, translation of strategy into operations, staff capacity and motivation, and financial security.*

As part of a larger organisation, VECO Bukavu falls under the direction of the Regional Representative, and the more general strategy of Vredeseilanden. Vredeseilanden is closely involved in the functioning of the Regional Office in DRC, which is demonstrated by the swift replacement of the Regional Representative at the beginning of 2013. The current Representative is an experienced leader, who has been involved previously in the setting up of VECO RDC as a new region of Vredeseilanden. Strategy is determined at the level of the regional office, and VECO Bukavu staff are capable to follow the strategy, and translate this into concrete monthly plans.

There has been a reduction in staff during the evaluation period, as one of the two projects of VECO Bukavu ended at the end of 2012. The two remaining staff run the Cordaid project, and have a university degree and a number of years of relevant working experience. At the end of the evaluation period, in 2014, the number of staff increased again. Job descriptions are available, and there is a clear organisational structure. Apparently, there is budget available for training through the Regional Office, but staff have received no training during the evaluation period. Staff have formal contracts, and salaries are in line with the international standards of Vredeseilanden, including provisions for illness

or retirement. Staff indicate they are satisfied with their remuneration. Individual performance is evaluated on a yearly basis.

For its financial resources, VECO Bukavu is dependent on projects; VECO RDC has indicated its intent to have a permanent presence in Bukavu, and with the extension of the Cordaid project, the cofunding with DGD and a new project with CFC, financial stability for the coming years is guaranteed. VECO Bukavu depends strongly on the Regional Office in the search for new sources of funding. With three main donors, VECO Bukavu remains at risk of having to reduce its staff when one of the projects ends.

Overall, this capability has remained stable over the evaluation period, notwithstanding the change in leadership. VECO Bukavu has proven to be able to reduce the number of staff when necessary, and find new sources of funding – the Regional Office has played a crucial role in this.

#### COOSOPRODA

During the evaluation period, the leadership of COOSOPRODA has remained the same: the President and the Board of Directors were elected by the members in 2008, and though their mandate has formally expired at the beginning of 2014, it has not yet been renewed. The cooperative has received training by VECO on how to structure a cooperative, and on good governance, but it takes time to appropriate these issues – as is exemplified by the fact that only one General Assembly has been organised during the evaluation period (in 2012). VECO has repeatedly urged COOSOPRODA to organise these meetings, as well as elections for the Board, but this has remained without result. Though governance of the cooperatives has improved through the accompaniment and training provided, the sense of ownership expressed by the members is still low – members should ‘see that the cooperative is not for the founders, or the managers, but for everybody’. Additionally, the Board has the tendency to be too involved in daily management.

In terms of strategy and vision, throughout the evaluation period, leadership continued to depend strongly on the guidance of VECO and the goals set in the project with Cordaid – even though in terms of internal governance they have not heeded the advice of VECO. Operations were planned on a yearly basis, described in the POPs, ‘*plan d’opération*’, and these plans were developed with support of VECO. Activities were often carried out in consultation with VECO staff. Over the years, paid staff of the cooperative has remained the same, and over the years VECO has become less involved in day-to-day operations. In the beginning, VECO staff spent more time in the field with the cooperative, joining them in meetings and other activities. By the end of the project, the cooperative undertook its own activities without informing VECO, and took its own decisions to a certain extent. Nevertheless, VECO continued to closely monitor the cooperative’s financial management, to check whether project funds were being spent in accordance with the quarterly plans and the project budget.

COOSOPRODA generated a limited amount of income, through renting out the infrastructure and equipment that they acquired with VECO/previous donor funding, and through membership fees (10 USD/member/year). This income was not enough to cover operations, and the cooperative depended strongly on financial support by VECO. In fact, the financial capacity of the cooperative is still very limited: VECO covers 50% of the salaries of the staff of the cooperative, and over the evaluation period it has not been able to generate sufficient revenues to cover the remaining 50%. A large part of Cordaid funding was managed by VECO; funds managed by the cooperative itself comprised its own revenues and funds transferred by VECO that were earmarked for certain goals (payment of staff, construction



of infrastructure, buying seeds). This means that over the evaluation period, COOSOPRODA has not managed to become financially independent.

Overall, there has been some progress during the evaluation period, but important points for improvement remain: with respect to internal governance, the appropriation of the cooperative by the members, and the change of a dependent mentality to a commercial mindset. The level of financial management can be considered a litmus test for the organisational capacity of the cooperative.

### Capability to deliver on development objectives

*Delivery of planned products and services, relevance of delivered products and services for target population, work efficiency*

VECO works with clear operational plans, which are translated into monthly activity plans. Plans are developed by VECO Bukavu and these are checked by the Regional Office. During the evaluation period, there have been no major deviations of plans, and the Cordaid project has been executed as planned – through there was a delay in transfer of finances from Cordaid, and plans had to be adapted.

VECO does not have a system in place for monitoring efficiency of its employees. Nevertheless, the Regional Office is closely monitoring the work of VECO Bukavu, and has developed a number of standardised procedures.

With respect to monitoring execution of projects and the relevance of delivered products and services for target population: after the IFDC project ended, there no longer was a dedicated M&E Officer. Within the Cordaid project, M&E was the responsibility of the Programme Officer. The major method to keep track of beneficiary satisfaction was through self-evaluations of the cooperatives, which were done twice a year. This is largely based on people's own memories and estimations of costs and output, and is not deemed very reliable by VECO staff, which is why VECO is seeking to develop a new monitoring system.

VECO seeks synergy between projects; for example, the IFDC project and the Cordaid project were mutually reinforcing, as they took place in the same intervention area, which allowed an efficient use of travelling means. VECO has a strong aim for developing economically viable cooperatives, and aimed for the two cooperatives in the Cordaid project to be able to function independently by the end of the project in 2013. This has turned out a bridge too far, and VECO staff indicate it may take another 6 years for the development of a fully functional rice value chain in Ruzizi Plain.

For this capability, there have been no major changes during the evaluation period. The development of an adequate M&E system is a challenge for the coming years, to collect reliable data on the cooperatives' functioning, while taking the limited financial and human resources for monitoring into account.

#### COOSOPRODA

The cooperative delivers agricultural services to its members, and provides the necessary infrastructure. It also aims to collect the harvest of the members and so this can be marketed jointly. In order to do so, COOSOPRODA needs to liaise with potential customers. All of the plans are described in the yearly POPs. Results exist in the form of infrastructure and services, as well as the collection and

storage of the harvest. The cooperative has improved its facilities with support of VECO, and now manages these independently. The amount of dehulled rice is growing, and rice is being sold jointly. COOSOPRODA also managed to secure an order of Bralima for the delivery of 40 tonnes of rice in 2014 (with the help of VECO).

However, the cooperative is still having a hard time involving its members, to increase their sense of ownership, as well as engaging with other chain actors (notably potential customers). Members are starting to see the benefits of belonging to a cooperative, but still have a way to go in understanding the duties that come along. As yet, the number of members actually paying membership fees is low, and the cooperative has not been able to create lasting relationships with larger customers (though the agreement with Bralima is promising). Monitoring and evaluation is still weak, data collection is done manually, and VECO has little trust in the reliability of these data.

Thus, in terms of the Capability to deliver, we see development during the evaluation period, with the cooperative delivering a number of outputs. This has been done with strong involvement of VECO, and continued support remains necessary (the members indicate they hope VECO stays for 10-20 years). The involvement of the members is important to ensure that services remain relevant for them, and it is important to develop the cooperative's capacity to access markets for its members.

### Capability to adapt and self-renew

*Effective application of M&E, strategic use of M&E, openness to strategic learning, context awareness*

As indicated under the previous capability, there is room for improvement of VECO's M&E. Activities of the cooperatives have been monitored by VECO staff, but data on agricultural production have been collected by the cooperatives themselves. The effective application of M&E depends on the reliability of the data, which is currently a hampering factor. This means that data collected during the evaluation period did not provide a solid basis for lobbying activities. In the future, VECO aims for its M&E to provide concrete evidence to fuel their lobbying activities. A new approach has been developed by the Country Office, but staff in Bukavu have not yet been trained to apply this.

The organisation Vredeseilanden places much emphasis on learning and innovation, and has recently completed a strategic planning process for the 2014-2019 period. The new strategic plan is based on input from the various regions, including DRC, and provides a strong focus for the activities of the local offices. Vredeseilanden also has an internal fund for innovation, which is an invitation to develop experimental projects. The restructuring of the VECO Office in DRC in 2011, to become a Regional Office, is an example of how the organisation learnt from an external review by MDF. Vredeseilanden as a whole is audited yearly by KPMG. At the level of DRC, the Regional Office organises two meetings a year, at which the strategy is discussed and there is room for critical reflection and analyse the context.

This means this Capability remained constant during the evaluation period, with room for improvement in the development of an adequate system to gather reliable data on the rice value chain, to serve as input for VECO's lobbying activities.

COOSOPRODA

The monitoring and evaluation capacity of COOSOPRODA is limited, and it depends wholly on VECO for the strategic use of this data. M&E during the evaluation period has focused on monitoring the activities of the members, in order to stimulate them to work their fields diligently and to reimburse inputs. Additionally, data are collected on the amount of rice produced. The cooperative conducted a self-evaluation two times a year, in order to determine the productivity; but due to the fact that costs are based on estimations, these exercises serve more to determine trends, than to produce actual data.

With respect to strategic learning: members of COOSOPRODA have participated in a number of training sessions and exchange visits during the evaluation period. This has allowed them to develop ideas about different ways to set up a cooperative. A concrete outcome has been the setting up of savings and loans groups, without intervention by VECO: *MUSOs* (which has been a trend in South Kivu in recent years). The exchange visits and training sessions have been organised by VECO, and the cooperative has not yet developed its own activities in this respect. Similarly, COOSOPRODA depends strongly on VECO for its awareness and analysis of the rice value chain.

This remains a weak capability for COOSOPRODA, with little discernible development during the evaluation period. In terms of strategic use of M&E, and the development of its strategy as a cooperative, COOSOPRODA has remained very dependent on VECO.

### Capability to relate to others

*Involving external parties in internal policy/strategy development; engagement of organisation in networks, alliances and collaborative efforts; active engagement with target groups; effective relationships within the organisation*

Policy and strategy for VECO Bukavu are developed at the regional level, in discussion with the head office in Belgium. External parties in DRC are not actively involved in strategy development.

Since the start of the MFS II period, VECO has been lobbying actively for the new Agricultural Law, which foresees the creation of consultative councils at the provincial and local levels. Engagement at national level is done through the Regional Office. Relevant networks for this are Agriprofocus and AgriCongo (VECO is founding member, and is also vice-president of the provincial project implementation team). VECO Bukavu is member of the working group (*comité de pilotage*) for the new Land Law in South Kivu. VECO is also seeing whether they can create a platform for actors that work in the rice sector. Interestingly, VECO is not actively collaborating with IFDC, even though this organisation complements their activities as it is actively involved in increasing production through the use of fertiliser on the Ruzizi Plain. VECO has also not been invited to the COS-PASAK agricultural synergy organised by ICCO. Besides the mentioned networks, VECO has focused its collaborative efforts on organisations intervening in the rice value chain, including a number of private sector organisations such as the brewery Bralima.

VECO Bukavu has actively engaged with the local cooperatives throughout the evaluation period: communication mainly takes place through regular visits, and representatives of the cooperatives also come to the VECO Bukavu office. Through their intervention in Ruzizi Plain, they are starting to become better known: they are also being approached by other cooperatives, and have developed

relationships with a number of these. International organisations that want to develop activities in the Plain have also approached VECO, for example the World Bank which is setting up a large project for the Plain.

Within the organisation, there is effective communication between the VECO Bukavu and the Regional Office, through email and Skype – the Bukavu office has a relatively stable internet access. There are regional meetings twice a year. Staff work at the office, when not in the field. The small size of VECO Bukavu and open internal atmosphere facilitate internal contacts.

Concluding: during the evaluation period, VECO Bukavu has established itself more firmly in networks related to agriculture in South Kivu. The Regional Office plays an important role in relations at the national level. In the Ruzizi Plain, VECO has established contacts with a number of cooperatives and associations. Within the organisation, VECO has maintained effective forms of communication.

**COOSOPRODA**

For COOSOPRODA, it is important to develop and maintain relationships with other actors in the rice value chain, most importantly suppliers and buyers. In order to become a stronger player on the local market, it is important to develop relations with other cooperatives and develop a joint strategy. The cooperative also needs to engage with its members, in order to involve them in the governance of the cooperative, and to ensure joint marketing of their harvest and an increase in production. Internally, it is important that there is effective communication between the management and the Board of the cooperative.

The cooperative is still weak in most of these aspects. For their external relations, it remains highly dependent on VECO: VECO puts them in touch with potential customers, VECO convenes meetings at the level of the value chain, and VECO organises the exchange visits to other cooperatives. VECO has the plan to set up a federation of rice cooperatives of Ruzizi Plain, to represent the rice value chain in the farmers’ union FOPAC-SK, and has convened a meeting for all cooperatives to discuss this. The federation has yet to be established. In terms of its engagement with members, the degree of ownership experienced by the members is still low (downward accountability). Trainings and requirements imposed by the project with Cordaid have improved internal governance and communication between management and the Board (upward accountability). In time, as the cooperative expands its infrastructure and financial means, downward accountability towards the members will become increasingly important.

For the Capability to relate to others, COOSOPRODA shows some development during the evaluation period, as its internal governance has improved, and contacts with other cooperatives and actors in the rice value chain have developed. However, in all of these aspects, it has remained strongly dependent on VECO.

**Capability to achieve coherence**

*Existence of mechanisms for coherence, level of coherence of various efforts of organisation*

The most important mechanism for coherence is the strategy developed by the Head Office in Belgium. The strategic plan is strongly focused on value chain development and connecting to markets. This ensures coherence at the global level, as lessons learnt in one value chain or Region can be applied in another. Activities in the Regions are developed in consultation with the Head Office. Similarly, activities at level of VECO Bukavu are developed in consultation with the Regional Office. There also exist operational guidelines developed by the Regional Office, to ensure operational coherence at the regional level.

During the evaluation period, it was decided to focus on two value chains: rice and coffee. This means there is coherence in terms of the general approach (value chains), while also developing expertise on issues that are specifically related to coffee or rice. In VECO RDC, there is a designated expert on rice and one on coffee. In its strong focus, the organisation is not donor-driven: it seeks donors that are willing to support its programme, instead of carrying out the programmes developed by others.

The Capability to achieve coherence has been reinforced during the evaluation period. The new strategic plan provides a strong focus for VECO's activities, and ensures coherence and synergy between various efforts of the different offices.

**COOSOPRODA**

In principle, the cooperative has a very clear goal: to act as an intermediary between suppliers and buyers (and other relevant rice value chain actors), and its members. This focus is reinforced by the strategy of VECO to focus only on value chain development, and to focus on one staple food only. Mechanisms that support the coherence of activities are the existence of a clear vision for the cooperative, as well as an independent Board, which monitors activities of the daily management of the cooperative. Additionally, the requirement of the Cordaid project to write a yearly POP stimulates yearly reflection about the coherence and relevance of the intended activities.

In practice, COOSOPRODA's activities are centred around the production, transformation and sale of rice. Nevertheless, there is a tendency to also engage in other types of activities, since members have other needs that are not directly related to the production of rice, and they ask the cooperative to fulfil those needs as well. There is also a strong tendency to copy activities that others are doing successfully, versus taking the own assets as a starting point. An example of this is the establishment of a MUSO, which is not explicitly an activity of the cooperative; it was set up by its members, and it remains to be seen what the effect of this will be on the activities of the cooperative – it can be reinforcing, but can also draw attention away from the cooperative's core activities.

The cooperatives depend on VECO for their strategic orientation. The capacity of the Board of Directors to think strategically about the development of the cooperative is improving, according to VECO staff; but in the General Assembly, members do not yet have the capacity to really strategically orient the organisation. This remains a challenge for the future.

## Contribution story

For the capacity development component, we focus on the contribution of MFS II funding to the development of organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu. Specifically, we investigate the contribution of the support by Cordaid to the development of VECO's capability to act and commit, with a focus on financial resource stability. Our choice for focusing on VECO's financial resource stability was induced by the fact that in 2013, VECO Bukavu has no other projects, and thus the project with Cordaid allowed the office to continue to be operational. How has Cordaid contributed to the organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu? We will discuss this question in the following contribution story.

First we briefly describe the theory of change and activities of the capacity development support by Cordaid (building on what we described under the project description). Then we assemble the evidence for the practice of change: how the organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu has changed over the evaluation period, and how Cordaid has contributed. We continue with a brief overview of other actors and factors that have played a role. We conclude by assessing the evidence, to what extent it is plausible that the capacity development intervention of Cordaid has contributed to the organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu.

## Theory of change and activities

Cordaid's Theory of Change for the development of organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu was based on Cordaid's approach of VECO Bukavu as the local office of international organisation Vredeseilanden (comparable in that sense to the local office of Cordaid in Bukavu). This entailed that Cordaid considered the organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu the responsibility of Vredeseilanden, and that Cordaid from the start of the partnership has undertaken no activity to develop the capacity of VECO Bukavu. VECO Bukavu received no support by the local Cordaid office in Bukavu. In fact, the capacity development aim in this project targeted the two cooperatives COOSOPRODA and COOPA, which we consider under our contribution analysis under the civil society strengthening component. The only support by Cordaid which can be seen as support to the organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu is the institutional support that was part of the project. This means that Cordaid claims no contribution in terms of organisational capacity development of VECO.

## Evidence, the practice of change

Our assessment of the organisational capacity of VECO shows that it has a relatively well-developed organisational capacity, which has remained more or less constant during the evaluation period. The major changes are the changes in number of staff: the decrease in staff at the end of 2012 (from 5 to 2 core staff), with the end of the project with IFDC; and the increase in staff in 2014 (from 2 to 3 core staff), with the expanding project portfolio. This change directly affects VECO's Capability to deliver. We also see some change for the Capability to relate, as VECO Bukavu has established itself more firmly in networks related to agriculture in South Kivu, and has expanded its network in the Ruzizi Plain. The Capability to achieve coherence has been reinforced during the evaluation period, mainly through the new strategic plan, which provides a strong focus for VECO's activities. VECO Bukavu has been able to deal with external shocks such as a change in management and a rupture in terms of financing.

The number of specific capacity development activities during the evaluation period has been limited. The new secretary/bookkeeper has received a training in accounting system OHADA, and the bookkeeping software SAGE. Individually, staff have studied online documents on how to structure a

cooperative, and the development of markets. A yearly audit is conducted of VECO RDC, which provides recommendations for improvements in terms of internal organisational governance.

In terms of strategy development, and strategic orientation of the organisation, Vredeseilanden and the Regional Office have played an important role during the evaluation period. This has not so much increased the organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu, but it has provided a stable source of orientation, and this has helped maintain the organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu. Even though staff of VECO Bukavu indicate they would like to be able to receive additional training on certain topics, they also indicate their satisfaction with the level of remuneration. The internationally standardised salary scale of Vredeseilanden helps ensure the stability of VECO Bukavu in terms of staff.

In terms of financing, the employment of staff at VECO Bukavu was based on the available projects, and to what extent these covered the salaries of staff. During the evaluation period, VECO Bukavu received institutional support from IFDC, Cordaid, and currently also from CFC and DGD. The following table breaks down the institutional support by Cordaid to the VECO Bukavu office:

*Table 8: Project 1 Institutional support 2011-2013 (source: budget approuvé Cordaid Congo)*

|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Office rent (VECO Bukavu)                           | € 16,800        |
| Salary Team Leader VECO Bukavu (two years 40%)      | € 8,400         |
| Salary Programme Officer (39 months)                | € 29,250        |
| Communications, fuel, consumables (VECO RDC Bukavu) | € 9,000         |
| Yearly audit (three years)                          | € 10,500        |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>€ 73,950</b> |

This means that during the period in which VECO Bukavu had only one project, in 2013, it was the project supported by Cordaid which covered the institutional costs of the VECO Bukavu office, since the project covered part of the costs of the two remaining staff.

**Actors and factors**

From the evidence presented above, it follows that Vredeseilanden and the Regional Office are an important actor, in terms of their close involvement in the operations of VECO Bukavu, and the way this ensures the stability of the organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu.

In terms of explicit capacity development activities, staff of VECO Bukavu themselves play an important role in developing their expertise on value chains, cooperatives and markets. Apparently, there is a budget available for following trainings, but we found no evidence that VECO Bukavu staff have made use of this during the evaluation period.

**Contribution**

We have found no evidence that Cordaid has contributed to an improvement in organisational capacity – but this was also explicitly not the aim of Cordaid in this partnership. However, through its institutional support, we can conclude that Cordaid and MFS II financing have contributed significantly to the continuity of VECO Bukavu, and thus to maintaining its organisational capacity. MFS II financing has allowed VECO Bukavu to bridge the year 2013, while negotiating with CFC and DGD about a new partnership. As such, it has contributed to VECO’s financial resource stability.

## Discussion

Cordaid had no strategy for capacity development of VECO Bukavu; capacity development activities in the project were directed entirely towards the beneficiary cooperatives, and we discuss these under the civil society strengthening component of this report. Nevertheless, as we show in our contribution analysis, the institutional funding supplied by Cordaid was crucial to maintaining the VECO office in Bukavu in 2013, when it had no other projects; it allowed VECO Bukavu to bridge this period between projects, and maintain its organisational capacity.

In the case of Cordaid's relationship with VECO Bukavu, the lack of capacity development strategy is understandable, since VECO Bukavu is the local office of international NGO Vredeseilanden (comparable as such to the local office of Cordaid in Bukavu). Through this collaboration with Vredeseilanden, Cordaid has been able to make use of the local knowledge and value chains expertise of VECO RDC, and we see no problems in continuing with similar projects in the future. An important factor for the organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu has been continued institutional support, and we recommend to continue to reserve room for institutional costs in project budgets in the future.

With respect to the evaluation: the partnership between VECO and Cordaid is clearly an exception in our sample, because of the international nature of VECO/Vredeseilanden, and the lack of a capacity development strategy for this partnership. This partnership should probably not have been included in the sample for the capacity development component; perhaps an explicit capacity development goal should have been a criterion in drawing the sample for this component of the evaluation.

## Conclusion

Here we provide an answer to the three evaluation questions:

*1. What are the changes in partner organisations' capacity during the 2012-2014 period?*

Our assessment of the organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu shows that it has a relatively well-developed organisational capacity, which has remained more or less constant during the evaluation period. The major changes are the changes in number of staff: the decrease in staff at the end of 2012 (from 5 to 2 core staff), with the end of the project with IFDC; and the increase in staff in 2014 (from 2 to 3 core staff), with the expanding project portfolio. This change directly affected VECO's Capability to deliver. We also see some change for the Capability to relate, as VECO Bukavu has established itself more firmly in networks related to agriculture in South Kivu, and has expanded its network in the Ruzizi Plain. The Regional Office plays an important role in relations at the national level. The Capability to achieve coherence has been reinforced during the evaluation period, mainly through the new strategic plan, which provides a strong focus for VECO's activities. VECO Bukavu has been able to deal with external shocks such as a change in management and a rupture in terms of financing.

There remains room for improvement: the development of an adequate M&E system is a challenge for the coming years, to collect reliable data on the cooperatives' functioning and the rice value chain, to serve as input for VECO's lobbying activities.

*2. To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*



In principle, Cordaid has not contributed to changes in organisational capacity of VECO. It was also never the intention of Cordaid to invest in capacity development of VECO Bukavu. However, the institutional support in the Cordaid project has allowed VECO Bukavu to continue to function in a period without other donor financing. In that sense, MFS II financing was crucial to the maintenance of organisational capacity of VECO in Bukavu.

*3. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

The most important factor is the fact that VECO Bukavu is part of the international organisation Vredeseilanden, and that this organisation is considered to be responsible for the organisational development of its local office. It has played an important role in maintaining VECO Bukavu's organisational capacity during the evaluation period. An important factor in this is the competitive level of salaries offered by Vredeseilanden, which has allowed it to attract and maintain a capable staff.

# Civil society strengthening component

In this section, we describe our findings with respect to the strengthening of Civil Society. We first provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions (Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment). This is followed by a contribution story assembling the evidence for the contribution of MFS II funding to a strengthening of civil society, through the development interventions of VECO. We then discuss our findings, and conclude by providing an answer to the evaluation questions.

## CSI dimensions

|                       | Baseline (0-3) | Endline |
|-----------------------|----------------|---------|
| Civic engagement      | 2.5            | 2.5     |
| Level of organisation | 1.5            | 2       |
| Practice of values    | 2              | 2       |
| Perception of impact  | 2              | 2.5     |
| Environment           | 2.5            | 2.5     |

## Civic Engagement

*Under this dimension we distinguish the diversity of socially-based engagement (taking into account needs of marginalised groups, participation of target groups in the project), and the diversity of political engagement (is there dialogue of local leaders with government representatives, are beneficiaries member of sectoral user groups).*

VECO does not focus exclusively on marginalised groups; in its focus on the rice value chain, which is a cash crop, it targets small farmers that have the capacity to produce a surplus for commercialisation. Within the project, VECO does pay special attention to the involvement of women. According to VECO’s Theory of Change, once the beneficiaries in the project start increasing their production and get access to markets for their products, the whole community will in time benefit of the increased revenues and economic development.

During the evaluation period, the two cooperatives COOSOPRODA and COOPA have formed an important intermediary between the beneficiaries and VECO. During the project, VECO was in regular contact with the management of the cooperatives, and visited the field once or twice a month. During the evaluation period, VECO also established relations with other cooperatives in the Ruzizi Plain. The frequency of visits to the two partner cooperatives went down in the final year of the project, though. The management of these cooperatives has become more involved in giving input for plans, problem analysis, and implementation of solutions. Beneficiaries are involved through member meetings of cooperatives (which has not happened frequently), as well as through meetings organised by VECO. An important mechanism in this respect were self-evaluation sessions, which were organised twice a year, by the cooperative and VECO. A challenge in terms of beneficiary participation, which VECO has not been able to surmount during the evaluation period, is the attitude of *attentisme*, dependency: the expectation that organisations from elsewhere will intervene and help them for free. This attitude is hampering the involvement of the members of the cooperative, because they continue to see themselves as beneficiaries, instead of entrepreneurs that own a joint business.

In terms of political engagement, at the local level: VECO works closely with authorities at the Territory level, as well as the chiefs of the groupings (*groupements*) and *chefferies*. Authorities are present at some of the activities of VECO and the cooperatives, such as the inauguration of a warehouse.

Overall, we see sustained involvement for the dimension of Civic Engagement. VECO has involved the cooperatives in problem analysis and developing solutions, and has also involved the relevant local authorities. Involvement of the members of the cooperatives and increasing their sense of ownership still is a challenge.

## Level of Organisation

*This dimension focuses on the organisational level of civil society (the connectedness of SPOs in networks of organisations, the nature of relationships between SPOs and networks, and the degree of representation of interests); peer to peer communication (the strength of the relationships of the SPO with other actors); and financial and human resources (the composition of the financial resource base, availability of human resources).*

During the evaluation period, VECO was part of various networks, including AgriCongo and Agriprofocus. VECO meets other civil society organisations at the meetings of these networks, where they exchange information about their activities. Staff indicate Agriprofocus is currently their most active network, with meetings 2-3 times a year, and it is growing. There has been a meeting of all actors in the rice sector in 2014, with the intention to develop this into a platform. VECO has not developed joint interventions with other CSOs; in terms of policy influencing, however, VECO has for example been involved in the lobby for the Agricultural Law, in the AgriCongo network. VECO is also member of the sectoral committee on food security in South Kivu, where it also meets relevant authorities.

In the intervention area, VECO sometimes encounters other organisations that intervene in the same area or target the same population group: in general, organisations carry out their own projects, without informing others. During our field visits, we encountered evidence of activities of other organisations, which had not sought to collaborate with VECO or COOSOPRODA.

In terms of financial resources, VECO Bukavu is not very diversified, as it had four donors during the evaluation period: Cordaid, IFDC, DGD and CFC, of which IFDC (2010-2012) and CFC (2014) each were responsible for over 75% of the budget. In 2013, Cordaid was the only donor. Nevertheless, VECO has managed to maintain its two core staff in this period, and is now again expanding its staff.

For this dimension, VECO has become more firmly established in civil society in South Kivu during the evaluation period, with regular participation in relevant networks and an attempt to create a platform of actors in the rice sector. Nevertheless, civil society remains operating in a fragmented fashion. In terms of financial and human resources, VECO managed to secure new sources of finances as the project with Cordaid came to an end.

## Practice of Values

*This dimension deals with internal governance (the functioning of the legally required committees and members, are they involved in the strategic management of the SPO, and the functioning of lower CSO*

*levels), and transparency (respect of internal written procedures, extent of downward accountability, within the SPO and to lower CSO levels, transparency on finances).*

VECO Bukavu is part of international organisation Vredeseilanden, which has a General Assembly with a Board of Directors in Belgium; this means that the local office of VECO Bukavu does not have members, or a governing Board. Nevertheless, the local office is held accountable by the Regional Office in Butembo, which in turn is accountable to the Head Office in Belgium. This Head Office also organises a yearly audit by KPMG of VECO RDC, including the Bukavu office. The staff in Bukavu are aware of the way Vredeseilanden is governed, and the head of VECO Bukavu has been present at the yearly GA in Belgium to get a better understanding of the internal governance of Vredeseilanden, and the working of the Head Office and the Regions.

With respect to downward accountability: the cooperatives are in the position to hold VECO accountable, but are still lacking the capacity or sense of ownership to do this structurally. The cooperatives are structured according to Congolese legal requirements, with a General Assembly, Board of Directors, and a Monitoring Committee. However, though they have been trained by VECO on good governance, they are not yet functioning as they should – the cooperatives are failing to organise a GA each year, and members have not yet developed the sense of ownership of the cooperative (see also the descriptions for the five capabilities under the organisational capacity component).

For the dimension of Practice of Values, there has been little development during the evaluation period. VECO RDC is audited each year, and upward accountability to the Head Office in Belgium is currently stronger than downward accountability to the cooperatives.

## Perception of Impact

*Under this dimension we discuss the responsiveness (nature and intensity of SPO's relationship with the public sector and the private sector); social impact (target group satisfaction regarding fulfilment of their primary social concern, perception of public and private sector of quality of delivery of services by SPO); and the policy impact (the level of influence of SPOs in the process leading to major policy changes identified in the sector of the SPO's intervention since 2011).*

VECO's interventions are primarily directed at the beneficiaries, and these interventions are regarded positively by the members of the cooperatives. Members indicate they benefit of the trainings provided by VECO, as well as the material support, and the higher price they receive for their rice when they sell it as a group. Examples of success are visible in the intervention area, with an increase of the surface area under cultivation, an increase in productivity, infrastructure, collective storage of rice, and people wanting to join the cooperatives. COOSOPRODA is the more successful cooperative in these respects. As described previously, the increase in organisational capacity of the cooperatives has been limited.

Relations with the public and private sector have been further developed during the evaluation period. Meetings with public sector actors such as the Provincial Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development are regular, and VECO is being invited to share their expertise. They also meet in thematic meetings, such as the sectoral committee on food security. VECO is becoming better known

and increasingly considered by public sector actors, and has developed some activities to influence policy - with AgriCongo, they have successfully lobbied for the Agricultural Law, through the Regional Office. Private sector actors are also participating in meetings organised by VECO, and invite VECO in turn. This happened through the Agriprofocus framework, and VECO has organised a multi-stakeholder meeting for the rice sector in 2014. VECO has directed most of its attention to Bralima, to negotiate orders for the cooperatives, which was finally successful in 2014. The wholesaler DATCO is also inviting the cooperatives to collaborate now.

This dimension has improved during the evaluation period, particularly in terms of the impact at the level of the beneficiaries. With the public and private sector, development proceeds at a slower pace, but there are some examples of successful policy influencing.

### Environment/context

*This dimension takes the wider environment into account. What is the degree of participation of the SPO in defining the civil society interventions of the CFA/Consortium; to what extent is a context analysis of the space and role of civil society in the specific country done as part of the programme /project cycle; to what extent is the SPO involved in studies on civil society?*

VECO has not been involved in defining the civil society interventions of Cordaid/CoC. Nevertheless, it is carrying out an intervention that can be considered to strengthen civil society, through investing in the capacity development of the cooperatives. VECO has a specific aim to develop cooperatives, as a means for small farmers to participate in the market. In order to facilitate the access to markets, VECO also engages in organising meetings to bring together the different actors involved in the rice value chain. The project extension with Cordaid involves an analysis of the regional market for rice.

For the development of the strategic plan 2014-2019, the Regional Office organised meetings to analyse information about the socio-economic, political and security context, and to discuss the opportunities presented by these developments. Analyses of the politico-security context are not done regularly; staff indicates that so far, insecurity has not been an issue for the activities in Ruzizi Plain.

For this dimension, we see little change during the evaluation period: VECO retains its focus on the rice value chain, the cooperatives and the relevant socio-economic context.

### Contribution story: civil society strengthening in cooperative COOSOPRODA

For this component of the evaluation, we focus on the contribution of MFS II funding to the strengthening of civil society. In the case of VECO Bukavu, we investigate the contribution at the level of the beneficiaries, in the form of developing the capacity of the cooperatives. We ask the question: how has MFS II funding, through intermediary organisation VECO Bukavu, contributed to the strengthening of local civil society, in the form of the cooperative COOSOPRODA? We will discuss this question in the following contribution story.

First we briefly describe the contribution claim of VECO, and the basic Theory of Change and activities of the project supported by Cordaid. Then we assemble the evidence for how the described activities have contributed to a strengthening of civil society. We continue with a brief overview of other actors

and factors that have played a role. We conclude by assessing the evidence, to what extent it is plausible that the development intervention of VECO Bukavu has contributed to strengthening civil society.

### Contribution claim

During the evaluation period, VECO has undertaken activities to facilitate linkages between rice chain actors, train producer groups (cooperatives), and organise lobbying activities. With respect to the development of the cooperatives, VECO claims the following contribution during the evaluation period:

- Increased productivity and an increased area under cultivation, with increased revenues for members of the cooperatives
- A limited success in organisational development (internal organisational structure) of the cooperatives
- Increasingly direct contacts between the cooperatives and the buyers of rice, contributing to increased levels of trust in the long term

### Theory of change and activities

The cooperatives play a central role in the Theory of Change for this project. The cooperatives are the mechanism through which smallholder farmers can get access to markets, and through which they can be linked into inclusive agricultural value chains. All activities undertaken by VECO Bukavu in relation to the cooperatives aim at developing the value chain and inclusive modern markets, in order to sustainably secure the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. At a higher level, the inclusion of smallholder farmers into value chains is seen to contribute to peace building and reconstruction in South Kivu.

In order for smallholder farmers to be durably linked into the rice value chain, it is necessary to develop cooperatives with the following characteristics (compiled from interviews and workshops with VECO staff):

- The cooperatives have developed a commercial mindset, they see themselves as a for-profit business, and not as a non-profit association
- The cooperatives have developed the capacity to develop their own business strategy
- Members are actively participating in the governance of the cooperative and express a sense of ownership of the cooperative
- It is not possible to adhere without paying a membership fee
- The members of the internal committees and the Board are well aware of their role, and the GA, Board of Directors, Monitoring Committee and executive check and balance each other
- There is a competent financial management
- The cooperatives are able to maintain the necessary external relationships
- The cooperatives in Ruzizi Plain have formed a federation, which is capable of representing the interests of the smallholder rice farmers in the farmers' union of South Kivu, FOPAC-SK, to represent these interests vis-à-vis the provincial government, and vis-à-vis potential customers

### Evidence: practice of change

For assembling the story for the MFS II contribution to strengthening civil society at field/grassroots level, in the form of the cooperative COOSOPRODA, we made use of project documents supplied by VECO and Cordaid, the testimonies of members of the cooperative, interviews with VECO and Cordaid

staff and our own observations. Information gathered from/with other civil society organisations intervening in the agricultural sector provided additional insights.

Generally speaking, VECO has engaged in a variety of activities to support COOSOPRODA, which can be summarised as organisational development, infrastructural development and financial support, agricultural knowledge sharing, facilitating relations with other chain actors.

For **organisational capacity development** of the cooperative, a number of activities have been undertaken: training sessions, exchange visits, self-evaluations, as well as closely accompanying the cooperative in its activities by staff of VECO. Members of COOSOPRODA have been trained by VECO on: management of a cooperative (the Board), developing a business plan, how a cooperative should be structured and governed. 15 members of both COOSOPRODA and COOPA have participated in three exchange visits, organised by VECO: two visits to other cooperatives in Rwanda, and a visit to MUSOs in Katana and Kalehe. VECO also organised several self-evaluation workshops.

According to VECO staff, the project has focused too little on organisational capacity development (the focus was on increasing production and joint selling of products), and they are not satisfied with the development of COOSOPRODA in this respect. This is confirmed by the fact that the last General Assembly was organised in January 2012, and this GA was more a training session on the structure of a cooperative and reminding members of their rights and duties. The GA did not involve a presentation of plans or reports by the Board or the management. The current Board was elected at the start of the cooperative, in 2008. The lack of elections is a sign of lack of ownership by the members, and gives the president a disproportionate influence. A large part of the members are not paying their membership fees. The cooperative remains strongly dependent on VECO for the development of its organisational capacity.

During the exchange visits, members of the cooperatives saw how other cooperatives operated, which inspired them. The creation of the MUSO at COOSOPRODA is a direct result of the exchange visit, and happened without involvement of VECO. It is deemed important by members because it will allow them to access small credit. A number of self-evaluation workshops were held, but it has proven difficult to organise them at the intended frequency of two per year. Reports of these workshops are available. Recommendations based on these workshops were supposed to be followed up by the Board of the cooperative in collaboration with VECO, but it is not clear to what extent this has been done. The self-evaluations do not show clear progress in terms of organisational capacity.

In terms of **infrastructure and financial support**, VECO financed a number of improvements, as well as three paid staff. VECO financed the construction and rehabilitation of several warehouses, as well as the procurement of a dehulling machine (*decortiqueuse*) including a building for the machine. VECO also financed the construction of a separate building for storing improved seed varieties in seed banks, and the creation of a drying area for rice. VECO facilitated the rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure, and supplied the cooperative with improved seeds for the members, which were to be reimbursed to the cooperative. Importantly, VECO also financed 50% of the salaries of the three paid staff of the cooperative, the manager, the agronomist, and the secretary/bookkeeper. VECO also provided financing for the operational costs of the cooperative, including a computer and printer, a generator, motorcycle, and fuel.

The results of the infrastructural and financial support are clearly visible; COOSOPRODA has a well-maintained storage area, including several warehouses, a number of dehulling machines, a drying area and a seed bank. The irrigation infrastructure has been cleaned, but remains in need of repair. The facilities have allowed the members of COOSOPRODA to increase the quality of their rice, and to jointly store and sell the rice. Members of COOSOPRODA have seen their revenues increase significantly during the evaluation period. The staff of the cooperative has not changed during the project, and VECO and the members are generally satisfied with the functioning of the manager and the agronomist. Financial management of the cooperative is weak, however, with also a lack of capacity in this respect among the members of the Board. 50% of the salaries of the paid staff is dependent on the revenues generated by the cooperative, but the staff have not been able to generate this amount. There is no clear centralised management of the different income-generating activities of the cooperative, and no clear overview available of the overall income and expenses. For this reason, VECO managed most of the finances for COOSOPRODA's activities, and the payment of staff.

VECO also engaged in the development of the **agricultural knowledge** of members of the cooperative. Training sessions were organised on integrated soil fertility management, rice parboiling, and separation of whole and broken grains of rice (*triage*). The cooperative also had a demonstration field, where the members could come see the result of using the new techniques.

At COOSOPRODA, many members have started using fertiliser, and the techniques to increase the quality of rice. During the project, the productivity of the members increased, as well as the area under cultivation. This means that total production increased, and the income of the members increased accordingly.

**Relations with other chain actors** were facilitated by VECO, including the exchange visits that we mentioned earlier. In 2012, VECO organised a meeting for all actors involved in the rice value chain, including suppliers of inputs, potential buyers, microfinance institutions, and the cooperatives. In 2013, VECO organised a meeting to set up a federation of rice producing organisations, which brought together 24 organisations from the Plain and Fizi Territory. Other meetings were organised with private sector organisations, such as COOPEC Imara to discuss access to credit, brewery Bralima to negotiate a rice order, and wholesaler DATCO to discuss the option of selling them rice.

The meeting in 2012 is supposed to have resulted in the formation of a multi-stakeholder partnership of rice value chain actors; however, we have found no evidence of further activities by this partnership. With respect to the establishment of a federation of cooperatives, at the meeting the organisation present decided to create a federation and started to elaborate the legal texts. However, due to the financial problems at COOPEC Imara, the finances to organise the follow-up meeting to formally constitute the federation could not be accessed. VECO facilitated the access to credit at COOPEC Imara, and Bralima finally placed an order for 40 tonnes of rice in 2014.

### Actors and factors

Besides the activities of VECO and the cooperative itself, a number of other actors and factors can be identified that may have contributed to the development of the cooperative.

An important actor/factor is the **history of previous interventions**. COOSOPRODA was established as a cooperative in 2008, by members that were participating in a project by ADI-Kivu with IFDC. This was a four-year project to train small farmers in intensive agriculture, making use of fertiliser and new



cultivating techniques. Once established as a cooperative, COOSOPRODA built a warehouse, and got access to inputs in the form of fertiliser and seeds. They also negotiated access to additional land to increase the area under cultivation.

**Insecurity** is another factor that may affect the development of the cooperative. There have been several flare-ups of conflict on the Plain during the evaluation period. Nevertheless, these instances of conflict have not affected the operations of COOSOPRODA. According to VECO, the ingenuity of people in protecting their assets should not be underestimated. VECO also deals with this by not making expensive investments in contexts that pose a great risk.

The **transition from humanitarian aid to development aid** is a factor that is often referred to. It can be referred to as *esprit d'attentisme*, dependency, and VECO staff refer to this as the change of an association (*asbl*, the Congolese abbreviation for a non-profit organisation) mentality, to a commercial, business mindset. In the past, many people have received support for free, and they are still expecting this, which complicates reimbursement of for example seeds or credit. There are also organisations that are still operating in a humanitarian approach, handing out free agricultural inputs. This issue has been referred to by many of the organisations in this evaluation.

A serious issue has been the trouble with **COOPEC Imara**, the bank of the cooperatives. Because of the disappearance of a large sum, COOPEC Imara was under threat of bankruptcy, and the Central Bank ordered all accounts to be blocked. This means the cooperatives were unable to access their deposits until today, which delayed the execution of certain activities. Stable access to finances is key to the successful development of the value chain.

### Contribution

During the evaluation period, we have seen important development in terms of infrastructure and production, group sale and increased revenues. Since there has been no other intervention directed at COOSOPRODA during the evaluation period, it is plausible that this development is related to the MFS II-funded project - taking into account the fact that COOSOPRODA had already established a basic infrastructure during previous interventions. The success of the cooperative in terms of increasing the revenues of its members, is not directly related to a strengthening of civil society. Nevertheless, its success can form an important motivating factor for members to adhere and to become more involved in the governance of the cooperative.

In terms of organisational capacity, VECO has developed several activities to improve the internal governance of the cooperative, and VECO staff has been closely involved in many of the cooperative's activities. We find limited progress in terms of organisational capacity, but considering the fact that VECO was the only partner of COOSOPRODA during the project, it is plausible that the MFS II-funded activities of VECO have contributed to this progress.

As described under the capacity development component, we consider Cordaid's institutional support to VECO Bukavu as the capacity development intervention (since Cordaid had no intention to develop the organisational capacity of VECO Bukavu). This intervention is very directly related to reaching the civil society objectives in this project: it covered the salaries of the two staff involved in the project, as

well as office rent and transportation. As such, this was crucial for all of the activities of VECO directed at the cooperatives, and thus to the contribution to strengthening civil society at the grassroots.

## Discussion

Given our findings, we think the interventions by VECO Bukavu towards strengthening civil society were reasonably well-designed. With hindsight, it is clear that the project did not focus enough on developing the organisational capacity of the cooperatives. At the same time, it is also clear that the development of a well-functioning cooperative with low-educated members in an environment which has seen a great deal of humanitarian aid, is a challenge that takes time. Considering the success in increasing the production of COOSOPRODA, getting the members to sell their harvest together, and getting access to a large customer such as Bralima, we would advise to continue funding the project. The changes made in the follow-up project lay more responsibility with the cooperatives and focus more strongly on getting access to markets, and we are looking forward to seeing the effects of this.

The evaluation as it has been set up, has a rather limited amount of time between the baseline and the endline rounds of data collection. Considering the complexity of the change we are looking at, it is not surprising that the degree of change we find is very limited. Since the majority of interventions are dealing with long-term changes, it would have been appropriate to adopt a similar long-term approach in evaluation these interventions.

In terms of causal mechanisms that can be considered valid beyond this case, we note that the approach of working with grassroots groups is common among SPOs. Members of cooperatives generally need a certain level of income security that goes beyond subsistence level. This makes the approach of cooperatives not suitable and reproducible for each context. A challenge which cooperatives in DRC face is that of the institutional context; high tax burdens, high transport costs and difficult market access are some of the conditions that hamper the development of the agricultural sector. A cooperative is not a miracle product that can solve this complex of challenges and expectations of what can be realised should therefore be rather modest.

## Conclusion

Here we provide an answer to the four evaluation questions for the civil society strengthening component:

- 1) What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?*

A great deal of interventions target civil society in some way, but often not with the explicit intent to strengthen civil society. Many NGOs, including the SPOs in our sample, work with grassroots structures. These structures are often trained on good governance principles, have a democratically elected Board, and organise meetings in which members can discuss activities and decisions to be taken. The vast majority of these local structures does not function without support from an NGO, often with international funding.

As set out in the context description, we note two major trends in civil society in the agricultural sector: farmers' cooperatives and Mutual Solidarity Groups. Many NGOs aim to set up or promote cooperatives and/or mutual solidarity groups. This is done with varying levels of success and impact. Especially the MUSOs can be seen as contributing to civil society development at the grassroots level. Most of these initiatives, however, have not yet reached the stage of maturity. This makes it difficult to assess to what extent they will make a sustainable contribution to civil society and the realisation of a more viable agricultural sector.

In terms of civil society development, we observe a tendency among donors to promote synergies/collaboration between civil society actors. This was often limited to collaboration between SPOs that were funded by the same donor. Ambitions now exist to promote more encompassing synergies, including not only civil society but also other actors in agricultural value chains. However, collaboration between donors themselves is often also limited, which does not set a good example for SPOs.

2) *To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*

With its ambition to develop 'Agricultural food chains are sustainable and inclusive for smallholders', VECO's interventions are in line with the developments that we have described above, most notably the development of cooperatives and bringing together the actors in an agricultural value chain. As we set out in the contribution story, VECO has been involved in supporting two agricultural cooperatives in Ruzizi Plain, and has made an effort to improve the organisation of the rice value chain, and to connect the producers joined in the cooperative to the market. We find that it is plausible that VECO has contributed to a strengthening of civil society at the grassroots, through working on the development of the capacity of the cooperatives. However, we also find that the internal governance of the cooperatives is still weak, and that they are still strongly dependent on VECO for getting access to markets and relations with other chain actors.

3) *What is the relevance of these changes?*

Cooperatives are helpful in increasing production, in getting access to markets, and in producing more professionally; people become aware of commercialisation, setting up a business plan etc. By doing this jointly, social cohesion within a community can increase. Cooperatives are mostly relevant for people who already have a certain standard of living/income and who are able to produce a surplus. These changes are thus less relevant for the most marginalised part of the population: they are excluded from becoming cooperative members, as they are not able to produce beyond subsistence level. Generally, beneficiaries were positive about the changes. The increased agricultural production has increased their household income and improved their living conditions. This is a very relevant development, given the figures presented in the context description at the beginning of this report, with 87.7% of the Congolese living below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day. Most of them make a living out of agriculture. This makes interventions aimed at strengthening agricultural value chains relevant for a large part of the population.

Also from the perspective of the Theory of Change of VECO, with the aim to develop agricultural food chains that are sustainable and inclusive for smallholders, the changes described are relevant.

4) *What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

Many civil society actors in the agricultural sector work towards realising the changes mentioned above, and there seems to be a momentum to achieve things. People see examples of success in neighbouring communities and become motivated to join initiatives themselves. Roughly, the elements mentioned in the contribution story can all be seen as actors and factors that explain our findings. Key factors are the development of a business mentality by members of the cooperative, and the development of a conducive institutional context, with effective linkages between the actors of the value chain. For a successful and independent cooperative, good internal governance is crucial.

## Concluding remarks

In this section we briefly summarize the findings of the three components of this evaluation: impact on MDGs & themes, capacity development and civil society strengthening. We then discuss the relationship between these three components.

We find little impact on MDGs & Themes. This does not mean the evaluated project has failed in this respect, as the power of the study was low. We find that the project was fairly efficient in producing outcomes. Furthermore we find that the largest driver of change is the recent increase in the conflict, which makes potential results less relevant, as gains in productivity are dominated by the negative impact of the conflict.

In terms of capacity building we note that in principle Cordaid has not contributed to changes in organisational capacity of VECO. It was also never the intention of Cordaid to invest in capacity development of VECO Bukavu. However, the institutional support in the Cordaid project has allowed VECO Bukavu to continue to function in a period without other donor financing. In that sense, MFS II financing was crucial to the maintenance of organisational capacity of VECO in Bukavu.

In terms of strengthening of civil society, VECO has been involved in supporting two agricultural cooperatives in Ruzizi Plain, and has made an effort to improve the organisation of the rice value chain, and to connect the producers joined in the cooperative to the market. We find that it is plausible that VECO has contributed to a strengthening of civil society at the grassroots, through working on the development of the capacity of the cooperatives. However, we also find that the internal governance of the cooperatives is still weak, and that they are still strongly dependent on VECO for getting access to markets and relations with other chain actors.

The potential exist for strong civil society organisations like cooperatives to be a driving force for agricultural productivity, and a mitigating force for conflict, thereby helping to achieve impact in both MDG 1 and the theme of fragile states. Thus far, there is no evidence that this potential has been realized by VECO. It would be unrealistic to expect this within an evaluation period of two years. The fact that MFS II funding has allowed VECO Bukavu to continue operations in absence of other donor financing means that the possibility remains for an impact on the longer term.

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PORTEUS

Nouveau cadre logique CORDAID projet 104320

Budget approuvé cordaid Congo

Final report

RAPPORT FILIERE RIZ 2011-2013-CORDAID

Dossier\_Cordaid\_Riz-14-15

Copy of Budget-Cordaid2014-corr

Original signed contract Pr. 110934

Text DEEL 2 Congo-def (algemeen programma Congo)

PROJECTKENSCHETS

110329 STRATEGIE VECO 2011-2015 rvsd1

Annex 1-strategy 2014-2019-1

POP Coosoproda 2011

POP Coosoproda 2012 ok

POP 2014 COOSOPRODA

Audit organisationnel COOSOPRODA OCT 2011

Rapport d'audit organisationnel de COOSOPRODA et de COOPA octobre2011-1

Rapport Auto Evaluation Semestrielle août 2012

RAPPORT auto evaluation Cooperative Coosoproda 2011

Autoevaluation des activités l'an 2 riz-Congo

ANNEXE1B-Baseline\_coosoproda\_Riz

ANNEXE1-Rapport impact 2013 riz Ruzizi COOSOPRODA-Cordaid

Audit - Management letter final Congo

AVENANT AF COOPA 2012

AVENANT AF COOSOPRODA 2012

PTO 2ème trimestre 2012 RO

Planification des activités d'avril 2012

Planification des activités mai 2012

Statut du personnel VECO RDCongo

Rapport VECO Final Shared

Draft MAPAFCO (Consolidé)(AM)

## Workshops, interviews and questionnaires:

Baseline visit: September 10-12, 20, 2012

Midterm visit: November 15-19, 22, 2013

Endline visit: July 2 & 11, 2014

Feedback workshop: February 4-5, 2015

| Name                          | Position   | Workshop baseline | Workshop midterm | Workshop end line | CS questionnaire baseline | CS questionnaire end line | 5C Questionnaire baseline | 5C Questionnaire endline | interview baseline | interview midterm |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| PIERRE MUNDEBA<br>MAPENDO     | Coordinateur d'antenne   | X                 | X                | X                 | X                         | X                         | X                         | X                        | X                  | X                 |
| LOUIS TCHUMA<br>BARHABWIRWA   | Spécialiste en Développement de<br>Chaîne de Valeur Agricole Durable<br>(SACD) | X                 | X                | X                 | X                         | X                         | X                         | X                        | X                  | X                 |
| JOSEPH KABUYAYA<br>MUTUTULO   | Chargé des finances et<br>administration d'antenne                             | X                 |                  |                   | X                         |                           | X                         |                          | X                  |                   |
| André Mayengo<br>Fuawanzolela | Former Représentant Régional   | X                 |                  |                   | X                         |                           | X                         |                          | X                  |                   |
| ESTHER REHEMA<br>MATENDO      | Chargée de suivi de PED  |                   |                  |                   | X                         |                           | X                         |                          | X                  |                   |
| Ivan Godfroid                 | Représentant Régional  |                   | X                |                   |                           |                           |                           |                          |                    | X                 |
| Maggy KIMBULUNGU<br>MWAYUMA   | Secrétaire administration et<br>finances                                       |                   |                  | x                 |                           | x                         |                           | X                        |                    |                   |

Besides our meetings with VECO staff, we also had a number of meetings with members of the cooperatives supported by VECO, as well as some people in the street to see whether they were aware of the cooperatives.

About 35 members of COOSOPRODA, Luberizi, 20.09.2012. These included the president and members of the Board, the management of the cooperative, and the Monitoring Committee.

Six young men, Luvungi, 18.11.2013.

5 women, Luvungi, 18.11.2013.

Five members of COOPA, Uvira, 19.11.2013. These included the manager, the agronomist, and the secretary of the Board.

Group interview with the President of COOSOPRODA, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and the manager of COOPA, Uvira, 22.11.2013.



About 15 members of COOSOPRODA, Luberizi, 11.07.2014. These included the vice-president, the agronomist, and a member of the Monitoring Committee.

We also observed the final evaluation of the Cordaid project with members of COOSOPRODA and COOPA, from November 18-22, Uvira.

## Contacts:

UNDSS Uvira, 21.09.2012

Cordaid The Hague, Ron Delnoye, 9.08.2012

Cordaid The Hague, Ron Delnoye, 14.02.2013

Cordaid The Hague, Ron Delnoye, 29.04.2014

|   |   |           |
|---|---|-----------|
| Willy Mulimbi<br>Byamungu                       | Catholic Relief Services (CRS),<br>agronomist                                 | 21.5.2014 |
| Felicien Zozo<br>Jean Marie<br>Delphine Mapendu | ASOP, coordinator<br>ASOP, programme officer<br>ASOP, field trainer           | 16.6.2014 |
| Solomon Kilongo                                 | ACDI, coordinator   | 13.5.2014 |
| Emmanuel  | AVUDS, coordinator  | 13.5.2014 |
| Laurent Ikundji                                 | FAO, M&E officer  | 16.5.2014 |
| Moussa Mahamane                                 | IFDC, DRC representative  | 20.5.2014 |
| Gaspard Zamu Haizuru                            | IFDC, economist   | 21.5.2014 |
| Nono Mwavita                                    | SARCAF, coordinator   | 24.5.2014 |
| Mireille Mihigo Nabintu                         | FOPAC-SK, lobby and advocacy<br>officer                                       | 13.5.2014 |
| Dieudonné Bakulikira<br>Nguma                   | UPACO, vice-president   | 23.5.2014 |
| 7 staff members, incl.<br>provincial inspector  | IPAPEL (provincial inspection for<br>agriculture, fisheries and<br>livestock) | 21.5.2014 |
| Netlyn Bernard<br>Moïse Foki                    | ICCO Bukavu   | 14.5.2014 |
| Thierry Kalimira                                | ICCO Bukavu, agronomist   | 14.5.2014 |
| Bilubi Meschac                                  | ISDR lecturer, consultant   | 21.5.2014 |

With some of the people listed above we talked directly about VECO. Others were consulted to provide us deeper insight into what is going on in the agricultural sector in South Kivu, to provide additional background to our analysis of the CIVICUS dimensions and the contribution analysis.

Next to the people listed above, we also talked to staff members of ADI-Kivu and UPDI (as part of our evaluation of these organisations). These organisations are working in the same field and some of the information gathered from them fed into our understanding of VECO. For a complete list of people consulted at these organisations, please see the respective organisation reports.

Besides, we attended one day of a workshop organised by UPDI as part of the ICCO synergy COS-PASAK. Participants in this workshop were representatives of the food security partners of ICCO (and some former partners), as well as some other NGO representatives, and representatives of state institutions such as IPAPEL (provincial inspection of agriculture, fisheries and livestock), INERA (national institute for agronomic study and research), SENASEM (national seed service), and the ministerial divisions of planning and environment.

## **Village list MDGs & Themes**

| <b>Village</b>  | <b>Treatment</b> |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Lubirizi        | 1                |
| Kiringi         | 1                |
| Kawizi          | 1                |
| Kibungo         | 1                |
| Sange (Gr 1)    | 1                |
| Runingu         | 1                |
| Kilomoni        | 1                |
| Kiliba          | 1                |
| Ruvuza          | 0                |
| Rubanga         | 0                |
| Rutanga         | 0                |
| Kigwema         | 0                |
| Kaala           | 0                |
| Kagando         | 0                |
| Rutumba         | 0                |
| Ndolera/Nyazigo | 0                |

## MDGs & Themes Data

The following table provides additional information on the construction of variables. All data cleaning, construction of variables and analysis was done in R, the scripts for these procedures are available on request.

The questionnaire is attached as a separate document.

| Variable Label   | Data source  |
|--|--|
| <b>MDG 1</b>   |  |
| Credit use (fraction)                                    | Module 2.4: Has your household used credit in the past year? 1 = yes; 0 = no   |
| Non food expenditure (\$)                                | Module 4.2: Sum of all non-food expenditures in the past fourteen days. (Longer would cause larger imprecision)  |
| Revenue from rice (\$)                                   | Module 3.3: Revenue of all rice sold   |
| Revenue from cassava (\$)                                | Module 3.3.: Revenue of all cassava sold   |
| Rice yield (Tonne/Ha)                                    | Module 3.3: Rice produced on all fields  |
| Cassava Yield (Tonne/Ha)                                 | Module 3.3: Cassava produced on all fields   |
| Rice Price (\$/kg)                                       | Module 3.3: Revenue of rice divided by the production  |
| Cassava Price (\$/kg)                                    | Module 3.3: Revenue of cassava divided by the production   |
| Fraction of rice sold                                    | Module 3.3: Rice sold / rice produced  |
| Fraction of cassava sold                                 | Module 3.3: Cassava sold / cassava produced  |
| Suffered from hunger in the last year                    | Module 4.1 Did you or someone in your household suffer from hunger in the last year? 0 = Never; 1 = just one or two times, multiple times, often, or always        |
| Often suffered from hunger last year                     | Module 4.1 Did you or someone in your household suffer from hunger in the last year? 10= Never or just one or two times 1 = multiple times, often, or always       |
| <b>Fragile States</b>                                    |  |
| Number (types) of incidents reported                     | Module 5.2: Asked if there were any of the following types of insults, in the community: theft,abuse,rape,witchcraft,land conflict, other. Number of yes reported. |
| Do you go out at night? (yes/no)                         | Module 5.1: Do you go out at night? 1 = yes; 0 = no  |
| Talk to members of the community about security (yes/no) | Module 6.1: Did you discuss security with members of the community 1 = yes; 0 = no.  |
| Talk to NGOs about security (yes/no)                     | Module 6.1: Did you discuss security with an NGO 1 = yes; 0 = no.  |
| Talk to authorities about security (yes/no)              | Module 6.1: Did you discuss security with the authorities? 1 = yes; 0 = no.  |
| Tokens sent in trust game                                | Number of tokens sent in the trust game (electronic questionnaire)   |
| <b>VECO Specific</b>                                     |  |
| Use Fertilizer (yes/no)                                  | Module 3.4 Did you use fertilizer 1= yes; 0 = no   |
| Use Irrigation (yes/no)                                  | Module 3.4 Did you use irrigation 1= yes; 0 = no   |
| Used Improved Seeds (yes/no)                             | Module 3.4 Did you use improved seeds 1= yes; 0 = no   |

# Civil Society Strengthening Report Villages Cobaye

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*Final report MFS II evaluation*

Bart Weijs and Carolien Jacobs

Wageningen University

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## List of Acronyms

AFEM-SK - Association des Femmes des Médias du Sud-Kivu  
CFA – Co-Financing Agency (the Dutch donor organisation)  
CoC - Communities of Change Alliance  
CSO – Civil Society Organisation  
CSI – Civil Society Index  
DRC – Democratic Republic of the Congo  
FARDC - Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo  
MDG – Millenium Development Goal  
MFS II – Mede-Financierings-Stelsel (the Dutch grant system)  
MONUSCO - Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation du Congo  
MUSO – Mutuelle de Solidarité (Solidarity group for savings and loans)  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
RFDP - Réseau de Femmes pour le Développement et la Paix  
SGBV – sexual and gender based violence  
SLRC – Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium  
SPO – Southern Partner Organisation  
VICO – Villages Cobaye / Vision Communautaire

## 1. Introduction

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Netherlands development programme MFS II. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Dutch NGOs, which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch NGOs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants. MFS II-funded organisations support a wide range of development activities of a large number of southern partner organisations in over 70 countries. This report is part of the country study carried out in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The overall report consists of three parts, based on three categories of priority result areas: achievement of MDGs & themes, capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), and civil society strengthening. This report focuses on the civil society strengthening component.

As part of the civil society strengthening component of the evaluation, we looked at ways in which development projects have strengthened civil society. The evaluation aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society during the evaluation period and the extent to which development interventions with Dutch MFS II financing have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a baseline and endline study and focuses on a broad sample of 19 partnerships. We conducted observations, workshops, field visits and interviews, during three visits in 2012, 2013 (smaller subsample) and 2014. At the beginning of 2015, we organised a feedback workshop in DRC for all organisations in the capacity development and civil society strengthening parts of the evaluation, where we discussed the general findings and received comments on the draft version of this report.<sup>1</sup> Core elements of our evaluation approach are the Theory of Change and the Civicus Civil Society Index<sup>2</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> The draft version of this report was commented upon by Wilhelmine Ntakebuka and Francine Kasese (VICO). We would like to thank them for their comments and additions.

<sup>2</sup> [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org); see also CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012

which distinguishes five dimensions to civil society: Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception of impact, and the Environment.

In this report we look specifically at the contribution of *Villages Cobaye/Vision Communautaire (VICO)* to civil society strengthening. VICO was a partner of Cordaid and the Communities of Change (CoC) Alliance. VICO is an organisation that aims to improve socio-economic circumstances of victims of war, and promote equal rights for men and women. Established in 1996, the organisation has carried out projects with various donors in the past, but the last two years have been characterised by a lack of funds. For this evaluation we focus on the project with Cordaid/CoC: a two-year, EUR 50,000 project for socioeconomic support to 300 women and 50 men that are victims of conflict in the territory of Walungu, South Kivu. This project had no dedicated civil society strengthening component, but we could identify a number of elements that can contribute to strengthening civil society.

In the case of VICO, two levels can be distinguished at which the MFS II financing may have contributed to civil society strengthening: 1) at the level of the beneficiaries and local *noyaux*, grassroots groups<sup>3</sup>, of VICO; and 2) at the level of civil society in Bukavu, where VICO was included in a *synergie*<sup>4</sup> of organisations working on women and peace that were partners of Cordaid. The evaluation has focused on the first level, as this is directly part of the project that VICO carried out. Indirectly though, the Bukavu level may have contributed to VICO's ability to contribute to civil society strengthening at the level of the beneficiaries; we have therefore also taken activities at the level of the synergy in Bukavu into account. Our analysis of VICO is contextualised by an analysis of the characteristics and capacities of women's civil society in South Kivu, available as a separate report (see the appendix).<sup>5</sup>

We find that it is unlikely that this project has led to a durably improved societal position of victims of armed conflict, because improvements in living circumstances were temporary and we found no direct evidence that beneficiaries' societal circumstances have improved in any sustainable way. The evidence suggests two main reasons for this: (1) A lack of capacity on the part of VICO to adapt the project when problems became apparent and in terms of financial management, and (2) a lack of involvement from the side of Cordaid, knowing the weaknesses of VICO.

In the following, first we describe the country and relevant local context. Then we give a short description of VICO and the project with the civil society strengthening/policy influencing elements. Next, we shortly discuss the methodology. We then present the results, followed by a discussion and conclusion.

## 2. Context

In this section, we briefly describe the country and local context as far as it is relevant for the project under evaluation.

South Kivu, and eastern DRC as a whole, is strongly characterised by the legacy of repeated conflict and high levels of insecurity. High levels of poverty are coupled with limited access to basic services, in

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<sup>3</sup> Literal translation: 'nodes'. See the description of Southern Partner Organisation VICO for more information.

<sup>4</sup> Literally: synergy, basically referring to a network or working group, with the idea that the total is more than simply the sum of the parts

<sup>5</sup> Hilhorst, Dorothea, and Marie Rose Bashwira, 2015. *The Women's Movement in South Kivu, DRC: a civil society analysis*. Occasional Paper #11, Special Chair Humanitarian Aid and Reconstruction, Wageningen University & Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural de Bukavu.

a still young democracy with a history of clientelism and rent-seeking. Eastern DRC is reputed for high levels of gender-based violence, including sexual violence against women. At the same time, especially South Kivu has a history of civil society mobilisation, and the eastern DRC has received a great deal of international aid. South Kivu possesses a wealth of natural resources and has a high agricultural potential. The following paragraphs describe these issues in more detail.

### *Conflict and poverty*

Since the mid-1990s, the east of the DRC has gone through several periods of violence. Even though the Sun City agreements in 2002 marked the end of all-out war and integration of important factions in the Congolese national army FARDC, there remained a number of armed groups that chose to retain arms for a variety of reasons.<sup>6</sup> With the presence of the world's largest peacekeeping mission MONUSCO and a great deal of international aid, the situation seems to be slowly improving. Nevertheless insecurity persists in some areas in South Kivu, and increased during the recent rise and demise of rebel movement M23 (2012-2013). The Fall of Goma in December 2012 and consequent threat to Bukavu led to the evacuation of the majority of international staff, and drew the attention of the military to North Kivu, with other armed groups taking advantage of the situation. The following defeat of M23 and military moves against other armed groups have led to more optimism, though. In general the security situation in the province was considered as stable, yet unpredictable during the evaluation period.

The decades of insecurity, conflict, and the rent-seeking dictatorship of Mobutu have greatly impoverished the DRC. The country has great potential for agriculture and possesses a wealth of mineral resources. The potential of all these resources however is far from being exploited. On the 2014 Human Development Index, DRC ranked 186 out of 187 (followed only by Niger). Gross national income per head was noted to be at \$444 in 2013, which was lowest of all countries for which data were available. In the same year, 87.7% of the population lived below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.<sup>7</sup> In South Kivu, which used to be the granary of DRC, roughly 3 out of 4 people live in rural areas.<sup>8</sup> A survey carried out in South Kivu in 2012 showed that around three-quarters of households in the sampled population make a living primarily in agriculture, either in subsistence agriculture (65%), commercial farming (5%), or by agricultural casual labour (6%).<sup>9</sup> Households within the same sample have access to 2.69 hectares of land, but often not all of this land is held in ownership. Due to various factors, such as insecurity, displacement, and market distortions, agricultural production is low. Food insecurity and poverty remain widespread.

### *Position of women*

Women in DRC are greatly underrepresented in the decision-making sphere<sup>10</sup>, and still face many challenges. Though the DRC has recognised United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325, enacted a law on sexual violence in 2006, and the constitution provides the basis and legitimation of political equality and equity, women continue to be second-rate citizens in several aspects of the law.

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<sup>6</sup> See the insightful maps of armed groups in the East by Christoph Vogel, and the elucidating analyses by the Rift Valley Institute

<sup>7</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD>, viewed on 06.10.2014

<sup>8</sup> UNDP (2009) 'Profil Résumé Pauvreté de Sud Kivu 2009'. Kinshasa: UNDP.

<sup>9</sup> n=1259; Miliano, C.W.J, de, A. Ferf, J. Oude Groeniger, and M. Mashanda. 2014. Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study, Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

<sup>10</sup> For example, in the first national elections in 2006, women made up the majority of voters, but only a few managed to get elected: 8 percent in the National Assembly and 8.6 percent in the Senate (International Alert (2012) 'Women's political participation and economic empowerment in post-conflict countries: Lessons from the Great Lakes region in Africa')



Yet the major impediment to women's development is the gap between the law and the culturally dominated institutions and practices that render women's position even lower. With some differences between urban and rural situations and despite some recent developments towards women's empowerment, women's low position remains expressed in different domains, including the political, social and economic domains.

The women's movement in South Kivu has grown in parallel to international development discourses on women and gender, and has from the 1990s onwards increasingly addressed issues related to the war and insecurity. While the number of women's organisations and coordination structures in the province grew, the main point of attention was sexual violence. In recent years the attention to violence has broadened to all kinds of gender-based violence, including for example inheritance issues, and to promoting women's leadership and political representation.

### *Civil society*

Civil society in South Kivu is relatively well-developed. There is a large number of local NGOs, organised in thematic groups and networks, and they are not afraid to speak out against the government. There is also a strong presence of international organisations willing to partner with local NGOs. After many years of a strong humanitarian presence, many organisations are now engaging in development aid. However, a side-effect of the long-time presence of humanitarian aid is an attitude of dependency among parts of the population, which people describe as *attentisme* (wait and see). A survey carried out in 2012 showed that 21% of all households had received food aid, 12% seeds and tools, 4% material aid (for construction) and 2% financial loans.<sup>11</sup> This is a challenge for organisations attempting to set up development projects, as their beneficiaries are used to free distribution of materials, and changing this attitude is not a short-term process.

The dependency of civil society on foreign aid is high, and almost complete. NGOs derive their funding almost exclusively from foreign funding. Their own initiatives are indirectly derived from this funding, which does allow them a certain institutional leeway. Local grassroots associations are not directly funded, but depend for their operations, seminars, transport and accompaniment on funded NGOs. For the near future, the continuation of the women's movement requires that the international community continues to recognise and support the role of NGOs in promoting women's rights.

### *Governance and decentralisation*

A history of corruption and bad governance is not easily undone, and the size of DRC is not making the process any easier. Governance in DRC faces many challenges, including formal and informal taxation, policies that are not implemented, and a stalling process of decentralisation. Decentralisation was part of the Constitution adopted in 2006, and the decision to put in place a more decentralised system of governance was taken 5 years ago.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, local elections have yet to be held. At the level of the local 'decentralised territorial entities' (*entité territoriale décentralisée, or ETD*), which corresponds with the level of the territories in North and South Kivu, many organisations have moved ahead to engage in promoting participatory planning processes, each with their specific issues in mind. Local elections are considered an opportunity for people to gain experience with the political process and

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<sup>11</sup> n=1259; Miliano, C.W.J, de, A. Ferf, J. Oude Groeniger, and M. Mashanda. 2014. Baseline report of SLRC livelihoods and perceptions DRC study, Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.

<sup>12</sup> For more information, see: Cellule Technique d'Appui à la décentralisation, 2010. *La décentralisation au service de la paix, de la démocratie, du développement et de l'unité nationale.*

public management. Women's organisations view these elections as a strategic moment for increasing women's participation at the decision-making level. The national electoral commission CENI has recently proposed to organise local elections in August 2015.

### 3. Description of Southern Partner Organisation

In this section we briefly describe VICO: its history, organisational details, main approach and areas of intervention.

VICO was established in 1996 as '*Villages Cobaye*', or 'Guinea pig Villages'. The organisation was created by the *coordinatrice*, Mrs Ntakebuka, as an attempt to create income-generating activities for people displaced during the First Congo war. These income-generating activities initially consisted of breeding and selling guinea pigs.<sup>13</sup> After this first project, VICO engaged in a diverse set of activities, including the rebuilding of three schools with support from MONUSCO, distribution of food with WFP, supporting victims of sexual violence with the Panzi Hospital since 2005, and education on health, human rights, sexual violence and gender with Global Fund for Women. VICO also continued to support the development of commercial activities, setting up a multipurpose community centre (*Centre Communautaire Polyvalente*) with UNDP for the development of economic activities by women and teenage mothers, in Burhale in 2011. People started calling Mrs Ntakebuka 'Mama VICO', and in 2012 the organisation changed its name to '*Vision Communautaire*', reflecting its intention to take a holistic approach. Following a grant of two tractors by the Ministry of Agriculture, VICO engaged in agriculture, and now exploits a field of 40ha in the territory of Fizi. In 2013 they started working together with another organisation, RRSF (*Réseau Rural sans Frontières*), and moved into their small office. This has not yet led to major profits, but VICO hopes the revenues will allow it to fund some of its projects in coming years.<sup>14</sup>

The mission of VICO has remained more or less the same over the years: to improve the socioeconomic circumstances of victims of war in DRC, and respect for equal rights for men and women in the communities of intervention. VICO facilitates the set-up of income-generating activities (small commerce) and raises awareness of local communities on a variety of topics related to health, human rights and gender. VICO also engages in agriculture and lobbying with local authorities and international organizations for the wellbeing of the communities in which there beneficiaries are present. VICO organises its beneficiaries in groups referred to as '*noyau*', or 'node' (a term generally used for grassroots groups at the community level). These *noyaux* can have up to 150 members, meet once a month, and are managed by a democratically elected committee. The *noyaux* constitute VICO's presence on the ground, and form an important source of information for VICO. Support to beneficiaries usually goes through these *noyaux*. At a certain moment, VICO counted 45 *noyaux*, but due to the current lack of financial support, this number has dropped to around 20. VICO primarily worked in the territory of Walungu, where the coordinator also originates, and the majority of the *noyaux* are located. Currently more attention goes to Fizi however, where the agricultural activities are located (but no project beneficiaries). There are also *noyaux* in Kabare and Kalehe.

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. Maas et al 2010: Livelihoods of Smallholders in South Kivu Depend on Small Livestock: the Case of the '*Cobaye*'

<sup>14</sup> See 'Realisations de VICO 1997-2012' for a more extensive overview of their activities over the years

VICO has no formal employees, but has up to 11 volunteers who may or may not receive a small fee, depending on the available resources. External labour is hired to take care of the fields in Fizi; the agronomist also receives a small fee, paid from the revenues from the agricultural activities. During the Cordaid project, 4 staff received a regular payment (the coordinator, programme officer, secretary, and bookkeeper).

Currently, VICO has no donors. The table below gives an overview of VICO's donor-supported projects during the MFS II period, from 2011 until 2014.

**Table #:** overview of donor-supported projects of VICO during the MFS II period

| Project  | Donor                             | Aim   | Period                            | Amount of funding (EUR)          |      |      |      |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------|------|------|
|  |                                   |   |                                   | 2011                             | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
| 103075; socio-economic support to 300 women and 50 men, victims of conflict in the east of DRC, South Kivu, territory of Walungu | Cordaid (MFS II)                  | Setting up and accompanying microcredit groups, provision of credit, awareness raising and advocacy | October 1, 2010 – October 1, 2012 | 47300* (+4.269 own contribution) |      |      |      |
| 105206 ; Urgent Action Fund  | Cordaid (non-MFS)                 | psychological support for VICO team and replacement of lost property                                | October - December 2011           | 7.214                            |      |      |      |
| Medias et organisations de la societe civile credibles   | Syfia International               | Support for the production of communication materias  | October 2011-August 2012          | 500 (675 USD)**                  |      |      |      |
| Support radio emissions Maendeleo  | Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises | Awareness raising on women's rights   | 2010-2011                         | 2969 (4000 USD)**                |      |      |      |
| Granting tractors to actors engaged in development   | Ministry of Agriculture, DRC      | Stimulate agricultural development  |                                   | Two tractors                     |      |      |      |
| Self-financing activities  | -                                 | Develop income-generating activities so that VICO has an own source of funding                      | -                                 | <i>Data unavailable</i>          |      |      |      |

*\*Cordaid transferred an initial 45000, then 2300 to pay the auditor, and decided not to transfer the remaining 2700, because VICO was not able to convincingly show the need.*  
*\*\*We used the exchange rate for the Cordaid project (1.3474) to calculate the EUR rates*

### General theory of change

VICO aims for a society where rights of women are respected, peace reigns, and poverty is eradicated. The final condition for this is the improved socio-economic condition of women. In order for their rights to be respected, an important precondition is the existence of fair courts and tribunals. A critical condition is also the involvement of relevant authorities (traditional chiefs, military, administration, religious authorities). As a start, the population at the grassroots needs to be involved, and they need to appropriate the VICO project and goals, and it is important to do an analysis of the socio-economic and health needs of women in the target area. For VICO to be able to play a role in this, it needs to

establish partnerships with other (international) actors, and develop its capacity. The availability of funding is a critical condition, as well as a relative degree of peace.

#### **4. Project description**

Here we describe the project and its civil society/policy advocacy elements, in terms of size, budget, duration, major objectives and activities. We also include a short theory of change at project level.

The relationship between VICO and Cordaid dates back to 2007. After some small-scale projects supported by the Cordaid field office in Bukavu, Cordaid supported an EUR 23,091 8-month micro-credit project for women in 2009. At the end of 2010, Cordaid supported an EUR 50,000 two-year project for socio-economic support to 300 women and 50 men that are victims of conflict in South Kivu, the territory of Walungu. This project forms the main focus of this evaluation.

The aim of the project was to contribute to improvement of the socioeconomic situation of victims of armed conflict in the territory of Walungu. The project was executed between October 2010 en October 2012, in the *groupements* or 'groupings' of Mulamba, Burhale, Mushinga, Walungu en Kaniola. In this project, VICO had three main objectives:

- Provide 300 women and 50 men with credit to develop income-generating activities, in 5 groups of 70 people, one in each of the mentioned groupings.
- Educate the beneficiaries in the project on how to set up a business, and how credit-groups work. VICO also aimed to raise awareness on the laws on sexual violence and on gender.
- Approach the local leaders of the communities to involve them in the struggle against sexual violence, in collaboration with Cordaid-partners AFEM, RFDP and the Panzi Hospital.

The project does not have a specific civil society strengthening component, but does contain elements that aim to strengthen civil society. We distinguish the following elements:

- Involving local leaders in the battle against sexual violence (two meetings planned)
- Training beneficiaries on principles of good governance in managing a credit group, as well as raising awareness on women's rights
- More broadly, the project can be seen as contributing to restoring the social fabric, through improving the economic position of vulnerable people, and thus allowing them to take part in society again

We describe the civil society strengthening activities of the project in more detail in our construction of the contribution story.

Importantly, through this project, Cordaid also aimed to contribute to an increase in organisational capacity of VICO. Cordaid involved VICO in its *synergie* of partners working on sexual violence, and in its capacity development programme. These activities were not part of the project budget, and as such were not the main focus of the evaluation; yet, we do consider them in our analysis below, since an interaction with the project is to be expected.

## 5. Data collection and analytical approach

Here we describe the baseline and follow-up assessment, as well as particular choices and data collection problems. We also explain here which outcomes were selected for the contribution analysis. The general methodology we followed can be found in the Annex, as well as a list of documents employed, workshop participants and other informants.

Generally, we followed the methodology described in the Annex. Due to changes in the composition of VICO (close collaboration/merger with RRSF), only two people who participated in the baseline workshop, also took part in the end-line assessment; the other participants in the end-line workshop worked for to RRSF, and thus were not able to give us any information about the project. Nevertheless, the two participants that were the same constitute the core of VICO, especially the coordinator. For the field visits, we organised a small focus group in Bukavu during the baseline, and we decided to go to Walungu to meet people in the actual area of intervention during the endline. This gave us a broad impression of the results of the project, especially since the project had ended almost two years before the endline. The beneficiaries we met during the endline came from three different *noyeax*, and not all had actually received the credit, allowing us to qualitatively compare their situations.

As described in our methodology, we decided to conduct a contribution analysis for a subsample, in which VICO was included. In November 2013, we did an additional qualitative study on the women's movement in South Kivu (Bukavu and Walungu), in order to gain insight into the role of selected SPOs in policy influencing/advocacy at the provincial level, as well as their influence at local level (Walungu) – see the report on the women's movement in the annex.

A draft version of this report was discussed with staff of VICO during a feedback workshop in DRC at the beginning of 2015.

For the analysis of contribution of the development intervention of VICO to the strengthening of civil society, we selected the following main outcome (see also the contribution story further below):

- (at the local level) the improvement of the societal position of victims of armed conflict in Walungu. We relate this outcome to the first CSI dimension, Civic engagement, and the first priority result area of this dimension, 'diversity of socially-based engagement'.

We consider a second outcome as a contributing factor to the main outcome:

- (at Bukavu level) the strengthening of civil society (VICO in particular) in Bukavu, through the synergy and the organisational development activities of Cordaid. We relate this outcome to the second CSI dimension, Level of organisation.

As explained in the introduction, the emphasis lies on the first outcome, as most of the efforts in the project of VICO were directed to strengthening society at the grassroots level.

## 6. Results

In this section, we describe our findings. We first provide descriptive analyses and scoring of relative changes in the CSI dimensions (Civic engagement, Level of organisation, Practice of values, Perception

of impact, and the Environment). This is followed by a contribution story assembling the evidence for the contribution of MFS II funding to a strengthening of civil society, through the development interventions of VICO.

|                       | Baseline<br>(0-3) | Endline |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------|
| Civic engagement      | 2.0               | 1       |
| Level of organisation | 1.5               | 1       |
| Practice of values    | 0.5               | 0       |
| Perception of impact  | 1.0               | 0.5     |
| Environment           | 1.0               | 1       |

**Civic Engagement**

*Under this dimension we distinguish the diversity of socially-based engagement (taking into account needs of marginalised groups, participation of target groups in the project), and the diversity of political engagement (is there dialogue of local leaders in dialogue with government representatives, are beneficiaries member of sectoral user groups).*

When assessing the five CSI dimensions, civic engagement is where VICO is strongest, most notably in its socially-based engagement: the organisation manages to maintain an extensive network of local grassroots groups, even without any external support (though the number of groups peaked at around 45 during the project with Cordaid, and has since gone down to an estimated 20). Members are mostly women, and include SGBV victims. VICO does not have a systematic way to distinguish who are vulnerable or marginalised, but utilises general categories, such as ‘SGBV victims’, ‘widows’, ‘teenage mothers’. The project with Cordaid also included men, but how these were vulnerable was not defined. These local groups make their needs known to VICO, and have participated in needs assessment and evaluation workshops (e.g. the midterm evaluation of the project with Cordaid). Staff refer to a lack of means to thoroughly gauge the ideas and needs of beneficiaries, and also, when beneficiaries voice their needs, to respond to these.

At local level, VICO focuses less on political engagement than on socially-based engagement, though it has established contacts with local leaders. Some dialogue activities have been undertaken within the project with Cordaid, but the focus has mainly been on awareness raising. With the local authorities, contacts generally are limited to when VICO has a need for their involvement.

In this dimension of civic engagement, both in terms of socially-based and in terms of political engagement, VICO has regressed during the evaluation period: staff point here at the lack of funding, which has diminished VICO’s ability to maintain ties with the local context, especially in less secure areas.

**Level of Organisation**

*This dimension focuses on the organisational level of civil society (the connectedness of SPOs in networks of organisations, the nature of relationships between SPOs and networks, and the degree of*

*representation of interests); peer to peer communication (the strength of the relationships of the SPO with other actors); and financial and human resources (the composition of the financial resource base, availability of human resources).*

The level of organisation is one of the weaker dimensions for VICO. It is evident that in 2010-2012, being part of the Cordaid synergy increased VICO's interactions with Cordaid partner NGOs working on women and peace (including AFEM and RFDP), as proven by the number of meetings and references by other Cordaid partner NGOs. When talking about synergy and collaboration, VICO mostly refers to exchange of information; we have identified no examples of the joint development of activities. After the end of the project relationship with Cordaid, these connections have weakened, and VICO made little reference to these organisations during our endline visit. Similarly, the new staff in the Women Leadership programme at the Cordaid office in Bukavu was not familiar with VICO. VICO has remained a participant in the women's composites of the Bureau de la Coordination de la Societe Civile, and for example was among the women's organisations to meet UN special envoy Mary Robinson when she visited Bukavu.<sup>15</sup> The strongest relationship with another NGO is with RRSF, with which VICO entered into a close collaboration in 2013, and moved into their small office. This collaboration seems born out of necessity, as both NGOs lack donors. Apart from this, VICO continues to work mostly on its own.

The financial resource base has weakened over the evaluation period: prior to 2011, VICO used to have one main external donor at a time, including some national donors. But after the end of the project with Cordaid in 2012, no new donors have been found. Nevertheless, VICO is working on establishing a new source of financing, through renting and cultivating 22ha of land in the territory of Fizi, using the two tractors it received from the Ministry of Agriculture. This has not yet yielded many revenues, but if the plan succeeds, VICO would belong to a small group of Congolese organisations that have their own source of financing.

Related to this, in terms of human resources VICO also remains weak. Apart from the coordinator and the communications officer, the core staff is composed of students or recent graduates. Even during the project with Cordaid, salaries were too low to attract qualified staff. Staff now work on a voluntary basis. An exception is the agronomist, who he receives a small fee from the revenues of the agricultural activities.

This means that for this dimension, there was a temporary improvement in level of organisation during the project with Cordaid, but VICO has not managed to retain this level after the external support ended.

### ***Practice of Values***

*This dimension deals with internal governance (the functioning of the social bodies/organs, are they involved in the strategic management of the SPO, and the functioning of lower CSO levels), and transparency (respect of internal written procedures, extent of downward accountability, within the SPO and to lower CSO levels, transparency on finances).*

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<sup>15</sup> Mary Robinson was the UN special envoy for the Great Lakes Region from March 2013- July 2014, when she was replaced by Said Djinnit. The visit to Bukavu was on April 8, 2014.

We found little evidence of the involvement of the statutory bodies in VICO – in our different visits, no reference was made to these, apart from when we questioned staff directly about them. In the 2012 evaluation visit, staff was critical about the functioning of the statutory bodies: though the target group was well-represented among the members (over 50%, according to staff), meetings were not frequent, and the different bodies (general assembly, board, control committee) played no active role – ‘laissez-faire’, according to one staff member. The poverty of many member contributes to this, as they have no means to get together for meetings, and cannot contribute their membership fees. In the past years, this situation has not improved; the members have been involved in an initial meeting to develop the main lines of the strategic plan 2012-2016, but not in the drafting of the plan, and with the lack of external financing in 2013-2014, the number of meetings and communication with the executive team has reduced even more – ‘some members even think we are no longer operational’. As the beneficiaries are organised in *noyeax*, they can present their needs to VICO, and hold the organisation to account. We see however, that this relationship is weakened by the lack of external financing.

In terms of transparency: a Manual of Administrative, Financial and Accounting Procedures has been developed as part of the organisational development plan in collaboration with Cordaid, but there is little evidence of formalised procedures in the current functioning of the organisation. In the absence of donor-funded projects, there is less incentive to adhere to procedures. Nevertheless, in order to secure future funding, as well as to be accountable to the beneficiaries, adopting and following at least some procedures seems relevant. Now that the Cordaid project has ended, downward accountability has weakened, because VICO is no longer regularly in touch with most of the grassroots groups it seeks to represent. No reports are available of activities since the ending of the project with Cordaid, and financial management is weak, with no yearly audit, and no overviews of revenues or expenses available. During the baseline visit, we came across some allegations of ‘*Operation Retour*’, fraud, both from the side of VICO as from Cordaid.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, an audit was done as part of the project with Cordaid, and found no irregularities.

This dimension shows that mechanisms for safe-guarding internal democratic governance, financial transparency and accountability to the target group are weak, and have weakened over the MFS II period. In combination with the lack of necessary funds to regularly visit the local grassroots groups, VICO has increasingly become a private project of the coordinator and staff.

### ***Perception of Impact***

*Under this dimension we discuss the responsiveness (nature and intensity of VICO’s relationship with the public sector and the private sector); social impact (target group satisfaction regarding fulfilment of their primary social concern, perception of public and private sector of quality of delivery of services by VICO); and the policy impact (the level of influence of SPOs in the process leading to major policy changes identified in the sector of the SPO’s intervention since 2011).*

The project with Cordaid was set up as part of a holistic approach to the needs of victims of sexual violence in the territory of Walungu, involving VICO for socio-economic support, RFDP for judicial assistance, and AFEM for raising awareness, education about women’s rights. Economic support is

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<sup>16</sup> VICO strongly disagrees with any allegation of fraud on their side, indicating that it were the employees of Cordaid which were involved in this.



highly valued by the target group, and we found that in many projects that involve non-material assistance, beneficiaries are often asking for more financial development assistance. At the same time, the empowerment of vulnerable groups, women, is an important social concern. In our contribution story below, we assemble the evidence for the social impact of the activities by VICO.

In the Cordaid project, engagement with the public sector focused on the local level. The project allowed VICO to engage local officials, through organising two meetings. Local officials were involved in the selection of vulnerable people as beneficiaries. The coordinator is well-connected to some local chiefs, illustrated by an invitation of one of these to join him to the opening of a mine of Banro, which was also attended by President Kabila. Similarly, the obtaining of two tractors by VICO indicates that the organisation knows how to navigate political channels.

VICO is also occasionally involved in lobbying at the provincial level, but there is no evidence of structural engagement with the authorities at this level. The coordinator indicates her awareness of the shortcomings of the current political system, and her hesitant willingness to enter politics to contribute to change. VICO has worked with some cooperative banks for the disbursement of credit in the project with Cordaid, but does not have the ambition to influence private sector policies.

Overall, development in past years in this dimension of Perception of impact is very limited, and can mostly be found at the local level. The involvement of public sector officials and chiefs has facilitated the execution of the project. At the same time, the policy impact of the engagement with the public and private sectors is negligible.

### ***Environment/context***

*This dimension takes the wider environment into account. What is the degree of participation of the SPO in defining the civil society interventions of the CFA/Consortium; to what extent is a context analysis of the space and role of civil society in the specific country done as part of the programme /project cycle; to what extent is the SPO involved in studies on civil society?*

Civil society at large does not feature in the project documents, nor is specific reference made to other women's organisations. The attention of VICO is directed to the beneficiaries, the authorities, and national or international donor organisations. Reference to other civil society organisations is only made in mentioning the networks VICO is part of. This is not surprising, as VICO does not have a specific focus on policy influencing, and collaborating with other CSOs for this.

VICO has participated in meetings of the Cordaid synergy for its partner organisations working on women and peace, but has not participated in defining further civil society interventions of Cordaid/Communities of Change. VICO has not been involved in subsequent projects, like the Droit pour Tous Campaign, which involved many Cordaid partners.

VICO staff indicate they generally collect information about their socio-economic and politico-security context, and the opportunities presented by the context, through for example attending meetings in Bukavu. However, the context descriptions in the project proposal of 2010 and the final report of 2013 are to a large extent the same. Though perhaps major changes are not to be expected, it would seem

reasonable to focus on the developments in the final report, even if they are small. VICO has no system to systematically collect evidence on the context and needs of beneficiaries.

There has been little development in this dimension for VICO, during the evaluation period. The organisation does not display a structural engagement with other civil society actors, and was also not part of further civil society interventions of Cordaid. It is aware of the context it operates in, but does not collect evidence on changes in context and local needs.

## 7. Contribution story

### From being ‘thin women’, to ‘fat women’, to ‘losing weight’ again

For this component of the evaluation, we focus on the contribution of MFS II funding to the strengthening of civil society. In the case of VICO, we investigate the contribution at the level of the beneficiaries and local *noyaux*, or grassroots groups, because this is where civil society strengthening efforts in the project were directed at. We also take the *synergie* of organisations supported by Cordaid among civil society in Bukavu into account. We ask the question: how has MFS II funding, through the intermediary organisation VICO, contributed to improving the societal position of victims of armed conflict in Walungu? How have the synergy and the organisational development support by Cordaid contributed this?

First, we describe the basic rationale and activities of the project and the support by Cordaid. We then assemble the evidence at the grassroots level and at the level of the synergy for how the described activities have contributed to strengthening of civil society. We continue with a brief overview of other actors and factors that have played a role. We conclude by assessing the evidence — to what extent it is plausible that the development intervention of VICO has contributed to civil society strengthening.

#### *Theory of Change and activities*

The basic rationale behind the project of VICO, as set out in the theory of change, is that if vulnerable, marginalised people are helped to become economically independent, they will be enabled to regain their position in society. Accordingly, about half of the financing in the VICO project supported by Cordaid went towards supporting the economic activities of 350 victims of armed conflict in the territory of Walungu (300 women and 50 men) in the form of the provision of credit (EUR 22.347).<sup>17</sup> The credit groups were set up (14 groups with 25 members each) and accompanied by VICO, with the aim of improving the socio-economic position of beneficiaries. Besides organising and overseeing the distribution of credit, VICO also engaged in training the groups on the development of a small business (petty trade—*petit commerce*) and the internal governance of an association, and awareness raising activities on the fight against sexual violence, gender and UN resolution 1325. VICO also organised two seminars for 75 community leaders and political and military authorities to involve them in the struggle against sexual violence and educate them about relevant legal texts. VICO claims their activities have contributed to an 75% increase in revenue for beneficiaries.

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<sup>17</sup> Roughly, the other half was spent on salaries and office rent.

Besides funding the project of VICO, Cordaid also involved VICO in a synergy of organisations supported by Cordaid, with the aim to take a holistic approach to the problem of SGBV in the territory of Walungu, and develop joint policy-influencing activities. These were not part of the direct objectives in the project of VICO and were not included in the project budget. Through the synergy, Cordaid also invested in the development of the organisational capacity of their local partners, including VICO. VICO started taking part in the capacity development activities in October 2011; these activities included a participatory analysis of their own organisational capacity (*radioscopie*) and training sessions on financial and administrative management and on results-based management.<sup>18</sup> Based on this, an organisational development plan was created, outlining the necessary improvements.

Basically, this means Cordaid attempted to improve the situation of marginalised SGBV victims through (1) supporting a number of CSOs to deliver a variety of services to SGBV victims in Walungu, so that their urgent needs would be covered, and (2) developing the capacity of the CSOs so they will be better able to address the needs of the SGBV victims.

### *Evidence*

For assembling the story for the MFS II contribution to improving the position of victims of armed violence at field/grassroots level, we made use of project documents supplied by VICO and Cordaid, beneficiaries' testimonies, interviews with VICO and Cordaid staff and our own observations. Information gathered from/with other women's organisations in our sample (notably AFEM, RFDP) provided additional insights.

Project documents provide **limited evidence of a durable improvement** in beneficiaries' living circumstances and societal position. The project proposal gives a general description of the context in the territory of Walungu and the situation of victims of armed conflict (serving as a general baseline of the social position of beneficiaries). Though it describes the need for support for economic activities, a thorough motivation for a microcredit approach is lacking. The final report describes the results of the project in general terms: a 'progressive improvement in social-economic conditions of victims of sexual violence', a 'contribution to the strengthening of the productive capacity of beneficiary households of more or less 30%', an 'increase in daily revenue of at least 30% for beneficiaries', as well as 'strengthening reunification, social cohesion and trust between victims of sexual violence and the community'.<sup>19</sup> These claims are not supported by any numerical evidence, and no baseline study was done against which to measure the originally intended 75% increase in daily revenue of beneficiaries.<sup>20</sup> Apart from a lacking baseline, the collection of data during the project was also weak: the final report describes a 70% decrease in monitoring visits in the second year of the project (from 100 to 30, which means about 2 visits per credit group in the second year). Perhaps related to this, there were also serious problems with the reimbursement of credit. The majority of beneficiaries do not succeed in repaying the loan on time, and some have not repaid at all (again, no specific data included).<sup>21</sup> Apart from the credit scheme, the project also included the two training sessions for community leaders and authorities; however, no information is included in the report on the participants or effects of these meetings.

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<sup>18</sup> According to the evaluation by Erika ten Broeke in October 2012

<sup>19</sup> Final report, pp. 7-9

<sup>20</sup> Project proposal, final report

<sup>21</sup> This issue was also mentioned by Cordaid finance expert Erica ten Broeke as reason for not continuing the partnership with VICO

Beneficiaries<sup>22</sup> themselves (three focus groups, one in Bukavu, two in/near Walungu city, during baseline, midterm and endline visits) give a mixed image of the contribution of the project to the improvement of their socio-economic circumstances. In group interviews, beneficiaries indicate a short-term improvement of living circumstances during the project, but long-term effects are negligible. Almost two years after the end of the project, beneficiaries indicate that little remains of the funds that were made available for credit provision. Nevertheless, beneficiaries indicate that they appreciated the project, the education they received and their organisation in *noyau* of VICO (the credit groups are part of *noyau*). They attribute their new self-confidence to the support of VICO. Often over a period of many years, they identify themselves with VICO, and refer to the coordinator as 'Maman VICO'.

**Some factors for the lack of durable results** of the project are mentioned by the staff of VICO. When visiting the beneficiaries almost two years after the project, the staff indicated that it had been a long time since they had last been there: without a stable source of funding, VICO is not able to cultivate relations with the local *noyaux*. Current attention is directed to Fizi, where VICO has started cultivating several hectares with the hope to become self-sufficient. Staff indicate the number of visits had already decreased in the second year of the project, because they lacked the finances to closely monitor the credit rotation process. Both staff and beneficiaries refer to adverse security conditions ('had the project been executed later, under the current improved security conditions in the area, it would have been more successful...'), and misfortune (staff were robbed twice of a substantial amount of money and their laptops (February/March 2012), and there was a fire in the house of the coordinator (January 2012)), although they received extra financing from Cordaid to compensate their losses. In individual interviews, staff claim they have the necessary expertise to fulfil their tasks. However, for three staff members, this project was their first assignment, and two were still studying, so we feel there is reason to doubt their qualifications.<sup>23</sup> Tellingly, the bookkeeper was in her second year of a study in financial management when we first visited in 2012 and did not know the total amount of funding involved in the project with Cordaid. The coordinator agrees that there is room for improvement, and points to a lack of finances to employ qualified personnel. This lack of experience in financial management means we do not have much confidence in the ability of VICO to provide adequate financial supervision and education to the credit groups.

**Some additional observations** pertain to the organisational infrastructure and the budget, and the collection of documents during the evaluation. During our first visit, VICO occupied a house in a relatively central spot in Bukavu that lacked facilities: There was no internet, and the location did not have its own power source. Archives were piled up in small rooms in the back of the building that were also the offices of the staff. Staff members indicated that they needed the large living room and garden to be able to receive the members of *noyaux* for the weekly gatherings. When funding ended, VICO had to leave this building and move to the much smaller office of RRSF. Besides spending money on this office, VICO also had budget to employ field staff, but decided not to do so. Instead, the budget was used as extra salary for the coordinator, who argued that she in fact executed the activities that had been foreseen for the field staff. The project further covered salaries ('fees', in fact, because the

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<sup>22</sup> According to the budget, beneficiaries were selected in collaboration with local leaders, and the criteria for their selection were specified in the project proposal. In the report, beneficiaries are referred to as 'FFVVS' (the French acronym for female victims of sexual violence) and 'she'—there is a clear tendency to focus on women. This corresponds with the traditional approach of VICO, even though this project explicitly includes men. The report also describes beneficiaries as rejected and abandoned women, victims of sexual and gender-based violence, people that have HIV/AIDS and widows.

<sup>23</sup> The bookkeeper was in the second year of her studies during the baseline visit, the animator was in the final year of a bachelor in political science, the project officer had a bachelor degree in English and was working as an assistant at university.

amount is too low to constitute a formal salary) for four people: the coordinator, the chargé de programmes, the bookkeeper and the secretary. This means that two people at the table in our baseline workshop were working completely on a voluntary basis.<sup>24</sup> Finally, the contract with Cordaid reveals that VICO apparently has no own bank account, since it made use of the account of another organisation (8me CEPAC/HGR de Panzi), for the transfers of financing. With respect to our collection of relevant documents, we managed to collect the necessary documents to assess the project, but we have not been able to obtain all of the documents we requested. VICO's response has been limited to the provision of several financial overviews and the strategic plan; the rest of the documents were received from Cordaid in the Netherlands—though Cordaid was also unable to supply all of the documents requested. In all, VICO is ambitious in its plans, but these do not seem based on a realistic assessment of its current capacity.

For assembling the story for the MFS II contribution to strengthening civil society at the Bukavu level, we made use of documents supplied by VICO and Cordaid; interviews with staff from VICO, Cordaid and with other CSOs in Bukavu; and our own observations.

Activities geared towards achieving **organisational capacity development** involved a participatory analysis of the organisational capacity of VICO, a training session on financial and administrative management and a training session on results-based management for two staff members (the coordinator and the bookkeeper).<sup>25</sup> VICO staff confirm their participation in these trainings, and during our visit in 2012 the results of these trainings in the form of large flipcharts were fixed to the walls of their office. The ensuing organisational development plan included activities such as the elaboration of a strategic plan, redefining mission and vision, the development of an annual budget, review of administrative and financial procedures, production of monthly financial reports and purchase of accounting software. The execution of the plan was monitored by the programme officer of the Cordaid Bukavu office.

Staff indicate the training sessions helped them in developing a strategic plan, as well as a manual for internal procedures. Nevertheless, a financial expert of Cordaid who visited VICO in October 2012 concluded that implementation of the recommendations in the development plan had been low, with respect to administrative and financial management.<sup>26</sup> This is reflected in the reasons given by Cordaid staff for termination of the project relationship, indicating that VICO had made insufficient progress in developing their organisational capacity. Especially in terms of planning, monitoring and evaluation, and financial management, VICO had not made sufficient progress. VICO staff indicate that they are not fully aware of the reasons for the termination of the relationship, as they had executed the project according to the terms. Interestingly, on both sides, there are allegations of fraud: VICO suggested the relationship was ended because they were not willing to pay 'operation retour', while Cordaid commissioned an audit because there were questions about VICO's financial integrity. The auditor did not find any irregularities. VICO staff remain hopeful that activities can be resumed in the future. At the same time, VICO staff indicated they did not think all of the training sessions conducted were necessary: 'It would be better to reduce number of days of training and to reduce the budget for

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<sup>24</sup> The *animatrice* and the communications officer

<sup>25</sup> 10-19 October 2011 at CAP – NGUBA in BUKAVU, with support by cabinet AGESFO

<sup>26</sup> Rapport Erica ten Broeke, 25 January 2013

trainings... We have everything necessary to do the work, just the money is lacking.’ We found no indication, however, that organisational capacity has improved since our first evaluation visit: VICO has not been able to access new sources of funding, the staff has remained the same and has not received additional training and they are now sharing a small office with another civil society organisation, RRSF.

A second activity in Bukavu that designed to contribute to civil society strengthening is the **synergy of partner organisations of Cordaid** that work on women and peace in South Kivu. The holistic approach was abandoned after the contract with VICO ended, because Cordaid did not replace the socio-economic component of the approach. Participants in the synergy describe their activities as mainly exchange of information and the referral of cases of sexual violence. The partners do not undertake joint projects, although, at field level, individual members of *noyaux* of VICO can also be found participating in the local groups of other SPOs in the synergy.<sup>27</sup> The close ties to the field in Walungu would seem to provide VICO with significant input for a lobby at the territorial or provincial levels. However, we have found no evidence of joint activities in this respect at the level of the synergy. VICO and the other partners have undertaken incidental lobby activities (often related to events, such as elections, International Woman’s Day, or the visit of Special Representative Mary Robinson, but also the law on sexual violence<sup>28</sup>). These activities can be coordinated with the Bureau de la Coordination de la Societe Civile in Bukavu. Many of the described activities took place before the current funding period, and evidence for the contribution of the Cordaid synergy to the impact of these activities is limited. At first, Cordaid did not take a leading role, but in the course of the evaluation, they have changed their approach: They now focus more on the creation of communities of change around certain issues and are willing to take a leading role in this.

### *Actors and factors*

Besides the obvious roles of VICO and Cordaid, there are other actors and factors in this contribution story that surfaced during the evaluation. They were mentioned by VICO and Cordaid staff, in the project report or in conversations with other actors. In the following section, we limit our discussion to actors and factors that are deemed most significant. Based on our assessment of their influence in combination with the evidence presented above, we can then assess the contribution of the MFS II financing to the strengthening of civil society at grassroots level and in Bukavu.

#### A history of previous interventions

The intervention currently under study does not stand alone: VICO has a history of intervening in Walungu, and some previous projects have been undertaken with support from Cordaid. Before 2009, the Bukavu office of Cordaid gave VICO several small grants, and in 2009, Cordaid supported VICO in an 8-month project on microcredit for female victims of sexual violence (total funding: EUR 23,091), with similar objectives as the project currently under evaluation, in the same geographical area.<sup>29</sup> At the same time, VICO has worked with the grassroots groups for several years already; some groups were established in the early 2000s. This means the members of these groups have been receiving training on internal governance, women’s rights and related topics for some time already, and that some have benefited from previous interventions supported by Cordaid. This factor relates to the first

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<sup>27</sup> Hilhorst, Dorothea, and Marie Rose Bashwira, 2015. *The Women’s Movement in South Kivu, DRC: a civil society analysis*. Occasional Paper #11, Special Chair Humanitarian Aid and Reconstruction, Wageningen University & Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural de Bukavu.

<sup>28</sup> Rapport de l’atelier de réflexion Transformation de Conflit, Cap Nguba, 06-07 Mars 2012

<sup>29</sup> Projectkenschets VICO project 2009

outcome area in this contribution analysis: it is likely that the project under study builds on previous interventions, and thus that an improvement in the societal position of victims of armed conflict in Walungu cannot only be ascribed to the project under study.

#### Insecurity and the transition from relief to development

The security situation is cited by both VICO staff and beneficiaries as a barrier to development: insecurity inhibits trade and investment. Nevertheless, the situation has gradually improved in the past years, though several pockets of insecurity persist, and in 2010 the situation was judged to have sufficiently improved to implement this microfinance project. Still, with hindsight, VICO staff indicate that it was still too early. First, the transition from humanitarian aid to development aid is proving difficult, as beneficiaries are not used to having to reimburse the support they receive. Second, people had significant immediate needs, and thus chose to spend the loans on things like school fees or health care, instead of investing in a small business. This factor is thus likely to have negatively contributed to the improvement in the societal position of victims of armed conflict in Walungu.

#### The aid context

The aid context in Eastern DRC, with a large presence of international organisations and large sums of donor funding, is an influencing factor in a variety of ways. Two important aspects are: the strong international attention given to sexual violence and its consequences and the competition for qualified staff. The high degree of attention for sexual violence, though justifiable in many respects, has also had negative effects: Many local organisations have begun to focus strongly on victims of sexual violence.<sup>30</sup> Though in the project under evaluation, VICO aimed to support victims of armed conflict in general and explicitly included men, based on the reports VICO is finding it difficult to make this shift and continues to refer to beneficiaries as victims of sexual violence. Besides this effect of the international presence, another effect is that international organisations compete with local CSOs for qualified personnel, and international organisations generally pay higher salaries and have better fringe benefits. This factor can be seen to negatively affect the improvement in the societal position of victims of armed conflict in Walungu, through (1) a continued focus on women victims of sexual violence, thereby excluding other marginalised people, (2) the difficulty of VICO to get a staff with sufficient qualifications to successfully execute the project.

#### Plurality of interventions

Related to the international presence and relatively large amounts of donor funding, a large number of local civil society organisations are present in South Kivu. During our visits, we have found there are numerous CSOs that intervene in the territory of Walungu, with or without support by international organisations – unfortunately it was beyond the scope of the evaluation to go beyond a rudimentary mapping of these interventions. Many interventions focus on awareness raising, education, human rights monitoring and assistance to victims of sexual violence, but there have also been many humanitarian interventions where people are provided with material or financial support. Other interventions focus on the police, the justice sector or the armed forces, striving to make them more aware of their rights and duties. This factor will likely also have contributed to the improvement of the societal position of the beneficiaries of VICO, as they were targeted by multiple intervening CSOs.

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<sup>30</sup> Douma and Hilhorst 2012

### *Conclusion: contribution?*

As many beneficiaries received a loan through the project, which most of them failed to reimburse, it is likely that MFS II funding has contributed to a temporary improvement in living circumstances of beneficiaries, and that the funding has allowed VICO to maintain relations with the different grassroots groups.

It is also plausible that the funding has contributed to educating members of these groups on themes related to democracy, women's rights and starting a small business. However, as there were many similar interventions by other CSOs in terms of awareness raising and organising grassroots groups. As VICO has a history of working in the area, the increased awareness cannot be uniquely attributed to the evaluated MFS II funded intervention by VICO.

At the level of Bukavu, it is likely that MFS II funding through the synergy has contributed to the improved exchange of information between the partners of Cordaid. In the case of VICO, however, we have not found evidence that support has resulted in civil society strengthening outcomes beyond this exchange (such as joint lobby); VICO has mostly concentrated on its own project implementation. We have also found no evidence that the synergy has contributed to the implementation of the project.

We deem it unlikely that this project has led to a durably improved societal position of victims of armed conflict, because improvements in living circumstances were temporary and we found no direct evidence that beneficiaries' societal circumstances have improved in any sustainable way. The evidence constructed above suggests two main reasons for this:

- A lack of capacity on the part of VICO, in terms of insight to adapt their Theory of Change and the project when it became apparent that there were problems with reimbursement, and in terms of financial management and monitoring, which did not improve sufficiently through the capacity development training provided by Cordaid. VICO did not keep track of how the microcredit was being used or of what percentage was not reimbursed.
- A lack of involvement from the side of Cordaid: Cordaid knew the weaknesses of VICO and involved VICO in training sessions to address these, but Cordaid did not give VICO the close supervision it needed.

In addition to these reasons, several other factors played a role:

- The context, including relative insecurity, the transition from relief to development and the poverty of the members of VICO's grassroots groups.
- A limited involvement of authorities and community leaders in the project. These people can make an important contribution to restoring the social position of victims of armed violence.

We question why this specific project was supported in the first place, considering the lack of experience in sound financial management of VICO and the many compounding factors and risks, which are not dealt with in the project plans: the local security situation, the lack of capacity of target group in financial management, the existence of alternative destinies for the credit and the existing expectation that aid is given freely and does not have to be reimbursed.



## 8. Discussion

For the development intervention as a whole, our main concern is whether it was wise to involve VICO as implementing partner. Its previous experience with microcredit was limited, and the SPO had some obvious shortcomings in terms of organisational capacity and knowledge of financial management and business development.

The project itself clearly addressed a need for financial support; microcredit groups have proven themselves in other environments, and the idea to involve local cooperative banks in the disbursement of credit is innovative in South Kivu. At the same time, no assessment was done of the local market and the main factors complicating business development. The aid context, shifting from humanitarian aid to development aid, in combination with beneficiaries' high amount of urgent needs, complicated the reimbursement of credit. Considering this, the project could and should have been designed better, in order to make it work in this specific environment.

In terms of VICO's interventions towards civil society strengthening: through socio-economically supporting victims of armed conflict, VICO essentially aimed to restore the social fabric in the localities of intervention. Besides providing credit, this involved organisation in credit groups, with the associated trainings on governance and legal rights. These groups allow for experimenting with democracy, transparency, good governance, equal relations between men and women, approaching authorities, and holding them accountable. Though not very innovative, this approach can be seen as one of the stronger points of VICO, and fitting the implementation environment (VICO has a history of accompanying these –mostly – women's groups). At the same time, the attempt to also include men as beneficiaries in this project seems half-hearted, as criteria for their selection remain vague, and the final report refers to beneficiaries almost exclusively as women and women victims of sexual violence.

The combination of a credit scheme with social organisation and education is a holistic approach to civil society strengthening at the grassroots. However, considering the challenges of the local context, and the weaknesses of VICO, we understand the decision to discontinue the project. In future projects, we recommend paying special attention to investigating potential of and barriers to small enterprise development (market analysis), the development of an adequate system of monitoring/accompaniment (including a thorough baseline), and the development of a durable engagement with local authorities.

An evaluation of impact of this project would greatly benefit of the transparent and regular collection of data on the functioning of the credit groups, including a study on the financial situation of the beneficiaries before their inclusion in the project. Similarly, it is important to develop appropriate indicators for monitoring the development of the credit and grassroots groups, including the strength of local civil society. For this evaluation, no such data were available.

In terms of causal mechanisms, the approach of working with grassroots groups is frequently used in DRC, in development interventions but also for example in the parent committees at schools and health committees in health zones. This approach suggests to have positive effects on beneficiaries' awareness of democratic principles and their rights. Nevertheless, we feel the success of this approach is very dependent on the capacity of the implementing organisation. More systematically collected data on these groups is necessary to draw stronger conclusions on the effects of involving beneficiaries in this way.

## 9. Conclusion

Here we provide an answer to the four evaluation questions:

- 1) *What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?*

As the development intervention of VICO focuses on the grassroots level, in the territory of Walungu, we will focus on changes at this level. From the perspective of the general theory of change of VICO, with the aim of ‘a society where rights of women are respected, peace reigns, and poverty is eradicated’, we see sustained development, but no major changes.

Vibrant associational life has continued, with many people involved in grassroots groups. Women and men in these groups have been educated on women’s rights. Grassroots groups continue to help victims of violence (often women) to access healthcare, judicial and psychological support. The organisation in local groups enables women (and men) to go to the local authorities to advocate for their own position and for the position of vulnerable women and children. In all of this, local grassroots groups continue to depend on nationally or internationally funded NGOs (often based in Bukavu) for many of their operations, seminars, transport and accompaniment.

- 2) *To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?*

There are many organisations intervening in Walungu. We can safely say that the development intervention of VICO has contributed to maintaining associational life in Walungu, through allowing VICO to support local grassroots groups. The decrease in number of *noyeax* of VICO after the project ends illustrates this, and shows how local grassroots groups are dependent on external funding. Through support to the grassroots groups, it is plausible that the VICO intervention has also contributed to civic education and an increased awareness of women’s rights.

At the same time, the change resulting from the economic support to beneficiaries was only temporary. In this respect, the development intervention contributed to a temporary improvement of the living circumstances of beneficiaries (based on our interviews with beneficiaries, because no hard data were available), but we have not found that it has led to a durable change and improved social position, as the project theory of change postulated.

- 3) *What is the relevance of these changes?*

To the direct beneficiaries the short term change in their economic situation was relevant, as illustrated by the examples of how they used the credit: they had a need for financial support, which was met by the development intervention of VICO.

Similarly, local grassroots groups are an important social context for experiencing democracy. The organisation of –mostly- women in groups allows them to stand up and engage with local authorities, and assert their position and rights. Women are still a vulnerable group in eastern DRC, and are strongly underrepresented in positions of authority. At the same time women are often responsible for

providing food, healthcare and access to education for their children. This means the support of these local grassroots groups can be considered a relevant activity for achieving long term changes.

From the perspective of the Theory of Change, however, the intervention has not been very relevant: as the provision of credit has not led to sustainable improvement of people's livelihoods, it will not significantly improve the societal position of victims of conflict in the long term. We therefore understand and support the decision of Cordaid to discontinue the project.

*4) What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

There are a number of factors that explain the lack of contribution to change of the development intervention by VICO. A first, general factor is the long-term nature of the changes in civil society that VICO and Cordaid aim at: a change in the societal position of women does not happen overnight, but can rather be seen as the result of years of sustained action to improve the social, cultural, legal and economic position of women. Another factor is the unpredictable security context, in combination with the bad conditions of roads. These factors inhibited beneficiaries' initiatives to set up a business in small trade, which most beneficiaries focused on.

At the same time, this could and should have been foreseen in the design of the project, which leads us to the third and major factor: weaknesses of VICO in terms of monitoring and financial management, and in developing a sound theory of change. In deciding not to employ field workers, VICO consciously decided not to closely monitor the credit groups. VICO itself was lacking capacity in terms of financial management, with a bookkeeper that was still in University. And VICO failed to sufficiently take into account the difficult context in their theory of change for the project, and did also not adapt the approach when it became clear that most of the credit would not be reimbursed.

Finally, we are also critical about the role of Cordaid. From an earlier microcredit project with VICO, Cordaid could have know about its weaknesses in terms of monitoring and financial management. In fact, Cordaid continued the relationship in order to build capacity of VICO. Even though Cordaid offered training in financial and project management, this was insufficient for VICO. The decision by VICO not to employ field workers in this respect should not have been accepted.

This means that even though there were important external factors that negatively influenced the project, we deem that the main responsibility for the lack of change resulting from the intervention lies with project design and execution, and thus with VICO and Cordaid.

## List of Documents Consulted for the report:

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 Projet VICO FVVS 2010 VERSION FINALE AMENDEE 1  
 Projectkenschets ESynDoc307201212919  
 Projectkenschets VICO project 2009  
 20111205 103075 Rapport Financier Octobre 2010 – Octobre 2011(1)  
 20111205 103075 Rapport d'Activités Octobre 2010 - Octobre 2011 1  
 2010-2012 VICO Copie de Rapport cumulé VICO CORDAID2011-2012  
 2013 RAPPORT\_NARRATIF\_FINAL DU\_103075 VICO  
 Plan strategique VICO VF  
 REALISATIONS DE VICO  
 BIJ PROJECT 105206 – URGENT ACTION FUND  
 VICO - RAPPORT AUDIT Version finale  
 2013 VICO Rapport de suivi CORDAID au 29 10 2012

### Workshops, interviews and questionnaires:

Baseline visit: September 7-8, 2012  
 Midterm visit: November 11&19, 2013  
 Endline visit: May 22-23, 2014  
 Feedback workshop: February 4-5, 2015

| Name                      | Position                         | Workshop baseline | Workshop end line | CS questionnaire baseline | CS questionnaire end line | interview baseline | interview midterm | interview end line |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| NTAKEBUKA Wilhelmine      | Coordinator                      | X                 | X                 | X                         | X                         | X                  | X                 | X                  |
| Francine Kasese           | Administration and communication | X                 |                   | X                         |                           | X                  | X                 |                    |
| CIRHUZA Buhemelwa Prosper | Programme officer                | X                 |                   | X                         |                           | X                  |                   |                    |
| Cikala Minja Nelly        | Bookkeeper                       | X                 |                   | X                         |                           | X                  |                   |                    |
| BAHATI Chantal            | Secretary/ animator              | X                 | X                 | X                         | X                         | X                  |                   | X                  |
| Emile Muzasangabo Bi      | agronomist                       |                   | X                 |                           | X                         |                    |                   |                    |
| <b>RRSF staff</b>         |                                  |                   |                   |                           |                           |                    |                   |                    |
| Serafin Mubambo           | Veterinary                       |                   | X                 |                           |                           |                    |                   |                    |

|                |               |  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|----------------|---------------|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| George Wakenga | Administrator |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |
|----------------|---------------|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|

Besides our meetings with VICO staff, we also had a number of meetings with VICO beneficiaries:

Focus group in Bukavu, with Francoise, Ncimire, Velare, and Zirirane, all members of the *noyau* in Namiera, on 08.09.2012

Focus group in Walungu, on 19.11.2013

Meeting with about forty members of three *noyaux* near Walungu, 20.05.2014

## Contacts

UNDSS-Bukavu , Idrissa Mbaye, 05.09.2012

Cordaid The Hague, Roos Wilhelm, 09.08.2012

Cordaid Bukavu, Bertin Rutega (programme officer) and Annelies Claessens (chargée de mission), 10.09.2012

Centre Olame, Madame Mathilde (coordinatrice), 14.09.2012

Composant Femme du Bureau Societé Civile, Marie (Coordinatrice), 14.09.2012

Cordaid The Hague, Roos Wilhelm, 02.14.2013

Radio Maedeleo, Jolly Kamuntu, 23.05.2014

Cordaid Bukavu, Olivier, 20.05.2014

Cordaid Bukavu, Deodatte Chisibanji, 01.07.2014

Cordaid The Hague, Erica ten Broeke, 03.09.2013, email communication

# ANNEX B

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Questionnaires

# MFS II DRC Questionnaire de ménage

Butembo 10/7/2012

## Module 0. Information

### 0.1 Codes

| A. | B.         | C.   | D.  |
|----|------------|------|-----|
|    |            | ID   | Nom |
| 1. | Secteur    | □    |     |
| 2. | Groupement | □□   |     |
| 3. | Village    | □□□□ |     |
| 4. | Ménage     | □□   |     |

### 0.2 Information interview

|    |                                    |         |   |
|----|------------------------------------|---------|---|
| 1. | Quel est le projet évalué ?        | □       | 1. AGIR<br>2. AdS<br>3. SOFIBEF<br>4. VECO<br>5. CEPROF               |
| 2. | Le répondant est-il bénéficiaire?  | □       | 1. Oui<br>2. Non  |
| 3. | Le répondant est qui ?             | □       | 1. Chef de ménage<br>2. Conjoint du chef de ménage<br>3. Autre: _____ |
| 4. | Le répondant est un remplacement ? | □       | 1. Oui<br>2. Non >>7  |
| 5. | Pourquoi il y a un remplacement ?  |         |   |
| 6. | Code remplacement                  | □□      | Le code de remplacement de liste échantillon                          |
| 7. | Numéro téléphone d'enquête         |         |   |
| 8. | Début interview                    | □□ : □□ | HH :MM  |
| 9. | Fin Interview                      | □□ : □□ | HH :MM  |

### 0.3 Information enquêteur

| A. | B.            | C.           | D.   | E.  | F.        |
|----|---------------|--------------|------|-----|-----------|
|    |               | Date JJ - MM | Code | Nom | Signature |
| 1. | Enquêteur     | □□ □□        | □□□□ |     |           |
| 2. | Chef d'équipe | □□ □□        | □□□□ |     |           |
| 3. | Encodeur 1    | □□ □□        | □□□□ |     |           |
| 4. | Encodeur 2    | □□ □□        | □□□□ |     |           |

### 0.3 Remarques

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |

## Module 1. Information sur le ménage

### 1.1 Rostre du ménage

Remplissez ce table, et incluez tous les membre du menage. Un menage est une groupe de personnes qui habitent dans une maison, et partagent une casserole.

A la fin on a besoin d'une femme, essayez de vous assurer qu'une femme est disponible a la fin (après +/- 2 heures).

| A.  | B.   | C.                         | D.                       | E.                       | F.                           | G.  | H.                       | I.   | J.                       | K.                       | Relation Chef |
|-----|--|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
|     | Nom  | Présent durant l'entretien | l'Age                    | Sexe                     | Relation avec chef du ménage | Statut de résidence   | Niveau d'éducation       | Religion   | Statut                   | Langue maternelle        |               |
|     | Le nom du chef sera utilisé pour trouver le ménage a phase 2. Les autres noms seront seulement utilisé pour faciliter cet entretien. | 1. Oui<br>2. Non           |                          | 1. M<br>2. F             | Codes→                       | 1. Permanent<br>2. Visiteur<br>3. Deplacee de guerre<br>4. Absent<br>8. Ne sait pas | Codes →                  | 1. Catholique<br>2. Protestant<br>3. Témoin Jehova<br>4. Musulman<br>5. Kimbanguist<br>6. Autre: _____<br>8. Ne sait pas | Codes →                  | Codes →                  |               |
| 1.  |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 2.  |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 3.  |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 4.  |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 5.  |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 6.  |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 7.  |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 8.  |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 9.  |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 10. |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 11. |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 12. |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 13. |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 14. |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 15. |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 16. |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 17. |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 18. |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |
| 19. |  | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |               |

#### Relation Chef

1. Chef
2. Conjoint
3. Enfant
4. Petit enfant
5. Parents
6. Soeur/frère
7. Nièce/neveu
8. Autre apparenté
9. Autre non-apparentée
98. Ne sait Pas

#### Education

1. Aucune
2. Quelques années primaires
3. Primaire complété
4. Quelques années secondaires
5. Secondaire complété
6. Etudes supérieures
7. Formation Professionnel
8. Ne sait pas

#### Statut

1. Chef de village
2. Chef de Groupement
3. Leader religieux
4. Leader local : \_\_\_
5. Fonctionnel public
6. Habitant
7. Autre, specifiez :
8. Ne sait pas

#### Langue

1. Shi
2. Kenyamulenge
3. Bembe
4. Swahili
5. Kipiri
6. Kimbuti
7. Havu
8. Kinande
9. Fuleru
10. Tembo
11. Vira
12. Kinyarwanda
13. Kinyabwishi
14. Lingala
15. Nyindu
16. Kikusu
17. Kuhunde
18. Autre, specifiez...
98. Ne sait pas



**1.2 Information Ménage/habitat**

|                                      |   |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--|------------------|
| 1.                                   | Est-ce que le chef de ménage est née dans ce village ?            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Oui >>5<br>2. Non  |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 2.                                   | Si non, quand il/elle est arrivé dans ce village?                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Année   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 3.                                   | Si non, vous venez d'où ?   |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 4.                                   | Pourquoi vous avez quitté votre village?                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. Insécurité a cause de conflit</td> <td>5. L'emploi</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Sorcellerie</td> <td>6. Pour aller a une centre</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Mariage</td> <td>7. Glissement</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Le champ ne produit plus</td> <td>8. Autre : _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>9. Ne sait pas</td> </tr> </table> <p>Tous les réponses &gt;&gt; 8</p> | 1. Insécurité a cause de conflit | 5. L'emploi                                     | 2. Sorcellerie                       | 6. Pour aller a une centre   | 3. Mariage                  | 7. Glissement     | 4. Le champ ne produit plus | 8. Autre : _____           |  | 9. Ne sait pas   |
| 1. Insécurité a cause de conflit     | 5. L'emploi   |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 2. Sorcellerie                       | 6. Pour aller a une centre  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 3. Mariage                           | 7. Glissement   |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 4. Le champ ne produit plus          | 8. Autre : _____  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
|                                      | 9. Ne sait pas  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 5.                                   | Est-ce qu'il/elle a quitté le village pour une certaine période?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Oui<br>2. Non >>8  |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 6.                                   | Si oui, Il/elle a quitté pour aller où?                           |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 7.                                   | Dans quelles années? (commencement – fin)                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 8.                                   | Nature de toiture de maison(s) de ménage                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. Tôle</td> <td>4. Ardoise</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Dalle en béton</td> <td>5. Paille</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Tuiles</td> <td>6. Tuiles en bois</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>7. Autre : _____</td> </tr> </table>  | 1. Tôle                          | 4. Ardoise                                      | 2. Dalle en béton                    | 5. Paille                    | 3. Tuiles                   | 6. Tuiles en bois |                             | 7. Autre : _____           |  |                  |
| 1. Tôle                              | 4. Ardoise  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 2. Dalle en béton                    | 5. Paille   |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 3. Tuiles                            | 6. Tuiles en bois   |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
|                                      | 7. Autre : _____  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 9.                                   | Matériaux des murs  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. Végétaux/ nattes (mangungu)</td> <td>5. Briques en terre non-cuit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Terre battu</td> <td>6. Briques en terre cuit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Planches</td> <td>7. Béton</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Blocs cement</td> <td>8. Autre : _____</td> </tr> </table>   | 1. Végétaux/ nattes (mangungu)   | 5. Briques en terre non-cuit                    | 2. Terre battu                       | 6. Briques en terre cuit     | 3. Planches                 | 7. Béton          | 4. Blocs cement             | 8. Autre : _____           |  |                  |
| 1. Végétaux/ nattes (mangungu)       | 5. Briques en terre non-cuit                                      |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 2. Terre battu                       | 6. Briques en terre cuit  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 3. Planches                          | 7. Béton  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 4. Blocs cement                      | 8. Autre : _____  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 10.                                  | Quel est la source d'approvisionnement en eau potable principal ? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. Robinet dans la parcelle</td> <td>5. Source</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Robinet publique extérieur</td> <td>6. Cours d'eau (rivière/lac)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Puit protégé (construit)</td> <td>7. Eau de pluie</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Puit non protégé</td> <td>8. Vendeur/ camion citerne</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>9. Autre : _____</td> </tr> </table>    | 1. Robinet dans la parcelle      | 5. Source                                       | 2. Robinet publique extérieur        | 6. Cours d'eau (rivière/lac) | 3. Puit protégé (construit) | 7. Eau de pluie   | 4. Puit non protégé         | 8. Vendeur/ camion citerne |  | 9. Autre : _____ |
| 1. Robinet dans la parcelle          | 5. Source   |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 2. Robinet publique extérieur        | 6. Cours d'eau (rivière/lac)                                      |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 3. Puit protégé (construit)          | 7. Eau de pluie   |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 4. Puit non protégé                  | 8. Vendeur/ camion citerne  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
|                                      | 9. Autre : _____  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 11.                                  | Distance d'eau  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Minutes à pied (distance de la maison, allez seulement)   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 12.                                  | Electricité   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1.SNEL</td> <td>3.Groupe</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.Solaire</td> <td>4.Aucune</td> </tr> </table>  | 1.SNEL                           | 3.Groupe  | 2.Solaire                            | 4.Aucune                     |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 1.SNEL                               | 3.Groupe  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 2.Solaire                            | 4.Aucune  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 13.                                  | Toilette  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. Intérieur privé</td> <td>3. Commun à plusieurs ménages construit/couvert</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Extérieur privé construit/couvert</td> <td>4. Non construit/non-couvert</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>5. Autre : _____</td> </tr> </table>   | 1. Intérieur privé               | 3. Commun à plusieurs ménages construit/couvert | 2. Extérieur privé construit/couvert | 4. Non construit/non-couvert |                             | 5. Autre : _____  |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 1. Intérieur privé                   | 3. Commun à plusieurs ménages construit/couvert                   |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
| 2. Extérieur privé construit/couvert | 4. Non construit/non-couvert                                      |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |
|                                      | 5. Autre : _____  |                          |   |                                  |   |                                      |                              |                             |                   |                             |                            |  |                  |

**1.3 Famille élargie**

|    |  |                                  |   |                         |   |   |   |  |   |                    |
|----|--|----------------------------------|---|-------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|--------------------|
| 1. | Est-ce que quelqu'un de votre famille élargie occupe une position ou rôle suivante? Encercliez les lettres applicables |                                  |   |                         |   |   |   |  |   |                    |
|    | A  | Chef de village de votre village | C | Conseiller d'un village | E | Prefet /professeur/directeur/enseignant | G | Prêtre ou pasteur                            | I | Personne politique |
|    | B  | Chef d'un autre village          | D | Mwami                   | F | Bien faiteur                            | H | Infirmier/docteur/sage-femme/tradi-praticien | J | Autre, specifiez   |

**1.4 Mariage**

Notez les mariages dans le ménage et si applicable les mariages des enfants de chef de ménage.

| A. | B.      | C.                        | D.        | E.      | F.                        | G.        | H.  | I.           | J.   | K.              | Qui<br>1-20 Membre du ménage<br>21 Vieux membre du ménage, spécifiez<br>22 Autre, spécifiez  |
|----|---------|---------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------------------|-----------|---|--------------|--|-----------------|--|
|    | Homme   |                           |           | Femme   |                           |           | Est-ce que vous vivez toujours ensemble ?     | Pourquoi pas | Type de mariage  | Date de mariage |  |
|    | Qui ?   | Age                       | Education | Qui ?   | Age                       | Education | 1.Oui >>J<br>2.Non, nous ne sommes plus marié | Codes →      | a)Union Libre/co-habitation<br>b)Traditionnel/coutumier<br>c)Civil<br>d)Religieux<br>e)RAP (par force)<br>f)Autre, spécifiez : _____<br>98.Ne sait pas<br>(encerclez les réponses) | MM - AAAA       | <b>Ne plus marié</b><br>1.Marie décédé<br>2.Sorcellerie<br>3.Infidéité<br>4.Problèmes de santé<br>5.Stérilité<br>6.Violence sexuelle<br>7.Problèmes familiales<br>8.Autre, spec<br>9.Ne sait pas |
|    | Codes → | Codes même que Module 1.1 |           | Codes → | Codes même que Module 1.1 |           |   |              |  |                 |  |
| 1. | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___   | ___          | A B C D E F 98   | ___ . _____     |  |
| 2. | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___   | ___          | A B C D E F 98   | ___ . _____     |  |
| 3. | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___   | ___          | A B C D E F 98   | ___ . _____     |  |
| 4. | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___   | ___          | A B C D E F 98   | ___ . _____     |  |
| 5. | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___   | ___          | A B C D E F 98   | ___ . _____     |  |
| 6. | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___   | ___          | A B C D E F 98   | ___ . _____     |  |
| 7. | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___     | ___                       | ___       | ___   | ___          | A B C D E F 98   | ___ . _____     |  |

**1.5**

Pour chaque mariage de module 1.3, notez les dots.

| A. | B.  | C.                    | D.   | E.                    | A. Argent<br>B. Vache<br>C. Chevre<br>D. Vêtements<br>E. Boissons<br>F. Nourriture<br>G. Outils de cuisine<br>H. Au crédit<br>I. Services rendu<br>J. Pas de dot<br>K. Autre : _____<br>98 Ne sait pas |
|----|---|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
|    | Qu'est-ce que le ménage de l'homme a donné comme dot pour les mariages (voir code)                    |                       | Qu'est-ce que le ménage de femme a amené pour le mariage ? (voir code)                                 |                       |  |
|    | Article, encerclez le(s) lettre(s) applicables.<br>Et faites une estimation de valeur total de ce dot | Valeur<br>(en dollar) | Article, encerclez le(s) lettre(s) applicables.<br>Et faites une estimation de valeur total des biens. | Valeur<br>(en dollar) |  |
| 1. | A B C D E F G H I J K 98  | _____                 | A B C D E F G H I J K 98   | _____                 |  |
| 2. | A B C D E F G H I J K 98  | _____                 | A B C D E F G H I J K 98   | _____                 |  |
| 3. | A B C D E F G H I J K 98  | _____                 | A B C D E F G H I J K 98   | _____                 |  |
| 4. | A B C D E F G H I J K 98  | _____                 | A B C D E F G H I J K 98   | _____                 |  |
| 5. | A B C D E F G H I J K 98  | _____                 | A B C D E F G H I J K 98   | _____                 |  |
| 6. | A B C D E F G H I J K 98  | _____                 | A B C D E F G H I J K 98   | _____                 |  |
| 7. | A B C D E F G H I J K 98  | _____                 | A B C D E F G H I J K 98   | _____                 |  |



## Module 2. Activités et possessions

### 2.1 Activités et revenus

Notez les activités et les sources de revenus pour ce ménage.

| A.  | B.                                 | C.  | D.  | E.  | F.  | G.   | H.  |  |
|-----|------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|
|     |                                    | Membres active.<br><br>Commence avec le membre qui travail le plus  | Temps (moyen par activité)  |   | Proportion de revenus de cette activité (en argent) par apport au revenu total de ce menage         | Proportion de production (argent/en nature) de cette activité utilisé pour nourrir les membres du menage | Commentaires  |  |
|     |                                    | Codes de module 1.1   | Quantité  | Mesure<br>1. heures/jour<br>2. jours/semaine<br>3. semaines/mois<br>4. mois/an                      | 0. Rien<br>1. Presque rien<br>2. Moins que la moitié<br>3. La moitié                                | 4. Plus que la moitié<br>5. Presque tout<br>6. Tout<br>7. Pas de response                                |   |  |
| 1.  | Agriculture de subsistance         | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 2.  | Agriculture de marché (commercial) | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 3.  | Exploitation minière               | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 4.  | Exploitation forestier             | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 5.  | Petit Commerce                     | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 6.  | Pêche                              | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 7.  | Chasse                             | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 8.  | Travail salaire                    | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 9.  | Artisanat                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 10. | Transferts                         |   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>      |   |  |
| 11. | Charité                            |   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>      |   |  |
| 12. | Autre : _____                      | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>      |   |  |

## 2.2 Possessions des biens par le ménage

Notez les possessions du ménage. **Observez** si les réponses sont complètes.

| A.  | B.                 | C.  | D.                       | E.  |
|-----|--------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
|     |                    | Etes-vous ou quelqu'un de votre ménage propriétaire des objets suivants ? | Combien de ces objets ?  | Pour combien de FC pourriez-vous vendre ces objets aujourd'hui (dans l'état actuel)? (en moyen/par pièce) |
|     |                    | 1. Oui<br>2. Non >> ligne suivante  | Ne sait pas = 98         | Montant FC<br>Ne sait pas = 999998  |
| 1.  | Machette           | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 2.  | Houe               | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 3.  | Foyer Amélioré     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 4.  | Moto               | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 5.  | Voiture            | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 6.  | Télévision         | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 7.  | Vélo               | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 8.  | Radio              | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 9.  | Téléphone portable | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 10. | Casserole          | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 11. | Lit                | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 12. | Matelas            | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 13. | Autres, spécifiez: | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 14. | Autres, spécifiez: | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 15. | Autres, spécifiez: | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 16. | Autres, spécifiez: | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  |

## 2.3 Contribution de ménage aux cas sociaux (dans le village ou d'ailleurs)

Pour les **derniers douze mois**, indiquez les contribution du ménage aux cas sociaux. Utilisez une nouvelle ligne pour chaque cas social. Si le personne amené plus que une article, utilise une ligne nouveau pour chaque article, et écrivez «6» dans colon B

| A. | B.                       | C.  | D.                                | E.                       | F.                       | G.  |
|----|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
|    | Cas sociaux:             | Qui a contribué?                                    | Qu'est-ce qu'il/elle a contribué? | Qte                      | Mesure                   | Qu'est-ce c'est le valeur de ce que on a contribué? |
|    | Codes↓                   | 1-20. Ménage, Code de Mod1.1<br>21 Autre, spécifiez | Codes↓                            | Ne sait pas = 9998       |                          | Montant, CF<br>Ne sait pas = 99998                  |
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            |
| 6. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            |
| 7. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            |
| 8. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                            |

### Codes

#### Cas social

1. Mariage
2. Nouvelle naissance
3. Une baptême
4. Un deuil
5. Soins des malades
6. Autre, spécifiez...
7. Même que précédent
8. Sait pas

#### Contribution

1. Argent >>G
2. Bière traditionnelle
3. Autres boissons
4. Chèvres
5. Vaches
6. Poules
7. Services rendu
8. Nourriture
9. Autre, spécifiez...
10. Ne sait pas

## 2.4 Crédit et épargne

|    |  |   |   |                                |  |                          |                                      |   |   |                          |
|----|--|---|---|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|
| 1. | <b>Est- ce que votre ménage a emprunté l'argent ou pris un credit pendant les 12 mois passé ?</b>                        |   |   |                                | <input type="checkbox"/>                             |                          | 1. Oui >>3<br>2. Non                 |   |   |                          |
| 2. | <b>Pourquoi pas ?</b>  |   |   | A                              | Intérêt trop haut                                    |                          | D                                    | Pas d'institutions de crédit                    |   |                          |
|    | Encirclez les lettres applicables et après >>Mod2.5  |   |   | B                              | Pas de garantie                                      |                          | E                                    | Pas de besoin                                   |   |                          |
|    |  |   |   | C                              | Trop de risqué                                       |                          | F                                    | Autre : _____                                   |   |                          |
| 3. | Rempliez le tableau pour toutes les dettes du ménage. Si il y a plus que quatre, notez les quatre dettes le plus grande. |   |   |                                |  |                          |                                      |   |   |                          |
|    | A.   | B.  | C.  | D.                             | E.   | F.                       | G.                                   | H.  | I.  | J.                       |
|    | Qui était l'emprunteur principal de ce ménage ?  | De qui le ménage a emprunté ou pris un crédit ? | Pour quel objective le ménage a emprunté / pris un crédit ? | Combien le ménage a emprunté ? | Intérêt<br>Notez l'intérêt en dollar ou en pour cent |                          | Quelle est l'échéance de l'emprunt ? | Quelle part de la dette a déjà été remboursé ?  | Pour quelle garantie l'emprunteur aurait reçu l'emprunt ? |                          |
|    | Utilisez codes de Mod 1.1  | Codes ↓   | (Encerclez tous lettres applicable)<br>Codes ↓              | en dollar                      | en dollar  | %                        | MM AAAA                              | 1. Completent<br>2. Un partie<br>3. Pas du tout | Codes ↓   |                          |
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>                        | A B C D E<br>F G H I J                                      | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                        | <input type="checkbox"/>                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>                        | A B C D E<br>F G H I J                                      | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                        | <input type="checkbox"/>                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>                        | A B C D E<br>F G H I J                                      | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                        | <input type="checkbox"/>                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>                        | A B C D E<br>F G H I J                                      | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                        | <input type="checkbox"/>                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Codes

| De qui ?            |                           | Pour quel objective ?                  |                             | Pour quelle garantie ?                   |   |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 1.Famille           | 5. Cooperative d'épargnes | A.Nourriture                           | F.Outils/équipement         | 1. La terre culturale/agricole           | 5.Personne qui porte garant (aval d'une personne) |
| 2.Amis              | 6. Cooperative de crédit  | B.Mariage                              | G.Construction de batiments | 2. Un bâtiment/maison ou autre propriété | 6.Expérience d'emprunt dans le passé              |
| 3.Banque            | 7. Autres, specifiez      | C.Autre cas sociaux                    | H.Achat de bétail           | 3.Or ou Argent                           | 7.Autre, specifiez                                |
| 4. Prêteur d'argent | 98.Ne sait pas            | D.Minerval/prime/fournitures scolaires | I.Achat de champs           | 4. Certificat de propriété               | 8.Pas de garantie                                 |
|                     |                           | E.Entrants agricoles                   | J.Autre, specifiez _____    |  |   |

**2.5 Chocs**

|    |  |   |   |                                      |   |
|----|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Avez-vous fait face à un ou plusieurs chocs dans les 12 mois passés?<br>(Ne lisez pas les options, encerclez les lettres applicables.) |   |   |                                      |   |
|    | A  | Perte de travail d'un membre du ménage          | D | Mort d'un autre membre du ménage     | G<br>Autre, spécifiez<br>_____<br>_____ |
|    | B  | Maladie ou accident grave d'un membre du ménage | E | Vole de bétail ou produits agricoles |   |
|    | C  | Mort d'un membre de ménage qui a un emploi      | F | Conflit/violence                     |   |

**2.6 Education des enfants**

Pour **chaque enfant âgé de 6 mois à 18 ans**, pose les questions suivantes :

| A.  | B.               | C.                          | D.   | E.  | F.                       | G.  | H.                |
|-----|------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|--------------------------|---|-------------------|
|     | ID               | [NOM] va à l'école /collège | Pourquoi pas ?                               | Combien de fois [NOM] a été absent durant le mois de Mai? | Coûts scolaires (annuel) |   |                   |
|     |                  |                             |  |   | Prime/minerval           | Fournitures scolaires (uniformes livres etc.) | Autre fournitures |
|     | Codes de mod 1.1 | 1.Oui >>E<br>2.Non          | 1.Minerval<br>2.Maladie<br>3.Autre : ____ >> | 98 = ne sait pas  | Montant FC               | Montant FC                                    | Montant FC        |
| 1.  | ___              | ___                         | ___  | ___   | _____                    | _____   | _____             |
| 2.  | ___              | ___                         | ___  | ___   | _____                    | _____   | _____             |
| 3.  | ___              | ___                         | ___  | ___   | _____                    | _____   | _____             |
| 4.  | ___              | ___                         | ___  | ___   | _____                    | _____   | _____             |
| 5.  | ___              | ___                         | ___  | ___   | _____                    | _____   | _____             |
| 6.  | ___              | ___                         | ___  | ___   | _____                    | _____   | _____             |
| 7.  | ___              | ___                         | ___  | ___   | _____                    | _____   | _____             |
| 8.  | ___              | ___                         | ___  | ___   | _____                    | _____   | _____             |
| 9.  | ___              | ___                         | ___  | ___   | _____                    | _____   | _____             |
| 10. | ___              | ___                         | ___  | ___   | _____                    | _____   | _____             |
| 11. | ___              | ___                         | ___  | ___   | _____                    | _____   | _____             |
| 12. | ___              | ___                         | ___  | ___   | _____                    | _____   | _____             |

## Module 3. Agriculture

### 3.1 Saisons

De quelles saisons culturales vous identifiez dans les dernier 12 mois ? Encerclez les lettres applicables dans les colons C, F, et I. Si il n'y a pas d'agriculture, encerclez « 0 pas d'agriculture » dans colon B.

| A. | B.                             | C. | D.               | E.               | F. | G.               | H.               | I. | J.               | K.               |
|----|--------------------------------|----|------------------|------------------|----|------------------|------------------|----|------------------|------------------|
|    |                                |    | Temps de semence | Temps de récolte |    | Temps de semence | Temps de récolte |    | Temps de semence | Temps de récolte |
|    |                                |    | MM -AAAA         | MM-AAAA          |    | MM -AAAA         | MM-AAAA          |    | MM -AAAA         | MM-AAAA          |
| 1. | 0. Pas d'agriculture >>Mod 3.4 | A  | _____            | _____            | B  | _____            | _____            | C  | _____            | _____            |

### 3.2 Propriétés foncières

Identifiez tous les champs de ménage, ou les champs que le ménage utilise (si il y a plus que 6, notez les 6 champs les plus importants)

| A. | B.   | C.                    | D.   | E.                           | F.                                     | G.   | H.  | I.  | J.  | K.               |   |
|----|--|-----------------------|--|------------------------------|--|--|---|---|---|------------------|---|
|    | Quels plantes sont dans vos champs? (plusieurs par champ est possible) | Taille de la parcelle |  | A qui appartient le champs ? | Leménage d'enquête a accès a c champ : | Combien payiez-vous par année pour l'accès ?     |   | Qui y travaillent ?   | Technique suivantes pour proteger/restorer le sol ? | Durée de jachere | Proprieteur   |
|    | Codes<br>Voire fiche   | Superficie            | Mesure<br>1.Hectare<br>2.Are<br>3.M <sup>2</sup><br>4.Carré/par celle<br>5.Autre : | Codes→                       | Codes →                                | Quantité<br>Notez « 0 » si le menage ne paie pas | Unite<br>1.FC<br>2.Chèvre<br>3.Poule<br>4.Récolte<br>5.Autre: | 1-20. Ménage, Code de Mod1.1<br>21.Par jour<br>22.Famille<br>23.Comité de femme<br>24.Voisin<br>25. Groupe solidaire<br>26. Groupe religieuse<br>27. Autre, specifiez : | Codes→<br>(Encerclez les lettres applicables)       | Annees           | 1-20. Ménage, Code de Mod1.1<br>21.Mwami<br>22.Chef de village<br>23.Quelqu'un d'autre au village<br>24.Autre, specifiez  |
| 1  | _____  | _____                 | _____  | _____                        | _____                                  | _____  | _____   | _____   | A B C   | _____            | <b>Access</b><br>1.Propriété de ménage>> I<br>2.Loué pour deux (ou plus) années<br>3.Loué pour le premier année<br>4.Autre, spec/<br><br>Methodes :<br>A.La Boure<br>B.Rotatio n enseulement<br>C.Culture en couloir<br>D.Champ en jachère<br>E.Agroforestiere (Grevillea, Leucena, Acacia, Markamia, Tephrosia))<br>F.Autre, spec. |
| 2  | _____  | _____                 | _____  | _____                        | _____                                  | _____  | _____   | _____   | A B C   | _____            |   |
| 3  | _____  | _____                 | _____  | _____                        | _____                                  | _____  | _____   | _____   | A B C   | _____            |   |
| 4  | _____  | _____                 | _____  | _____                        | _____                                  | _____  | _____   | _____   | A B C   | _____            |   |
| 5  | _____  | _____                 | _____  | _____                        | _____                                  | _____  | _____   | _____   | A B C   | _____            |   |
| 6  | _____  | _____                 | _____  | _____                        | _____                                  | _____  | _____   | _____   | A B C   | _____            |   |



### 3.3 Récoltes les dernier 12 mois

Utilisez les informations de module 3.1 et 3.2 pour remplir colons B et C. Si il y a plus que 6 champs, incluez les récoltes des les champs qui ne sont pas dans mod 3.2 !

| A.  | B.                                | C.                               | D.                     | E.  | F.  | G.  | H.            | I.   | J.  | K.            | L.   | M.  | N.   |
|-----|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|---|---|---|---------------|--|---|---------------|--|---|--|
|     | Plante<br>s/<br>Cultures          | Saison<br>de<br>semence          | Sais.<br>de<br>recolte | <b>Pour annuels:</b> Combien est-ce<br>que vous avez planté/semé cet<br>saison ?<br><br><b>Pour perennes :</b> Combien de<br>plantes vous avez maintenant ? |   | Combien avez-vous récolté<br>dans ce saison ? |               | Pourquoi vous<br>n'avez pas eu<br>de récolte ?   | Quantité vendue de récolte de cet<br>saison ? |               | Combien de revenus<br>est-ce que vous<br>avez gagné dans la<br>vente de ces<br>produits? | Quand est-ce<br>vous avez<br>commencé à<br>vendre ?   | Lieu de vente<br>principal   |
|     | Codes<br>sur la<br>fiche<br>Codes | A,B,C<br><br>Perennes :<br>« - » | A,B,C                  | Quantité  | Code unité<br><br>(Codes<br>Fiche)<br><br>Pour<br>perennes :<br>1 | Quantité                                      | Code<br>unité | 1. Maladies<br>2. Ravage<br>3. Grèles<br>4. Animaux<br>5. Insécurité<br>6. Vol<br>7. Autre,<br>specifiez<br><b>Tous :</b><br>>>Ligne<br>Suivante | Quantité                                      | Code<br>unité | Montant, FC  | 1. Avant ...<br>2. Moins que<br>deux<br>semaines<br>après...<br>3. Plus que<br>deux<br>semaines<br>apres<br>...la recolte | 1.A côté de la<br>route<br>2. Au marché<br>3. A un<br>commerçant<br>4. A une<br>coopérative<br>5. Au champ<br>6. A domicile<br>7. Autres,<br>spécifiez : |
| 1.  | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 2.  | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 3.  | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 4.  | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 5.  | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 6.  | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 7.  | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 8.  | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 9.  | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 10. | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 11. | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 12. | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 13. | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |
| 14. | □□□                               | □                                | □                      | □□□□□□  | □□  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □  | □□□□□□  | □□            | □□□□□□   | □   | □  |

**3.3 Technologie et facilités**

| A.  | B.                     | C.  | D.                                     | E.                      | F.                         | G.                                      | H.   | CODES F.<br>1.Production Propre<br>2.Acheté avec épargnes<br>3.Acheté avec Crédit<br>4.Autre acheté : _____<br>5.Don ONG<br>6.Don d'une organisation villageois<br>7.Autre don : _____ |
|-----|------------------------|---|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|--|
|     | T                      | Avez-vous utilisé les technologies suivantes les 12 mois passées pour la production agricole de votre ménage? | Combien en avez-vous utilisé?<br>Unité |                         | Comment vous avez acquis ? | Qu'est-ce que c'est le prix par unité ? | Sur quelles parcelles avez-vous utilisé ces technologies ? |  |
|     |                        | 1. Oui<br>2. Non >> ligne suivante  | Quantité                               | Mesure<br>(Codes Fiche) | Codes →                    | Montant CF<br>999998 = Ne sait pas      | Utilisez les numéros de champs de Module 3.2               |  |
| 1.  | Engrais chimique       | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="text"/>                   | <input type="text"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="text"/>                    | <input type="text"/>                                       |  |
| 2.  | Engrais Organique      | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="text"/>                   | <input type="text"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="text"/>                    | <input type="text"/>                                       |  |
| 3.  | Sémences amélioré      | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="text"/>                   | <input type="text"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="text"/>                    | <input type="text"/>                                       |  |
| 4.  | Pesticides/ herbicides | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="text"/>                   | <input type="text"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="text"/>                    | <input type="text"/>                                       |  |
| 5.  | Par jour               | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="text"/>                   | jours                   |                            | <input type="text"/>                    |  |  |
| 6.  | Irrigation             | <input type="checkbox"/>  |  |                         | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="text"/>                    | <input type="text"/>                                       |  |
| 7.  | Tracteur               | <input type="checkbox"/>  |  |                         | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="text"/>                    | <input type="text"/>                                       |  |
| 8.  | Decortiqueuse          | <input type="checkbox"/>  |  |                         | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="text"/>                    | <input type="text"/>                                       |  |
| 9.  | Aire de séchage        | <input type="checkbox"/>  |  |                         | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="text"/>                    | <input type="text"/>                                       |  |
| 10. | Autre : _____          | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="text"/>                   | <input type="text"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="text"/>                    | <input type="text"/>                                       |  |

**3.4 Protection et restauration du sol**

|    |   |                     |   |                    |   |  |
|----|---|---------------------|---|--------------------|---|--|
| 1. | Est-ce que votre ménage utilise un des technique/methodes suivantes pour proteger/restorer le sol ? (Encerclez les lettres applicables) |                     |   |                    |   |  |
|    | A   | La boure            | C | Culture en couloir | E | Planter des arbres de agroforesterie (par exemple Grevillea, Leucena, Acacia, Markamia, Tephrosia) |
|    | B   | Rotation ensolement | D | Champ en jachère   | F | Autre, specifiez   |

**3.5 Betail**

Combien de ces animaux a votre ménage ?

|   |        |                      |   |              |                      |
|---|--------|----------------------|---|--------------|----------------------|
| A | Vache  | <input type="text"/> | D | Porc         | <input type="text"/> |
| B | Chèvre | <input type="text"/> | E | Autre: _____ | <input type="text"/> |
| C | Poule  | <input type="text"/> | F | Autre: _____ | <input type="text"/> |



| A.  | B.                            | C.  | D.                       | E.                                    | F.  | G.   | H.                       | I.   | J.  | K.                       |
|-----|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------|--|---|--------------------------|
|     | Bien de consommation          | Est-ce que votre ménage a consommé ceci les 2 dernières semaines? | Avez-vous acheté ceci ?  | Combien avez-vous dépensé pour ceci ? | Avez-vous utilisé votre propre production ou votre stock pour la consommation de ceci ? | Quelle quantité avez-vous prise de votre propre production ou de votre stock?<br>(Aussi produits de vos champs, la récolte en sauvage, pecheries etc.) |                          | Avez-vous reçu une certaine quantité gratuitement? | Quelle quantité avez-vous reçu gratuitement ? |                          |
|     |                               | 1. oui<br>2. non >> ligne suivante                                | 1. oui<br>2. non >> F    | FC                                    | 1. oui<br>2. non >> I   | Quantité   | Mesure (cf. codes)       | 1. oui<br>2. non >> ligne suivante                 | Quantité                                      | Mesure (cf. codes)       |
| 13. | Autre legume/fruit :<br>_____ | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. | Poulet                        | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. | Viande                        | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. | Poisson                       | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. | Oeufs                         | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. | Autre produit animal<br>_____ | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. | Sel                           | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. | Cubes de maggi                | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. | Autre condiment : __          | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. | Sucre                         | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. | Huile                         | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24. | Boissons sucré                | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25. | Boisson alcoolisé             | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26. | Lait                          | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27. | Thé, café                     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28. | Bois chauffage                | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 29. | Savon, poudre lessive etc.    | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30. | Batteries, piles kérosène     | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31. | Autre, spécifiez :<br>_____   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>  | _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Module 5. Sécurité

### 5.1 Sentiment de sécurité

| Au cours des trois mois passés.... |  |                          |  |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| 1.                                 | Etes-vous sorti seul le soir ou la nuit dans votre village?            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1: souvent<br>2: parfois<br>3: jamais<br>4: aucune réponse |
| 2.                                 | Etes-vous sorti seul le soir ou la nuit en dehors de votre village?    | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 3.                                 | [Si applicable] Est-ce que vos enfants sont sortis le soir ou la nuit? | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |

### 5.2 Incidents dans la communauté

| A. | B.  | C.                       | D.                       | E.  | F.  |
|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|
|    | Pendant les 12 mois passés, est-ce qu'un de vos voisins a vécu l'expérience suivante: |                          | Combien de fois ?        | Est-ce que cet incident a connu un suivi ou a été résolu ?<br>(si ça s'est arrivé plus qu'une fois, seulement par rapport à la dernière fois) | De quelle manière?  |
|    |   | 1. Oui<br>2. Non<br>>>   |                          | 1. oui, résolu<br>2. pas résolu, mail il y a un suivi<br>3. pas de suivi >>   | 1. Chef de village est intervenu<br>2. Sages sont intervenus<br>3. Régulé entre les personnes impliquées (arrangement à l'amiable)<br>4. Procès au tribunal (affaire civil/penal)<br>5. Autre, spécifiez... |
| 1. | A été insulté en public?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 2. | Été victime d'un vol ?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 3. | Été victime d'une violation physique (par ex. battu)                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 4. | Été victime d'une violation sexuelle ?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 5. | Impliqué dans la sorcellerie ?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 6. | Impliqué dans un conflit foncier avec quelqu'un de la communauté?                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 7. | Impliqué dans un conflit d'exploitation minière avec quelqu'un de la communauté ?     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| 8. | Autre, spécifiez:<br>_____  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |

## Module 6. Gouvernance

### 6.1 Organisation

| A  | B.  | C.                                  | D.                       | E.   | A.Gérer les disputes foncières<br>B.Gerer les disputes minières<br>C.Gérer les autres conflits dans le village<br>D.Discuter la sécurité de village<br>E.Ceremonies sociales<br>F. Discuter/gérer les projets de développement<br>G.Selectionner des responsables<br>H.Autre, specifiez...<br>I. Autre, specifiez... |
|----|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
|    |   |                                     | Combien de fois ?        | Sur quel(s) sujet(s) ?                           |  |
|    |   | 1.Oui<br>2.Non >><br>ligne suivante |                          | Encerclez les lettres applicables<br><br>Codes → |  |
| 1. | Au cours des 12 mois passés, est-ce que vous vous êtes mis ensemble avec d'autres membres de la communauté pour adresser un problème quelconque ?           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | A B C D E F G H                                  |  |
| 2. | Au cours des 12 mois passés, est-ce que vous avez parlé avec <u>une ONG ou avec une autre organisation</u> sur les problèmes dans la communauté ?           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | A B C D E F G H                                  |  |
| 3. | Au cours des 12 mois passés, est-ce que vous avez parlé avec une <u>autorité locale ou une agence gouvernementale</u> sur les problèmes dans la communauté? | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | A B C D E F G H                                  |  |

### 6.2 Participation publique

|    |   |                          |   |                          |   |                             |                          |
|----|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | Vous ou un autre membre de votre ménage êtes membres de quelles organisation ?<br><br>Encerclez les lettres applicables, et notez le codes de Mod 1.1 des membres de ménage qui font partie de ce organisation. | A                        | Coopérative agricole  | <input type="checkbox"/> | G | Groupe de jeunes            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    |   | B                        | Coopérative commercial  | <input type="checkbox"/> | H | Groupe religieux / CEV      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    |   | C                        | COOPEC  | <input type="checkbox"/> | I | Organisation politique      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    |   | D                        | Coopérative minière   | <input type="checkbox"/> | J | MUSO (mutuel de solidarité) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    |   | E                        | Organisation de base  | <input type="checkbox"/> | K | Autre : _____               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|    |   | F                        | Groupe de femmes  | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |                             |                          |
| 2. | Vous avez voté pour les dernières élections présidentiels ?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1.oui<br>2.non  |                          |   |                             |                          |
| 3. | Quand vous êtes avec vos amis ou votre famille, diriez-vous que vous discutez de questions politiques: [Lire les options]   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Fréquemment<br>2. Occasionnellement<br>3. Jamais<br>4. Ne sais pas [Ne pas lire] |                          |   |                             |                          |

### 6.3 Salongo

|    |  |                          |  |  |
|----|--|--------------------------|--|--|
| 1. | Combien de jours par mois votre ménage travaille pour le Salongo ?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Jours  |  |
| 2. | A. B.  | C.                       |  |  |
|    | Est-ce que les groupes suivant ont tous les memes avantages de cet travail communautaire (Salongo) ? Codes → | Remarques                |  |  |
| 1. | Votre ménage   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Plus que les autres<br>2. Le même comme les autres<br>3. Moins que les autres<br>4. Pas du tout<br>8. Ne sait pas |  |
| 2. | Le chef de village   | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |  |
| 3. | Ménages riches   | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |  |
| 4. | Ménages pauvres  | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |  |
| 5. | Etrangers (autre tribu)  | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |  |



**6.6 Capital social**

| A. |                        | B.   | C.  | D.  | E.  |
|----|------------------------|--|---|---|---|
|    |                        | J'ai beaucoup de respect envers ces personnes.   | J'ai beaucoup de confiance en ces personnes . | En cas de problèmes, je peux m'adresser à ces personnes pour m'aider. | Ces personnes peuvent agir dans mon intérêt . |
|    |                        | 1. Tout à fait d'accord<br>2. D'accord<br>3. Neutre<br>4. Pas d'accord<br>5. Tout à fait pas d'accord<br>6. Je ne suis pas sûre<br>7. Pas de réponse |   |   |   |
| 1. | Membres du ménage      | □  | □   | □   | □   |
| 2. | Etrangers au village   | □  | □   | □   | □   |
| 3. | Chef du village        | □  | □   | □   | □   |
| 4. | Mwami                  | □  | □   | □   | □   |
| 5. | Associations locales   | □  | □   | □   | □   |
| 6. | Politiciens Nationales | □  | □   | □   | □   |



## Module 7. Histoire du conflit

### 7.1 Histoire depuis 1996

|     |  |           |   |                      |                    |
|-----|--|-----------|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1.  | Avez-vous connu de destruction de votre propriété à cause de conflits armés dans ce période (1996 – maintenant)? | _         |   | 1. Oui<br>2. Non >>3 |                    |
| 2.  | Si oui, marquez les lettres applicables  | A         | Maison  | E                    | Vêtements          |
|     |  | B         | Propriétés foncières                            | F                    | Betail             |
|     |  | C         | Outils agricultures                             | G                    | Autre : _____      |
|     |  | D         | Récolte   | H                    | Autre : _____      |
| 3.  | Avez-vous ou un membre de votre ménage été blessé à cause de conflits armés dans ce période?                     | _         |   | 1. Oui<br>2. Non >>5 |                    |
| 4.  | Si oui, qui ?  | _ _ _ _ _ |   | Codes du Mod 1.1     |                    |
| 5.  | Avez-vous ou un membre de votre ménage été enlevé à cause de conflits armés dans ce période?                     | _         |   | 1. Oui<br>2. Non >>7 |                    |
| 6.  | Si oui, qui ?  | _ _ _ _ _ |   | Codes du Mod 1.1     |                    |
| 7.  | Avez-vous perdu des membres de la famille pendant les conflits armés dans ce période?                            | _         |   | 1. Oui<br>2. Non >>9 |                    |
| 8.  | Indiquez les membres que vous avez perdu ?<br><br>Encerclez la(/les) lettre(s) applicables                       | A         | Grand Parent                                    | D                    | Enfants            |
|     |  | B         | Parent  | E                    | Petit enfant       |
|     |  | C         | Epoux/ épouse                                   | F                    | Autres: _____      |
| 9.  | Quelles groupes sont responsable pour les fait ci-dessus ?<br><br>Encerclez la (/les) lettre(s) applicables      | A         | FARDC   | F                    | M23                |
|     |  | B         | FDLR  | G                    | Nalu               |
|     |  | C         | CNDP  | H                    | Simba              |
|     |  | D         | PARECO  | I                    | Autre, specifiez : |
|     |  | E         | Mai-Mai   | J                    | Pas de réponse     |
| 10. | Vous avez pris quelles mesures de protection ?<br><br>Encerclez la(/les) lettre(s) applicables                   | A.        | Donné d'argent a un agent de le gouvernement    |                      |                    |
|     |  | B.        | Donne d'argent a un agent d'une groupe armée    |                      |                    |
|     |  | C.        | Fait partie d'une groupe armée                  |                      |                    |
|     |  | D.        | Fait partie de FARDC                            |                      |                    |
|     |  | E.        | Acheté un arme                                  |                      |                    |
|     |  | F.        | Participé au projet de protection communautaire |                      |                    |
|     |  | G.        | Déplacement                                     |                      |                    |
|     |  | H.        | Autre : _____                                   |                      |                    |
|     |  | I.        | Pas de réponse                                  |                      |                    |

FIN D'ENTRETIEN. REMERCIEZ L'ENQUETE, ET CONTINUEZ AVEC LE MODULE GENRE

## Module 8. Genre

Ce module on fait avec une femme du ménage.

Lisez : « Maintenant, je voudrais parler avec une femme de votre ménage **en privé**. Nous allons décider avec qui je vais parler avec une loterie. »

|    |   |   |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
|----|---|---|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. | Est-ce que une ou plus femmes plus âgée que 16 est présente ?   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | 1. Oui → Continuer normalement.<br>2. Non → C'est dommage ! On fait le module avec un homme qui est présent. |                            |                            |                             |  |
| 2. | Notez les codes de Mod1.1 des femmes qui sont présent et plus âgée que 16. Sélectionnez au hasard un numéro, et <b>encerclez le numéro sélectionné</b>  | 1 <input type="checkbox"/>  | 2 <input type="checkbox"/>   | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/>  | 6 <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| →  | Cherchez un endroit privé avec la femme sélectionné, et suivez les instructions suivants :  |   |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
| 3. | Lisez : Je vais lire chaque fois deux opinions : A et B. Je vais vous demander d'indiquer quelles de ces opinions suivants sont proche de votre opinion : A ou B. Après chaque deux opinions, encerclez le chiffre applicable.  |   |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
|    | <b>Argument A →<br/>Certains pensent que...</b>   | Tout a fait d'accord avec A   | D'accord avec A  | Neutre                     | D'accord avec B            | Tout a fait d'accord avec B | <b>←Argument B<br/>D'autres pensent que...</b>   |
| A. | Selon nos mœurs et coutumes, les femmes ont toujours été soumises et devraient rester comme telles.   | 1   | 2  | 3                          | 4                          | 5                           | Dans notre pays les femmes devraient avoir des mêmes droits et obligations que les hommes.   |
| B. | Si un homme maltraite sa femme elle a droit de se plaindre.   | 1   | 2  | 3                          | 4                          | 5                           | Selon nos mœurs et coutumes les femmes ne devraient pas se plaindre de leurs hommes même si elles se sentent maltraités.                                   |
| C. | Selon nos mœurs et coutumes, un homme dont la femme a été violée a le droit d'abandonner sa femme.  | 1   | 2  | 3                          | 4                          | 5                           | Une femme qui est victime d'un viol ne devrait pas être rejetée par son marie et la communauté.  |
| D. | Les femmes devraient avoir la même chance que les hommes d'occupé des positions socio-administratives dans le village.  | 1   | 2  | 3                          | 4                          | 5                           | Les hommes sont les meilleurs dirigeants et ce sont eux seuls qui devraient occuper les positions socio-administratives dans le village.                   |
| E. | Seulement les hommes devraient etre les presidents de comités de gestion qui existent dans le village.  | 1   | 2  | 3                          | 4                          | 5                           | Les femmes ont des connaissances à apporter. Elle devraient donc être éligibles au poste de président des comités de gestion qui existent dans le village. |
| 4. | Encerclez le chiffre applicable :   |   |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
|    | 1   | Code ménage est pair → 4 boules, 4 options : éliminez option 5 : <del>(Violence sexuel)</del> |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
|    | 2   | Code ménage est impair → 5 boules, 5 options. N'éliminez rien.                                |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
| →  | <b>Lisez :</b> Je vais lire quelques problèmes que les femmes peuvent connaître. Ces sont des problèmes sensibles. Quand je dis un problème applicable à vous, dans la dernière année, laissez tomber une de ces boules à la terre. Je ne vais pas regarder quand les boules tombent, donc je ne vais savoir quels problèmes sont exactement applicables à vous. Je seulement vais compter les boules sur la terre, pour savoir combien de problèmes. Ce nombre je garderai dans tout l'anonymat. |   |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
|    | <b>Lisez les options à haute voix.</b> (Si le code de ménage est pair, ne lisez pas option 5 !!)  |   |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
|    | 1   | <b>Manque de nourriture</b>   | Tous les ménages   |                            |                            |                             |  |
|    | 2   | <b>Manque d'argent</b>  |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
|    | 3   | <b>Vol</b>  |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
|    | 4   | <b>Stérilité</b>  |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
|    | 5   | <b>Violence sexuel</b>  |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
|    | Lisez pas pour Ménages 2,4,6,8,10,12,14,16  |   |  |                            |                            |                             |  |
| 5. | Combien de boules il y a sur la terre ?   | <input type="checkbox"/>  |  |                            |                            |                             |  |

# Auto-évaluation

## *Développement de la société civile*

### Information générale

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Votre nom                                   |  |
| Nom de l'organisation                       |  |
| Fonction dans l'organisation                |  |
| Votre adresse e-mail                        |  |
| Votre no. téléphone                         |  |
| MDG/thème sur lequel l'organisation travail |  |
| Date de l'exercice                          |  |
| Lieu de l'exercice                          |  |

*Les pages suivant présentent un nombre de questions à choix multiples (indiquez lequel parmi les affirmations suivants est le plus applicable à votre organisation). Par question on vous demande aussi de donner quelques exemples (de preuve) qui soutiennent votre choix par rapport aux changements récents (depuis 2012), ainsi qu'une bref résumé des facteurs (forces, faiblesses) qui expliquent la situation actuel.*

#### 1. Besoins de vos bénéficiaires/groups marginalisés

a) Dans votre planification, les activités, les stratégies, comment votre organisation prend en compte les besoins (qui sont en concordance avec les objectifs du projet et votre mission) de vos bénéficiaires ?

- Les besoins de nos bénéficiaires NE SONT PAS pris en compte
- Sont pris en compte MARGINALEMENT
- Sont pris en compte PARTIELLEMENT
- Sont pris en compte ENTIEREMENT
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Indiquez si votre choix ici-haut concerne une attention SPÉCIFIQUE sur les bénéficiaires les plus marginalisés/vulnérables

- OUI
- NON

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

#### 2. L'inclusion des bénéficiaires dans votre organisation

Quel est le degré de participation de vos bénéficiaires dans l'analyse, la planification, et l'évaluation de vos activités ?

- Ils sont INFORMÉS sur les activités en cours ou des nouvelles activités à entreprendre

- Ils sont CONSULTÉS par l'organisation dans l'identification des problèmes et la proposition des solutions
- Ils EXECUTENT les activités et/ou formulent des demandes à l'organisation. Ils apportent leurs ressources (temps, mains d'œuvre) en échange pour l'assistance par notre organisation (matérielle ou immatérielle)
- Ils ANALYSENT des problèmes et FORMULENT des propositions ensemble avec notre organisation et/ou PRENNENT des initiatives eux-mêmes d'une manière indépendant
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

**3. L'intensité de la collaboration de votre organisation avec des institutions/autorités gouvernementales du pays**

Quel est l'intensité de votre collaboration (individuellement ou par l'organisation) avec des institutions/autorités gouvernementales?

- Pas de contact
- Notre collaboration est limitée.
- Nous sommes régulièrement en contact avec les autorités mais seulement quand ils nous approchent
- Nous sommes régulièrement en contact avec les autorités, sur la demande des autorités, mais aussi sur notre demande.
- Nous avons des liens proches avec les autorités et notre collaboration est intense.
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Indiquez si votre choix ici-haut concerne surtout la collaboration à quel niveau

- Institutions/autorités locales (groupement, territoire)
- Institutions/autorités provinciales
- Institutions/autorités nationales
- Tous

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

**4. Relations avec d'autres organisations de la société civile**

Depuis début 2011, quel a été le degré d'interaction avec d'autres organisations de la société civile (ONG) qui travaillent sur le même sujet/thème ?

- Pas d'interaction

- On se rencontre seulement pendant des réunions thématiques ou on s'informe mutuellement mais chacun travaille d'une manière indépendante sans division de rôles
- On se rencontre seulement pendant des réunions thématiques ou on s'informe mutuellement, et les rôles de l'un et l'autre sont plus ou moins définie mais nous n'avons pas d'activités communes
- On se rencontre pendant des réunions thématiques mais aussi par des rencontres bilatérales, les rôles de l'un et l'autre sont défini et nous cherchons activement à être complémentaires dans nos activités
- On se rencontre pendant des réunions mais aussi par des rencontres bilatérales, les rôles de l'un et l'autre sont défini et nous avons des fois d'activités communes
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

**5. Fréquence de dialogue avec l'organisation qui est le plus proche à le votre**

Depuis début 2011, combien de rencontres avez-vous eu avec d'autres organisations de la société civile qui travaillent sur le même sujet/thématique) : .....

- Pas d'interaction
- Moins de 2 fois par an
- Entre 2 et 3 fois l'an
- Plus de 4 fois l'an
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

L'organisation avec laquelle nous coopérons plus est .....  
(svp donnez le nom de l'ONG)

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

**6. Agir sur la même groupe cible (des groupes marginalisés)**

Comment décrivez-vous la complémentarité entre votre organisation et d'autres organisations de la société civile qui agissent sur les mêmes groupes cibles ? ,

- Des fois on observe sur terrain que d'autres organisations travaillent aussi avec nos cibles, mais nous ne sommes pas informés de cela en avance, chacun agisse d'une manière non-concerté
- Nous sommes informés en avance des activités que d'autres organisations développent avec la même cible mais ça se limite là
- Nous cherchons ensemble avec les autres organisations à se définir et répartir des rôles quant aux activités qui agissent sur la même cible

- Nous cherchons ensemble avec les autres organisations à se définir et répartir des rôles quant aux activités qui agissent sur la même cible et exécutons les activités des fois conjointement
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Indiquez si votre choix ici-haut concerne surtout quel type thématique développée par ces autres organisations

- Ils travaillent sur d'autres thématiques
- Ils travaillent sur la même thématique
- Les deux cas arrivent

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

## **7. Composition des ressources financières de l'organisation**

A) Quelle est actuellement la composition de votre base financière?

- On a un seul bailleur
- On a quelques bailleurs, dont l'un couvre plus de 75% de tous nos couts
- On a une variété des ressources financières, dont un couvre un maximum de 50% de nos couts.
- Nous avons plusieurs sources financières d'une importance égale
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

B) Qui sont vos bailleurs principales?

- Nous dépendons uniquement des bailleurs internationaux
- Nous avons majoritairement des bailleurs internationaux mais aussi quelques fonds qui proviennent des sources nationaux
- Nous avons majoritairement des fonds qui proviennent des sources nationaux
- Nous fonctionnons seulement avec des petites contributions locales
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

## **8. Fonctionnement des organes sociaux**

Comment décrivez-vous la relation entre votre équipe exécutive et les organes sociales mandatrices (CA, AG)?

- Je ne connais pas les rôles des organes sociaux, ni je vois des activités exécutés par les organes sociaux

- Je connais les rôles des organes sociaux, mais ils ne fonctionnent pas comme il le faut
- Je connais les rôles des organes sociaux et ils fonctionnent partiellement comme il le faut
- Je connais les rôles des organes sociaux et ils fonctionnent entièrement comme il le faut
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

### 9. Composition des organes sociaux

Quel pourcentage de vos organes sociaux obligatoires (ex. CA, AG) fait partie des groups de bénéficiaires?

- Pas de participation des groups de bénéficiaires
- Moins de 20 % des membres des organes sociales
- Entre 21-50 % des membres des organes sociales
- Plus de 50% des membres des organes sociales
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

### 10. Les audits financiers externs

Avec quelle fréquence votre organisation est soumise à un audit financier externe ?

- Jamais
- Occasionnellement, sur demande de notre/nos bailleur(s)
- Périodiquement et régulièrement sur demande de notre/nos bailleur(s)
- Périodiquement et régulièrement car ça fait partie de notre code de conduite
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

**11. Satisfaction de vos bénéficiaires**

Par rapport à 2011, comment le niveau de satisfaction de vos bénéficiaires est développé jusqu'à aujourd'hui par rapport aux services que vous leur offrez ?

- La majorité de nos bénéficiaires sont moins satisfaits
- La majorité de nos bénéficiaires sont également satisfaits
- La majorité de nos bénéficiaires sont un peu plus satisfaits
- La majorité de nos bénéficiaires sont plus satisfaits
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

**12. Votre impacte sur la société**

A) Depuis début 2011, à quel niveau vous situez surtout l'influence que votre organisation a eu sur le renforcement de la société ?

- Nos interventions s'adressent surtout aux groupes bénéficiaires directement.
- La plupart de nos interventions s'adressent aux bénéficiaires directement, une autre part s'adresse aux autres intervenants à la base (ex. autorités locales, ONGs qui travaillent sur le même axe géographique/thématique)
- Nos interventions s'adressent surtout aux intervenants à la base (ex. autorités locales, ONGs qui travaillent sur le même axe géographique/thématique).
- Nos interventions s'adressent surtout au niveau des intervenants au niveau provincial (ex. autorités
- Nos interventions combinent les options données ici-haut
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

B) Par rapport au niveau stipulé ici haut, comment décrivez-vous votre impact?

- Pas d'activités développées dans ce domaine
- Quelques activités développées dans ce domaine mais avec un impact négligeable
- Plusieurs activités développés dans ce domaine, mais l'impact est encore limité
- Beaucoup d'activités développées dans ce domaine et d'exemples de succès peuvent être détecté
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?



**13. Relation avec le secteur public (services sociaux publiques, des députés provinciales/nationales, institutions exécutifs publiques etc)**

Les derniers 12 mois, quels interactions vous avez eu avec des acteurs du secteur public afin de réaliser vos objectifs ?

- Pas d'interaction
- Nous sommes invités par/nous invitons les organisations du secteur public pour partager d'information
- Nous sommes invités par/nous invitons les organisations du secteur public pour consultations régulières mais le secteur public décide ce qu'elle fait avec notre apport
- Nous faisons part des réunions formalisés et régulières avec multiples acteurs publiques
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question? Si vous avez eu des contacts avec des autres ; c'était à l'initiative de qui ?

**14. Relation avec le secteur privé (entreprises, commerçants, opérateurs économiques, etc.)**

Les derniers 12 mois, quels interactions vous avez eu avec des acteurs du secteur privé afin de réaliser vos objectifs ?

- Pas d'interaction
- Nous sommes invités par/nous invitons les organisations du secteur privé pour partager d'information
- Nous sommes invités par/nous invitons les organisations du secteur privé pour consultations régulières mais le secteur privé décide ce qu'elle fait avec notre apport
- Nous faisons part des réunions formalisés et régulières avec multiples acteurs privés
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question? Si vous avez eu des contacts avec des autres ; c'était à l'initiative de qui ?

**15. Votre influence sur les politiques et pratiques des acteurs du secteur public (services sociaux publiques, députés, institutions étatiques, etc)**

Les derniers deux ans, quel a été le degré de succès quant à votre influence sur les politiques et pratiques des acteurs publiques ?

- Pas d'activités développées dans ce domaine
- Quelques activités développées dans ce domaine mais avec un impact négligeable
- Quelques activités développées dans ce domaine et avec d'exemples de succès
- Plusieurs activités développés dans ce domaine, mais l'impact est encore limité
- Beaucoup d'activités développées dans ce domaine et d'exemples de succès peuvent être détecté
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

**16. Votre influence sur les politiques et pratiques des acteurs privés (entreprises, commerçants, opérateurs économiques, etc.)**

Les derniers deux ans, quel a été le degré de succès quant à votre influence sur les politiques et pratiques des acteurs privés ?

- Pas d'activités développées dans ce domaine
- Quelques activités développées dans ce domaine mais avec un impact négligeable
- Quelques activités développées dans ce domaine et avec d'exemples de succès
- Plusieurs activités développés dans ce domaine, mais l'impact est encore limité
- Beaucoup d'activités développées dans ce domaine et d'exemples de succès peuvent être détecté
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

**17. Contexte**

A) Comment votre organisation fait face aux changements dans le contexte socio-économique qui peuvent poser des risques pour vos activités ou la société civile en large ?

- Pas d'analyse du contexte socio-économique est faite par notre organisation
- Nous collectons des informations sur le contexte socio-économique mais nous ne les analysent pas régulièrement
- Nous collectons des informations sur le contexte socio-économique et analysent les conséquences des changements observés sur nos activités. D'exemples de ces exercices sont disponibles.
- Nous sommes activement impliqués dans des actions conjoints pour rendre le contexte socio-économique plus favorable pour la société civile. D'exemples de ces exercices sont disponibles.
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

B) Comment votre organisation fait face aux changements dans le contexte politico-sécuritaire qui peuvent poser des risques pour vos activités ou la société en large ?

- Pas d'analyse du contexte politico-sécuritaire faite par notre organisation
- Nous collectons des informations sur le contexte politico-sécuritaire mais nous ne les analysons pas régulièrement
- Nous collectons des informations sur le contexte politico-sécuritaire et analysons les conséquences des changements observés sur nos activités. D'exemples de ces exercices sont disponibles.
- Nous sommes activement impliqués dans des actions conjoints pour rendre le contexte politico-sécuritaire plus favorable pour la société civile. D'exemples de ces exercices sont disponibles.
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

C) Comment votre organisation s'adapte aux opportunités présentés par le contexte ?

- Pas d'analyse des opportunités faite par notre organisation
- Nous collectons des informations sur les opportunités mais nous ne les analysons pas régulièrement
- Nous collectons des informations sur les opportunités et les analysons en fonction de renforcer nos activités. D'exemples de ces exercices sont disponibles.
- Nous sommes activement impliqués dans l'application des opportunités à nos activités pour les rendre plus efficaces. D'exemples de ces exercices sont disponibles.
- La question n'est pas pertinent parce que....

Quels sont les changements que vous observez depuis 2012 par rapport à cette question?

**Merci pour votre coopération !**

Autres remarques :



| Capacité   | Resultats   | Indicateur de performance  | Jamais | Rarement | Parfois | Régulièrement | Souvent | Toujours | N'applique pas |
|--|---|--|--------|----------|---------|---------------|---------|----------|----------------|
|  |   |  |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
| 3<br>Capacité à fournir sur les objectifs de développement   | Mesure dans laquelle l'organisation offre des produits et services prévus.                            | 25 Notre organisation a des plans opérationnels clairs pour la réalisation des projets que tout le personnel comprend aisément                             |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
|  |   | 26 Nos opérations sont basées sur une utilisation raisonnable et efficace des ressources   |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
|  |   | 27 Les activités prévus sont exécutés conforme planification   |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
|  | Niveau de l'efficacité de travail   | 28 Nous avons des mécanismes en place pour vérifier si les services répondent aux besoins des groupes cibles   |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
|  |   | 29 Notre organisation surveille à son efficacité en vérifiant si les inputs mènent effectivement aux outputs souhaités                                     |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
|  |   | 30 Notre organisation vise à équilibrer les exigences d'efficacité avec la qualité de notre travail  |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
| 4<br>Capacité de se rapporter aux autres (parties prenantes) | Niveau de la participation des parties externes à la politique interieur/stratégie de développement   | 31 Notre organisation entretient des relations/collaborations/alliances avec nos partenaires pour le bénéfice de notre organisation                        |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
|  |   | 32 Notre organisation a établi des relations avec des réseaux et des alliances existants   |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
|  | Niveau d'engagement de la organisation sur les réseaux, les alliances et les efforts de collaboration | 33 Notre organisation effectue des visites fréquentes à nos groupes cibles et aux bénéficiaires dans leur environnement                                    |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
|  |   | 34 Structure et culture organisationnelles facilitent les contacts, la communication et la prise de décision internes sont participatives et transparentes |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
| 5<br>Capacité à assurer la cohérence                         | Existence des mécanismes de cohérence   | 35 Vision, mission et stratégies sont régulièrement discutées dans l'organisation  |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
|  |   | 36 Directives opérationnelles (techniques, administration, gestion des ressources humaines) sont en place et utilisés                                      |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
|  | Niveau de cohérence des efforts divers de l'organisation  | 37 Projets, stratégies et les activités y associées sont correspondent avec la vision et la mission de l'organisation                                      |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |
|  |   | 38 Le portefeuille (des activités) des projets offre des possibilités pour des efforts mutuellement renforçant   |        |          |         |               |         |          |                |

**Si une question n'applique pas, donnez ici la raison**

No. de question    Explication

# ANNEX C

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Methodology for the Capacity Development and Civil Society  
Components of the Study

## **II Capacity development of Southern partner organisations**

### **Part 2: Evaluation design**

*Please note: In addition to a baseline and endline evaluation, we carried out a midterm visit to three of the five SPOs in our sample in November 2013: CEPROF, RHA and VECO. We used this visit to pilot our methodological approach for the endline and to obtain additional information about these SPOs that could enrich our picture.*

### **What technique(s) was/were used to evaluate the impact towards capacity development of the Southern partner organisations?**

*More than one answer possible.*

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  |   |
| Before/after comparison  | X |
| Case study   | X |
| Difference-in-Differences  |   |
| Focus groups/group interviews  | X |
| Force field analysis   |   |
| Individual interviews  | X |
| Knowledge and achievement tests  |   |
| Observation  | X |
| Propensity Score Matching  |   |
| Randomized Controlled Trial (randomized assignment)  |   |
| Randomized offering  |   |
| Randomized promotion   |   |
| Regression Discontinuity Design  |   |
| Self-reporting methods: Self-assessment Questionnaire on 5Cs   | X |
| Other: Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Timeline</li><li>- 5C framework</li><li>- Theory of Change</li><li>- Contribution story (only endline)</li></ul> | X |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Other: Review of primary and secondary data | X |
| Feedback workshop                           | X |

*Please note: For a detailed overview of the number of workshops and interviews carried out, see the main report, chapter 3.*

**Please explain why these methods were chosen.**

For a comprehensive understanding of the capacity and the context of operation of each organisation, we used a mixed-methods approach and incorporated triangulation as much as possible, combining objective and (inter)subjective measurements. The evaluation is a ‘real-world’ evaluation, acknowledging that many more factors influenced the outcome and impact on beneficiaries than the project interventions alone (Bodnar et al. 2010).<sup>1</sup>

Workshops allowed us to combine various methods of data collection. Workshops were chosen for four reasons:

- Most of the questions call for ideas, opinions and explanations from actors. This requires reflection and brainstorming, especially because the concepts introduced in the research were unfamiliar to respondents. The knowledge they have on their organisation’s capability is therefore mainly tacit in nature. Group discussions are suitable for bringing out such tacit knowledge because respondents will guide each other in comprehending the questions and in reflecting on the answers. Since participants can complement each other, group discussions can be useful in generating a broad range of ideas quickly.
- Workshops can bring out differences of opinion. Congolese organisations have a strong tradition of discussion, and a workshop is ideally suited for bringing out variation and differences among staff members.
- Workshops allowed us to incorporate an element of *observation* on social processes taking place; how staff would cooperate/take decisions/relate to each other.
- We needed agreement of the staff on certain things to guide the evaluation, in particular the identification of evidence-based indicators specific to the organisation of the capability to deliver, which we consider a crucial capability that also provides an entry point to assess the other four capabilities. The workshops provided an efficient opportunity to reach the needed consensus.
- A feedback workshop was organised early 2015. In preparing for this workshop, we translated draft versions of all of the organisation reports into French and shared these with participants (two representatives of each SPO). During plenary sessions, we discussed general findings and results. Individual sessions allowed participants to express their views on the reports. Finally, participants formulated recommendations for donors, the state, themselves and for their grassroots structures. These recommendations are presented in our final report.

The most important techniques chosen for the workshops were as follows:

- Construction of a timeline. This technique was used to identify in a systematic way the main developments and trends, mission and vision, strategies, target groups, capacity strengthening activities, external factors/actors and donors. (These were later validated through individual

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<sup>1</sup> Bodnár F, M van Leeuwen, A Niyonkuru, C Muvira, G Bucumi. 2010. Evaluation du programme d’Oxfam Novib au Burundi 2005-2009. AgrEvaluate, CICAM, Pays Bas ; ARCADE, Burundi.



interviews with staff members and other stakeholders.) During our baseline visit, we asked respondents to think back to the foundation of the organisation, with more dense descriptions towards 2012. During interim visits (RHA, VECO, CEPROF) and endline visits (all five SPOs), we constructed a very dense timeline covering the period from our last visit to the present. This was a useful way to zoom in on organisational changes taking place.

- Establishing the Theory of Change (ToC). The Terms of Reference of the evaluation assigns importance to the ToC. During the baseline visit, participants were invited to establish the goal that they wanted to achieve with their organisation in five years' time, especially in relation to their organisation's capacity. From there, they were asked to identify preconditions/intermediate outcomes that are essential for achieving this goal and the activities that they themselves could undertake to realise these conditions. Our choice to focus on one specific, tangible objective was based on the observation in the pilot of the evaluation that staff members found it difficult to work on the basis of more abstract objectives. Once the ToC was established, participants jointly designed a pathway to realise the desired change and outcome indicators were defined to measure the future realisations of the intermediate outcomes.<sup>2</sup> During the interim and endline visits, we drew upon the ToCs conducted during the baseline visit, providing staff members with an outline and schematic overview of the ToCs they had composed in 2012. We then discussed the level of validity that this ToC still had, and to what extent the conditions were already met. This was a helpful exercise in establishing the direction an organisation had taken in the course of time.
- Further drawing on the ToC and the 5C indicators (see below), we selected one outcome in each organisation for *contribution analysis*. Contribution analysis offers 'a more systematic way to arrive at credible causal claims' (Mayne 2012:271) and acknowledges that development is driven by multiple actors and factors. For each SPO, we selected one outcome prior to the endline workshop. The outcome was usually in a domain in which we expected to be able to find some evidence on the level of change and on contributing actors and factors. We discussed in detail what happened in the specific domain, and asked participants to detail how and why certain things happened. Based on this, we compiled a list of contributing actors and factors, together with participants. The list was then used for what we call 'explanation ranking': we invited individual participants to indicate the importance of each item by distributing 30 points between the five or six most essential actors and factors. Results were discussed in plenary (and participants gave their justifications and explanations for the rankings they made. This gave us additional insight on the value attributed to the different actors and factors. To construct our contribution stories, we carried out an analysis that consisted of the six steps suggested by Mayne (see Box 1) and referred back again to the ToC. In the contribution analysis, we drew on data gathered during the workshops, interviews (with SPO staff and with other stakeholders), observations, primary and secondary documents, and on communication with the CFAs. Contribution analysis was carried out for all of the SPOs in our capacity sample.

1. Set out the attribution problem to be addressed
2. Develop a theory of change and risks to it
3. Gather the existing evidence on the theory of change
4. Assemble and assess the contribution story, or performance story and challenges to it.
5. Seek out additional evidence
6. Revise and, where the additional evidence permits, strengthen the contribution story.

*Box 1: Six steps of contribution analysis, based on Mayne 2012.*

In looking at the relevant actors and factors that contributed to the outcomes under investigation, we especially considered the following:

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Anderson, A., n.d. *The Community Builder's Approach to Theory of Change: A practical guide to theory development*, New York: The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change; Keystone, 2009. *Developing a Theory of Change: Impact Planning, Assessment and Learning Guide 2*, [www.keystoneaccountability.org](http://www.keystoneaccountability.org)

- The *individual* capacities of the key actors and stakeholders
- The *interpersonal* relationships required to support the intervention
- The *institutional* setting in which the intervention is implemented
- The wider (*infra-structural*) and welfare system (based on Pawson, Greenhalgh and Harvey, 2004: 65)

The *5C questionnaire* was introduced as a tool for self-reporting by SPO staff. In some cases, this was done by individual staff members; in other cases, the questionnaire was completed in groups during the workshops. We chose to administer the questionnaire in groups especially when groups were small or showed low levels of reflection. In such cases, a joint discussion could help to come to more informative answers. Overall, the questionnaire helped to arrive at an inter-subjective self-assessment of the organisation's capabilities and gave directions for our own scoring.

Individual interviews were conducted to validate data derived from the workshop and to compensate for possible bias during workshops due to power relations between different staff members, organisational culture or style of leadership. The interviews were usually held the day after the workshop, when a certain level of trust/familiarity had been built to allow for stronger rapport. During the follow-up visits this was less important as most staff were used to us already.

*Focus group interviews* were carried out with beneficiaries and (voluntary) field staff to assess whether the image sketched of the organisation by the executive staff coincided with the perceptions of the beneficiaries. During these focus groups, participants were invited to also reflect on their experience with the SPO in comparison with experiences (their own or observed) with other NGOs to assess the SPO's position in civil society.

*Project documents and organisational documents* were collected from both the Dutch CFA and the SPO. These documents were screened for evidence of capabilities, in particular the capability to deliver, for clues on the ToC and to identify the objectives, resources and methods provided in projects for capability development, as this enabled us to establish our contribution stories. An overview of documents consulted is provided in the technical reports per organisation.

### **How was the sample of the beneficiaries/informants selected, and why was it selected in this way?**

Within the organisations, staff members were selected for interviews on the basis of a quota sample, with representatives of the different levels of staff and departments of the organisation. For small organisations, interviews were carried out with all staff members. Workshop participants were selected in the same way.

Field visits were undertaken for all partners. However, due to security limitations and the remoteness of certain projects, possibilities were often restricted. The selection of beneficiaries was carried out by the organisations. In this way, we ensured that the selected beneficiaries would have a fairly in-depth knowledge of the organisation and its capabilities. For half of the organisations,

meetings with beneficiaries took place in the presence of staff because of practical reasons, for the other half of the organisations, staff was absent. However, we observed that this did not affect openness of beneficiaries. Respondents were generally open and critical. Presence of SPO staff was therefore not a limiting factor in obtaining information

**Is there a control or comparison group? NO**

It would be difficult to identify comparable organisations working in the same area of intervention, on the same theme and with a comparable network. Statistically, matching would be difficult to reach.

**Were reference data collected for comparison of capacity development results? NO**

**Were reference data collected from the Southern partners of other Dutch CFAs? YES**

**For both together: If yes, please describe what organisations data were collected from. If these data were not collected, please explain why not.**

Besides the selected SPOs, we also interviewed representatives of various other civil society organisations. We spoke with members of the civil society coordination office in Bukavu and Goma and representatives of CSOs in Bukavu, Goma, Uvira and Bunia, among which were various local NGOs that were not in our final selection.<sup>3</sup> These interviews focused on the development of local civil society and also the general strengths and weaknesses of local CSOs, discussing topics such as transparency, organisational capacity and corruption. These data form a frame of reference for our analysis of both the capacity development and the civil society impact of the SPOs under evaluation, allowing us to contextualise the data we collected through the evaluation visits.

We did not use the data for comparison, for reasons outlined above.

**Was baseline data on the Southern partner gathered by the CFA prior to your own data collection?**  
YES

**Did you make use of this data? YES**

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<sup>3</sup> Specifically, we consulted: Bureau de la coordination de la société civile Bukavu: conseil éthique, composante droits humaine, femme, et humanitaire; Bureau de la coordination de la société civile Goma: président; In Bukavu: Centre Olame, Comité Anti-Bwaki, Héritiers de la Justice, Radio Maendeleo; In Uvira: CCAP, ECOOKAL; In Goma: CREDDHO, FOPAC, GATT-RN

**Did the evaluation team monitor capacity development in between the baseline and follow-up assessments? YES**

**If yes, did this take place in the form of high frequency monitoring? YES**

**If not, please explain why no monitoring takes place; if yes, please explain how monitoring is carried out.**

0.1 fte was reserved for monitoring capacity development throughout the evaluation period. It appeared to be difficult to stay in touch with the organisations from a distance. After an initial period of testing this, we decided that the response rate and information gathered this way were not as good as we had predicted. Although we remained in touch with the SPOs to some extent, we decided to concentrate our monitoring efforts in one condensed period. We therefore undertook an interim visit to DRC in November 2013, when we visited three out of the five SPOs. In addition to gathering in-depth data about actual capacity development taking place, this visit allowed us to pilot the methodology we had envisioned for the endline visit.

**Which specific interventions/activities were evaluated to assess the efficiency of the capacity building efforts?**

N/A

**Were data gathered on all of the uniform indicators agreed upon? YES**

**If not, please list the indicators that lack data and explain why.**

Some indicators were reformulated to correspond better to the Congolese context. This was done after a pilot workshop carried out in July 2012 by a consultant with well-developed expertise on the local context. During the pilot, we used the initial indicators.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, organisation-specific indicators were developed during the workshops to study the capability to deliver on development objectives.

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<sup>4</sup> On the need to tailor evaluations to their own national and historical contexts, see Fowler, A. 2011; From sectors to processes: understanding civil society in action, in: Anheier, H et al. *The Future of Participatory Civil Society Assessments: A Conceptual Analysis*, New York: United Nations Development Programme.

Information was collected on all indicators through the questionnaires, interviews and workshop. However, some indicators were not highly relevant for all organisations and, therefore, hardly yielded data. This is indicated in the report.

During baseline and follow-up, we made use of the same set of indicators.

### III Efforts to strengthen civil society

#### Part 2: Evaluation design

**What technique(s) was/were used to evaluate the impact towards civil society strengthening?**

*More than one answer possible.*

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Before/after comparison  | X |
| Case study   | X |
| Difference-in-Differences  |   |
| Focus groups/group interviews  | X |
| Force field analysis   |   |
| Individual interviews  | X |
| Knowledge and achievement tests  |   |
| Observation  | X |
| Propensity Score Matching  |   |
| Randomized Controlled Trial (randomized assignment)  |   |
| Randomized offering  |   |
| Randomized promotion   |   |
| Regression Discontinuity Design  |   |
| Self-reporting methods: Self-Assessment Questionnaire on civil society development   | X |
| Other: Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Key theme/timeline</li><li>- Network analysis</li><li>- Theory of Change</li><li>- Contribution story (only for endline)</li></ul> | X |
| Feedback workshop  | X |
| Other: Review of primary and secondary data, media analysis  | X |

*Please note: For a detailed overview of the number of workshops and interviews carried out, see the main report, chapter 3.*

### **Please explain why these methods were chosen.**

For a comprehensive understanding of an organisation's contribution to civil society and the context of operation, we have used a mixed-methods approach and triangulation as much as possible, combining objective and (inter)subjective measurements. The evaluation is a 'real-world' evaluation, acknowledging that many more factors influence the outcome and impact on beneficiaries than the project interventions alone (Bodnar et al. 2010)<sup>5</sup>.

Workshops allowed us to combine various methods of data collection. Workshops were chosen for four reasons:

- Questions relating to trends in CS, changes and restraining factors call for ideas, opinions and explanations from actors. This requires reflection and brainstorming, especially because many concepts introduced in the research were unfamiliar to respondents. The knowledge they have on their organisation's capability is therefore mainly tacit in nature. Group discussions are suitable for bringing out such tacit knowledge, because respondents will guide each other in comprehending the questions and in reflecting on the answers.
- Workshops bring out differences of opinion. Congolese organisations have a strong tradition of discussion, and a workshop is ideally suited to bringing out variation and differences among staff members.
- Workshops allowed us to incorporate an element of *observation* on social processes taking place; how staff members would cooperate/take decisions/relate to each other.
- We needed the agreement of the staff on certain things to guide the evaluation, particularly the identification of evidence-based indicators to measure progress against the ToC.
- A feedback workshop was organised early 2015. In preparing for this workshop, we translated draft versions of all of the organisation reports into French and shared these with participants (two representatives of each SPO). During plenary sessions, we discussed general findings and results. Individual sessions allowed participants to express their views on the reports. Finally, participants formulated recommendations for donors, the state, themselves and for their grassroots structures. These recommendations are presented in our final report.

The most important techniques chosen for the workshops were as follows:

- Mapping trends and developments. After identifying the primary theme or concern to the organisation, a mapping exercise was done during the baseline visit to identify—in a systematic way—trends and developments that are pertinent to that theme. We further validated these data during interviews with staff members and other stakeholders after the workshop. During the endline, we returned to this mapping by setting up a dense timeline, which looked at changes in terms of trends and developments over the last two years.
- Network analysis. This was used to collect data on contacts the organisation has with other civil society actors, as well as with beneficiaries, state institutions, beneficiaries, the private sector and donors. For each contact, we discussed the type of contact, the intensity of collaboration and their importance.
- Establishing the Theory of Change (ToC). The Terms of Reference of the evaluation accords importance to the ToC. During the baseline, participants were invited to establish a goal of what they

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<sup>5</sup> Bodnár F, M van Leeuwen, A Niyonkuru, C Muvira, G Bucumi. 2010. Evaluation du programme d'Oxfam Novib au Burundi 2005-2009. AgrEvalue, CICAM, Pays Bas ; ARCADE, Burundi.

wanted to contribute to civil society with their organisation in five years' time. From there, they were asked to identify preconditions/intermediate outcomes that are essential for achieving this goal, and the activities that they themselves could undertake to realise these conditions. Our choice to focus on one specific tangible objective was based on observation in the pilot of the evaluation that indicated that staff members found it difficult to work on the basis of more abstract objectives. Once the ToC was established, a pathway was designed to realise the desired change and outcome indicators defined to measure the realisations in the future.<sup>6</sup> During interim and endline visits, we went back to the ToC, providing staff members with an outline and schematic overview of the ToC they had composed in 2012. We then discussed the validity this ToC still had, and to what extent conditions were already met. This was a helpful exercise in establishing the direction an organisation had taken in the course of time. The ToC compiled during this exercise was different from the ToC compiled for the capacity development part of the evaluation; the latter focused on the internal capacity of the SPO, whereas ToC here was more externally oriented; looking at the contribution of the SPO to civil society development.

- Further drawing on the ToC and the Civil Society Index, we selected one outcome for *contribution analysis* for each organisation that was included in our sample for contribution analysis (see below for more detail on sampling of SPOs for contribution analysis). Contribution analysis offers 'a more systematic way to arrive at credible causal claims' (Mayne 2012:271) and acknowledges that development is driven by multiple actors and factors. For each SPO, we selected one outcome prior to the workshop. The outcome could be connected either to one or two of the dimensions of the Civil Society Index, or to civil society strengthening at the grassroots level in more general terms. Outcomes were usually selected in relation to a dimension in which we expected to be able to find some evidence on the level of change, and on contributing actors and factors. We discussed in detail what happened in relation to the outcome, and asked participants to detail how and why certain things happened. Based on this, we compiled a list of contributing actors and factors. The list was then used for what we call 'explanation ranking'; we invited individual participants to indicate importance by distributing 30 points between the five or six most essential actors and factors. Results were discussed in plenary *en groupe* and participations set out their justifications and explanations for rankings made. This gave us additional insight on the value attributed to each (f)actor and was later validated through interviews with staff and other stakeholders. To construct our contribution stories, we carried out an analysis that consisted of the six steps suggested by Mayne (Box 2) and referred back again to the ToC. In the contribution analysis, we drew on data gathered during the workshop, interviews (with SPO staff and a wide range of other stakeholders), observations, primary and secondary documents, and communication with the CFAs.

- |  |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Set out the attribution problem to be addressed</li><li>2. Develop a theory of change and risks to it</li><li>3. Gather the existing evidence on the theory of change</li><li>4. Assemble and assess the contribution story, or performance story, and challenges to it.</li><li>5. Seek out additional evidence</li><li>6. Revise and, where the additional evidence permits, strengthen the contribution story.</li></ol> |
|--|

*Box 2: Six steps of contribution analysis, based on Mayne 2012.*

In looking at the relevant actors and factors that contributed to the outcome under investigation, we especially considered the following:

- The *individual* capacities of the key actors and stakeholders
- The *interpersonal* relationships required to support the intervention

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. Anderson, A., n.d. *The Community Builder's Approach to Theory of Change: A practical guide to theory development*, New York: The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change; Keystone, 2009. *Developing a Theory of Change: Impact Planning, Assessment and Learning Guide 2*, [www.keystoneaccountability.org](http://www.keystoneaccountability.org)



- The *institutional* setting in which the intervention is implemented
- The wider (*infra-*)*structural* and welfare system (based on Pawson, Greenhalgh and Harvey, 2004: 65)

The self-assessment questionnaire was introduced as a tool for self-reporting by SPO staff. We used an adapted version of the Civil Society Index and the Civicus analytical framework.<sup>7</sup> It was done individually to arrive at an inter-subjective self-assessment of the organisation's capabilities. It provided input to the scoring we have given in the report.

Individual interviews were conducted to validate data derived from the workshop and to compensate for possible bias during workshops because of power relations between different staff members, organisational culture or style of leadership. The interviews were usually held the day after the workshop, when a certain level of trust/familiarity had been built to allow for stronger rapport. During the follow-up visits, this was less important as we had already met with most staff members.

Key stakeholder interviews were done to develop a frame of reference on civil society in more general terms. We did not ask key stakeholders to assess the SPOs under evaluation, which was deemed inappropriate in view of high levels of distrust within Congolese society. During the endline visit, we focused our interviews on stakeholders who were involved/knowledgeable about one of the three themes on which we focused our contribution analysis (gender, agriculture, good governance/fragile states), or who were familiar with civil society development in more general terms.

*Focus group interviews* were carried out with beneficiaries and (voluntary) field staff to assess whether the image sketched of the organisation by the executive staff coincided with the perceptions of the beneficiaries. During these focus groups, participants were invited to also reflect on their experiences with the SPO in comparison with experiences (their own or observed) with other NGOs to assess the SPO's position in civil society.

*Project documents and organisational documents* were collected from both the Dutch CFA and the SPO. These documents were screened for evidence of civil society strengthening, for clues on the ToC and to identify the objectives, resources and methods provided in projects for civil society development, especially in relation to our contribution analysis. In addition, we carried out a media scan for the most relevant online news sources on DRC on a day-to-day basis. This means that we scanned newspaper articles to find relevant information in relation to civil society development. The UN-funded Radio Okapi (radiookapi.net) appeared to be the most informative source.

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<sup>7</sup> Klaver, D. et al. 2012. *Civil society component: MFS II country evaluations. Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India and Indonesia*, Wageningen: CDI, p. 3

**Please explain how the sample of Southern partners for the civil society evaluation was selected.**

The selected sampling design was chosen to meet the requirements of representativeness and relevancy while maximizing the depth of analysis and allowing for meaningful analytic comparisons between types of SPOs. The overall sample size of 20 was selected to capture the geographical and topical range of organisations operating in DRC while still conducting a thorough analysis of each selected case.

To maximise efficiency in data collection, we first selected with certainty all organisations included in the given MDG and capacity development samples (9 total), leaving 11 additional organisations to be selected for our final sample of 20 organisations. This allowed us to maximise integration with the capacity development and MDGs teams, increasing efficiency by cooperating on data collection strategies (thus increasing the depth in which these organisations could be examined) and minimizing costs.

For completing the sample, seven geographical clusters were selected to ensure that geographical spread reflected donor activity in DRC, but also for practical reasons (travel time and security). Donor activity is strongly concentrated in the eastern provinces of DRC, most notably Bukavu. The selected clusters were Bas Congo, Bukavu, Bunia, Dungu, Kindu, Kinshasa and Kisangani. This selection of regional clusters left 44 organisations eligible for the sample from the initial list of 90 organisations.

Four of the nine organisations the MDG and/or capacity development samples that were selected with certainty are located in non-selected regions. We nevertheless included these four organisations in our sample, drawing the remaining 11 organisations from the selected regions. The sample was drawn to reflect the relative size of each of these clusters in the overall list of organisations. Including the organisations selected with certainty, the distribution of organisations in the final sample within the selected regions was determined as follows: Bas Congo—1, Bukavu—8, Bunia—2, Dungu—1, Kindu—1, Kinshasa—2 and Kisangani—1 organisation.

In the next stage of sample selection, we identified the most relevant MDGs and themes in the total listed organisations for DRC. Based on our survey of CFAs, over 20% of the organisations had a thematic focus on 1) MDG1, 2) MDG3, 3) MDG 4 5 or 6, or 4) good governance and/or fragile states. We selected these four thematic groupings for inclusion in our sample.

To be consistent with the evaluation requirements to obtain a representative sample of partner organisations and focus on relevant MDGs and themes, and to select an analytically useful sample, we took a proportionate stratified random sampling approach within each selected geographic cluster. The aim of our sampling was to reflect the relative frequency of thematic focus at the regional level as much as possible, within the constraints of our selected sample size. In drawing this sample, we treated the pre-selected organisations (from the MDG and/or capacity development

samples) as part of the relevant strata. (For example, in Bukavu, based on relative frequencies of the relevant thematic focuses, Four organisations focusing on MDG 3 were to be selected. As the pre-selected sample in the Bukavu region already contained one organisation with an MDG3 focus, we selected three additional organisations of this type.)

One selected organisation was excluded in the end, as the funding had ended already in early 2011. As this organisation was also part of the capacity sample and could not be replaced, we decided not to replace it in the civil society sample.

Considering the instable security situation in DRC, we initially drew a back-up sample of 10 organisations (following the same logic as described above). Ultimately, we did not make use of these, but we did collect the relevant project documents from the CFAs as back-up.

For our contribution analysis, we first selected the three relevant themes that are the main focus of interventions for at least two SPOs based in a single selected region. Our reason for selecting SPOs based in the same place was that we wanted to get a good overview of trends in civil society in relation to a specific theme. With multiple organisations based in the same place, we were able to get a deeper understanding of the situation. Based on thematic focus, we excluded Armée du Salut (primary education), Réseau CREF (good governance of nature), KMS (WASH) and CME (health) from this part of the analysis. Next, based on geographic location, we excluded RECIC (Kinshasa), REMACOB (Mbanza-Ngungu), Caritas (Kindu) and RRILRP (Kisangani).

The remaining organisations focused primarily on 1) Gender: SOFIBEF, AFEM-SK, RFDP, VICO; 2) Agriculture: VECO, ADI-Kivu, UPDI, CEPROF; and 3) interventions centred around good governance/fragile states: RHA, IFDP, Groupe Jérémie.

Revisiting the geographic criterion, we then decided to exclude SOFIBEF from the gender SPO group and CEPROF from the agriculture group, as these were the only SPOs not based in Bukavu. Based on this criterion, we should have excluded RHA as well. However, because RHA works as a network and because we knew we would be able to consult the various member organisations of the network, we decided not to exclude them.

This provides us with a balanced sample of 3 SPOs per theme: Gender: AFEM, RFDP, VICO; Agriculture: VECO, UPDI, ADI-Kivu; Good governance/fragile states: GJ, IFDP, RHA.

The third theme was rather general and interventions of SPOs varied more widely. Hence, our contribution analyses did not provide us with as clear a picture for this theme as for the other two

themes in terms of civil society changes. Nevertheless, we were able to identify some crosscutting themes.

**How was the sample of the beneficiaries/informants selected and why was it selected in this way?**

Within the organisations, staff interviews were held on the basis of a quota sample, with representatives of the different levels of staff and departments of each organisation. For small organisations, interviews were carried out with all staff members. Participants for the workshop were selected in the same way.

Other key informants from civil society and government circles were selected on the basis of recommendation (snowball sample selection) and on the basis of secondary sources (press statements, project documentation).

The selection of beneficiaries was carried out by the organisations, under restrictions of security. In this way, we ensured that the selected beneficiaries would have a fairly in-depth knowledge of the organisation and its capabilities. For half of the organisations, meetings with beneficiaries took place in the presence of staff because of practical reasons. However, we observed that this did not affect openness of beneficiaries. Respondents are generally open and critical.

**Is there a control or comparison group? NO**

**If not, please explain why.**

It would be difficult to identify comparable organisations working in the same area of intervention, on the same theme and with a comparable network. Statistically, matching would be difficult to reach.

**Were attempts made to measure spill-over effects of civil society initiatives? Yes**

**If not, please explain why? If yes, please explain how.**

The comprehensive mixed methods approach used, especially during the workshop, allows for acknowledging many more factors than just the intended effects of an organisation. These methods help to identify the most significant factors/actors/processes that contribute to changes in civil society.

**Was baseline data on the Southern partner gathered by the CFA prior to your own data collection?**

YES

**Did you make use of this data? YES**

**Did the evaluation team monitor civil society strengthening in between the baseline and follow-up assessments? YES**

**If yes, did this take place in the form of high frequency monitoring? YES**

**If not, please explain why no monitoring takes place; if yes, please explain how monitoring is carried out.**

0.1 fte was reserved for monitoring civil society strengthening throughout the evaluation period. It appeared to be difficult to stay in touch with the organisations from a distance. After an initial period of testing this, we decided that response rate and information gathered this way were not as good as we had predicted. Although we still stayed in touch with the SPOs to some extent, we decided to concentrate our monitoring efforts in one condensed period. Our team therefore undertook an interim visit to DRC in November 2013 during which we focused especially on one of the themes selected for contribution analysis: gender. In addition to gathering in-depth data about the theme, this visit allowed us to pilot the methodology we had envisioned for the endline visit. The results of this visit are presented in a separate working paper, which is attached to this report.<sup>8</sup>

**Were data gathered on all agreed upon uniform indicators? YES**

**If not, please list the indicators that lack data and explain why.**

Some indicators were reformulated to correspond better to the Congolese context. This was done after a pilot workshop carried out in July 2012 by a consultant with well-developed expertise on the local context. During the pilot, we used the initial indicators.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Hilhorst, Dorothea, and Marie Rose Bashwira, 2015. *The Women's Movement in South Kivu, DRC: a civil society analysis*. Occasional Paper #11, Special Chair Humanitarian Aid and Reconstruction, Wageningen University & Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural de Bukavu.

<sup>9</sup> On the need to tailor evaluations to their own national and historical contexts, see Fowler, A. 2011; From sectors to processes: understanding civil society in action, in: Anheier, H et al. *The Future of Participatory Civil Society Assessments: A Conceptual Analysis*, New York: United Nations Development Programme.

Information was collected on all indicators through the questionnaires, interviews and workshop. However, not all indicators were highly relevant for all organisations. This is indicated in the report.

During both subsequent follow-up visits we made use of the same set of indicators

## **Appendix C Limitations of the capacity building and civil society components of the study**

### **Practical limitations**

- *Complex security situation*: The security situation excluded a number of organisations from the sample and therefore reduced geographical variation. With the organisations that were included in our sample, we encountered limitations in visiting project sites. This was less the case during our endline visit, but for reasons of comparability we nevertheless decided to return to the same sites to the extent possible.
- *Overrepresentation of Kivu provinces*: Of the total list of organisations that were initially eligible in the sample, the majority of the organisations is based in North and South Kivu. Apart from Goma, we excluded organisations based in North Kivu from our list because of security restrictions. This resulted in a high number of NGOs in our sample being based in South Kivu. Although this reflects the spread of donor activity in DRC, we are aware that our findings are not necessarily representative for the whole country. As a result, attention to activities such as lobby and advocacy for policy reform at the national level is limited. We have attempted to compensate for the focus on the Kivu provinces by including a number of organisations (6) outside the province of South Kivu. This included one organisation in the 5C sample. Poor infrastructure and long travel distances did not allow us to include more organisations at different locations.
- *Linguistic and cultural differences in definitions*: DRC is a Francophone country, and this has been the language of communication for our evaluation. Hence, we have translated a great deal of information: first from English into French for the purpose of our visit to DRC, and then back to English for the purpose of our report. There is a risk that this has resulted in a loss of meaning for certain concepts. We have compensated for this as much as possible by keeping a list of concepts in which we have made explicit which meaning we wanted to attribute to a word. Part of the difference in meaning is related to language, and part to culture. Examples are the following:
  - o *Sensibilisation*: sensitisation, awareness raising, etc.
  - o *Recycler*: give new training, usually meant as a 'refresher course' for people who already have a certain level of knowledge on a topic.
  - o *Plaidoyer*: Translated as advocacy and more widely used than lobbying. Almost all organisations claim to do 'plaidoyer', but in many cases this seems a rather empty term. Part of this might also be due to the fact that it can be done in more informal ways, making it less visible and not easy to measure.
  - o *Animateurs*: trainer/mediator/facilitator/field staff, etc.
  - o *Suivi*: Monitoring, but not limited to monitoring in a strict sense, because it often incorporates follow-up activities. Beneficiaries in the field also refer to this term and consider it important to have monitoring after a project is implemented, by which they likely mean follow-up projects.
  - o *Motivation*: Tellingly, motivation for most people = envelope= salary. There is a general complaint that motivation is low. Talking about *engagement* reveals more about intrinsic motivation.

- *Civil society*: Concept well-known to NGO staff. Usually people come up with definitions close to the CIVICUS definition. However, in interviews, people tend to fall back on a more limited concept of civil society, namely in reference to the 'bureau de la coordination de la société civile': an umbrella organisation to which most NGOs belong. This organisation exists in most places, but its strength varies greatly and depends on the personal involvement of board members. Board members are elected but are frequently criticised for using the 'civil society' (as it is referred to briefly) as a vehicle to enter into politics. Statements made by this office on behalf of its members are channelled to the larger public and government through the use of media. Usually in such cases, statements are made that 'Civil society says that...' Such statements strengthen people's view that 'civil society' equals the coordination office, which sometimes hindered open reflection about civil society in more general terms.
- *Organisational/planning*: Our team has been adjusted several times in the preparation period, with the final evaluators not having attended the initial stages of the methodology development. In our planning, we therefore faced some difficulties. For example, it was necessary to collect data from Dutch CFAs during the summer period when many people were out of office. This has not affected the research but put pressure on our planning and the flexibility of the organisations for scheduling interviews. For the endline, we were able to maintain the core team.

### **Theoretical limitations**

- *5C Framework*: Similarly to the above discussion of linguistic limitations, here we also faced some translation issues. The most significant was the translation of 'capacity' and 'capability', which are both best translated into French as 'capacité'. This complicates a clear understanding of the framework as it revolves around 5 capabilities that together contribute to an overall capacity. Since we have been consistent in the usage of the French terms throughout the evaluation and explained the concepts, we do not consider this to be of impact on the evaluation results.
- *Civil Society Index (CSI)*: The CSI was developed as a tool to analyse civil society features at large. In our evaluation, we were supposed to make use of the CSI to analyse individual organisations. This brings the CSI framework closer to the 5C framework and causes some overlap. The capability to relate to others for instance, is also part of the CSI dimension Level of Organisation. Although the CSI is meant to analyse civil society at large, we feel there is some risk in generalising our findings to the larger level, as we have been asked to do in the synthesis report; we have applied the CSI at the level of individual organisations.
- *ToC and applying this for both CS and 5C at the same organisation*: When starting our field research, we had some doubts about using the ToC twice during a workshop, as an instrument to obtain information on organisational capacity and on civil society building. We wondered whether it would be possible to distinguish the two clearly. In practice, it appeared no problem to carry out the ToC twice for the five organisations that were in both samples. Nevertheless, it required very clear guidance to encourage workshop participants to think about the future in these two distinct ways. In the end however, we concluded that the two complement each other and often provide extra information. Hence, we feel it has increased efficiency in data collection for these organisations.
- *Attribution*: Attribution is one of the key questions for our research, but is difficult to establish. For some organisations, this is very clear as projects of different donors have a clearly different nature. Other organisations, however, carry out similar projects with different donors, and staff members cannot readily distinguish the impacts of each contribution. In these cases, it is complicated to attribute a certain impact to the intervention of a certain donor. For the endline,

we have chosen to make use of contribution analysis, but here, as well, complexity is not fully captured. Our answer to the evaluation question is in the end more geared towards contribution than towards attribution.

- *Scoring:*
  - o In relation to the civil society assessment: We are aware that it is most desirable to base scoring on information obtained from various stakeholders, complemented by a document review. Initially, it was foreseen to ask other stakeholders (in civil society/government) to assess the contacts with the organisation under evaluation. Talking about this with DRC experts, we were repeatedly advised against this approach, as these experts believed levels of trust were not high enough to raise these issues with other stakeholders. Therefore, we refrained from doing this, which limited our options for triangulation. We have tried to make up for this as much as possible by talking with the Dutch partners, by collecting documents and by talking with key civil society actors in general about the topic of the evaluation.
  - o When analysing the self-scoring questionnaires, we found that some organisations had low levels of self-criticism, resulting in high scores for all indicators. In our scoring, we have taken this into consideration. Our scoring constitutes our general assessment based on the different methodologies.
  - o The scoring of the 5Cs is complicated, because there is no 1-to-1 relation between an activity and a specific capability. Additionally, the contribution of the Dutch donor in terms of capacity strengthening is not always easily distinguishable from project documents.
  - o Scoring for both 5C and CSI has been done by looking at the characteristics of the organisations and by comparing them among each other (taking into account specificities of each) and between baseline and endline. As a result, scoring is relative. It is of utmost importance to keep this in mind when making comparisons with other country studies.
- One of the concerns that was raised by one of the CFAs and that we shared is whether, in the course of the evaluation period, Dutch CFAs might have focussed more on the partners under evaluation than on other partners that are not part of our sample. To what extent is there risk of the Hawthorne effect? We have indications that this happened to some extent in terms of continuation of funding, but we do not have the impression that it influenced actual programming, given the little specific attention that was paid to capacity development of the SPOs in the capacity sample, for instance.

## **Data availability**

### *Finances:*

- o Many organisations do not have consolidated budgets or financial reports, and project terms of various donors often do not run parallel, which makes it difficult to set up a consolidated budget. The question about budget for the period 2011–2015 is impossible to answer completely, because most organisations are not ensured funding for a period of more than one year ahead. Although strategic plans or project proposals might extend beyond this period, contracts usually do not.
- o We feel that asking about budgets is not the proper way to get information about actual funding. We found that organisations often compose budgets on the basis of project proposals submitted but do not adapt budgets at the moment funding is not attributed.
- o Civil society development and capacity strengthening are often by-products of other budget lines and may not be visible in the budgets at all. In cases where capacity development and civil society strengthening were cross-cutting all activities, we have included overhead costs in the budget. As different agencies could not specify their



budgets for the two domains, we have applied the lesser specification across the cases to maintain comparability.

### **Limitation in reporting**

- The reporting format provides little room for critical reflection from the side of the evaluators. As a result, the critical reflection process of the evaluators is not highly visible in the reports. It would enhance transparency if room for such reflection were expanded in the format. The format for the organisational reports for the endline was more helpful. For the synthesis report, we decided to largely follow the same outline as during baseline to allow for more straightforward comparison.

# ANNEX D

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Other

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Civil Society Capacity of Women's organisations in South-Kivu

Recommandations Atelier MSF II (French)

# Civil society capacity of women's organisations in South Kivu, DRC

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Dorothea Hilhorst and Marie Rose Bashwira

Wageningen University, 2015

**Inhoud**

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We thank all the women and men who graciously shared their time and insights, and who patiently responded to all our questions. We are especially grateful to the *Réseau des Femmes pour la Défense des Droits et la Paix* (RFDP), the *Association des Femmes des Média du Sud-Kivu* (AFEM-SK), and *Villages Cobaye* (VICO) for helping us to organise the fieldwork in Walungu Territory. The women in Walungu Centre, Kamanyola and Burhale have been most hospitable and generous in sharing their experiences with us. We also thank Cordaid for facilitating the validation session at the end of our fieldwork. We thank professor Bashwira for helping us with transportation and numerous other things, and professor Mashanda for his advice.

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The report was translated into French before sharing and validating it in a feedback workshop, which was held in February 2015 in Bukavu.

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## List of Acronyms

AFEM: Association de Femmes de Media

CAFCO: Cadre Permanent de Concertation de la Femme Congolaise

CAMPS : Centre d'Assistance Médicaux Psycho- Sociale

CAP: Comité d'Alerte pour la Paix

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

COFAS: Collectif des Organisations Féminines Agissant en Synergie

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

IMC: International Medical Corps

INGO: International NGO

GAD: Gender and Development

OCHA - Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

MFS: Medefinancieringstelsel, Co-financing Programme of the Netherlands government

MONUSCO : Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en Republique Democratique du Congo

MUSO: Mutuelle de Solidarité (Village Savings and Loans Association)

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

RFDP: Réseau de Femmes pour le Développement et la Paix

STAREC: Stabilisation and Reconstruction Plan for War-affected Areas

SPR: Synergie des Femmes pour la Paix et la Réconciliation des Peuples des Grands Lacs d'Afrique

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNICEF: United Nations Children Fund

UNIFEM: United Nations Development Fund for Women

UNFPA: United Nations Population (formerly the United Nations Fund for Population Activities)

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNSCR 1325: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

UWAKI: Umoja wa Wanawake wa Kivu

vico: Vision Communautaire (also known as Villages Cobaye)

WID: Women in Development

WOPPA: Women as Partners for Peace in Africa

# 1. Introduction

The position of women and their problems have been a major development concern. Women's social and reproductive rights are a priority issue for the Netherlands Development Policy. As part of a large evaluation of the Dutch development programme in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), this report analyses the characteristics and capacities of women's civil society in South Kivu.

The report is meant to provide input on two aspects of the evaluation:

- civil society strengthening
- international lobby and advocacy.

The Netherlands Development Programme MFS (co-financing system) finances intermediary Netherlands-based organisations that fund civil society partners in various sectors in the DRC. This report describes a case study of civil society in one sector: women's rights.

Women in the DRC still face many challenges when it comes to their empowerment. In the first national elections in 2006, women made up the majority of voters but nonetheless very few women were elected: 8 per cent in the National Assembly and 8.6 per cent in the Senate (International Alert, 2012). Through intermediary development organisations, the Netherlands supports a number of women's organisations, mainly in South Kivu, that address a range of issues including the economic empowerment of women and female leadership, sexual violence and gender-based violence, and women's rights more broadly.

The evaluation of the Netherlands Development Policy is concerned with the ways in which development projects have strengthened civil society. It aims to analyse changes that have taken place in civil society with regards to the organisation, issues and approaches in the evaluation period (2011/2012-2014) and the extent to which Dutch development interventions have contributed to these changes. The evaluation consists of a base-line and an end-line study which focuses on a large sample of development projects. In addition, one of the case study components of the evaluation looks at international lobbying and advocacy and examines lobbying and advocacy around UN Resolution 1325.

This qualitative analysis of the women's movement has been conducted in the middle period of the evaluation and aims to provide in-depth insight into women's civil society in South Kivu. As background to establishing the ways in which particular initiatives contribute to specific aspects of society, it is important to understand the totality of women's civil society including trends and general achievements. This is the rationale of the case study. As there were few secondary sources available to serve as context for the evaluation, this required primary research.

This report is guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the general situation of women in the Democratic Republic of Congo?
2. What is the history, composition and general characteristics of women's civil society in South Kivu?
3. What trends can be observed and what are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of women's civil society at the provincial level of South Kivu in terms of their civic engagement, level of organisation, practice of values, perception of impact, and external influences?
4. How does women's civil society strengthen local women's associations in South Kivu?
5. What can we learn from the above about lobbying and advocacy practices of women's civil society in South Kivu?

Chapter 2 addresses the first question and is meant to provide background information to enable an appreciation of changes in women's civil society in its context. It is mainly based on a literature review.

Chapter 3 addresses the second question and provides a descriptive overview of the history and current composition of women's civil society in DRC, especially in South Kivu, at provincial and local levels. It is based on literature review and interviews.

Chapter 4 deals with the third and fourth questions and uses the civil society index developed by CIVICUS, the World Alliance for Citizen Participation<sup>1</sup> as entry point to analyse women's civil society in South Kivu. CIVICUS (Mati *et al.* 2010) defines civil society as, "the arena, outside of the family, the state, and the market which is created by individual and

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<sup>1</sup> See [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org)



collective actions, organisations and institutions to advance shared interests.” In the case of women’s civil society, we can view the shared interests as the reproductive and social rights of women.

Finally, Chapter 5 draws out the conclusions about international civil society strengthening and lobbying and advocacy, as well as some general conclusions.

#### *CIVICUS framework*

To analyse the strength of women’s civil society, we used the Civil Society Index developed by CIVICUS. The Terms of Reference of the evaluation called for the use of this framework in order to make sure that all the different parts of the evaluation (carried out in parallel in eight different countries) are based on a common framework.

The Civil Society Index consists of five dimensions that each have a number of indicators (see Box 1 below and Annex 2 for an elaboration). While we have maintained the five dimensions, we have selected particular indicators on the basis of the relevance to South Kivu, and added other indicators on the basis of our interviews.

#### **Box 1: The CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI)**

The CSI distinguishes five dimensions (see also Annex 2);

**Civic Engagement**, or ‘active citizenship’ describes the formal and informal activities and participation undertaken by individuals to advance shared interests at different levels. Participation within civil society is multi-faceted and encompasses socially-based and politically-based forms of engagement.

**Level of Organisation**. This dimension assesses the organisational development, complexity and sophistication of civil society, by looking at the relationships among the actors within the civil society arena.

**Practice of Values**. This dimension assesses the internal practice of values within the civil society arena. CIVICUS identified some key values that are deemed crucial to gauge not only progressiveness but also the extent to which civil society’s practices are coherent with their ideals.

**Perception of Impact**. This is about the perceived impact of civil society actors on politics and society as a whole as the consequences of collective action. In this, the perception of both civil society actors (internal) as actors outside civil society (outsiders) is taken into account.

**Context Dimension: External Environment**. It is crucial to give consideration to the social, political and economic environments in which it exists, as the environment both directly and indirectly affects civil society. Some features of the environment may enable the growth of civil society. Conversely, other features of the environment hamper the development of civil society.

*Source: CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012 (see Annex 1)*

## Methodology

This report is based on three weeks of fieldwork in November-December 2013. Fieldwork in the first two weeks was done by the authors of this report, while additional interviews in week 3 were conducted by Marie Rose Bashwira and Carolien Jacobs, who is part of the broader evaluation team.

The first week was spent in Bukavu interviewing key resource persons from women's organisations and other key informants who are part of the women's movement or who aim to strengthen women's civil society. We used semi-structured interviews based on the CIVICUS dimensions to understand how the women's movement is understood by the different respondents. We also did a number of interviews with key informants who are part of broader civil society.

To gain more insight into the community-based dimension of civil society, we conducted a study in the Walungu Territory during the second week of the fieldwork. Walungu was chosen because most of the women's organisations sampled in the evaluation had projects in this *territoire*. Apart from interviews in the centre of Walungu, we had two excursions to local areas (Kaniola and Burhale), where we conducted a number of focus group discussions.

Annex 1 contains details of the 31 interviews that were held. In addition, we had several focus group discussions that took place and we attended and observed several meetings that were organised by others. The Box below provides brief descriptions of the focus groups and meetings.

### Box 2: Focus Groups and Meetings

- FG1: 13 representatives of organisations participating in the 'Droit pour Tous' campaign about the impact of the campaign on women's civil society, held in the Cordaid office, 12 November 2013
- Participation in the launch of 'Femme-au-Fone', 15 November 2014.
- FG 2: 11 women representing a variety of women's associations that operate under the umbrella of COFAS (Collectif des Organisations Féminines Agissant en Synergie), 16 November 2013
- FG 3: 7 officers and members of the VICO cooperative in Walungu Territoire, 18 November 2013
- FG 4: 23 students of literacy class, organised by RFDP, 18 November 2013
- FG 5: 4 members AFEM Club d'Ecoute, Walungu centre, 18 November 2013
- FG 6: 4 members of Comité d'Alerte pour la Paix organised by RFDP, Kaniola, 19 November 2013
- FG 7 : 11 members of sewing club, organised by RFDP, Burhale, 21 November
- Validation meeting with 11 participants, Cordaid office, 27 November

Data analysis was done using NVivo software, in which the data were coded to analyse the key features of the women's movement in South Kivu.

In sum, the report is based on interviews, focus group discussions and literature review. Most of the interviews were done with two or more people, which was usually the choice of the organisation. At the end of two weeks of data gathering, a validation workshop was held with representatives from women's civil society. Annex 1 provides a list of interviewees.

Although the topic of our research is women's civil society, we often refer in this report to the women's movement. Interviewees often emphasised that the women's movement is broader than just civil society, also including women in politics, or women civil servants.

This research had a special focus on three organizations that were part of the Dutch co-financed programme: RFDP, AFEM and VICO.

Réseau de Femmes pour le Développement et la Paix (RFDP) was founded in 1999 to promote the social, economic, cultural and political participation of women. They work through a network of grassroots groups, the Comités d'Alerte pour la Paix (CAP), to give judicial support to victims of sexual violence, to raise awareness about human rights and democracy, and to increase women's literacy.

Association de Femmes de Media (AFEM) works on the promotion and defence of the position of Congolese women and their rights through the media. Since 2003 AFEM has become one of the influential women's organisations in South Kivu,

working with a number of international donors, and developing a large network of Clubs d'Écoute, listening groups, throughout South Kivu.

Vision Communautaire or Villages Cobaye (VICO) is an organisation that aims to improve livelihoods for victims of war, and to promote equal rights for men and women. Established in 1996, the organisation works with a wide network of local women's groups. VICO has carried out projects for various donors in the past, but the last two years have been characterised by a lack of funds.

To uphold confidentiality of the interviews, the report does not specify the names of interviewees in presenting quotes from the interviews. It uses references to denote specific respondents as follows: for NGO staff: NGOM/F#; for government representatives or politicians: GO#; for staff of international organisations: IO#; for religious actors RA# and for key informants KI#. Note that we only differentiate respondents by gender in the case of NGO staff. The number of interviewees in the other categories is too small, and gender in these cases is less of a distinctive property. The focus group discussions are labelled FG#, corresponding to Box 2. Respondents were coded on the basis of their current employment or position. In several cases, staff of INGOs or women in the government would have a track record in NGOs before taking up their current position.

## 2. Women's situation in the DRC

Although women constitute more than half of the Congolese population (53%), and have an important role as food provider in the family, they still have a low position in the political, social and economic sphere. Women's situation has become worse in the last two decades due to the war, as a result of which displacement and gender-based violence increased dramatically throughout the country.

This chapter describes some key characteristics of the position of women in different domains of life. It is based on a number of reports.<sup>2</sup> It must be noted, however, that the reliability of data is problematic. Even recent reports usually rely on outdated data due to lack of current data.

### *The legal position of women*

The first woman in politics in the DRC appeared in 1966 when a woman became head of the Department of Social Affairs. Her nomination was followed by the N'sele declaration in 1967 which proclaimed legal protection and equal rights for all citizens without any distinction. This was followed by the DRC's ratification of Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)<sup>3</sup> signed in 1980 and ratified in 1985.

In the 1980s, the first bureau for women was created; the 'Secretariat Executive Chargé de la Condition Féminine', which was part of the political bureau of the leading party of Mobutu, the Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution. The secretariat's name and status changed several times during the 1980s. It started in 1981 as the 'Secretariat Général à la Condition Féminine', and became in 1987 the 'Secretariat Exécutif du Partie Etat Chargé de la Condition Féminine'. Between 1993 and 2007 the Bureau shifted from a Ministry to a Secretariat and back again into a Ministry, when it took its current name of 'Ministère du Genre, de la Famille et de l'Enfant' in 2007.<sup>4</sup>

The United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325, adopted in 2000, calls for attention to the effects of conflict on women (women as victims), and in addition, aims to recognise and advance women's (potential) leadership in peace processes. The DRC is committed to implement resolution 1325 of the Security Council since 10 June 2010. In addition, The 'Déclaration Solennelle sur l'Egalité Entre les Sexes en Afrique' was adopted by the DRC in 2004, to promote the Millennium Development Goal pertaining to gender, followed by other UN resolutions 1820, 1888 and 1889 that are all related to women's rights.

Even before the new constitution of the DRC was ratified in 2006, the country adopted a law on sexual violence. It aimed to monitor and punish all actions which compromise women's dignity. The constitution in its articles 5, 14 and 15 provided the basis and legitimation of political equality and equity in the DRC.<sup>5</sup> In 2009, the country ratified the Protocol on the rights of African women<sup>6</sup> and signed the SADC (Southern African Development Community) Protocol on Women and Development. The DRC has also developed a national gender policy and a national action plan for its implementation in the different domains of women's lives.

However, all these initiatives have so far not had a strong positive impact on the position of women. Congolese laws are usually not well implemented and people are not aware of them. Discrimination continues to be at a very high level in education, work places, politics and the socio-economic sphere. Married women still face multiple deprivations of their rights. According to the Family Code, they require permission of their husband to be involved in a legal contract, open a

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<sup>2</sup> Douma N. (2008) *Women, peace and security in the DRC, civil society assessment on current practices and future perspectives of the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*, Cordaid and Whyze research, unpublished document; Sida (2009), Country gender profile, [www.sida.se](http://www.sida.se); Ministère du Genre, Famille et Enfant (2011) *Rapport National de Genre DRC*; Mpoumou D. (2004) 'Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Discourse in the Democratic Republic of the Congo', in: J. Ballington: *The implementation of Quotas: African Experiences*, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, IDEA, pp 120-123; [www.idea.int/publications/quotas\\_africa/upload/IDEA\\_no3.qxd.pdf](http://www.idea.int/publications/quotas_africa/upload/IDEA_no3.qxd.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Convention sur l'Élimination de toute forme de Discrimination à l'Égard des Femmes (CEDEF)

<sup>4</sup> Heckmus, Forti and Coffi Kousssemou, (avril 2013), *Rapport final sur l'appui au Ministère du Genre, de la famille et de l'enfant en RDC : étude d'analyse organisationnelle et institutionnelle*, contrat n 2012/301648, contrat- cadre com 2011- lot 1, consortium AETS.

<sup>5</sup> A. Matundu Mbambi et M.C. Faray-Kele (2010) *L'inégalité du genre et les institutions sociales en RDC*. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), <http://ukwilpf.org.uk>

<sup>6</sup> Protocole sur les Droits de Femmes en Afrique

bank account, take out a loan, start a business, or travel. That clause has been the subject of many discussions but has not yet been modified officially.

Most marriages in the DRC continue to take only place before customary law, and are not formally registered, which creates all sorts of problems for the rights of women.

The DRC has a high rate of early marriage of girls between the age of 15 and 19 years, mostly in rural areas, despite the legal age of marriage being 18. Girls of 12 or 13 years old are obliged by their family or their own mother to get married to an old man (up to 65 years old<sup>7</sup>). WILPF (2010) also reported that 20% of girls in rural areas are either married, divorced or widowed between 15 and 19 years. Many cases of polygamy are noted although officially this is prohibited.

#### *The social position of women (family and gender relations)*

One of the central problems of gender is the social situation of women. Despite the equality of men and women before the law, cultural norms continue to dominate and have an important role in everyday life. There, resistance to women's autonomy is dominant (Gender National Report of the Ministry of gender, family and children, 2011: 41). Women depend socially on their husbands, although they often constitute the principal food provider in the family. The low level of women's education makes them more vulnerable to external life shocks.

Ideally, an African woman gets married and lives with her husband. A non-married woman does not have the same status as a married woman. She may be subject to discrimination and disrespectful treatment. Married women must always be available to their husbands.

In addition, marriage in the DRC culture implies having children. Motherhood is primordial for women's identity. It is what earns women respect in the community, especially when she has sons. There are many cases of women who are rejected by their family in law, due to a lack of children or even lack of a son. Lack of children is also a legitimate cause for divorce, or for taking a second or a third wife in many tribes in the DRC.

On the other hand, some parents continue to ignore the importance of girls' education and prioritize boys' education as girls are expected to be devoted to domestic work. Also, the costs of education in DRC are high because many kinds of payment are imposed on parents as schools/teachers do not get paid by the government. If parents need to choose, paying for schooling for their boys is considered to be a better return on investment. Women always explain that once married, their family-in-law will not consider her diploma but the work she is able to do for them. If she does not meet the family-in-law standards of work, she will be returned to her family. In these cases, the mother of the girl will be sanctioned by the community as she was not capable of educating her daughter to do domestic work.

Community programmes have had a special interest in the development and empowerment of women since the 1980s. Now, starting at a young age, women are used to group discussions as a place where they can have free discussions and voice their ideas. These group activities are more than a nice way to spend spare time; they become places for capacity development and literacy.

#### *Women's representation*

The Constitution and the adoption of UNSCR 1325 provided the legal framework for improving women's participation in the political sphere. There they can have a voice to contribute to conflict resolution, the peace process, and post conflict reconstruction. The electoral law which came into force on 9<sup>th</sup> of March 2006 had some contradictions. For example, section 13.3 calls for equal representation of men and women in the electoral lists, but section 13.4 specifies that "*the non achievement of equal representation between men and women does not make the list inadmissible*". As a result, political parties did not feel obliged to follow this through. Added to this were the cultural obstacles to women's representation and the lack of education about the law, which makes women unaware of their rights. Indeed women's representation in the political sphere has always been very low in recent years (Douma 2008; WILPF, 2010; Observatoire de la Parité, 2012).

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<sup>7</sup> Interview in North Katanga for the PHD field work in gender and mining governance in April 2014

It is only recently that women started to express themselves and claim to be part of the decision-making sphere. This is still a process, but assisted by international and national NGO programmes, women are improving their management capacity and learn how to become more professional in politics. In 2012, the senate adopted a policy which calls for a minimum of 30% representation of women in all institutions<sup>8</sup>. This was reconfirmed by President Kabila in his 2013 speech at the 'concertation national'.<sup>9</sup>

#### *Economic involvement of women*

Strong disparities exist between women and men in the economic domain. This is expressed by the control and access to resources. Men formally own all the resources of the household. The Gender National Report (2011: 95) gives statistics of the lower level of women's revenue compared to men and explains this by the nature of women's business as well as discrimination in the market. Indeed, more than half of small and informal activities are performed by women.

The level of control women have over their revenue differs between urban and rural areas. The Gender National Report (2011: 35) states that in urban areas women principally take decisions themselves about the use of their income, whereas in rural areas these decisions are taken by the men.

As in many other African countries, Congolese women in rural areas are the ones in charge of agricultural activities. Most of the time this is her sole responsibility and women empowerment programmes often focus on a more equal division of labour. It is still a general practice that rural women spend the whole day in the field, to come back in the late afternoon with food to start cooking and taking care of the family, whereas her husband is in town drinking and socialising. When he returns home, he will ask for the money and for food without contributing anything<sup>10</sup>.

#### *Sexual violence*

The war in the DRC started in 1996, when the country saw itself invaded by several neighbouring countries. The atrocities escalated rapidly and have continued for almost 20 years now. The successive wars heavily affected the Congolese population, including women and girls. The amount of gender-based violence, sexual violence, domestic violence and population displacement is difficult to estimate. Women are the most vulnerable, and are victims of physical assault, sexual mutilation and rape. In its 2002 report, Human Rights Watch noticed that '*rape has been used as weapon of war and intimidation*'.<sup>11</sup>

Even though there is major attention to conflict-related sexual violence, it is now being recognised that a high level of sexual violence occurs among civilians, both in rural and in urban areas, which seems an expression of the low esteem for women on the one hand and on the other points to an erosion of social norms that protect women.

Sexual violence has many repercussions as it contributes to the erosion of the social structure, the position of women, the disruption of agricultural activities, draining of social and health services, and acute poverty.

#### *Women in informal sector*

To a large extent, the economic structure of the DRC does not allow both men and women to emerge in their activities and cause them to get bogged down gradually and increasingly into informal activities.

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<sup>8</sup> the bill was passed by the Senate in Nov. 7, 2012, but it is not yet enacted because the Supreme Court of Justice had found this law unconstitutional as it goes against gender equality.

<sup>9</sup> This was a national dialogue on policy reform with representatives of different regions and organisations, organised by the President of DRC.

<sup>10</sup> This is also referred to with the nickname 'zukolye' given by women to that kind of men. Women are the only food providers and they also take care of health, school and sanitation of the whole household whereas men are doing nothing but then claim women's money and food.

<sup>11</sup> Human Rights Watch (2002) The war within the war. Sexual violence against women and girls in Eastern Congo. [www.hrw.org/reports/2002/06/20/war-within-war](http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/06/20/war-within-war)

Great numbers of women are pushed into their business to make loans at a higher rate that result in the charges and bogged down in the informal sector pushing them to build up a social network of influence persons. One particular scenario is focused on women working in the artisanal mining sector. This sector, which supposedly is a typically male sector is one of which features a large portion of women for whom this informal activity is the only source of income for their households

Thus, to meet the recommendations of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and the Beijing Action Plan, the Congolese Government through the National Programme for the promotion of women, which has been updated (2005-2015), is interesting on women entrepreneurship. This program is based on 12 programs in women's access to economic resources. The informal sector is the one that most are full of women entrepreneurs is strongly considered.

### *Concluding*

This chapter was mainly based on secondary sources and summarized some of the main issues regarding the position of women in DRC. As it shows, women continue to be second-rate citizens in several aspects of the law, yet the major impediment to women's development is the gap between the law and the culturally-dominated institutions and practices that render women's position even lower. With some differences between urban and rural situations and despite some recent developments towards women's empowerment, it can be said that women's low position is expressed in several domains including political, social and economic.

### 3. Women's civil society and the women's movement in South Kivu

This chapter provides a brief and general description of women's civil society and the organized women's movement more broadly in South Kivu. It starts out with the history, followed by the structure and the main themes addressed by women's civil society.

#### 3.1 History

The international women's movement started to grow after the Second World War, when women began to make their voice heard. This has been partly explained by the emergence of a global economy and the surge of women's employment.<sup>12</sup> Already at that time, the principal themes elaborated by the worldwide movement were women's legal and political rights, violence against women, reproductive rights and abortion, sexual liberty, employment and discrimination, and political participation and representation.

However, there have also been differences noted between the 'Northern' feminist movement (Europe, North America, Japan and North Asia) and the South (Central America, Africa, the East). The differences are mainly that Southern women's organisations are more concerned by poverty, labour conditions, education and health care.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the women's movement evolved in the context of decolonisation. The continent has known many crises and instabilities since, which have further affected women's positions, including processes related to war, socio-economic instability, structural adjustment, informalities and corruption. Apart from being victims of multiple atrocities, women continued to be less educated, with their economic activities concentrated in the informal spheres of agriculture, artisanal activities and small trade. An important number of women suffered from malnutrition or death at childbirth.

In view of women's unequal position in African societies, women's participation and empowerment became an important objective of many Western development policies. However, concepts like parity and gender were considered very Western and the idea took hold that the West – reminiscent of the colonisation - wanted to impose their ideas on the South without due consideration of the cultural dynamics of these areas. RoSa (2004) explains that this created a two-sided reality, where on the one hand women acquired opportunities for making decisions and at the same time felt this was "imposed by the West".

Two principal approaches of the policies were WID (Women in Development) and GAD (Gender and Development). Until the 1970s, development policies were mainly concerned with the roles of women as mother and spouse.<sup>13</sup> Coming from a 'wellbeing; approach, the general idea was that macroeconomic strategies on modernisation and growth would benefit women as it would improve the work conditions of their husbands. The WID approach, spearheaded by Ester Boserup<sup>14</sup>, broke away from this approach and underlined the need to recognise the economic importance of women and the need to further integrate them into development policy and practises by creating employment, income generating opportunities and improved access to credit and education.<sup>15</sup> The WID concept was criticised for not addressing the existing unequal relations between men and women and for not taking into consideration the multiple roles of women and the overload imposed to them.

During the UN Decade of Women (1976-1985) a shift came about in the academic and policy approach to WID.<sup>16</sup> Feminist writers showed the importance of focusing on gender rather than on women. Rather than perceiving sex differences, gender concerns the social relationships by which women have been subordinated. The new Gender and Development (GAD) approach aimed to reduce the existing social, economic and political differences between men and women and promote better and fairer development. Although GAD policies signalled a shift away from WID, in reality the two

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<sup>12</sup> M. Maerten (2004) *Feminism in Africa*. RoSa factsheet 34, [www.rosadoc.be](http://www.rosadoc.be)

<sup>13</sup> Idem

<sup>14</sup> E. Boserup (1970) *Woman's role in economic development*. London: George Allen & Unwin

<sup>15</sup> Harcourt W. (2006) 'The Global Women's rights movement. Power politics around the United Nations and the World Social forum.' UNRISD programme papers on Civil society and Social movements, programme paper n 25

<sup>16</sup> C. Moser (1989) *Gender planning in the third world: meeting practical and strategic need*. *World Development*, Vol. 17:11m pp 1799-1825



approaches are intertwined or simultaneously applied in development programmes.<sup>17</sup> There is a contradiction between certain GAD policy rhetoric and practical application which is much more WID oriented. There is also criticism on the way in which gender is often being reduced in practice to mean women only.

Finally, there has been considerable discussion on how African women want to address their social roles. Unlike their Western counterparts, for “African women the acceptance of a certain social role does not exclude a rejection of women’s oppression”<sup>18</sup>. The central value attached to motherhood continues to be an important aspect of African womanhood, for example.

### *Women’s movement in South Kivu*

The women’s movement in South Kivu can be traced to the end of the colonial period. In 1959, Centre Olame already claimed that part of the population was marginalised and not included in the decision-making sphere. They proclaimed that, “if Congo was to become independent, it must integrate women in the fight for independence”. Some women were being trained on issues of empowerment and sent to villages to educate women about infant mortality, hygiene and literacy. They also started to discuss with men the necessity of health care for mothers and children.

Issues concerning women’s health were taken up by the first NGOs in South Kivu, that mainly had religious backgrounds. The social department of the Kimbanguiste Church was formed in 1962. The Diocesan Bureau of Development (Bureau Diocesain de Développement) was formed by the Catholic Church, and the Protestant Bureau by the Eglise du Christ au Congo in 1970. They aimed to involve their constituency in the development of the country.

In the 1980s, women’s NGOs and church groups started to organise solidarity groups and social meetings and this period saw the start of non-confessional NGOs. This period also saw the start of economic empowerment projects for women. For example, Centre Olame introduced the production of ‘masoso’ (maize, sorghum and soya) powder and cookies to improve the food security of the region, and Solidarité Paysanne joined them for training and capacity building. Comité Anti-Bwaki (unsuccessfully) tried to introduce donkeys for transport, and Umoja wa Wanawake wa Kivu (UWAKI) introduced agricultural projects targeting women. These efforts recognised the disruption to socio-economic development of the rural population caused by Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs).<sup>19</sup> They also recognised the heavy workload and responsibilities that fell on women. “Women were/ are used as means of transport, they carried loads, like bags of flour, of up to 100 kg on their back.”<sup>20</sup>

In the early 1990s, there was a boost to civil society because of the opportunities created by democratisation in the ‘Conference Nationale Souveraine’.<sup>21</sup> In the context of this process, civil society started to organise itself as a separate ‘sector’. A civil society network was formed under the name ‘Conseil Régionaux des Organisations Non-gouvernementales de Développement’, or CRONGD, that exists to date. In South Kivu, the “Bureau de Coordination de la Société Civile du Sud Kivu” was formed, as a platform for civil society. Its main objective was to address, and protest against, the mismanagement of president Mobuto’s government.

At that time, women were an integral part of civil society, but women working in NGOs were getting frustrated in their work as all the leadership was constituted of men who did not understand or consider their actions. All decisions were made by men and there was no space for women to talk. Other women, such as businesswomen and women politicians integrated into civil society and joined the lobby for recognition of women’s role in society. This resulted in an initiative to form a women’s action group. There were also several initiatives to form women’s groups within mixed NGOs or women’s associations that split off from mixed international NGOs, such as UWAKI (Umoja wa Wanawake wa Kivu, Kivu’s women union) that came from Solidarité Paysanne.

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<sup>17</sup> Connolly, P.M, Li Murray, T. MacDonald and J.L. Parpart. (2000). Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives. In: Parpart, J.L. Connolly, P.M. and Barriteau, V.E.(Eds.), Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development, International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada, pp. 23-51

<sup>18</sup> Maerten (2004), *op cit.*

<sup>19</sup> NGOF6

<sup>20</sup> INGO1

<sup>21</sup> This was an 18 months process where representatives of different regions, civil society and the diaspora were brought together by President Mobutu to discuss the state of the country and find solutions to address its problems.

In the mid-1990s, women in Eastern Congo started to speak out against war atrocities. They successfully brought attention to the issue of sexual violence, and spearheaded the initial protests against this.<sup>22</sup> Women's organisations started to demand the recognition and reinforcement of women's leadership. This started with women's capacity to denounce the atrocities and express their needs. It was often stated that women and men, in the same situation, can have different problems and different needs.

When a major peace initiative developed in Sun City in 2002, women's civil society was able to show that they had become a force to be reckoned with. With the help of UNIFEM (now UNWOMEN), women members of civil society as well as the members of Femme Africa Solidarité (FAS) and those from Women as Partners for Peace in Africa (WOPPA) organised a meeting in Nairobi earlier in 2002<sup>23</sup>. This brought women together from the whole country and women from areas with warring parties were able to agree on a common position prior to the start of Sun city negotiation.

The Sun City peace negotiations (Dialogue Intercongolais) marked the start of real regional discussion on security and economic issues at the centre of Congolese conflict (International Crisis Group, 2002: 3). It was the time to talk seriously about some key issue such as the disarmament of the Rwandan Hutu militia (FDLR) based in DRC, the reconstruction of the Congolese state and rights and sovereignty. The dialogue was held in South Africa (Sun City) between March and April 2002. Only 40 women delegates were invited out of 340 participants. Fortunately UNIFEM and the UNDP decided to invite an additional of 40 women which brought the number to 80.

Yet only 40 women were allowed to participate in formal negotiations. Further, only 10 women were allowed to attend the follow up to the Sun City meeting in South Africa<sup>24</sup>. Many women we interviewed for this research stated that they consider Sun City as the real beginning of the women's movement in DRC.

In the prelude to Sun City, the women's movement came together with the formation of the Caucus de Femmes, that united women to put pressure on the peace process in Sun City. Unique about the Caucus de Femmes was that it brought together women from different parts of the country, i.e. including women from Eastern Congo that was to a large extent occupied by the Rwanda-backed RCD militia, and women from the rest of the country that was fully government controlled.<sup>25</sup> The formation of the Caucus and the participation of the women in Sun City also testifies that the Congolese women's movement and the international community are closely intertwined.

Immediately after the peace treaty of Sun City, the women's umbrella organisation in South Kivu split. According to the women who led the split, the Caucus had no cohesion at national level. A group of women from WOPPA were part of the caucus but was not well accepted as they came from Rwanda and Uganda. They were considered as enemy groups or traitors. Another point was that some women coming from Sun City preferred to have a provincial movement. By the end, a situation emerged where a national women's platform continued under a different name, namely CAFCO (Cadre Permanent de Concertation de la Femme Congolaise).<sup>26</sup> The Caucus de Femmes continued as a provincial women's association of South Kivu. The Caucus de Femmes and CAFCO have continued up to today, and are affiliated to the Bureau de la Coordination de la Société Civile as alliances.

In the aftermath of Sun City, when a peace agreement was reached and a national government was formed, the Caucus de Femmes lobbied hard to have women represented in decision-making and in the end three women of South Kivu were given a government position in Kinshasa.<sup>27</sup> They then lobbied for adopting the bill on sexual violence. The experiences of these women in Kinshasa were disappointing – they felt they were not heard as women politicians or government officials. One of the women who took up a position in Kinshasa returned disillusioned to the province to resume her place in civil society.<sup>28</sup>

In 2006, the first national elections were held. A number of women leaders from the Caucus, other organisations and members of political parties ran for election. Unfortunately, most of them did not get elected. Several reasons were given

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<sup>22</sup> INGO1, N. Douma and D. Hilhorst (2012) *Fond de commerce? Sexual Violence Assistance in the Democratic Republic of Congo*. Occasional Paper 02, Disaster Studies, Wageningen, 61 pp.

<sup>23</sup> NGOF7, NGOF9

<sup>24</sup> Mpoumou, 2004,.

<sup>25</sup> NGOF7

<sup>26</sup> NGOF7

<sup>27</sup> NGOF6

<sup>28</sup> KI1

for this outcome. One reason was found in rumours that affected these women. They were personally discredited, for example by suggesting that they had a secret love affair.<sup>29</sup> It was apparently also a difficulty that women from their own constituencies in the communities ended up voting for a man, because they thought it more appropriate for men to be politicians.<sup>30</sup> Other factors were related to more general factors, such as the competition between political parties to which different women belonged and lack of resources for the campaign.<sup>31</sup>

Nonetheless, the women's movement had become a political stakeholder. When the next major peace conference was held in 2009, the women were provided a space to speak alongside other sections of civil society.<sup>32</sup> The local elections that have been announced since 2012 – but continue being postponed – have given rise to a number of initiatives for accompanying prospective women candidates and initiating voter's education.

The most visible activities in recent years continued to be the 'lutte contre les violences sexuelles', or the battle against sexual violence. From 2003 onwards, several organisations, including Centre Olame and the International Rescue Committee, started to address these issues. In 2006, after the establishment of the national government, the Law on Sexual Violence was brought forward, under the combined pressure of the women's movement and the international community. The women that were part of the Kinshasa government were able to extend lobbying for the law despite the resentment of the different warring parties who were all implicated in the violence. The women were strongly supported by the peacekeeping force of MONUC<sup>33</sup> and the Bill was passed in 2006.<sup>34</sup> By this time, the international community had become increasingly prominent in addressing sexual violence.

The high level of attention to sexual violence culminated in the 'Marche Mondiale' organized in Bukavu in October 2010. A number of organisations collaborated in the planning of the march. This was the third worldwide women's march, in which international participants joined local organisations for a rally during a 5-day period of action. More than 20,000 people were hosted and worked together with the theme 'Paix et Démilitarisation' (peace and demilitarisation). Comité National Femme et Développement (CONAFED) and COFAS were the central organisations in bringing about this activity. The 'Marche Mondiale' was a highlight and testified how the cause of Congolese women had become international. By this time, many women's NGOs were formed – which was partly explained by the huge availability of funding. One interviewee estimated that currently a large majority of NGOs in South Kivu have a (partial) focus on the theme of "gender based violence".<sup>35</sup> At the same time, women leaders started to feel increasingly marginalised in the coordination and agenda-setting around sexual violence. They were particularly concerned with the fact that there was no attention to gender issues outside of sexual violence.<sup>36</sup> As one of the respondents to our research explained:

"Women's organisations tried to keep working on these other issues as well. They formed women's associations. They also tried to work on poverty. Many husbands lost their work and became unemployed. Often women had to keep their family alive through small business activities to support their families. It became increasingly difficult to give children education, because the government could no longer pay. There were strikes everywhere."<sup>37</sup>

### *Community histories of women's movement*

Above, we have focused on the top-level history of the women's movement in South Kivu which centred on women's organisations based in Bukavu. But it should be stressed that the women's movement was also triggered and shaped by the grassroots.

Our interviews in Walungu territory showed that already in the mid-1990s, there were widespread small initiatives of local women that emerged to assist violated women in their areas. This started as human rights advocacy. Around the turn of the

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<sup>29</sup> KI1, INGO1

<sup>30</sup> GO1

<sup>31</sup> KI1

<sup>32</sup> INGO1

<sup>33</sup> MONUC is the Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo, the predecessor of MONUSCO, Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo

<sup>34</sup> NGOF6

<sup>35</sup> NGOF4

<sup>36</sup> Douma and Hilhorst, 2012

<sup>37</sup> INGO1

century, these women got in touch with provincial NGO representatives, who started to help them to take care of victims that were severely wounded and/or traumatised.<sup>38</sup> This set in motion a development in which provincial NGOs worked with local associations. These local associations are the local chapter of a provincial NGO or in other ways belong to the provincial NGO.<sup>39</sup>

The local women's groups grew to some extent out of existing structures. The communities in Walungu appear to have a rich history of association. Women have traditionally been organised mainly through churches. The Catholic Church has formed basic Christian communities, so-called Cirika, involving many community women. Many of the small women's initiatives were started by these groups.<sup>40</sup> The Protestant churches likewise have formed women's organisations since 1962 in the Conseil Protestant du Congo (or Eglise du Christ au Congo) in Kinshasa and since 1975 in South Kivu. The churches have formed the 'Federation National des Femmes Protestants du Congo'. This Federation has nodes (committees) in all their territories. Currently, there are 21 local women's committees in Bukavu.

Many women have multiple memberships in associations that seems to consolidate their position as *women of influence*. During a group interview with staff and three volunteers of the RFDP in Walungu centre, we asked the three women volunteers about their positions:

- The first lady was president of a CAP (Comité d'Alerte pour la Paix) of RFDP, she was the treasurer of the Club d'Écoute of AFEM, she was the secretary of the Cirika chapter, and had a number of other positions in her home village.
- The second lady was chef de cellule (a small unit, comprising a group of houses of a community), member of the security committee of Walungu centre (where she was the only woman in a committee of 15), vice-president of the AFEM Club d'Écoute, responsible for the coordination of all the RFDP CAPs in the territoire, and head of the CAFCO chapter of the territoire.
- The third lady was conseiller de quartier (head of the neighbourhood), secretary of the Cirika, in her parish, and member of a CAP.

We only asked these women about their current positions and no doubt if we would dig deeper we would have found a history of committee work related to development or humanitarian programmes. In a similar vein, we found women in the communities who formed the core of a listening or peace committee having simultaneous positions in other associations, NGO initiatives or authority-related committees.

### 3.2 Structures

This research is primarily interested in women's civil society. Women's issues, however, are not only the concern of civil society. In reality, the distinction between civil society, the state, politics and international organisations is often blurred, as these organisations often work together on campaigns or projects for women. In this section, we briefly describe the different structures concerned with women and gender.

The government body most concerned with gender is the national Ministry of Gender, Family and Children and its technical branches of the Divisions of gender in the provinces. At the provincial level, there is a Ministry of Gender, Family and Children which is coordinated by the provincial government and is seen as the political authority. In practice, the provincial Ministry usually uses the Division office of the national Ministry to implement programmes in the province. The Division of Gender, Family and Children coordinates a number of programmes, mainly in collaboration with UN organisations and backed by international donors. The implementation often involves partnerships with local NGOs. For the Division, the 2006 Law on Sexual Violence is a leading policy framework. In addition, it works on UN resolution 1325 which it aims to disseminate throughout the Province.

The international organisations present in the province and concerned with gender are mainly UN Women, UNFPA, and MONUSCO. MONUSCO is the United Nations peacekeeping organisation, and it has two (small) sections that are relevant to this study: the gender section and the section on sexual violence. The gender coordinator of MONUSCO works closely with several other UN civil relations officers, and is mandated to promote the implementation of UN resolution 1325. UNFPA has coordinated sexual violence issues in South Kivu until 2011. In 2011, the provincial coordination on gender started, which is coordinated by the government and UN Women. UNFPA continues to be active in the province, mainly for medical concerns

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<sup>38</sup> NGOF8 and FG5

<sup>39</sup> These associations have different names, and are often dubbed as the *noyaux*, or the nodes of the provincial organisations.

<sup>40</sup> INGO1

of reproductive health and rights. It also coordinates data collection on sexual violence. MONUSCO's mandate was until recently restricted to war-related sexual violence, but the latest mandate allows a broader engagement as it speaks of gender-based violence.<sup>41</sup>

The Provincial Gender Division works closely with MONUSCO in coordinating humanitarian and – increasingly- development assistance. It co-chairs the Protection Cluster of the UN Cluster System.<sup>42</sup> Each of the sub-clusters of the Protection Cluster is headed by a combination of a UN agency and one of the technical divisions of the government. These are the Protection and Prevention Sub-cluster, headed by UNHCR and the Division of Social Affairs; the Multi-sectoral Assistance Sub-cluster headed by UNICEF and the Ministry of Health; the Fight Against Impunity Sub-cluster headed by MONUSCO and OCHA; and the Data Gathering Cluster, headed by UNFPA and the Gender Division.

The Protection Cluster originally only dealt with war-related sexual violence, which was in line with the mandate of MONUSCO. Now it is increasingly dealing with gender-based violence more broadly and in more stable areas. As this coordination structure is part of a stabilisation programme (STAREC), the Division considers it programme-related and leads in addition a general monthly provincial coordination meeting for gender. This meeting is attended by government departments, UN agencies and (I)NGOs.

Increasingly, international NGOs that are present in South Kivu have formed separate gender units or programmes. These include, for example, IRC, ICCO, Search for Common Ground, International Medical Corps, Cordaid, Life and Peace International, International Alert. Many of these are concerned with sexual violence, but also increasingly women's leadership, the promotion of women's rights and socio-economic activities.

We were not able to assess the level of gender mainstreaming in aid programmes that have no specific or exclusive gender focus, such as, for example, attention to gender in programmes for food security, microcredit or the development of value chains. Specific gender programmes mainly relate to advocacy and what we might call social services: training, responses to specific cases of rights violations, and, increasingly, small-scale saving or other socio-economic activities for members of associations.

In December 2013, a coordination meeting was held<sup>43</sup> with international organisations involved in gender. A network was formed consisting of people in charge of gender programmes to create a group for all international NGOs who are working in promoting women's participation in decision making, the promotion of women's leadership and/or working on the implementation of UNSR 1325. Their aim is to promote synergy, starting with mapping the locations in which they are operating, sources of funding, their media partners, local partners, amount of the budget, etc.

Civil society is organised at the provincial level under the 'Bureau de Coordination de la Société Civile'. The Bureau is well-known and in fact many people refer to the Bureau when they speak of civil society. It has for many interviewees gained a negative reputation, as many view the Bureau representatives as mainly interested in political careers, or as being too close to the government.<sup>44</sup>

The 'Composante Femme', or Women's Component, of the Bureau has 93 member organisations, and meets every month. The gender approach of the Composante is to integrate parity and women's leadership into law and everyday life. The actors of the movement place premium importance on enhancing women's capacities and integrating women into the decision-making sphere as a key to combatting discrimination against women. For this reason, networking is considered very important in enhancing women's positions. Inheritance, discrimination and access to justice are high on the civil society agenda.

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<sup>41</sup> Douma and Hilhorst, forthcoming.

<sup>42</sup> This cluster falls under the stabilisation programme of STAREC, which is the Stabilisation and Reconstruction Plan for War Affected Areas. It started in 2009 as a government plan, supported by the UN and MONUSCO

<sup>43</sup> Notably, this meeting was an initiative by one of the international NGOs in Bukavu.

<sup>44</sup> NGOF7, NGOM1, NGOF7. At the time of research, a new initiative was launched, the Nouvelle Dynamique, which aimed to recapture the spirit of civil society. It was, amongst others, a reaction against the unilateral choice of the Director of the Bureau to join a national consultation on the constitution. Although it was broadly decided to boycott this event, the Director had joined and had apparently received a car from the President as a reward. This issue was raised several times in interviews.

Among the member organisations of the Composante Femme, three are considered platforms in themselves. These are the Caucus de Femmes, CAFCO (63 members) and COFAS (44 members). Caucus de Femmes is said to operate largely like an NGO, with projects and programmes of its own, next to representing a platform for its members. CAFCO is part of a nationwide platform composed by representatives from civil society organisation as well as political parties. COFAS is a collection of NGOs and local associations.

### *Structure of women's civil society in Walungu Territoire*

Based on our interviews in Bukavu, we expected to find several representatives of the government or international agencies concerned with women in Walungu. But this was not the case, or at least they were not referred to. MONUSCO, for example, said they regularly had meetings on gender in the territoires, but this could not be confirmed by the MONUSCO commander in the territoire.

There are a number of NGOs in the centre of Walungu, including offices of RFDP, CAMPS<sup>45</sup>, and Vovolib. RFDP has an office with a library for women's affairs. Other women's organisations have contact persons in the area, such as AFEM and VICO. There are also a lot of actual signposts that remind visitors of past initiatives on women and/or sexual violence. These signposts either stand by the road announcing past NGO activity, or are attached to a house where the president of an association lives.

Some interviewees refer to a coordination structure at the *territoire* level of Walungu, as part of the Bureau de la Société Civil, but this appears to be dormant.

As mentioned above, there is a rich association-related life in Walungu. We have only focused on associations attached to the three women's organisations which are the focus of the evaluation of the Dutch co-financed programme: RFDP, AFEM and VICO.

VICO has formed and supported cooperatives. The cooperative we met had not had any support for several years, yet continued to have activities. RFDP has organised nodes which they call CAP: Comité d'Alerte pour la Paix. These women's clubs facilitate NGO activities, especially seminars, follow up individual cases of women's rights amongst the members, and may operate a Village Savings and Loans Association, ROSCA, (Mutuelle de Solidarité, MUSO)<sup>46</sup> in which women contribute a small amount weekly which is given every week to one of the participants, or in case of special needs, such as a wedding). AFEM has a number of listening groups, Clubs d'Écoute, where women can share their stories. The groups assemble stories and pass them on to the NGO for items on the radio. AFEM also aims to empower women through these clubs on women's rights, and to help them confront, for example, local authorities. In the practice of the communities of Walungu, the CAPs and Clubs d'Écoute work closely together and sometimes seem to function in practice as one women's association, also because they are often represented by the same or closely related women.

### **3.3 Themes and activities**

Women's civil society in South Kivu has no explicit agenda. Similarly, the Composante Femme of the Bureaux of Civil Society has members but there is also no common agenda.

Nevertheless, on the basis of the interviews and activities the following themes appear to constitute the agenda of the women's movement.

- Women's representation and women's leadership

The dismal figures on women's representation in public positions have given rise to a number of programmes to enhance women's political representation. Even where women are represented in the government, women still form a minority, and find it difficult to influence decisions at the parliament.<sup>47</sup> Women's leadership appears the most

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<sup>45</sup> Centre d'Assistance Médicaux Psycho-Sociale.

<sup>46</sup> Also called Rotating Saving and Credit Associations, or ROSCAs.

<sup>47</sup> GO2, INGO4

prominent theme in gender programming. Many INGOs share the perspective of the crucial importance of women's leadership to improve women's participation at different levels of decision making, with activities geared towards political representation as well as women's leadership in the communities.

The W-Lead (Women in Leadership) programme of International Medical Corps IMC, for example, works at the grassroots level to make women understand their place within the election process and encourage them to vote for women. RFDP provides literacy training, to enable the empowerment of women. Literacy classes are also used to raise women's awareness about their rights. International Alert is developing a project with Caucus des Femmes for strengthening women's citizenship and peace. Other international organisations are likewise working on advocacy for women's leadership (UN Women, IMC, International Alert, Search for Common Ground, ICCO, V-day).<sup>48</sup>

At the time of our research, there was also a women's civil society initiative: campaign 30% to 50% (see box 3).

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### **BOX 3: 30-50% Campaign**

The campaign is a broad collaboration of women's networks (Observatoire de la Parité, COFAS, RFDP). The initiative came from Observatoire de la Parité, and the campaign is for 75% financed by the women organisations. The remaining 25% is financed by the INGO IMC. The immediate trigger of the campaign came from a speech of the President Kabila on 23th October 2013 at the Congress. The president said:

"I have taken interest in the proposal to make it obligatory for political parties to present a minimum of 30% of women on every candidate list. That is certainly a noteworthy progress, but it does not guarantee a tangible increase of women's representation in the elected bodies. As women make up the majority of our population and are the basis for the national creativity, I propose we will do better. For that reason I invite the legislator to examine the possibility to add, that in every body of three seats or more, one is only opened for competition of women."<sup>49</sup>

The 30-50 campaign first wants to make the 30% a reality and then lobby for a 50% representation. At the time of our research, a delegation of eight women from South Kivu was ready to depart for Kinshasa to have an audience with the President and lobby with different institutions to make the 30% objective a reality.

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- **Women's networking**

Women's voices are strengthened and women's struggles are more effective in association with others. The existence of several associations is in the eyes of some interviewees a strength rather than a weakness, as "women's problems cannot be solved only by one *dynamique*".<sup>50</sup> In addition, it is acknowledged that women's issues are not just the concern of civil society. The women's associations also comprise civil servants and politicians. Women's networking seems to work most effectively in the framework of campaigns. "In campaigns very different organisations can work together and it brings together individuals from these organisations that develop the same ideas about change".<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Meeting of 10 December 2013 where international NGOs based in Bukavu presented their gender programs.

<sup>49</sup> President Kabila's speech at the Congress, Oct. 23th 2013. "J'ai tout aussi noté avec grand intérêt la proposition de faire obligation aux formations politiques de présenter sur chaque liste de candidats, au moins 30 % de femmes. C'est certes un progrès notable, mais qui ne garantit pas une augmentation sensible de la représentation féminine dans les Assemblées délibérantes. Et puisque les femmes constituent la majorité de notre population et le vivier de la créativité nationale, Je propose donc que nous fassions mieux. Dans cette optique, J'invite le législateur à examiner la possibilité d'ajouter, dans chaque circonscription de trois sièges ou plus, un siège pour lequel la compétition ne serait ouverte qu'aux femmes."

<sup>50</sup> NGOF4, GO1

<sup>51</sup> NGOM1

- Women's rights and gender-based violence

An important theme constitutes women's rights. This theme concerns a broad category of legal rights, such as women's right to inheritance. The theme of women's rights is often approached through the angle of gender-based violence. This can include domestic violence, the denial of inheritance, husbands abandoning their spouses without taking responsibility for their children, adultery, economic exploitation, violation of the minimal age of marriage. In broader terms still, it can include the lack of medical care, poverty and other social problems.

Examples of these activities are found amongst all local associations. One of the mechanisms employed are '*tribunes d'expression populaire*', or local public hearings or tribunals. At the provincial level, the attention for gender-based violence is found in the different radio programmes and, for example, in the *Droit pour Tous* campaign (Box 4).

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#### **BOX 4: Droit pour Tous Campaign**

The Droit pour Tous campaign was organised in 2012-2013 by 14 organisations, initiated by Mobile Cinema Foundation in collaboration with Cordaid. As part of the campaign, a set of three films was produced about sexual violence, the rights of suspects and prisoners, and women's land rights. The films reached a large audience: 12.000 through 259 indoor screenings, and 367.000 through 159 public screenings.

The campaign tested people's knowledge before and after the showings and revealed that it produced major results in enhancing knowledge, with a lot of documented anecdotal evidence on changes in perception and attitude.<sup>52</sup>

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- Sexual violence against women

Sexual violence against women is often distinguished from gender-based violence, because GBV is seen as an expansion and as an alternative to the exclusive attention to sexual violence.

In Bukavu, interviewees did not stress sexual violence as a theme, suggesting that they were now working more on female leadership.

In Walungu on the other hand, sexual violence continued to be a dominant theme. Many programs are exclusively set up to assist victims of sexual violence. In addition, victims of sexual violence are often mentioned as a special target group of general programmes. RFDP, for example, accompanies victims with legal assistance, while CAMPS provides medical and psycho-socio care.

The local women's associations all have stories of women they accompanied to the hospital, or in the case of severe trauma even brought to Bukavu to the specialised Panzi hospital.

We also found some organisations offering small economic activities to sexual violence victims, such as Vovolib, which offers modest handicraft projects to women victims.

- Women's autonomy and livelihoods

There is increasing attention to the theme of women's autonomy, which is a term used to refer to livelihoods programmes. Many of the women NGOs try to set up small-scale programmes to work on women's livelihoods. Two reasons are given in interviews for the rise of this theme. Firstly, the dire poverty of women is seen as a major impediment to empowerment. Secondly, attention to livelihood programmes is seen as a response to an increasing fatigue and willingness among local women to receive training and awareness sessions that do not provide tangible benefits.<sup>53</sup> Two examples we saw were the cooperative set up by VICO, and the sewing club supported by RFDP. Many

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<sup>52</sup> Batano Chubolire, G. (2013) Mission de suivi du projet. Campagne Droit Pour Tous, pour la période de Novembre 2012 à Septembre 2013, Bukavu, Cordaid.

<sup>53</sup> NGOFS



associations have so-called MUSOs or ROSCA/VSLA<sup>54</sup> as their activity, where they save and rotate who gets the weeks savings.

- UN resolution 1325  
UN resolution 1325 was signed in 2000 and addresses the inordinate impact of war on women and the pivotal role women should and do play in conflict management, conflict resolution and sustainable peace. The resolution is an important frame of reference for gender projects. The Division of Gender aims to disseminate knowledge of the resolution throughout the province. MONUSCO's mandate is based on 1325, and the UN agencies such as UN Women and a number of INGOs also use the resolution as a frame of reference for their work. While we were doing our fieldwork, a new initiative was launched by the Dutch 1325 platform that includes Cordaid and several other organisations, called Femmes-au-Fone, that aims to improve communication so that women find it easier to reach assistance in case of sexual abuse or other violations of their rights. As part of this radio initiative, reception in some parts of the province is going to be improved. It involves international organisations as well as AFEM, Radio Maendeleo and SPR (Synergie des femmes pour Paix et la Réconciliation des peuples des grands lacs d'Afrique) as local partners.

There are also a number of themes that appear to be important, yet did not come up much as expected during interviews.

- Peace and security  
Peace and security continues to be an important theme in South Kivu, where rebel activity continues to flare up, and where the human rights' performance of state authorities are often an issue. During interviews, however, it emerged that few of the women's organisations are currently actively addressing this theme. When asked, they say they address the theme through their other foci, such as the economic empowerment of women.
- Gender mainstreaming.  
The importance of gender mainstreaming was formulated by Sida (Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency) in 2009<sup>55</sup> as follows: "*Key development and cooperation programmes aiming at bridging gender gaps in DRC should focus on institutionalizing the state and mainstreaming gender equality at all levels of the public sphere, on developing proper gender-sensitive statistics collection, on the long-term change of traditional/customary norms that marginalize women, on development projects targeting families, on increasing access to sustainable micro-finance, on supporting an in-depth reform of the health and education systems, and on engendering the security sector and justice reforms*".  
Nonetheless, in interviews, concerns with gender mainstreaming were not mentioned. One interviewee remarked how important it should be to have women represented in the governmental divisions working on energy and mining, because these sectors are very important for women's livelihoods.<sup>56</sup>  
Gender mainstreaming does appear in the discourses of general NGOs. It is then often described as a cross-cutting theme and phrased as such in project proposals. In practice however, it does not come out very clearly in projects and seems to be mostly lip-service to donors.<sup>57</sup>
- Urban issues  
The plight of internally displaced women and urban women was not a theme surfacing in the interviews of the women's organisations. The Division of Gender stated it has no services and activities directed to urban poor women because they do not want to encourage the 'rural exodus' as the rural-urban migration flow is referred to.

### *Women's agenda in Walungu territory*

In the above section, we have incorporated examples from the provincial level as well as local activities. The issues addressed in the *territoire* are largely similar to the provincial ones, although the emphasis may be different. Sexual violence was more prominent in interviews in Walungu as well as other women's rights issues. At the provincial level, women's representation in politics is a more prominent issue. A striking difference is that at the provincial level, 1325 provides an important framework for women's organising, whereas in the *territoire*, the resolution was never mentioned.

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<sup>54</sup> ROSCA are rotating saving and credit associations, also known as VSLA, village savings and loan associations.

<sup>55</sup> SIDA 2009, p. 10

<sup>56</sup> GO4

<sup>57</sup> This is based on the broader set of interviews done for the development evaluation of MFS-II.

### *Conclusion*

This chapter has elaborated on the history, structures and themes of the women's movement in South Kivu. The women's movement has grown in parallel with international development discourses on women and gender and has from the 1990s onwards increasingly addressed issues related to the war and insecurity. While the number of women's organisations and coordination structures in the province grew, this is in part explained by segregation in (political) agenda's. Many provincial organisations have local nodes. In the communities of Walungu, these often have overlapping membership and centre on a core of influential women.

The emphasis of themes in the province is to some extent different from the local level. Even though attention for a long time singled out sexual violence as a theme, in recent years the attention to violence has broadened to other kinds of gender-based violence, including for example inheritance issues and women (economic) livelihood programs. Promoting women's leadership and political representation appears to have been an agenda-point throughout time, albeit with limited success.

## 4. Civil society index and women's civil society

In this chapter, we will analyse our findings according to the framework of civil society as developed by CIVICUS.

We started the research using the five dimensions and key indicators provided by CIVICUS, and represented in Chapter 1. The CIVICUS indicators are developed internationally, and not all indicators are applicable in the DRC. In the course of our interviews, we have added issues and indicators that are incorporated in this chapter.

**Civic Engagement**, or 'active citizenship', is a crucial defining factor of civil society. It is the hub of civil society and therefore is one of the core components of the CSI's definition. Civic engagement describes the formal and informal activities and participation undertaken by individuals to advance shared interests at different levels. Participation within civil society is multi-faceted and encompasses socially-based and politically-based forms of engagement.

**Level of Organisation.** This dimension assesses the organisational development, complexity and sophistication of civil society, by looking at the relationships among the actors within the civil society arena.

**Practice of Values.** This dimension assesses the internal practice of values within the civil society arena. CIVICUS identified some key values that are deemed crucial to gauge not only progressiveness but also the extent to which civil society's practices match their ideals.

**Perception of Impact.** This is about the perceived impact of civil society actors on politics and society as a whole as the consequences of collective action. In assessing this dimension, the perception of both civil society actors (internal) as actors outside civil society (outsiders) is taken into account.

**Context Dimension: External Environment.** It is crucial to give consideration to the social, political and economic environments in which civil society exists, as the environment both directly and indirectly affects it. Some features of the environment may enable the growth of civil society. Conversely, other features of the environment hamper the development of civil society.

### 4.1 Civic Engagement

The civic engagement dimension describes the involvement of people in civil society. The two primary indicators we used are whether respondents perceive women's civil society as a women's movement and whether women's civil society is grounded in a constituency.

In several interviews<sup>58</sup>, the mobilizing power of civil society in the 1990s and around the turn of the century is remembered with nostalgia. In those days, it is said, civil society was able to address people's concerns, and even churches were engaged in social activism. People could be mobilized for mass meetings and demonstrations when there was an important issue. In comparison, today civil society seems to be out of touch with the population at large, especially in the city. "Even though people are all angry about the same issue, they will not mobilize".<sup>59</sup>

Many interviewees expressed the view that people have lost trust in civil society because they see how leaders use civil society as a springboard into politics. Once they are in politics they forget their ideals and follow their personal interests. As someone said: "Once they are in politics, they either disappear quickly, or they conform. Very few can resist the pressure".<sup>60</sup> It was stressed that this is the case for civil society in general, not just women's civil society.<sup>61</sup>

Instead, a different type of civil society has emerged which is much more organized around NGOs. While some people speak critically of this trend, as they see this NGO-ism as donor-dependent or dominated, as creating a dependency attitude among people (*'attentisme'*), or as self-interested. The different actors concerned with civil society amount to an impressive number of engaged actors.

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<sup>58</sup> NGOF6, NGOF7 and others

<sup>59</sup> NGOF4

<sup>60</sup> NGOM1

<sup>61</sup> INGO4

Asked whether a women's movement exists, most interviewees are positive. They feel part of a movement, or they observe there is a broad engagement. "I have been involved since 2005, and I really feel part of a movement. For me, the core is about the promotion of women's involvement in decision-making".<sup>62</sup> One recurring observation is that there is a movement, which speaks one language and has a common cause of women's rights, even though this translates in different agendas.<sup>63</sup>

The cause of women is broadly promoted. For example, when asked about the role of donors, some people make it clear that they think the donors (or locally present INGOs) are part of the *lutte pour les femmes*, 'some of them really work'.<sup>64</sup> It has also been emphasised that the women's movement is broader than civil society or NGOs. Caucus des Femmes and the other umbrella organisations represent women from NGOs, government, politics and churches. This feature of the women's movement is not considered equally positive by all. Some find it confusing and some interviewees want to make clear that they do not want to be seen as part of civil society.<sup>65</sup> This may also have to do with the fact that many people associate the term civil society with the coordination bureau of civil society, that they may not want to engage with.

#### *Local embeddedness in Walungu*

Several interviewees say that the real test of a women's movement is in its local embeddedness. The amount of local women's organizations and associations in the *territoire* is vast, and quite a few signboards signal the presence of small local women's NGOs. In the centre of Walungu *territoire* there are a number of (previously) internationally funded NGOs, even though most that are active in Bukavu are not present in Walungu but have occasionally funded project activities. During a women's focus group, at least 20 organisations were named that had activities for women in the area, mainly in the context of sexual violence.<sup>66</sup> In the villages we visited there were multiple women's associations. We visited the villages because they had Comités d'Alerte pour la Paix, Clubs d'Écoute, or an association connected to VICO. In addition, we found women involved in multiple other associations (see also under 3.1). The women we interviewed all had a keen interest in women's rights and all had stories and examples of how they were able to claim their rights.

We were also impressed to find that most of the women leaders we spoke to in the villages were 'cultivatrice' (farmer). They were not part of the educated village elite, yet had been able to gain some influence in the promotion of women's rights through their association. We also have many indications that the relation between NGOs in Bukavu and women's associations is two-way. While NGOs supply certain services, they are also responsive in following up cases brought forward by local groups. Local groups also provide news items for the radio programmes organized by AFEM. There was thus ample evidence of local embeddedness of the women's movement.

There are two provisos to this:

- We have spoken to core groups of women at the local level. We cannot say much about the involvement of the ordinary members of the associations. There have been many trainings involving members, as well as ongoing efforts to provide services to them, such as literacy training and saving groups (MUSOs). Most of the participants in the two literacy trainings we attended just started to be involved in the associations and learn about their rights during the classes. Several interviewees mentioned that core members provoke jealousy with the benefits derived from their NGO contacts (such as allowances paid during training sessions)<sup>67</sup> and it was often mentioned that local women increasingly demand payment or other benefits when they attend training.
- We have only visited one *territoire*, Walungu. In this *territoire* there were three villages in two *groupements* where we were sure to find activity we could interview about. There are several reasons why Walungu may be more advanced in terms of women organising than other *territoires* of South Kivu:
  - Walungu has seen many atrocities during the war, which led to women organising since the late 1990s.
  - Walungu is relatively close to Bukavu. easy to reach for organisations and has benefited more than other territories from assistance.

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<sup>62</sup> NGOF3

<sup>63</sup> GO1,GO2, NGOF9

<sup>64</sup> GO2; also NGOF1

<sup>65</sup> In particular some women from the churches.

<sup>66</sup> Douma and Hilhorst, forthcoming.

<sup>67</sup> NGOF8, NGOF1

- Walungu happens to be the place where many women leaders in Bukavu were born, including the directors of all three NGOs central to our research: AFEM, RFDP and VICO. The relations between associations and these leaders are close and the local women's associations often referred to the leaders by name, rather than by the name of the organisation, when they talked about NGO support.

## 4.2 Level of Organisation.

This dimension assesses the organisational development, complexity and sophistication of civil society, by looking at the relationships among the actors within the civil society arena. Based on the general indicators we have identified the following issues as pertinent in the South Kivu context for the level of organisation: coordination, human and financial capacities, internal governance, communication and culture, self-regulation, partnerships with local institutions, and international support structures and networking.

### 4.2.1 Coordination

In the previous chapter, we described the co-ordination mechanisms that structure the women's movement.

The Civil Society Bureau in South Kivu is considered by a number of interviewees to be ineffective and politicised.<sup>68</sup> An illustration of this concern was a scandal unfolding at the time of our research. It was rumoured that the Director of the Bureau was given a car by the President, because of his engagement in the national consultation (Concertation Nationale 2013) that civil society in South Kivu had decided to boycott because it was seen as part of the President's scheme to change the constitution to prolong his stay in office. True or false, the fact is that many interviewees were very angry about this.<sup>69</sup>

The 'Composante Femme' of the Bureau is seen more as a meeting place for exchange than a coordinating body. The three members of the Composante, that form alliances of their own (Caucus de Femmes, CAFCO and COFAS) are seen more as coordinating, although their roles are confused because they also act as an NGO fundraising for its own activities rather than promoting its members.

The women's movement is also hampered by a number of issues:

- There is mistrust with women leaders that are thought to aspire to becoming a politician or that are considered to be too close to politicians.<sup>70</sup> Although the fact that a number of women from these organisations have obtained political office, including the former Director of the Bureau who has become part of the Election Preparatory Committee (CENI), is considered a major achievement of the women's movement, mistrust in her appointment seemed to be strongly interwoven with this.
- There seems to be a certain competition about leadership, where initiatives may not be accepted by other organisations or where organisations only want to join the initiative when they can take part in the leadership.<sup>71</sup>

While none of the interviewees appeared to appreciate the coordination structures, they emphasised that coordination works much better when it is done through campaigns. There have been several successful campaigns where the women's organisations work together. These campaigns vary in the extent to which they are being supported or even initiated by an international agency. The recently completed campaign Droit pour Tous (see Box 4) is an example.<sup>72</sup> The 30-50% campaign (see Box 3), on the other hand, is an initiative of local women's organisations who finance the campaign partly with funds of their own organisation.

### *Walungu coordination*

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<sup>68</sup> NGOM2, INGO1

<sup>69</sup> NGOF4, NGOM1

<sup>70</sup> NGOF4, NGOM1

<sup>71</sup> NGOF4, INGO1, INGO2

<sup>72</sup> Droit pour Tous was not exclusively by and for women, and focused on rights more broadly. Women's rights to inheritance and land were central to the campaign, as well as sexual violence.

In Walungu, we found evidence of women's organisations working together, for example when RFDP follows up cases of violence against women that AFEM simultaneously takes up in the media. Coordination structures seem to exist but appear to be mainly dormant.

#### 4.2.2 Human and financial capacities

Human and financial capacities are an important dimension of civil society, and lots of references were made to this in interviews.

There are many women NGOs and associations, but many of these have no access to funding. It is estimated that at least 50% or as much as two thirds of the organisations affiliated to the Composante Femme of the Coordination Bureau of Civil Society do not have funding. "They have shrunk to 2 or 3 women".<sup>73</sup> In our group discussion with eight representatives of CAFCO, we found that none of the NGOs represented had regular funding, and this seemed typical for the entire membership. There seems a trend towards reducing funding, as many of these 'dry NGOs' used to have funding in previous years. This is attributed to the fact that development budgets are reducing internationally.<sup>74</sup> Also, it may be related to changes in the attention to sexual violence that used to provide resources to numerous small agencies.<sup>75</sup> Another reason may be that international donors increasingly have partnerships with state agencies in DRC.

Organisations without funding may nonetheless continue working. With a core staff of one or two, they hope to receive new funding and survive in the meantime on small jobs or other activities. In our focus-sample, VICO was going through a period without funding. In the *territoire* of Walungu, we had two interviews with local partners of VICO. In both cases, they mentioned they continued to have regular visits by the VICO director. We also found traces of VICO initiatives that had started in villages and ceased to operate, often many years prior to our research.

Among the 'dry' organisations, we also found a tendency to change to a different line of work. There is always a story about why it makes sense to shift, for example, from an advocacy or micro-credit group to agriculture and food security, and why the organization has the necessary capacities to do so. On the other hand, these also seem like attempts to find whatever funding is available. There are (anonymous) stories of how some organisations offer to pay staff of international organisations a share of the project money (up to 30%) when they ensure the organisation is granted a programme.<sup>76</sup>

Organizations that are well-established nonetheless have small offices and modest numbers of staff. Funding agencies rarely allow structural capacity development. AFEM, for example, has 12 staff members in Bukavu and one staff member in each of the 10 field offices, although it is not clear whether these are all being paid. In addition, the organisation has a network of members that are employed for short-term contracts in the framework of specific projects.

The gender division of the Ministry of Gender, Family and Children is well endowed compared to other divisions, as it has many internationally-backed programmes. The division has 15 staff in Bukavu and 43 in the *territoires*. Most of its work depends on donor-funding. International NGOs and organisations usually have one gender coordinator.

With regard to human capacity, it is apparent that the numerous trainings have resulted in a high level of awareness and knowledge on women's rights, the law, treatment of victims, etc. This is the case throughout the different levels of organisation: from Bukavu to the villages. In addition, we found that donors increasingly invest in financial management capacities.<sup>77</sup>

In *Walungu*, the reduced funding also affected civil society and we encountered several groups in miniscule offices in Walungu centre hoping and waiting for funding opportunities. The reduced levels of funding also result in a certain competition between Bukavu-based NGOs and local organisations, with the latter complaining that the central NGOs retain more money for themselves when the funding becomes restricted. Questions were also raised about the reasons for the

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<sup>73</sup> NGOF10

<sup>74</sup> GO4, NGOF9, NGOF10

<sup>75</sup> INS3, see also Douma and Hilhorst, forthcoming.

<sup>76</sup> IO2, NGOF2

<sup>77</sup> NGOF1

Bukavu-based NGOs not putting more effort into hiring women from the *territoire* when vacancies came up, and why local volunteers were not given allowances.

Human capacity development, as stated, has resulted in a high level of awareness of women's rights. The question is how effective and efficient this was. There were a number of indications that there were too many seminars, that the content sometimes overlapped and that people were tired of seminars.

#### 4.2.3 *Internal governance*

A major development reported by some NGOs is that donors increasingly make demands on (financial) management and invest to some extent in capacity development to make NGOs stronger partners.<sup>78</sup> The result appears to be an increasing duality among the women's organisations. A number of agencies that have regular donors and are able to invest in their professional capacities become stronger and are likely to attract further donors. On the other side of the divide is a large number of agencies that have no funding and are thus not included in initiatives to professionalise and are therefore increasingly unlikely to attract substantial funding in the future.

With regard to the local associations we encountered in Walungu, we found that many of them adhere to formal structures. They have a president, vice-president, treasurer and secretary, hold elections and may have statutes.

#### 4.2.4 *Communication and culture*

In general, interviewees reported that there is increasing collaboration within women's civil society and between women's organisations and other sectors (especially government and politicians).

A very important issue here is that women's rights and women's leadership have become a unifying language. This would allow collaboration across sectors and between different layers of organization (from the city to the village).

On the other hand, the language of gender can also become divisive. Interviewees from the religious sector in particular mentioned that they consider gender as part of the language of donor agencies.<sup>79</sup> These respondents prefer to address women's rights within a framework that recognises the complementarity between men and women.<sup>80</sup> One respondent said they had to be careful not to turn women hostile to men: '*l'oiseau a deux ailes, si on coupe une aile, il va tomber*' ('A bird has two wings; when you cut one off it will fall').<sup>81</sup>

There is a large involvement of men in the women's organisations. The gender dimensions within the organisations differ between the province and Walungu. At the provincial level, women dominated leadership positions. Even though there are many men in these organisations, they are generally considered female dominated. In Walungu, on the other hand, we found that the salaried and leading staff member was male in a number of organisations. At this level, societal gender relations seemed to be reproduced even in the women's organisations.

With respect to women's leadership in NGOs without a specific gender focus, it seems there are very few NGOs led by women.<sup>82</sup>

#### 4.2.5 *Self-regulation*

The indicator of self-regulation refers to codes of conduct and other mechanisms by which civil society can hold itself and each other accountable to some commonly agreed values.

There are no formal mechanisms for such self-regulation in women's civil society or civil society more broadly. When we asked about the need for self-regulation, it was remarked that self-regulation would be important especially for the work

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<sup>78</sup> NGOF1, INGO1 BNGO4,

<sup>79</sup> INS2, RA1

<sup>80</sup> RA2

<sup>81</sup> INGO4

<sup>82</sup> Based on interviews for the evaluation of the broader development programme

on responses to sexual violence. 'I estimate that the majority of the NGOs claim to work on sexual violence, and it will be important to regulate this field. Now there is total autonomy and it would be good to have peer review'.<sup>83</sup>

#### 4.2.6 *International support structures and networking.*

There are a number of UN agencies and INGOs that have specific programmes to reinforce women's organisations and promote women's rights. These include UN Women, International Alert, Search for Common Ground, International Medical Corps, Life and Peace Institute, ICCO, Cordaid and Kvinna till Kvinna.

These international programmes appear to share very similar objectives. They have a strong focus on women's leadership. They usually differentiate between women's representation in politics and local women's leadership through the strengthening of local associations.

They also seem to work to a large extent through the same local organisations.<sup>84</sup> In some cases, programmes are set up as a collaboration between different INGOs. Otherwise, INGO representatives have no formal coordination. In December 2013 they organised a meeting for INGOs with a gender programme which was the first in several years.

In the past, several INGOs attempted to form networks among their local partners. Currently, they are more inclined to form networks around specific campaigns. This is the case, for example, with the *Droit pour Tous* campaign, and the leadership campaign of IMC and others.

As the different agencies overlap, it is not surprising that they claim similar outcomes as the result of their work. The fact that South Kivu now has 4 female ministers out of 10 after the last cabinet reshuffle was mentioned as a programme result by several organisations.<sup>85</sup>

While a number of international organisations aim to strengthen women's associations, they do this mainly through the Bukavu-based NGOs. Representatives of the international NGOs regularly visit the *territoire*. Association with the international NGOs, sometimes indirect, is one of the elements adding some status and legitimation to the local women's associations.

### **4.3 Practice of values**

This dimension questions whether civil society actors live up to their own standards. Are they themselves being the change they want to achieve?

#### *Politics in civil society*

There is a lot of talk about the political roles and ambitions of society actors. When asked what happened after the successful mobilization around the turn of the century, one of the issues raised was that prominent civil society actors assumed political office and forgot about their cause.

There is a large distrust of women who use their civil society position as a launching pad into politics. This leads to a contradiction. While many see the promotion of women in politics as an important condition for promoting women's rights, there is a general expectation that women will forget their ideals, once they are in power. On the other hand, women politicians explain that women have a hard job in politics and cannot achieve a lot because they are being blocked by their party.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> NGOF4

<sup>84</sup> INGO2

<sup>85</sup> IO1, INGO2

<sup>86</sup> GO4



Several interviewees remarked that this is not typical for women's organisations but a feature of civil society in general. Also, in acknowledgement of this issue, a number of programmes are geared to sensitising and training women politicians.<sup>87</sup>

Our fieldwork in Walungu was too brief to provide deep insights into the possible politicisation of the women's associations. The local associations in DRC are known to be facing two ways. On the one hand, they are a mechanism for self-enhancement of the leaders, who seem to have 'ownership' of associations, yet at the same time they do put a lot of effort into promoting the objectives of their organisation, such as enhancing women's rights.<sup>88</sup>

#### *Equal opportunities in civil society*

A number of interviewees mentioned that equal opportunities may be an issue in the women's movement. All women's organisations seem to employ men, but there is a concern that these organisations are seen to be dominated by women.

#### *Employment in civil society*

One of the issues that came up in Walungu, is the status of volunteers. While NGOs celebrate the active engagement of local women in their organisations, some of these women look differently at the situation. There are a number of women in Walungu who consider it unfair that they are not given a job in the NGO, even though they spend a lot of time working for it. They have the impression that provincial women are not being taken into account when NGO positions come up.

#### *The provision of sitting allowances*

A related issue concerns the practices around sitting allowances. NGOs have taken on the practice of paying local people for their presence in training activities. This practice stems from the notion that people who spend the day in training cannot otherwise find income during that day. However, in later years it seems that the payment that some organisations give is much higher than what somebody would gain for a day working in the field. One of the interviewees said his organisation paid \$5-\$10 every day to each of the participants of seminars. Otherwise, people would refuse to take part in seminars: 'People say that the NGOs eat all the money themselves' (*Ils bouffent de l'argent*).<sup>89</sup> Another NGO told us they stopped given training because they could not afford to pay the increasing compensation.<sup>90</sup> This issue was also raised in a number of focus groups, where key women of the communities mentioned they found it difficult to motivate people to attend training.

The increased expectation to be paid for activities is also seen by one of the interviewees as a reason for the demise of mobilizing power of civil society. 'In the early 2000s the NGOs, and some churches, mobilized a lot of people. But now, for example in the last elections, many people were upset, but there was no mass mobilisation. The problem of the sitting allowances and transport diminishes the number of people that come to activities, in addition to other problems like poverty'<sup>91 92</sup>

## **4.4 Perception of impact**

This dimension of the CIVICUS index is the perception on the part of participants and stakeholders of the impact of civil society. This is seen by interviewees as the following:

#### *Different representation of women*

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<sup>87</sup> INGO4, IO1

<sup>88</sup> Wagemaker, I. (2014) *The Periphery Revisited. Understanding local urban governance in the context of rapid urban expansion and weak state institutions in Kinshasa*. PhD thesis, IOB, University of Antwerp, 152-156.

<sup>89</sup> NGOM2

<sup>90</sup> NGOF5, See also Wairimu, W, D. Hilhorst and I. Christoplos, forthcoming.

<sup>91</sup> NGOF4

<sup>92</sup> Note that this issue is not only related to development organisations, as politicians apparently also increasingly provide small payments and gifts to their constituency.

Changes are being observed in the ways in which women are being represented by themselves and their organisations. The image is moving away from the subservient customary woman on the one hand and the victimised woman evoked by the sexual violence responses on the other. Increasingly, women assert their various rights and show leadership.

#### *Women have a voice*

Gradually, women are acquiring a voice. There are many provisos: interviewees remark that women fall silent in the presence of men yet there is a general feeling that this is changing and that women increasingly speak out for themselves whether in political parties or village meetings. 'Women are determined and really engaged; they are now free. Before they did not dare to talk, but now they dare more.'<sup>93</sup>

#### *Women gain influence*

In the communities of Walungu, women's associations have grown strong. They represent women from all layers of village society and they gain influence in their communities. This influence is partly derived from the backing they receive from NGOs, which may lend them a certain status. The associations give women space to develop leadership skills and gain dignity as community members. Because women combine different positions, the leaders become 'women of influence'.

One remarkable story that came up in Kaniola is that women who are divorced or live with a man without being married – which is very frequently the case due to the war – are banned from having positions in the Cirika or the choir of the church. Women who could not be active in the church found a place in the associations to be active. We were not able to confirm if this was generally the case, or only in this particular village.

At the provincial level of South Kivu, there have recently been a number of appointments of women in political and high administrative positions referring to the Ministry posts earlier mentioned and others keys position in the provincial government.<sup>94</sup>

#### *Women assert their rights*

There is a lot of anecdotal evidence that women have started to assert their rights. We came across stories of women who successfully claimed the land they were entitled to through inheritance<sup>95</sup> and of abandoned women who manage to have their husbands forced to pay for their children. Increasingly, systems are in place to follow up individual cases of women who want to assert their rights. Even though the systems are based in communities through associations, they heavily depend on the support of subsidised NGOs that can provide assistance.

#### *Women advocate for their rights.*

The follow-up of individual cases, and the fact that these are being talked about, is also a form of advocacy. The actual successful cases may be very small dots on the horizon but they have a strong impact because these anecdotes are being told in many places and are the subject of many radio programmes which contribute to spreading a new message. There is also advocacy for representation of women in government and politics and there is some advocacy for legal reform, especially the code de la famille (family law).

The advocacy function is strongly enabled by the close collaboration of women's organisations and the media.

Even though the mobilising power of civil society is observed to be much less than in the past, there are occasions when women take to the streets to claim their social and political space, notably on Women's Day (March 8) and V-day (One billion rising, February 14).<sup>96</sup> Some people question the genuine mobilizing force of these rallies, as many of the participants are invited by organisations and sponsored to join.

#### *There is a women's movement.*

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<sup>93</sup> GO4

<sup>94</sup> Notably the appointment of 4 women Ministers (of a total 10) in the new Provincial government in June 2013, <http://observatoiredelaparite.org/wp/?p=1109>

<sup>95</sup> These stories look like each other and it is not possible to estimate how many real cases of inheritance have been resolved. We have spoken to one woman who herself did successfully claim her inheritance.

<sup>96</sup> IO4

Everybody agrees that there is women's movement in South Kivu. Although there are many critical remarks about its direction, coordination, and sometimes even motivation, the many initiatives from local women's associations, women's NGOs, the government and the international community come together into a movement that speaks a new language on gender relations in DRC.

#### 4.5 External dimension, or the larger picture

The external dimension can be divided into social-cultural, socio-institutional, and socio-political factors. It is important to take this into account, because the civil society agenda largely comes about in response to these factors, because the room for manoeuvre for civil society and its possible impact is largely determined by this dimension, and because we can find there many explanations of the characteristics of civil society. Civil society, after all, is part of society and is largely shaped by this so-called external dimension. We follow the terminology of CIVICUS, but note that this dimension would more aptly be labelled the larger picture, in consideration of the fact that it is not external to civil society.

##### *Socio-cultural factors: gender relations.*

Gender relations are crucial for the women's movement, they form its *raison-d'être* and the ultimate objective is to render gender relations more equal.

Customary gender relations are deeply ingrained in society, and institutions around gender are known to have a very strong ordering capacity, are reproduced through everyday social life, and are very difficult to change.

Traditional gender relations are also a major obstacle for women seeking to assert their rights and organise themselves. This is, amongst others, apparent in the critiques that women leaders may receive. In interviews, several references were made – by men – to the personal choices of women leaders. It was stated, for example, that women's organisations discredited themselves because they were led by women who were not properly married.<sup>97</sup> Several interviewed women related personal stories about how they were being criticised, insulted and even threatened because of the work they do.

##### *Socio-institutional factors*

Religious institutions show two facets. On the one hand, they are seen to play a positive role in promoting respect for women and to provide space for women to develop their skills. On the other hand, by emphasising the complementarity between men and women, they are seen to reinforce the power differentials between men and women. We heard several examples of how the Catholic Church obliged NGOs to remove references to women's reproductive rights in education.

Traditional institutions, in particular the system of traditional leadership of *Mwami* (kings) and *chefs* are usually seen as a major barrier to the status of women. Customary practices of different tribes usually do not allow women to inherit, does not protect women who are being abandoned by their husband, and condones early marriage from the age of 12 onwards. However, there are also changes visible in these institutions. *Mwamis* and *chefs* are increasingly better educated and are always involved in NGO training, and hence may be open to change.<sup>98</sup> At the same time, the traditions are part of society, and continue to dominate gender relations, as stated above.

There is a strong symbolism in the leadership of some women who take over the kingdom when their son is too young to assume his title. A lot of reference was made to these so-called *Mwami Kazi* (king's mothers), with the late *Mwami Kazi Astrid* figuring as a legendary woman of benevolent power and influence. In one of the communities, *Burhale*, a training centre for women built with the support of *Cordaid*, was named after her: *Maison Astrid*.

The women's movement also finds some inspiration in stories about the pre-colonial situation of women in DRC, with some interesting examples of women as founders of empires or as combatants, especially in the *Kuba*, *Luba* and *Lunda* tribes where women played an important role and still have matrilinear inheritance. Women were considered as pillars of the kingdoms and strong contributors to their development, prosperity and unification.

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<sup>97</sup> IO3

<sup>98</sup> GO5

On the positive side we can also point to the rich associational life in communities in Congo. The women's associations that are formed as part of the women's movement build on this tradition. There are many different associations in communities, ranging from associations connected to the church to associations of farmers and other groups. Women we encountered were often part of multiple associations.

#### *Socio-political*

The distinction between social-institutional and socio-political factors is gradual. Traditional leaders and churches are also governance actors. Traditional leaders have formal political roles, and the churches have important roles in the governance of services, particularly health and education. These have been discussed in the section above so we will limit ourselves here to the state and the international community.

The state, and the governance culture of personalised and highly commoditized service relations, has an impact on everything in civil society, including the women's movement. Civil society has to deal with and respond to this governance culture, and has to some extent internalised it.

The government is also seen to provide space for the promotion of women's rights. In the case of inheritance, for example, the modern state law is much more favourable for women than traditional practice. Nonetheless, the legal status of women still needs to be improved, in particular the family law.

The government appears to have invested in a strong capacity for gender issues. However, as the Division of Gender largely depends on external funding the question remains about the commitment of the government towards gender issues.

The international community is an important factor in the governance of gender policy in DRC. This will be dealt with in the next chapter.

#### **Conclusion**

This chapter analysed the women's movement of South Kivu – in particular the NGOs in Bukavu and the associations in Walungu *territoire* – on the basis of the five dimensions of civil society developed by CIVICUS.

As for civil engagement, added to rich associational organisation on local level, most provincial women's organisations reach out to and have presence in rural areas such as Walungu, causing women to feel part of a movement. On the other hand, the mobilizing power of women's organisations appears in part to be activity-centred rather than broader-cause-centered.

Coordination structures of the women's movement are fragmented and often mistrusted, and INGO coordination on gender appears to be irregular. As for human resource capacity in women's organisations, strong female leadership coexists with strong reliance on volunteers (due to limited funding capacities). Self-regulation mechanisms are largely absent, and was especially cited as needed for peer review of the quality of work in topics relevant to women.

Under practice of values, the degree of politicisation of women's civil society was mentioned, as well as the issue of payment of sitting allowances blurring real motivation to defend the cause.

Impact on the achievements of women's civil society is perceived in the degree to which women now have a voice, occupy positions of influence, and advocate for gender balance.

The customary (social), political and institutional factors that define societal functioning in DRC are running through and define women's civil society too, and can therefore not necessarily be seen as an external sphere of influence.

The next chapter will draw some conclusions on the basis of the overall analysis presented in this report.

## Analysis and conclusion

In this chapter, we will bring together the findings for the main concerns of the report: strengthening of women's civil society, strengthening local associations, and lobbying and advocacy. We will also provide some general conclusions about women's civil society in South Kivu and Walungu in particular.

### *The role of the international community in civil society strengthening*

The role of the international community in social, economic and political work in the region is great, and in the case of the women's movement perhaps even greater. The international attention to gender issues has been triggered by the high level of conflict-related sexual violence. The 2006 law on sexual violence, for example, has largely come about under pressure from, and with the assistance of, the international community. In the last few years, the attention to gender issues has broadened to incorporate gender norms, rights, women's leadership and other pertinent concerns of women.<sup>99</sup> Behind all programmes and most of the campaigns, we find international agencies not only in the role of funder, but also in roles of co-initiator, co-shaper and facilitator.

Although this has many positive sides, interview excerpts and observations also point to negative side effects including:

- The NGO-isation of the women's movement may have come at the cost of social mobilisation. The inflated use of sitting allowances is one of the contributing factors to this.
- The impression that the women's movement is being internationally steered, which may affect the legitimacy of the messages.
- The service-orientation of the international community which may have diverted attention away from addressing the politics of poverty, instability and governance that underlie many problems that women face.
- The fragmented and largely uncoordinated nature of aid agencies' work which may have contributed to the equally fragmented and uncoordinated nature of women's organisations.

Civil society is almost completely dependent on foreign aid. NGOs derive their funding almost exclusively from foreign funding. Their own initiatives are indirectly derived from this funding which allows them a certain institutional lee-way. Local associations are not directly funded, but depend for their operations, seminars, transport and accompaniment on funded NGOs. In the immediate future, the continuation of the women's movement requires that the international community continues to recognise and support the role of NGOs in promoting women's rights. The (temporary) absence of funding of women's organisations that have a long history does in many cases not necessarily weaken the bond with local constituencies.

An important question raised in evaluations is the question of attribution. When we see changes in direction called for in a programme, how can we know that these changes have been implemented? In the case of strengthening civil society, it is impossible to attribute the effects of strengthening to a single programme. For this reason, the evaluation of the Netherlands development programme focuses on 'contributions'. Have programmes contributed to change? How important have they been for this change?

Even the question of contribution is not easy to answer for individual organisations. Some indicators of contributions by international organisations are:

- The number of organisations that have been highly instrumental in women's civil society have derived part of their financing from Netherlands-based organisations.
- The number of international organisations, amongst them Cordaid and ICCO, which have invested heavily in improving the management capacity of their partners. Positive effects of these investments have been mentioned several times in interviews, without prompting.
- As we have seen, campaigns have the effect of strengthening civil society. In that sense, it is possible to say, for example, that Cordaid together with Mobile Cinema Foundation, by facilitating the Droit pour Tous campaign has strengthened civil society.<sup>100</sup> This campaign is particularly powerful because it reached out to the communities where it may have had some impact on local women's associations' capacities to promote women's rights.

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<sup>99</sup> See also Douma and Hilhorst forthcoming

<sup>100</sup> Note, however, that this campaign was not financed by under the MFS II grants, hence can be seen as a contribution of the partners involved, but not MFS II.

### *Strengthening local associations*

The findings of local associations are based on fieldwork in the *territoire* of Walungu, and additional research would be required to know if these findings also apply to other *territoires*.

Most civil society organisations work with local ‘nodes’ – *les noyaux*. There is sometimes a suggestion that women’s civil society is concentrated in Bukavu, and that there is no real connection to the communities.<sup>101</sup> We do not agree with this suggestion, as we have seen a lot of evidence in the Walungu *territoire* of very active, knowledgeable and capable women’s associations.

There is a tendency among Bukavu-based NGOs to claim women’s associational activity in the communities as an outcome of their work. This is clear in the use of the term ‘noyaux’, suggesting it concerns an association set up by the NGO. This doesn’t do justice to the tradition of associations in communities and the initiatives taken within the communities. The multiple and overlapping associations result in some key women leaders that have multiple positions and become ‘women of influence’. This is especially remarkable as a number of these are found among farmers, rather than educated women.

Although there is a big overlap in the agenda and methods of NGOs and local associations, we see some diverging trends where local associations pay more attention to leadership than to official representation of women in political positions and where local groups do not speak of UN resolution 1325.

There are tensions about the support given by NGOs to the local associations. These are in particular:

- Tensions about remuneration; local women would like to get more of the funds of the NGOs.
- Mismatches in agenda; while the NGOs mainly offered seminars and awareness raising, coupled with the follow-up of individual cases, local groups are also interested in socio-economic projects.

### *Lobbying and advocacy*

None of the people we interviewed made a distinction between lobbying and advocacy. They all speak of the general term ‘*plaidoyer*’. Local women often use the term ‘*plaidoyer*’, when they refer to fundraising. They do advocacy to find partners who will fund their programme.

There are two approaches to advocacy: advocacy grounded in service delivery, and advocacy through special activities.

The first approach concerns advocacy as a spin-off from service-oriented programmes. It is grounded in the follow-up of individual cases where women assert their rights. When local associations or Bukavu-based NGOs follow up such cases, this is usually accompanied by training, lobbying authorities and media attention. This appears to be a strong method of advocacy, as it serves as a constant reminder of what women’s rights are. For this type of advocacy, it is important to note that advocacy activities are grounded in practice of service delivery.

The second approach is based on the campaigns to influence peace processes or elections, to change a law, or bring about changes in government and practice. We have come across a number of campaigns that have been quite successful, such as the 30-50% campaign to advocate more women in politics and high government positions, and the *Droit pour Tous* campaign. These campaigns have an impact at different levels. Apart from achieving results with regard to the objective of the campaign, they have become important and effective in forging collaboration between different organisations, and they have added depth and content to relations between funding agencies (INGOs) and NGOs.

UN resolution 1325 is used by a number of organisations as the framework for their work in promoting women’s rights. The Division de Genre of the provincial government and several NGOs aim to bring about awareness about the resolution. They seem to take knowledge of the resolution as the hallmark of success. The resolution was often brought up in interviews in Bukavu.

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<sup>101</sup> IO3, NGOM1

In the *territoire* of Walungu, on the other hand, we never heard any reference to the resolution. However, when we take the important aspects of the resolution, which include more attention to the effects of conflict on women, the recognition of women's leadership qualities, and involvement of women in peace processes, one can see that all these issues resonate at a local level in all kinds of activities. In practice, therefore, we see lots of evidence that women's associations work in the spirit of the resolution, and the question arises as to whether it is important that women in the communities know about the resolution as such.

Advocacy is something that people in DRC do. We have not come across explicit theories about advocacy or explicit planning of advocacy, except in some projects that are especially geared to achieve advocacy objectives. We also found that INGO representatives working on advocacy may not have a clear idea about how advocacy depends on the linkages between people, organisations and activities. INGOs have a tendency to think in terms of projects with clear objectives and partners. As a result, we came across instances where the representative of an INGO would not consider a project as part of her advocacy campaign, because it was financed from another source, even though there were clear linkages between the project and her agency's advocacy campaign. The new project could have easily been framed as the successful outcome of advocacy, but was seen as belonging to a different silo. We found that INGO representatives do not often make reference to the bigger advocacy picture and do not position their project in a wider agenda of advocacy that incorporates a larger range of actors.

#### *General conclusions*

Women's civil society in South Kivu consists of many small initiatives and relatively small projects. Nonetheless, they add up to the women's movement whose agenda - promoting women's representation and women's rights - has been adopted by politicians and government, and are well-known among other sectors of civil society and to some extent the population at large.

In addition, we find many NGOs which do not have an explicit gender profile to have women's divisions or gender programmes. Many of these have originated in a programme responding to sexual violence and have evolved into a broader programme aimed at strengthening women's associations, or incorporating women in general programmes. On the other hand, there are also many NGOs that work in a specific domain such as agricultural or credit associations that have not explicitly adopted a gender approach. Gender often seems to be treated as a separate sector and mainstreaming of gender has not systematically been done.

We found a number of strongly negative or derisive opinions about women's civil society. These were prevalent among the different groups of interviewees, most outspoken by men but to a large extent also by Congolese women and the international community. There are several misgivings about women's civil society that our research partly disproves.

- **Misgiving 1: 'Women's civil society used to be much stronger before and during the war'**  
Several people have told us that the mobilising power of civil society has strongly decreased. On the other hand, we found evidence that the number of activities, local associations, the knowledge about women's rights in society and actual cases that have been followed up has steadily grown since the war.
- **Misgiving 2: 'Women's organisations only fight amongst themselves'**  
Again, this is a misgiving that appeared in several interviews. Although we found some evidence of conflict and competition, we also found evidence of collaboration. Collaboration happens especially through campaigns and several women stressed that having a common language of gender and women's rights unites them and helps them to overcome problems.
- **Misgiving 3: 'Women leaders only use their position as a springboard to political office. Once they are in political office they forget about origins.'**  
This issue has often been mentioned, also by women that are very active in women's civil society. On the other hand, several people explained that this problem is not specific to women's civil society, but experienced by civil society in general. It is problematic for women's civil society, because it contradicts a major theory of change which stipulates that if only there were more women in power, women's position would change. To resolve this contradiction, several programmes have started to train and accompany women politicians.

## Recommendations

This report was commissioned as part of a three-year evaluation of Dutch development aid. Preliminary findings were validated in a meeting with 11 representatives of women's organisations and other (I)NGOs.<sup>102</sup> The Final Report will be presented and validated in a meeting at the beginning of 2015. This leads to the following recommendations to the women's organisations and their support structures.

- Invest in more systematically documenting the history and achievements of women's civil society.
- Continue to use campaigns to enhance the collaboration between women's organisations.
- Continue and strengthen the linkages between service delivery at the same time asserting women's rights and raising awareness and media attention for these rights.
- Develop a more systematic approach to advocacy. Make sure that advocacy projects link up with a broader agenda and with the wider network of organisations aiming to achieve similar goals.
- Invest in more knowledge about the positive and negative dynamics of associational life and power relations at community level, in order to enhance the work of promoting women's associations.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of multiplication and fragmentation of women's civil society coordination on the one hand, and the weak presence of INGO coordination on the matter.
- Evaluate the practice of inflated sitting allowances (*des motivations*) and try to develop a joint policy for dealing with this issue.
- Continue/strengthen support to organisational and institutional development of women's organisations.
- Consider how gender can be mainstreamed, especially in socio-economic projects.

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<sup>102</sup> November 27, 2013, at the office of Cordaid Bukavu



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## List of interviewees

|                                    | Name                       | Organisation/ Institution                                     | Position   |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|
| <b>NGOs</b>                        |                            |   |  |
| 11-nov                             | Wilhelmine Nakebuka        | VICO  | Executive secretary  |
| 12-nov                             | Safari Bagula              | IFDP  | Coordinator  |
| 12-nov                             | Venantie Bisimwa           | RFDP  | Executive secretary  |
| 13-nov                             | Marie Migani               | Composant Femme Société Civil                                 | Coordinat or. Also Director of CAPSA (centre d'appui à la promotion de la santé) |
| 13-nov                             | Marie Rose Shakalira       | action des femmes solidaires pour le droit et le dvpt AFESODD | Coordinator in Mwenga  |
| 13-nov                             | Esperence Mawazo           | Observatoire de la parité                                     | Coordinator  |
| 14-nov                             | Benjamen Bahati            | Observatoire de la parité                                     | Programme officer  |
| 14-nov                             | Chouchou Namegabe          | AFEM  |  |
| 15-nov                             | Solange Lwashiga           | CAUCUS des femmes   | Executive secretary  |
| 16-nov                             | Gisèle Balegamire          | CAFECO  |  |
| 20-nov                             | Etienne Chizungu           | CAMPS Centre d'assistance médicaux psycho-sociale             | Location manager   |
| 20-nov                             | Management team            | VOVOLIB   | Walungu  |
| 4-dec                              | Mathilde Muhindo           | Centre Olame  | Director   |
| <b>International NGOs</b>          |                            |   |  |
| 3-dec                              | Eugénie                    | ICCO  | Programme officer gender/women leadership  |
| 3-dec                              | Tamara Akinyi Obonyo       | IMC International Medical Corps                               | Programme coordinator  |
| 5-dec                              | Bertin Bisimwa             | International Alert   |  |
| 11-dec                             | Deodate Chishibanji        | CORDAID   | Programme officer Droit pour Tous and women leadership                           |
|                                    | Mamadou Silla              | CORDAID   | Administrateur Financier   |
| 12-dec                             | Olivier Cibashimbe         | CORDAID   | Programme officer Performance-based financing                                    |
|                                    | Annie Buraka               | Search for Common Ground                                      | Coordinator  |
| <b>International organisations</b> |                            |   |  |
| 14-nov                             | Albert Mirindi             | MONUSCO section genre   |  |
| 15-nov                             | Deo Bahizire               | UNFPA   |  |
| 3-dec                              | Fidel Buhendwa Kasagwe     | ONUFEMME  | National Program Officer   |
| <b>Government/ politicians</b>     |                            |   |  |
| 15-nov                             | Jacqueline Ngeengele       | Division Genre  | Chef de Division   |
| 15-nov                             | Kinja Mwendanga Beatrice   | Assemblée Provinciale   | Circonsr. Bukavu / questeur  |
| 13-nov                             | Mawazo Esperence           | Réseau des femmes des parties politique                       |  |
| 2-dec                              | Colette Mikila             |   | ex Ministre de Mines   |
| <b>Key informants</b>              |                            |   |  |
| 4-dec                              | Mama Kinja                 |   | Business woman   |
| <b>WALUNGU NGOs</b>                |                            |   |  |
| 19-nov                             | Nzigire                    | AFEM Walungu  | volunteer Walungu centre   |
|                                    | Anthelme Mugisho Buhashe   | RFDP  | Field worker   |
|                                    | Maître Jacques Birinzanine | CAMPS   | Legal adviser  |
|                                    | Francoise Cizungu          | VICO  | volunteer  |

|        |  |  |   |
|--------|--|--|---|
| 20-nov | <b>Yvette Kitumaine</b><br>Victorine<br>Adelaide | AFEM Walungu<br>AFEM Walungu<br>AFEM Walungu | coordinator<br>volunteer Izege<br>volunteer |
|        | <b>Religious actors</b>                          |  |   |
| 20-nov | Curé   | Paroisse de Walungu                          | Priest                                      |
| 20-nov | <b>Laurence Cishugi</b>                          | Paroisse de Walungu                          | Coordinator of nodes of women leaders       |
|        | <b>Key informants</b>                            |  |   |
| 11-may | Nynke Douma                                      | Independent                                  | Consultant                                  |
| 20-nov | René Nkemba                                      | Hopital général de Walungu                   | Medical doctor - Director                   |

## The CIVICUS' Civil Society Index (CSI)

The civil society index distinguishes 5 dimensions;

**Civic Engagement**, or 'active citizenship' describes the formal and informal activities and participation undertaken by individuals to advance shared interests at different levels. Participation within civil society is multi-faceted and encompasses socially-based and politically-based forms of engagement.

**Level of Organisation.** This dimension assesses the organisational development, complexity and sophistication of civil society, by looking at the relationships among the actors within the civil society arena. Key sub dimensions are:

1. Internal governance of Civil Society Organisations
2. Support infrastructure, that is about the existence of supporting federations or umbrella bodies
3. Self-regulation, which is about for instance the existence of shared codes of conducts amongst Civil Society Organisations and other existing self-regulatory mechanisms.
4. Peer-to-peer communication and cooperation: networking, information sharing and alliance building to assess the extent of linkages and productive relations among civil society actors.
5. Human resources, that is about the sustainability and adequacy of human resources available for CSOs in order to achieve their objectives.
  1. Financial and technological resources available at CSOs to achieve their objectives.
  2. International linkages, such as CSO's membership in international networks and participation in global events.

**Practice of Values.** This dimension assesses the internal practice of values within the civil society arena. CIVICUS identified some key values that are deemed crucial to gauge not only progressiveness but also the extent to which civil society's practices are coherent with their ideals. These are:

1. Democratic decision-making governance: how decisions are made within CSOs and by whom.
2. Labour regulations: includes the existence of policies regarding equal opportunities, staff membership in labour unions, training in labour rights for new staff and a publicly available statement on labour standards.
3. Code of conduct and transparency: measures whether a code of conduct exists and is available publicly. It also measures whether the CSO's financial information is available to the public.
4. Environmental standards: examines the extent to which CSOs adopt policies upholding environmental standards of operation.

Perception of values and within civil society: looks at how CSOs perceive the practice of values, such as non-violence. This includes the existence or absence of forces within civil society that use violence, aggression, hostility, brutality and/or fighting, tolerance, democracy, transparency, trustworthiness and tolerance in the civil society within which they operate.

**Perception of Impact.** This is about the perceived impact of civil society actors on politics and society as a whole as the consequences of collective action. In this, the perception of both civil society actors (internal) as actors outside civil society (outsiders) is taken into account. Specific sub dimensions are

- 5 Responsiveness in terms of civil society's impact on the most important social concerns within the country. 'Responsive' types of civil society are effectively taking up and voicing societal concerns.
- 6 Social impact measures civil society's impact on society in general. An essential role of civil society is its contribution to meet pressing societal needs.
- 7 Policy impact: covers civil society's impact on policy in general. It also looks at the impact of CSO activism on selected policy issues
- 8 Impact on attitudes: includes trust, public spiritedness and tolerance. The subdimensions reflect a set of universally accepted social and political norms. These are drawn, for example, from sources such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as CIVICUS' own core values. This dimension measures the extent to which these values are practised within civil society, compared to the extent to which they are practised in society at large.

**Context Dimension: External Environment.** It is crucial to give consideration to the social, political and economic environments in which it exists, as the environment both directly and indirectly affects civil society. Some features of the environment may enable the growth of civil society. Conversely, other features of the environment hamper the development of civil society. Three elements of the external environment are captured by the CSI:

- 9 Socio-economic context: The Social Watch's basic capabilities index and measures of corruption, inequality and macro-economic health are used to portray the socioeconomic context that can have marked consequences for civil society, and perhaps most significantly at the lower levels of social development.
- 10 Socio-political context: This is assessed using five indicators. Three of these are adapted from the Freedom House indices of political and civil rights and freedoms, including political rights and freedoms, personal rights and freedoms within the law and associational and organisational rights and freedoms. Information about CSO experience with the country's legal framework and state effectiveness round out the picture of the socio-political context.
- 11 Socio-cultural context: utilises interpersonal trust, which examines the level of trust that ordinary people feel for other ordinary people, as a broad measure of the social psychological climate for association and cooperation. Even though everyone experiences relationships of varying trust and distrust with different people, this measure provides a simple indication of the prevalence of a world view that can support and strengthen civil society. Similarly, the extent of tolerance and public spiritedness also offers indication of the context in which civil society unfolds.

*Source: CDI, Operational guidelines for Ethiopia, India, and Indonesia, 2012*

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Box 4: Droit pour Tous Campaign (p20)

# Recommandations Formulées pas les Participants de L' Atelier de Restitution de L'Evaluation MSF II - NL

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*Bukavu du 4 au 5 février 2015*

## **Recommandations aux Grand bailleurs et bailleurs intermédiaires**

1. Appuyer des programmes à long terme des ONG locales et Nationales.
2. Soutenir des projets qui préparent le désengagement des bailleurs aux ONG locales/Nationales
3. Développer des projets conjoints bailleurs intermédiaires-ONG locales/nationales pour ouvrir ces dernières aux fonds des autres partenaires
4. Intégrer dans les projets le renforcement de capacité (investissement, formations de haut niveau, recyclage) et l'autofinancement des ONG locales et nationale
5. Rétablir la coopération bilatérale entre la Hollande et la RDC (Pays encore fragile) (Grands bailleurs)
6. Associer la société civile aux négociations de financement menées à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur du Pays " TRIPARTITE)
7. Pour atteindre les objectifs, augmenter l'enveloppe financière des ONG nationales pour le « MFSIII »

## **Recommandations à l'Etat Congolais**

1. Veuillez au respect de la loi sur les ASBL pour la signature et la mise en œuvre des accords-cadres avec les ONGI
2. Que les accords-cadres et contrats signés avec les ONGI soient en harmonie avec les politiques nationale, provinciale et locale et soient rendus publiques
3. Associer la société civile dans toutes les phases de la mise en œuvre des politiques de développement (sociale, économique, coopération bilatérale et multilatérale, etc.) au niveau national, provincial et local.
4. Instituer le processus de budget participatif sur toute l'étendue du territoire national
5. Appuyer les ONG locales dans la mise en œuvre de leurs programmes ( appui institutionnel, financier, administratif et technique). Cfr Article 38 de la loi sur les ASBL.
6. Assurer l'opérationnalité de la décentralisation sur toute l'étendue du territoire national
7. Vulgariser en langues nationales jusqu'à la base les lois relatives aux actions de la société civile
8. Définir les zones d'intervention prioritaires sur base des études fiables en vue d'orienter les projets des partenaires

## **Recommandations aux ONG de la RDC**



- 1) Face à l'opportuniste des associations vis-à-vis des financements et l'inefficacité des interventions à la base, la spécialisation (professionnalisme) des ONG dans des thématiques bien précises et pertinentes en s'alignant derrière l'optique des programmes nationaux et provinciaux est à renforcer ;
- 2) Vue l'éparpillement des forces, les compétitions des acteurs et l'insuffisance des moyens financiers au détriment de l'efficacité des interventions à la base, il y a nécessité de renforcer les synergies thématiques et géographiques des interventions à la base ;
- 3) Vue la nécessité de renforcement mutuel entre acteurs face aux différents défis auxquels ils sont confrontés dans l'organisation, la gestion et la mise en œuvre de leurs programmes, les échanges d'expériences entre les organisations et acteurs par thèmes d'intervention sont à renforcer ;
- 4) Vue l'inefficacité de certaines organisations sur le terrain suite aux contraintes organisationnelles et de fonctionnement auxquelles elles sont confrontées, le renforcement des capacités organisationnelles et de gestion en vue du renforcement de la gouvernance et de la redevabilité vis-à-vis des communautés bénéficiaires est indispensable. La culture de l'excellence est à renforcer aussi ;
- 5) Vue l'instabilité à laquelle sont confrontées les organisations après rupture des financements et l'insuffisance des moyens financiers pour couvrir la mise en œuvre de différents programmes initiés, le renforcement des capacités d'auto-prise en charge est nécessaire. La politique de mobilisation des ressources est à renforcer.
- 6) Les organisations à la base jouant un rôle très important dans la conception, la mise en œuvre et la pérennisation des programmes à la base, sont aussi confrontées aux difficultés organisationnelles et de gestion. En vue de leur efficacité et de la durabilité des actions à la base, les organisations d'appui devront aussi se focaliser sur le renforcement de leurs capacités.

#### **Recommandations aux groupes de base**

- 1) Appropriation et capitalisation des résultats des projets
- 2) Avoir une vision de développement partagée par tous les membres et avec les ONG et autres structures partenaires
- 3) s'ouvrir à d'autres groupes de base et autres acteurs de développement, surtout pour les actions de plaidoyer et pour un partenariat efficace
- 4) Renforcer la collaboration avec les autorités politico-administratives et coutumières et avec des leaders communautaires
- 5) Se doter des documents et de textes de fonctionnement en se faisant appuyer par des ONG partenaires
- 6) Participer au développement et à la mise en œuvre du Plan Local de Développement
- 7) Mettre en place des mécanismes de redevabilité et de gouvernance interne

- 8) Exiger aux ONG et autorités publiques de leur ressort la redevabilité et la gouvernance interne.