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Engaging Civil Society Organizations in Conflict-Affected and Fragile States

Three African Country Case Studies

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Acronyms

AEA	Angolan Evangelical Alliance
CBO	Community-based Organization
CEAF	Civic Engagement Analytical Framework
CEAST	Episcopal Conference of Angola and São Tomé
CICA	Council of Christian Churches in Angola
COIEPA	Inter-Ecclesiastical Committee for Peace in Angola
CSA	Country Social Analysis
CSAT	Civil Society Assessment Tool
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FAS	Fundo de Apoio Social/ Social Action Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IDA	International Development Association
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization
LICUS	Low-Income Countries Under Stress
MPLA	<i>Movimento Popular da Libertação de Angola (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola)</i>
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OMA	<i>Organização das Mulheres de Angola/ Angolan Women's Association</i>
PAIGC	<i>Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e do Cabo Verde (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde)</i>
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNITA	<i>União Nacional da Independência Total de Angola (National Union of the Total Independence of Angola)</i>

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Table of Contents

Acronyms.....	iii
Preface	v
Executive Summary	vi
I: Introduction	1
II: Methodology	2
III: The Socio-Political Context of the Three Case Study Countries.....	5
IV: Functions that CSOs Serve in Conflict-Affected or Fragile States.....	9
V: Constraints on CSO Effectiveness	12
VI: CSO-Government Relations	17
VII: Summary of Recommendations	21
Bibliography	24

Annexes

Annex 1: CSAT Methodology	27
Annex 2: Lessons on Methodology	30
Annex 3: Summary of Angola Pilot Synthesis Report.....	36
Annex 4: Summary of Togo Pilot Synthesis Report.....	40
Annex 5: Summary of Guinea Bissau Pilot Synthesis.....	43
Annex 6: Analytical Framework for Beneficiary Assessment.....	46
Annex 7: Country Summary Findings	48

Preface

This report presents the key findings from pilots of the Civil Society Assessment Tool (CSAT) in Angola, Guinea Bissau, and Togo. The pilots were carried out from January 2004 to February 2005. Through semi-structured interviews and field-based Beneficiary Assessment methods, CSOs, their government counterparts, and members of rural and urban communities were asked about their activities, resources, and partnerships. The pilots examined the functions, strengths and weaknesses of CSOs, as well as their relations to donors, governments and citizens. In conducting the analysis, the three case studies were complemented by a review of existing analytical work on CSOs from Nigeria, Somalia, Chad, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. These are not referenced in the text but helped the authors interpret findings and enrich the analysis.

Sigrun Aasland, Ian Bannon, Lawrence Salmen, and Annika Silva-Leander wrote this report with inputs from Warren Van Wicklin. Invaluable inputs and comments were provided by Maria Correia, Christian Lotz, Stephen Ndegwa, Veronica Nyhan-Jones, Najma Siddiqi, Yasmin Tayyab, and Jeff Thindwa (World Bank). The pilots were carried out by: the National Institute for Studies and Research (INEP) and Cedrick Boulan in Guinea Bissau; Action for Rural Development in Angola (ADRA) and Helena Farinha in Angola; and by Esse Amouzou, Komla Andreas, Akpaka Attitso, and Komi Kossi-Titrikou in Togo. The pilots were supervised by Lawrence Salmen, Sigrun Aasland, Mariana Felicio, and Annika Silva-Leander, in close collaboration with Demba Balde, Ana Maria Carvalho, Kossi Eguida, Ayi Klouvi, Elisabeth Maier, and Carmen Maria Pereira in the World Bank Country Offices. Consultations with the European, French, British, Italian, and Swedish delegations in the pilot countries, as well as their participation in overseeing the pilot work, provided important insights and perspectives to the analysis. Most importantly, the active participation of CSO leaders and government officials in the same oversight capacity ensured the relevance and validity of the work, as well as ensuing discussions on dissemination and next steps.

Network Anchor Knowledge Product Economic Sector Work (ESW) is undertaken with the intent of developing and disseminating knowledge related to the Bank's thematic area of social development. The audience of Anchor ESW is primarily external although it is acknowledged that many of the ESW findings will also be valuable to Bank staff.

Executive Summary

Civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly non-governmental organizations (NGOs), play a prominent role in conflict-affected and fragile states. In the absence of capable or credible public institutions, the development community relies heavily on CSOs to reach the poor. Despite this reliance, there is weak understanding about CSOs and how to engage them more effectively. This report reached the following conclusions based on case studies of three African countries.

Socio-political context affects the ways in which citizens, CSOs and states interact. The three country cases represent different stages on a conflict to peace continuum, with distinct challenges for CSOs. In Angola, extensive donor presence during the conflict has led to a burgeoning yet uncoordinated landscape of CSOs dominated by high capacity international non-governmental organizations (INGOs). Development projects have created a wide range of community-based organizations (CBOs). In areas with less NGO presence, mass party organizations and religious groups are the main organizational structures. Citizens in Guinea Bissau are compensating for a perpetually weak state by creating CBOs in response to specific problems. A number of NGOs, mostly national, support these CBOs on a project-by-project basis, but lack necessary resources and capacity to ensure institutional development and sustainability. Poor governance has reduced donor investments but has also shifted resources from the state to CSOs. In Togo, a repressive state and drastic donor cutbacks have created a situation where neither government nor civil society are able to provide minimal social services. Lack of oversight has enabled fraudulent NGOs to take advantage of poor communities.

CSOs play different roles in conflict-affected and fragile states than in other countries. When public services have broken down due to conflict or a weak public sector, NGOs, religious groups, and other CSOs become more important providers of basic social services, in contrast to advocacy and governance work. The latter is generally distrusted by governments, who often try to regulate and control these activities. Communities deprived of basic services too may attach lower priority to advocacy and governance efforts. Nevertheless, CSOs do have important governance functions. First, they improve governance from the bottom-up by creating partnerships between CBOs and local governments. Second, CSOs introduce more participatory approaches to community-level decision-making. Third, CSOs can play a stabilizing and mediating role in reducing conflict.

Engagement with CSOs by donors and other development partners has been largely fragmented and short-term, and has not promoted institutional development. Donors heavily influence the dynamics between CSOs, governments, and citizens with the way that they engage with CSOs. Donor preferences for financing CSOs on a project-by-project basis gives these organizations limited opportunities for developing capacity, specialization, strategic planning, and long-term investments in beneficiary communities. This is particularly difficult in the fluid and quickly changing development environment of conflict-affected and fragile states. Competition over scarce resources has led CSOs to become donor-driven with their accountability focused upward to donors rather than downward to citizens. Weak networks do not provide the necessary coordination, cross-fertilization, and internal accountability mechanisms. Weak accountability mechanisms can enable the emergence of fraudulent CSOs, but also of CSOs with exclusionary practices such as differential treatment based on ethnicity, religion or political affiliations. Donors have not provided sufficient funding to support overhead costs of CSOs and CSO networks.

CSO dynamics change in the transition out of conflict. The transition poses new challenges, both in terms of CSO-government relations, and the new skills and capacities that CSOs need to function in a changing environment. First, as conflicts end and public institutions gradually recover, the dynamics between citizens, CSOs, and government institutions change and new sources of friction may emerge.

While CSOs are likely to continue to play a major development role, especially in social service delivery, the redefinition of roles and responsibilities may be subject to tension between CSOs and government, especially where rules are not clear or applied arbitrarily. Second, as countries transition out of conflict and as the state is strengthened, the type of activities carried out by CSOs needs to shift from relief to development. This requires new skills and business models among CSOs, which are difficult to acquire when donor funding is tied to small, discrete projects, and CSOs have few sources for longer-term assistance in capacity building and institutional development. Third, as public institutions gradually resume responsibilities in basic service delivery, opportunities may arise for CSOs to be more active in advocacy and policy influence, but this is an area where CSO experience and capacity is generally limited. In two of the country cases, weak democratic traditions constrain such activities. The paucity of institutionalized communication between government and CSOs, with reliance on ad-hoc or personal contacts, further exacerbates misunderstandings and suspicions. Legal frameworks in all three countries are unclear and rarely enforced. CSOs are subject to arbitrary restrictions not sanctioned by law. This is particularly true for advocacy organizations.

Some preliminary recommendations emerged from the findings on the three case studies. Although further contextual analysis would be required in each country setting before applying these recommendations, the basic message of the report is for donors to move away from a project-by-project approach to supporting CSOs, toward more sustained engagement focused on institution building among CSOs and networks. This would entail a strategic shift with less ad-hoc project funding and one-off training events, and more systematic cooperation and commitment, including partnering and funding long-term institutional development of CSOs.

The recommendations target a broad specter of development partners including donors, CSOs, and governments. They can be summarized as follows: First, more rigorous and systematic analysis of CSOs could help inform more effective engagement. This is particularly important in post-conflict settings, where there is likely to be little systematic information on CSOs, and their role will likely change as the country moves through the relief-to-development transition. Second, longer-term financial support to CSOs would create better incentives for capacity and institutional development, strategic planning and specialization. As CSOs transition out of the emergency phase, with its less stringent requirements, they need sustained support to meet the more demanding conditions required by donors in the development phase. Third, long-term partnerships between international and national CSOs could ensure transfer of capacities and improve sustainability. Fourth, financial support to networks and umbrella organizations could promote more effective use of resources, cross-learning, and accountability. Fifth, strengthened forums for CSO-government communication may contribute to better coordination and effectiveness, and underpin more systematic government engagement with CSOs in policy formulation, as well as more clear and transparent rules of engagement. Sixth, analysis of CSOs could be a useful precursor to Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) processes. More systematic and contextualized analysis of CSO dynamics and capabilities could assist governments and donors identify additional sources of quantitative and qualitative information on poverty and social conditions (which is often a severe constrain in conflict-affected and LICUS settings), and potential partners in developing and monitoring PRSPs.

I: Introduction

1. Civil society organizations (CSOs) play a prominent role in conflict-affected and fragile states. In the absence of capable or credible public institutions due to conflict or weak policy environments, CSOs tend to substitute for public institutions and become primary providers of basic social services. At the same time, the international donor community has increased its involvement in countries affected by conflict and instability, often relying increasingly on CSOs to reach the poor. While the prominent role of CSOs in social service delivery and other development activities is often seen as an interim solution, it may extend for years, even decades. Recognizing that reliance on CSOs is likely to prevail for the foreseeable future in many countries, there is a need to consider how to make CSO engagement more effective and sustainable.

2. The high reliance on CSOs in conflict-affected and LICUS (Low-Income Countries Under Stress) countries is not matched with a good understanding of what CSOs are, how they work, and how they interact with each other and their beneficiaries. Donor targeting of CSOs is often ad-hoc, based on ease of access, previous experience, and existing relationships.¹ There is limited understanding of the different types of organizations, how to effectively engage with them, and how this engagement fits in the longer-term country development process. Available information has mostly been limited to quantitative inventories listing CSO size, membership and self-reported activities. It tends to be descriptive observations from an external perspective, giving limited insights on the perspectives of civil society, government, and communities on their own reality, activities and the relationships between them. Better understanding can help address the challenges of capacity, specialization, sustainability, scale, and accountability. Specifically, more knowledge about the organizational and institutional context of CSOs could inform operations that rely on CSOs for direct project implementation, such as community-driven development (CDD), community-based activities, and reintegration programming.

3. Better understanding of community-based organizations (CBOs) is necessary to fully tap their potential. Most poor communities rely heavily on CBOs. They perform a wide range of functions in education, health, labor rotation, savings, and even security. CBOs are generally the most important development partners identified by poor communities and they constitute the main coping strategy for people deprived of government-led development. Often, CBOs are also the chief interlocutors between citizens and development financing agencies. But the mere existence of CBOs in itself does not tell us much about their effectiveness as development partners, especially as CBOs vary greatly. The functional distinction between endogenous groups, CBOs created by specific projects, and politically or professionally affiliated CBOs is often quite blurred. The origin and affiliation of CBOs may be relevant for inclusion and legitimacy. Creating new CBOs as opposed to using existing ones is not a guarantee for inclusion of vulnerable groups. Careful analysis of existing community structures and their composition can help identify the best approach to community outreach.

4. As conflicts end and policy conditions improve, the division of labor between government and CSOs will change. There are still very important tasks for CSOs in service delivery, even as governments get increasingly involved. The right mix will depend on country context, but the transition will require redefining and agreeing on a new division of labor between government and CSOs. Transition out of conflict will also necessitate a shift from relief to development operations, which can be difficult for CSOs to adjust to. In preparing for such transitions, engagement with CSOs for delivery of essential social services should be combined with strengthening of government institutions for the longer term, or what is often referred to as the two-track dilemma (World Bank 2005). In other words, not only is there a

¹ Memorandum to the Executive Directors. *Improving Engagement between the World Bank and Civil Society Organizations*, October 15, 2004, p. 4.

need for effective and sustainable engagement with CSOs, but these development interventions should support a transition to stronger government institutions.

5. The objective of this report is to identify approaches to more effectively engage CSOs in the context of weak public institutions in conflict-affected and fragile states. The report will:

- Examine the roles, strengths and weaknesses of CSOs in terms of service delivery, community development, advocacy, peace building and governance;
- Identify the factors that influence CSO effectiveness in performing these functions;
- Assess donor influence on CSOs and their indirect influence on governance by supporting CSOs; and
- Discuss the relationship between CSOs and government including their changing roles, weak communication, and government efforts to coordinate and regulate CSO activity.

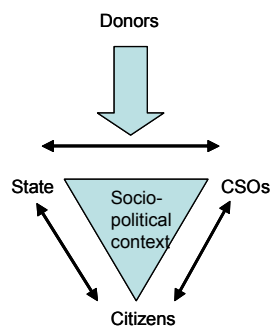
6. This report seeks to inform and influence development practitioners and policy makers in the development community and in client country governments. The latter comprise three country case studies as well as conflict-affected and LICUS countries more generally. This audience includes: (i) the international development community—practitioners working with CSOs for international organizations, bilateral donor agencies, and CSOs; and (ii) client countries—national and international CSOs, and government officials responsible for policy and strategy formulation and implementation. This report is also expected to be relevant to Bank country programs and strategies as well as individual projects. In addition, the findings in two of the three case countries feed into other social analytical work.

7. This report contains six more chapters. Chapter II discusses the conceptual framework, key terms and concepts, methodology, and some limitations of the study. Chapter III describes the socio-political context of CSOs in the three country cases. Chapter IV identifies some functions that CSOs can serve in public service delivery, governance, participatory decision-making, peace building and conflict management. Chapter V examines mainly internal constraints of CSOs, including limited technical and financial capacity, short term financing, weak and underfunded CSO coordination mechanisms, accountability issues, and ability to reach the poorest areas. Chapter VI assesses mainly external constraints on CSOs through the lens of CSO-government relations, including government efforts to control CSOs. Chapter VII summarizes the main recommendations for donors, governments and CSOs.

II: Methodology

Conceptual Framework and Definitions

8. This report takes an analytical rather than a descriptive approach. Instead of mapping the number of CSOs and their activities, the analysis seeks to understand CSO dynamics through the lenses of the main actors. It examines the factors affecting the work of CSOs as well as the relations between states, CSOs and citizens. The figure below illustrates the conceptualization of a tripartite relationship between states, CSOs and citizens, their socio-political context, and the influence that donors have on these dynamics. The socio-political context affects the ways in which citizens, CSOs and states interact. Donors heavily influence these dynamics with the way that they finance and affect the enabling environment for CSOs, and the relationships between different actors and stakeholders.



9. The term CSO is used to describe organizations rather than civil society as citizens at large. These include international NGOs (INGOs), national NGOs, associations, trade unions, media, religious groups, diaspora, mass-party organizations, traditional authorities, and a diverse range of community-based organizations (CBOs). The term mass-party organization is defined as development related organizations such as women’s organizations and farmer associations, that have emerged from political parties and remain strongly affiliated to party structures. CBOs cover a vast landscape of organizations. At a community level, the term CBO is used to encompass all “grassroots organizations managed by members or on behalf of members” (Edwards and Hulme 1992). For CBOs, linking with other CSOs (mostly NGOs) represent their main access to resources.

10. This report is mostly concerned with NGOs as a subset of CSOs. It focuses on the development and advocacy organizations that receive financial support from donors such as bilateral and international agencies, INGOs, governments, or private sector actors. These are mostly NGOs, and in some cases religious groups, associations, and networks. In the case studies, terminology varied between countries. Togolese legislation distinguishes between NGOs and associations, where the latter perform similar tasks but are often more local in nature. Togolese associations are subject to fewer formal requirements than NGOs. Both interact with CBOs. In Angola and Guinea Bissau, legal frameworks refer exclusively to NGOs. Angolan CSOs themselves, however, distinguish between cultural associations, NGOs, business interest groups, professional associations, unions, networks, and religious groups. In Guinea Bissau, most stakeholders refer to either NGOs or religious groups, and to CBOs as associations. In the report, associations in Guinea Bissau are referred to as CBOs.

Methodology

11. This report draws on findings from extensive field research as well as from limited secondary literature. The field research piloted the Civil Society Assessment Tool (CSAT). CSAT was designed by the World Bank in 2002 in response to insufficient understanding of CSOs in fragile countries. The CSAT sought to broaden the Bank’s qualitative understanding of civil society, based on the perspectives of civil society as well as its intended beneficiaries. CSAT provides information on “civil society’s needs and realities, the existence of civic engagement, and its strengths and weaknesses”² (see also Annex 1 on CSAT). The findings can inform country assistance strategies, poverty reduction strategies, and planning of projects and programs.

12. The CSAT exercise had two main parts, preceded by brief contextual analyses.

- The first part was a ‘top-down’ assessment of a wide range of CSOs, activities, constraints, and their relationship with the government. This assessment was based on semi-structured interviews with 40 or more CSOs and government officials in selected ministries. The interviews with CSOs covered activities, resources, constraints, and stakeholder relations. The interviews with government officials covered only stakeholder relations (see interview guide A in Annex 1 for details). The top-down assessments were conducted by individual local or international consultants. They spent two weeks on interviews and two weeks on report writing.
- The second part was a field-based ‘bottom-up’ beneficiary assessment³ to gather people’s experiences with civil society through conversational interviews, focus groups, and participant-observer case studies. Topics covered included: (i) most important needs, where people go to

² *Assessing Civic Engagement in LICUS: Conceptual Framework for the Civil Society Assessment Tool (CSAT)*, p. 6.

³ Beneficiary assessment is a qualitative research tool used to provide in-depth information on the sociocultural conditions of a beneficiary population. Lawrence F. Salmen, *Beneficiary Assessment: An Approach Described*, The World Bank, Social Development Report Number 10, August, 2002.

have them met, and their experience with results and ownership regarding the provision of these services; (ii) their active involvement in CBOs; (iii) impacts of CSOs; (iv) channels of information on opportunities, activities, and services provided; (v) equity and issues of exclusion; and (vi) recommendations for improving CSO effectiveness. A relatively small but diverse sample was selected in each country. The communities were located in areas with significant CSO engagement as well as in areas with fewer development activities. In Angola, the sample included 568 respondents in 7 provinces and 21 communities. In Guinea Bissau, the sample included 513 respondents in 12 communities in all five regions of the country. In Togo, the sample included 587 respondents in 25 villages in the five regions plus three *arrondissements* of Lomé.

13. The two parts allowed for a dual perspective on the issues covered, and lay the foundation for a more complex and in-depth analysis. Since both the bottom-up and the top-down studies were sample-based, efforts were not made to map organizations by location and activities in order to verify actual presence in the field. The studies were more concerned with identifying patterns and trends. The dual perspective of citizens on the one hand and CSO-leaders and government officials on the other is not a community-by-community match. The organizations interviewed do not necessarily work in the sampled communities. Rather, the combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches was intended to provide a more complex analysis of the factors affecting CSOs and their impact on the ground. Field visits, stakeholder meetings and workshops, and additional consultations to validate findings complemented the CSAT exercises.

14. The three countries where the CSAT was piloted did not represent a strategic comparative sample. Rather, they responded to requests from Bank country teams who felt that their limited understanding of CSOs constrained their effectiveness. The pilots were carried out from January 2004 to February 2005.

15. The report team reviewed existing social analysis from Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Somalia, and consulted Bank staff working in other regions. These sources are not directly referenced in the text but they helped deepen the understanding of the CSAT findings. The other countries reviewed are all affected by conflict. To the extent that CSOs were analyzed by these studies, the findings resonated well with those from the country cases analyzed for this report. These other analytical approaches, to the extent to which they cover CSOs, also helped to inform the annex on methodological approaches.

Limitations of the Study

16. This report presents only a small part of the CSAT findings. For example, while traditional authorities were an important part of the beneficiary assessments, they are not analyzed in this report. Their importance to understanding the institutional aspects of development, however, merits its own analysis. Generally, community-level decision making processes are also not covered. CBOs are mainly studied as they relate to entities outside the communities. Additional findings can be found in the annexes containing summaries of the three country synthesis reports.

17. *Limitations of the case studies:* While the findings presented in this report provide new and significant insights into the dynamics of CSOs, they do not do justice to the CSAT tool. Nor do they offer a complete analysis of the important roles played by a wide range of CSOs in the three country cases studied. In particular, the beneficiary assessment was not fully implemented in all three countries mainly due to capacity constraints. Consequently, the CSAT pilots have data limitations and did not yield all the expected results. Since the analysis in this report is limited to three African countries, findings may not be directly applicable to other countries or regions. Nonetheless, the findings may offer a useful point of

departure for more contextualized analysis of this type in each country setting. Because of limited beneficiary assessment experience among the local research institutes that undertook the fieldwork, and the generally difficult working environment, there is a paucity of comparable and quantified data. Nevertheless, the emphasis was on qualitative data. An analysis of the methodology used, and lessons for future analysis of CSOs in similar contexts, is presented in Annex 2.

III: The Socio-Political Context of the Three Case Study Countries

18. The dynamics and the constraints of CSOs largely depend on the socio-political contexts in which they operate. Although the three country cases represent three very different socio-political contexts, in all three countries public institutions and service delivery capacities are unable to provide the necessary social services to citizens and communities. This chapter establishes the context for the subsequent analysis of CSO strengths and weaknesses, and CSO-government relations.

19. The three countries are all in different stages of conflict-affectedness and may serve to illustrate different types of challenges. Angola is recovering from a long civil war and the former socialist party structure remains in power. Conflict in Guinea Bissau has tended to simmer, and CSOs continue to substitute for a perpetually weak state, although there have been some improvements in governance since late 2003. In Togo, democratization has been slow with power concentrated in the executive. The environment for non-state actors has been restrictive. Violence erupted after the death of President Eyadema in early 2005. It is too early to say whether the election of Eyadema's son as his successor will lead to major policy changes or greater instability. The current transition will present challenges for emerging CSO-government relations, and both have potential to strengthen their presence in the development process.

Angola

20. The three-decade conflict between UNITA (*União Nacional da Independência Total de Angola*, National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) and the MPLA (*Movimento Popular da Libertação de Angola*, Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) ended in April 2002. An estimated 750,000 people (7 percent of the population) died as a result of the conflict, about 4.5 million were displaced, and another 450,000 became refugees. Almost three years after the conflict ended, nearly one in three children still die before their fifth birthday, primary school enrollment is very low, and three in five people do not have access to safe water or sanitation.

21. Angola is Sub-Saharan Africa's second largest oil producer (currently one million barrels per day, with the potential of doubling by 2007), and the world's fourth largest producer of diamonds (6.3 million carats in 2003). Real GDP growth in 2004 reached 11.2 percent, up from 3.4 percent in 2003. While there has been limited progress toward social and economic normalization, much remains to be done to attain sustained macroeconomic stability; improve the transparency, accountability, and efficiency of government; increase effective social spending (especially in health and education); rehabilitate destroyed infrastructure; and rebuild national capacity devastated by decades of conflict. While Angola's public sector remains among the largest in Africa, relatively little has been spent on development since the end of the war. Corruption and mismanagement of public resources remains an obstacle to substantial donor investments in reconstruction and recovery. A number of CSOs, especially INGOs, are promoting transparency and governance on a national level.

22. The ceasefire was preceded by a series of failed peace agreements, and was a result of military victory by the MPLA rather than a negotiated settlement. The political landscape is firmly controlled by the MPLA. This time, peace appears robust. Nevertheless, in order to be effective, poverty reduction

efforts will need to account for the process of reconciliation, impact of the conflict on poverty, as well as risks for future tensions.

23. Challenges relate both to the legacy of the civil war and to localized conflicts. Conflict-induced poverty still lingers due to displacement, disrupted and divided families, disabilities and vulnerability, landmines, and weak local government institutions. This includes the reintegration of former UNITA combatants and their families into society after three decades of war, as well as the demobilization and reintegration of government forces. Localized conflicts over scarce resources reflect overall inequalities between different social groups. These conflicts do not necessarily escalate to a national level, but they do affect the potential for poverty reduction and equitable development. These local conflicts may escalate in intensity through a culture of violence fostered by a lifetime of conflict.

24. CSOs proliferated after multiparty democracy was introduced in 1991. Before that, most organizations were associated with the only political party—as mass organizations of the MPLA or created by ministerial decrees—such as residents’ commissions,⁴ farmer associations,⁵ and parent-teacher associations.⁶ In communities less exposed to NGOs and other external development agencies, party-affiliated CBOs remain the dominant venue for collective action. In Angola, there is an ongoing debate between civil society and the government as to whether MPLA organizations can be defined as CSOs. Community-level women’s associations are often part of OMA, the MPLA women’s organization. UNITA has its own associations and women’s groups, but is much less widespread. Strong MPLA penetration through party-based organizations may have consequences for the reintegration of ex-UNITA combatants and their dependents.

“Here the only community organizations we know are MPLA and OMA (MPLA women’s organization). They are very important, because at least someone with a problem can talk to them. They cannot resolve the problem, but they can bring it to the leaders. The farmers associations that used to exist all died out, and they are missed.” (Ex-combatant, Angola)

25. Because of the war, INGOs play a very significant role. INGOs and international agencies operated in the country to alleviate the impacts of the ongoing civil war and donors continued to support a large INGO presence after the war. Most funds managed by CSOs come from external sources, with national organizations acting as intermediaries for international organizations and donors. CSOs and citizens are concerned that INGOs often do not establish local partnerships, thus not ensuring the continuity of their interventions.

26. Tribal leaders and traditional authorities, mostly elder male members of the community, are the main point of contact between communities and public officials, and fill functions of resource distribution and conflict resolution. Generally, they tend to have a stronger position in rural than in urban areas. Often, the councils of leaders also have a function of controlling the local chief, and are responsible for educating youth and transmitting the indigenous knowledge of their community. Traditional authorities have begun democratization through the representation of women and youth, and even through election of chiefs. Traditional leaders can provide necessary leverage to exogenous community structures. In the Bank-funded Social Action Fund (FAS) Project, it became clear that community committees in charge of

⁴ Provincial Government of Luanda – *Regulamento das Assembleias e Comissões de Moradores* (1993)

⁵ Local farmer associations were also established during the one-party state that would guarantee agricultural inputs to their members, support commercialization of agricultural products, and provide support in sale and distribution.

⁶ Ministry of Education/ National Agency for Basic Education – *Regulamento do Ensino de Base* – Artº. 28 (1990)

infrastructure construction and maintenance had much more leverage and stature if linked with traditional authorities by membership in the committee.⁷

27. In Angola, 'endogenous' solidarity groups unrelated to any particular development project were mostly observed in more isolated areas that have benefited less from external interventions. They provide emergency credit for major or unexpected events (funerals, weddings, etc.), savings schemes, and rotating help in labor intensive productive activities. Angolan solidarity groups were weakened during the conflict, but have been revived in the last few years, mainly as rotating credit and savings groups to allow purchase of costly items such as refrigerators, stoves, and other appliances. These groups are potential partners in micro-credit and income generation activities.

28. Religious missions typically include basic social services in their interactions with communities. During the colonial period, Catholic and Protestant churches were central in the health and education sectors. After independence, their domain was reduced to evangelization, but social activities were reactivated after 1991, especially in peace and reconciliation work. At the community level, churches also are active in the social sectors. To some external CSOs, partnerships with church related groups in beneficiary communities is seen as an advantage for community-driven development, as required community contributions are more easily mobilized with the extra motivation provided by a religious authority. Churches tend to be more active in social service delivery where other CSOs are less active.

Guinea Bissau

29. Guinea Bissau is rich in natural resources but is among the least developed nations in the world, ranking 172nd (out of 177 countries) on the UNDP Human Development Index (UNDP 2004). External aid accounts for 80 percent of the country's revenue. More than two-thirds of the population lives below the poverty line, with an average GDP per capita of \$195 (1997-2000). People have very limited access to social services. Unemployment and underemployment are high, and salary arrears in the public sector are a source of instability as well as vulnerability.

30. Conflict and instability in Guinea Bissau have become cyclical events confined mainly to the capital. Violence, including the military conflict in 1998-99 and even personal rivalries, tends to be concentrated among the political elite of Bissau. While not causing physical destruction, the continued instability is detrimental to institution building, investment, growth and poverty reduction. This is compounded by a weak state with low resilience and an inflated, unpaid army voicing shared popular discontent. Politicization of ethnicity creates a significant risk of recurring violence. There is little tradition of close state-citizen relations, and the presence of the government in people's lives has always been weak. Traditional authorities of pre-colonial rule remain the most important authorities.

31. Since the armed conflict of 1998-99, the majority of social service delivery, especially in the rural areas, has been through CSOs. The government, already weak before the period of armed conflict, was further weakened by repeated crises due to a stagnating economy, dysfunctional governance, and outflux of international donors under Kumba Yala's presidency (2000-03). The government has been unable to deliver on basic social services such as health and education. Several government departments have been functioning only in a very limited fashion and salary arrears for civil servants remain a serious problem. In addition to causing protests and unrest in Bissau, this has often resulted in civil servants charging for services in order to make up for unpaid wages.

32. Until the early 1990s, national organizations were dependent on the state party. Restrictions on CSOs, imposed by the only political party (PAIGC) after liberation, were gradually lifted starting in 1986. The constitution was revised in 1991, abolishing the single party system and embracing political and

⁷ Implementation Completion Report Angola Second Social Action Fund: FAS II, World Bank 2004

social openness. After a 1992 statute gave legal existence to NGOs, a large number of organizations were created under the status of NGOs and outside the tutelage of government institutions. The creation of CSOs was considered a viable venue to attract investments from the non-governmental sector abroad, which motivated the establishment of a ‘governmental civil society’.

33. While the emergence of CBOs was often sparked by external donors, they now are mostly established by community members in response to specific needs or problems. These groups represent an interlocutor for the community toward external donors and for leveraging external funds. CBOs benefit from external support from national and international NGOs, and intermediary regional associations, but also mobilize member fees to cover specific initiatives. Very few have any sustained support, but rely on sporadic assistance from external organizations. Since the conflict, the number of CBOs has decreased, reportedly as a result of dire economic conditions.

34. The role of religious organizations, church groups in particular, is significant, especially in the education sector. Contributions by church groups and Catholic missions in health and education were highly valued by communities. Religious organizations can be considered CBOs or more broadly CSOs, depending on the context. Christian groups play an important role in social service delivery, particularly in areas where the presence of other CSOs is weak. National church groups have also been active in peace and reconciliation. The majority of the population in Guinea Bissau is animist or Muslim. Islamic schools complement the primary school system. Islamic charity encompasses cash contributions and credit for expensive events such as weddings and funerals.

“If it had not been for the Catholic Church, we would all be illiterate.” (Member of women’s focus group, Guinea Bissau)

Togo

35. Togo has been in non-accrual status with IDA since May 2002. Throughout this period, the Bank has remained engaged through analytical and advisory services under the LICUS Initiative. A few partners, notably UNDP and UN specialized agencies, have also remained involved through limited programs, but most bilateral aid programs have been stagnant or scaled down. Although the EU, Togo’s major donor, suspended budgetary assistance in 1993 due to major human rights and democratization issues, it has continued to provide project and community-based assistance. Due to the suspension of donor support, the level of public investment dropped from 13.8 percent of GDP in 1990 to 1.4 percent of GDP in 2002. Real per capita income declined from \$430 to \$283 between 1990 and 2002. Nation-wide, net enrollment in primary education dropped from 71 percent in 1980 to 60 percent in 1994, to then pick up again to 92 percent in 2000. Improvement in access to education was due, in large part, to greater involvement of local communities and the private sector which created and financed their own schools as a response to the inadequacy of public education services. In the health sector, per capita public expenditures fell by over 7 percent (in 1995 prices) between 1995 and 2002.

36. The country is now entering a new era following the death, on February 5, 2005 of the late president Gnassingbé Eyadéma, after 38 years in power. In 1991, Togo was among the first African states to hold a national conference to introduce a democratic system of government. However, the political process deteriorated into street riots, mass civil disturbances, human rights violations, and an eight-month general strike. Since then, the opposition has boycotted several general elections, and expressed serious concerns about the integrity of all legislative and presidential elections, including the last one in April 2005.

37. Civil society started emerging in the 1990s, spurred by the Togo National Conference in 1991. This led to a burgeoning democratization process, a softening of the grip of the state and to a more favorable legislative environment for civil society to form and operate, and the reemergence of the right

to unionize. As a result, a variety of CSOs were created (including NGOs, associations and religious organizations) and a free press started flourishing. In 1992 the government adopted a legal framework for NGOs.⁸ Since then the number of NGOs have seen a rapid increase. NGOs operate in 7 main sectors, mostly in agriculture (35 percent) and education (20 percent), with the rest relatively equally divided among culture, community infrastructure, micro-credit, health and environment.

38. Associations have a different definition and legal status from NGOs and have been legally recognized since 1934. Associations have grown exponentially since 1990. Associations often graduate to NGOs once they have reached a certain level of maturity. In the context of this analysis, associations are more similar to NGOs than CBOs, and may receive some external funding. While some CBOs are remnants of earlier state interventions, others are the result of community initiatives. To a large extent, health and education services have been delivered through such groups, often with little external assistance.

39. The exclusive dominance of the state in Togo continues to impair the effectiveness of religious entities, much as is the case with other parts of civil society. Before 1992, only 3 religious confessions were permitted in Togo (the Catholic Church, the Evangelical-Presbyterian Church and Islam). In the new constitution of 1992, the state was proclaimed non-religious, and religious freedom was established. As a result, a number of religious confessions have emerged in Togo in the last decade, some Catholic, other Protestant and Muslim. They operate at the community level, in the areas of education (infrastructure provision and teaching) and self-help activities.

IV: Functions that CSOs Serve in Conflict-Affected or Fragile States

40. This chapter discusses the roles that CSOs can play in conflict affected or fragile states. Because of the reduced capacity of government, CSOs can and often are asked to serve a function that may be more typically performed by the government under normal circumstances. While CSOs in these contexts also serve regular development functions, the focus here is on the additional set of functions asked of them because of weak government capacity: public service delivery, improving governance and participatory decision-making, and peace building and conflict management.

Public Service Delivery

41. When public service provision has broken down due to conflict or weak policy environments, NGOs tend to substitute for public institutions and become primary providers of basic social services. Donors, whose willingness to pay exceed governments' ability to absorb resources and implement development projects, channel their resources through NGOs. This is broadly agreed to be a necessary, yet unsustainable strategy—necessary because it ensures a minimum provision of basic services to the poor, yet unsustainable as it fails to build important public capacity and institutions, and thus may further entrench government irresponsibility or state fragility.

42. Ultimately, governments, with civil society and the private sector, are critical actors in a long-term development process. The absence of government institutions in basic social service delivery is problematic for five principal reasons. First, reliance on a limited number of CSOs that are engaged for a limited time-span may hinder sustainability. Maintenance of infrastructure and continuity in the provision of recurrent costs requires a permanent presence which CSOs often cannot commit to and provide. Second, scaling up activities to a national level requires institutions that are present throughout the country. Most CSOs are not. Third, efficient delivery of social services requires a multi-sectoral approach

⁸ Decree 92-130/PM RT, May 1992.

with coordination between different sectors relying on each other. Fourth, public accountability of development institutions, public or private, requires some kind of feedback mechanism, such as elections. Fifth, delivery of basic services is an important basis for government legitimacy. It may therefore strengthen political stability and peace if the government visibly engages in the effective delivery of services. Conversely, absence of government institutions in delivery of social services and basic infrastructure may contribute to instability.

“We buy everything in Togo: water, health, education... The roads are unusable; we wade in water to get to our houses. And yet, we pay taxes. (...) Do something.” (Member of men’s focus group, Togo)

43. In the rural areas of Guinea Bissau, most health and education services are delivered by private NGOs and religious missions and maintained by CBOs. While this demonstrates an expression of valuable social capital at the community level and a responsive civil society, efforts are not coupled with comprehensive and long-term sector strategies. User payment for services seems to be widespread but not systematized and transparent. Even service delivery financed by the government is often implemented on the ground by CSOs. This may further undermine the credibility of the government.

Improving Governance and Promoting Participatory Decision-Making

In a situation where the most basic services are lacking, CSOs are often driven into social service delivery and distribution of emergency aid. This may draw attention and resources away from advocacy and governance work. Advocacy tends to be less positively viewed by governments than social service delivery, and may be subject to indirect government controls. This is especially true in countries with weak governance and few democratic checks and balances. Moreover, advocacy-oriented activities are likely to be regarded as lower priority by citizens deprived of basic services such as education and health. These dilemmas will be further explored in the next chapters. Nevertheless, CSOs may contribute to governance from the bottom-up by creating partnerships between CBOs and local governments, by installing principles of participation and consultation, and by participating in peacebuilding activities.

44. CSOs can positively impact governance from the bottom-up. In Angola, local government institutions are gradually recovering, and development projects increasingly are making efforts to strengthen partnerships between NGOs, CBOs and government institutions. In a few Angolan projects, participatory methodologies introduced by NGOs have inspired local government institutions (see Box 1) to make use of more participatory and democratic governance models. In Guinea Bissau, an INGO facilitated local development planning with NGO, government, and community participation. In Angola, quasi-governmental interventions such as the Bank-financed Social Fund (FAS) Project, appear to have improved the image of the state in the eyes of the citizens, notably by strengthening CBO-NGO-state partnerships.

Box 1: Municipal Commission of Project Implementation, Huila, Angola

The Municipal Commission of Project Implementation (CMIP) was launched in 2000 as a result of capacity building activities—organized by the NGOs ADRA and ACORD in Gambos—targeting government institutions, national NGOs, and community groups. The capacity building stimulated the Municipal Administration to experiment with new methodologies based on approaches used by these NGOs. The Commission is composed of five officials from the municipal administration, including the municipal sections of education and health. CMIP manages social investments from the Huila provincial government using participatory methodologies to involve communities in diagnostics and planning. The establishment of CMIP responded to concerns about the continuity of activities after the exit of ADRA and ACORD. Decision making in the commission is based on broad consultations. The experience has spread to neighboring municipalities and the provincial government endorsed the approach, thus securing its continued support.

45. CSOs can introduce more participatory approaches to community-level decision-making. Development projects often form CBOs that act as intermediaries between communities and external development organizations. While the civil war in Angola has been detrimental to the country's social fabric and to many community-level organizations, it has also created opportunities for NGOs delivering social and economic services. To mitigate the emergency situation created by the civil war, NGOs (mostly INGOs) with state-of-the-art methodologies introduced participatory development and social accountability at the local level. These development activities usually created CBOs to serve as interlocutors between the NGO and the community. In some cases, these new CBOs have crowded out existing organizations. As the war disrupted the formerly top-down government-run community structures, what remained in many communities were mostly religious organizations. These were far less participatory and inclusive in their activities than the new CBOs. In some cases, the new methodologies are now promoting improved relations between local governments and citizens. On the other hand, mechanisms to ensure broad inclusion in new CBOs are not always successful. Research in Angola found that women in particular continue to be excluded despite efforts by external agencies to make women's participation a condition of their financing.

"The development of a community must happen from the inside out, so that communities feel autonomous and in charge of the process". (Community leader, Angola)

Policy Formulation

46. The contribution of CSOs to policy formulation in the three country cases is limited. Engagement with CSOs is on a case-by-case basis rather than part of a systemic approach. In Angola, a number of CSOs have been involved in the formulation of specific government strategies. Consultations with civil society on the national Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) also increased after pressure from donors. In Guinea Bissau, CSOs were invited to a workshop to discuss the new regulations for land legislation. The government is in the final phase of preparing its PRSP, and will need to rely on CSOs with experience on the ground to help implement the social sector strategies. In Togo, no policy consultation was reported by the interviewed CSOs.

Peace Building and Conflict Management

47. CSOs can play a stabilizing role. In particular, the Catholic Church has played an important role in peace and reconciliation in Angola and Guinea Bissau. Although Catholics represent only around a tenth of the Guinean population, many of them are concentrated in Bissau. In 1998 and 2003, leaders of the Catholic Church played key roles in efforts to negotiate peaceful outcomes. Until his death in January 1999, the Bishop of Bissau, Settimio Ferrazzetta, was one of the most active participants in the peace process. In September 2003, his successor, Bishop Jose Camnate, presided over the multi stakeholder consultations on transitional arrangements after the coup that ousted President Kumba Yala. The broad involvement of civil society, religious leaders, and the private sector in the transition process of September 2003 was in many ways a model for peaceful transition. A 16-member panel of CSOs, political parties, and the military agreed on transition arrangements, an interim president, a prime minister, and dates for elections. Legislative elections were held in March 2004, and a new government was formed in May.

48. In Angola, the peace movement that emerged from church organizations is well documented. In 1999, the three church umbrella organizations—the Council of Christian Churches of Angola (CICA), the Angolan Evangelical Alliance (AEA) and the Episcopal Conference of Angola and São Tomé (CEAST)—formed the Inter-Ecclesiastical Committee for Peace in Angola (COIEPA), encompassing Protestant and Catholic churches. COIEPA became the key advocacy institution of the Angolan peace

movement. The emergence of a peace movement in civil society “helped break down simplistic notions that one either had to be a supporter of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) or of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), and in effect created a 'vehicle' for mobilization outside these political structures” (Comerford, in Meijer 2004).⁹ In fact, the churches offered to mediate between the parties on various occasions but these offers were never taken up by either of the parties to the conflict. The Peace Network (*Rede da Paz*) was established in 2000, but never gained influence on a national policy level. The greatest impact of the peace movement in Angola was perhaps, as Comerford argues, to initiate a more open dialogue. The peace movement defined its objectives beyond ending the war itself. Although the war in Angola ended militarily, there is further scope for peace building. The challenge is for the movement to reinvent itself in this new context.

49. Angolan CSOs have played key roles in managing emerging land conflicts. At a national level, the Land Network (*Rede da Terra*), consisting of several NGOs working on land issues, has actively sought to influence a new Land Law. Based on extensive fieldwork and legal analysis, this network has identified key risks in the interpretation of the text as well as in practical implementation. While the actual NGO influence on the final Law is difficult to assess, the process contributed substantially to raising awareness about risks of future conflicts. As the Law is now being articulated and implemented, this network could represent a valuable asset to policy makers. Locally, a number of NGOs are already involved in management of land conflicts. For example, traditional authorities cannot resolve frequent conflicts between traditional and commercial herders. A number of NGOs have been engaging local governments, traditional authorities, commercial actors, and CBOs to facilitate peaceful resolution of these conflicts. The need for CSOs in mitigating local land conflicts is likely to persist, complementing the role of traditional authorities in equitable and inclusive management of land. The network has already identified risks related to legal recognition of traditional authorities as custodians of 'community land'.

“Land conflicts exist because the coordinator of the resident commission together with the police protects the people with money. A person will sell you the land and then re-sell it to someone else. And the person who is nobody special loses his land and his money.” (Street seller, Luanda, Angola)

V: Constraints on CSO Effectiveness

50. This chapter discusses five principal elements that constrain effective development on the ground through donor engagement with NGOs. First, weak NGO capacity is a constraint to achieving long-term and sufficient financing. Conversely, financial constraints inhibit investment in capacity development. Second, financing is short-term and makes long term strategic planning and commitment to long-term goals difficult. Third, weak networks and coordination impede cross-fertilization as well as efficient distribution of resources. Fourth, these factors may influence accountability of NGOs and associations vis-à-vis CBOs and the population. These concerns were raised by all stakeholders in all three countries as well as other literature on capacities and constraints. Fifth, the most difficult and least accessible areas are also the areas with the least external support. Ultimately, all five relate to the way in which donors engage with CSOs. Financing is characterized by isolated efforts and projects rather than long-term partnerships and institutional development.

Capacity Constraints

51. Civil society has seen explosive development over the last 15 years in all three countries, but capacity needs remain significant. CSOs in all three countries call for more capacity building—in fiduciary and management skills (Angola), in technical skills and participatory methodologies (Guinea Bissau), and in technical skills and specialization (Togo). Half of the Togolese NGOs and associations

⁹ Accord Publications Issue 15 – *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process*

interviewed listed poor technical and human resource capacity as the main limitation to their effectiveness. In Angola, the transition from distribution of emergency aid to delivery of peacetime development requires new capacities. Fiduciary requirements are greater in a development context than during emergency operations. Questions of sustainability arise more frequently and donors are becoming more demanding. Types of activities are also changing. Organizations that have previously been concerned with distribution of food and emergency aid seek to redefine their work program rather than declaring themselves redundant. CSOs express a need for better dissemination of lessons and experience through networks, but as networks are weak and underfunded, there is little opportunity to acquire new skills unless donors organize specific trainings.

52. A common constraint in all three countries—especially in Togo and Guinea Bissau—is that few NGOs are specialized. Citizens and government officials raise concerns about lack of specialization, while NGO leaders admit they have insufficient technical capacities and specialization. A less specialized approach is an understandable strategy for an organization dependent on attracting funds, but may be problematic for the accumulation of necessary experience and skills. Many of the NGOs covered by the study engage in health, education, productive activities, protection of vulnerable groups, and some engage in advocacy. A few organizations are more specialized, but these tend to be those focusing on advocacy. While this reflects dependency on donor resources, it may also be an indication of the multi-sectoral nature of development. With only a few NGOs in each country, many are forced to do a little bit of everything, sometimes without the relevant expertise. This tendency is perceived as greater among regional and national NGOs and associations than among INGOs.

53. National NGOs in Angola and Guinea Bissau believe INGOs have greater technical and financial capacity than their national colleagues. It appears that donors share this view, as INGOs tend to control financial resources. Citizens in Angola almost always give highest praise to projects implemented by INGOs. The most innovative approaches and participatory methodologies are mostly implemented by INGOs in both Angola and Guinea Bissau. Due to this weak technical and fiduciary capacity, donors have low confidence in Angolan NGOs and tend to concentrate their financing on a few privileged organizations with higher capacity. Consequently, INGOs with more elaborate fiduciary procedures and higher legitimacy among donors tend to manage most of the funding. In turn, these INGOs have subcontracting arrangements with national NGOs. Bilateral donors are investing in fiduciary and reporting capacities of Angolan national NGOs to strengthen their ability to compete for resources.

“In a way this lack of confidence (by donors in national NGOs) is justified by the weak management capacity of the majority of NGOs. However the good ones are also penalized.” (NGO leader, Angola)

54. National CSOs, especially in Angola, have difficulty competing with the salary levels of international agencies to attract qualified staff. They cite lack of contextual understanding by INGOs as a concern. Angolan CSOs express disillusionment about partnerships with INGOs. Rather than partnership, often the relationship is consultation or subcontracting. A very limited number of national CSOs have attained a level of dialogue with international organizations that ensures a more balanced relationship. These relationships, like those between other CSOs and government institutions, are often built on personal relationships.

“Partnerships in the true sense of the word hardly exist. There are only consultations”. (NGO leader, Angola)

55. Beneficiary participation in development decisions and investments that affect them appear to be less widespread than commonly assumed, especially in Togo and Guinea Bissau. Community-driven development, participatory methodologies, and local ownership are all part of the development discourse and are widely agreed to benefit the sustainability of development activities. For example, in one Guinea

Bissau community, the majority (76 percent) of those interviewed were not consulted prior to development activity taking place. More participation is solicited based on existing positive experiences. This may indicate a need for more rigorous consensus and capacity building in participatory approaches.

“The NGOs are not interested in the development of our community, projects are brought here without prior consultation, we do not participate in their design, and the budgets are not publicized. It is time that donors start financing the community directly to develop their activities. We do need support and capacity building in agriculture and management. We have learned to deal with NGOs over the years, but few have been the benefits of their realizations to the village or to us.” (Member of men’s focus group, Guinea Bissau)

56. The most appreciated development interventions by community organizations are those that sustain a relationship over time between an NGO and a CBO, and invest in the capacity of the latter. This is clearly stated by citizens in all three countries. Citizens call for more direct investments in CBOs and for strengthening of their capacities to manage projects. In a few cases in Angola, where partnerships with CBOs have been sustained over time and subject to regular follow-up and capacity building, community groups established through a specific external intervention have remained in the community after the end of the project. These have become important change agents in their community, translating the project specific capacity into longer-term development and in particular soliciting funds from other sources for new activities. In Angola, one national NGO that has invested in longer term bridging partnerships with CBOs has been supporting the legalization of CBOs to facilitate their access to independent financing. Yet the process has been excruciatingly slow. Occasionally, these surviving community groups have even inspired neighboring communities to get organized or solicit specific interventions from NGOs and religious groups, as in the community of Santa Teresa in Angola. More analysis is required to determine variables that increase the chance of durable institutional development in communities.

“We have possibilities, with our activities, to make more organizations emerge in the area. For example, we are thinking about developing sewing activities, and establish a song group for youth”. (Community leader, Angola)

Short-Term Financing

57. Development activities in the three countries are largely donor-driven and financing is often short-term. While one may argue this is typical of development, it might be even more so for CSOs than for governments. Donor investments are not driven by long-term strategies and priorities. Due to weak capacity in CSOs, most donors are reluctant to finance large programs implemented by any one CSO. Donors shift funding based on their own priorities and invest in discrete projects instead of longer-term sector programs. Communities in Guinea Bissau faulted interventions for being too short-term and sought sustained partnerships between NGOs and religious groups on the one hand, and CBOs on the other. As citizens in Guinea Bissau complained about “NGOs that come and go”, these NGOs were concerned that funding is project-based and often in the form of subcontracting, with no coverage of overhead costs or opportunities for longer-term commitments. This undermines the institutional impact of many development activities in Guinea Bissau. Similar concerns were raised with church groups in Angola:

“The churches here in Gambos have no permanent activities, they only do temporary things”. (Community leader, Angola)

58. CSOs complain that too much time is wasted in searching for resources. For many Angolan CSOs, their main sources of income are analytical services, organization of workshops, and facilitation of meetings. CSOs point out that these financial constraints impede strategic planning, specialization, and sustained engagement with specific areas and communities.

59. High CSO dependence on donor financing is compounded by lack of alternative funding sources. A key challenge for CSOs is to find the right balance of funding from different sources, avoiding dependency on any one source (Huetter 2002). In reality, conscious balancing between financing sources is a luxury when donors represent the only source. While many CSOs require co-financing from community members, this usually represents a symbolic arrangement to ensure ownership rather than a real financial contribution. The capacity to pay in poor communities can not offset CSO dependency on external donors. Stakeholders in civil society and government in Angola argue in favor of government financing of CSOs. They argue that by providing resources to CSOs, governments would capitalize on their experience, while reducing CSO dependency on external donor financing. Government financing would have some necessary built-in caveats, for example, as one Angolan CSO leader put it:

“The government should contribute to the civil society organizations as long as criteria are transparent and democratic, and civil society is not transformed into a vehicle for the transmission of the political interests of the government.” (CSO leader, Angola)

60. The public officials interviewed in Togo declared that there are budgetary lines within the national budget that provide support to NGOs. Tax exemptions were also mentioned as an important financial advantage provided by the state. However, very few NGOs mentioned receiving financial assistance from the state or being granted tax exemptions. Several were not aware of the existence of budgetary lines to support NGOs and others knew of organizations that had received support but thought that this was provided only selectively and non-transparently. Most (86 percent) NGOs covered by the UNDP survey saw lack of and poor access to, financial resources as their main handicap. They believed that the cut of EU aid and a general decline of foreign aid in the last decade worsened this problem.

Weak and Underfunded Coordination Mechanisms

61. Networks and umbrella organizations in all three countries are currently weak and lack resources. In all three countries, national umbrella organizations have been established, but none have been particularly effective. While they represent important interlocutors for external communication, their finances are too weak to play an active facilitation and coordination role. Since these networks do not execute projects, they do not benefit from contracting arrangements with donors or INGOs, which form the core support for most of their members. Consequently, they have very limited access to resources. Moreover, given that such overhead financing is usually minimal, member organizations have few resources themselves to help co-finance a strong network.

62. Angolan CSOs report that membership in a network often provides them with a certain legitimacy and donors may request membership in networks as a condition for financing. Concerns were voiced that some organizations may join the networks as a way to access financing, and that this practice risks reducing the function of the networks to a mere ‘rubber stamping’ mandate.

“... sometimes we are required by donors to be part of networks and alliances” (CSO leader, Angola)

63. In Togo, two competing umbrella organizations existed in parallel. During initiatives to strengthen CSOs, the two were merged in 2004. A common donor framework for CSO engagement is under development which may improve coordination in the future.

64. Information sharing and communication lack regular channels. This was stated most strongly in Angola. CSOs believe that radio and written materials could significantly improve lesson sharing and strengthen relations among them. Angolan CSOs particularly mentioned the need for internet access and technology, and were concerned that high printing costs prevented them from regularly sharing information.

Accountability

65. It has been argued that the risk of unaccountable and fraudulent CSOs is intrinsic to zones of post-war recovery (Richards et al. 2004) and that this stems from a combination of unemployed or unpaid civil servants, chaotic political conditions and limited local knowledge by donors. Absent or unsanctioned legal frameworks do not provide the necessary checks and balances or accountability mechanisms. Alongside the many CSOs doing good work in difficult environments, a few organizations take advantage of the governance vacuum to the detriment of populations and scrupulous CSOs. One possible explanation of more positive experiences reported by Angolan project beneficiaries could be the high number of CSOs that hold each other accountable.

66. The distinction between the private sector and civil society may be blurred in conflict-affected and fragile states because of weak law enforcement. Financial opportunities, weak quality controls, and tax exemptions may combine to make it tempting for private firms to present themselves as NGOs.

67. CSOs can be exclusionary and at worst reinforce divisions between groups. Vulnerable groups are often excluded from the benefits of CSOs, and not represented in CBOs. For example, although measures have been taken to ensure the inclusion of women in CBOs created by development projects, such numerical requirements are easily circumvented. Particularly in Angola, citizens raise concerns that women are excluded. In Guinea Bissau, a few citizens complained of food aid being delivered based on known political preferences. In Angola, community-based civilian defense groups, armed by the government forces during the war, may represent a risk to stability and rule of law. Citizens in Angola also complain of exclusionary practices among some church groups, whose development projects only cater for their own parishioners.

68. Citizens of Guinea Bissau and Togo indicate that CSOs are more responsive upward to donors than downward to beneficiaries. For example, donors to Guinea Bissau allocate funds for governance related activities while citizens prefer that their basic needs be addressed first. When people were asked to identify their primary needs, they most frequently cited activities in the social sectors and to support rural development, such as education, health, water, and roads. Except for one urban community that put security at the top of its priorities, no communities mentioned governance issues. The fact that nearly all beneficiaries requested basic social services, while NGOs also intervene in governance and advocacy, raised questions about the responsiveness of NGOs. When people lack even the most basic social services, can they really be that concerned with democracy and governance issues? A strategy that is increasingly being employed is a mixed approach of social and economic interventions including awareness raising messages. This provides clearer immediate benefits for participants, who are in turn more open to receiving messages about HIV/AIDS, conflict resolution, gender, and governance.

69. Concerns about downward accountability vis-à-vis communities were raised in all three countries, but most strongly in Guinea Bissau and Togo. There is clearly potential for improvement in terms of transparency, accountability, community participation and empowerment. In Guinea Bissau, tension and frustrations were expressed with the unpredictability and lack of transparency of NGOs, with citizens calling for better accountability mechanisms. Suspiciousness vis-à-vis external organizations is illustrated by the example of community members traveling from the southern region to the capital to verify that funds designated for a given activity actually correspond to what was being implemented in the field.

“People take on the NGO cloak to swindle the population.” (Member of men’s focus group, Togo)

70. Lack of transparency in the selection criteria of communities to be supported is also a source of tension, and people request more systematic information about opportunities and projects. Several communities claimed that they could have built infrastructure faster and better than external organizations had they been financed directly. In one community, repeated disappointments with non-delivery on

promises and plans by both NGOs and public institutions have spurred the creation of a women's organization named "*Nô Ka fia más ninguin*" (We No Longer Believe in Anyone). In Togo, the strongest negative statements about CSOs concern credit and savings organizations. Since the mid-1980s Togo has been plagued by a proliferation of entities established primarily for the enrichment and/or political gain of their founders.

Box 2: Fake credit schemes in Togo

A community in Togo cited the experience of a microfinance NGO in Danyi-Apéyémé, Kloto. The NGO claimed association with a well-known insurance agency in Togo and convinced villagers to save money to build a capital base for future credit services. As the savings reached significant levels, the NGO disappeared taking all the savings. Since then, no organization can convince the villagers to participate in any savings and credit scheme. Similar cases were reported in Lomé, Anié, Sotouboua, and Kara.

Reaching the Poorest Areas?

71. As pointed out by previous studies, CSOs and governments have had limited success in reaching the very poorest (Narayan 2000; UNRISD 2000). In all three countries the most difficult and least accessible areas are also the areas with the least external support and the least number of active NGOs. In these areas other CSOs, such as religious groups and mass-party organizations, tend to be more present. In Togo, 63 percent of NGOs and associations are operating in the southern Maritime region and 53 percent are in the capital, Lomé. In Guinea Bissau, most NGOs are located in Bissau. Outside the capital, the fertile south and the islands have the most NGOs, while the poorest northern regions have the fewest. The north and east have far fewer NGO development activities. In Angola, NGOs mainly operate in the coastal provinces and the central highlands. The east, most devastated by the war, is far less accessible and was isolated during the conflict. Many areas in the east are still considered to be in a state of emergency. Accessibility is a major issue when infrastructure, such as roads and bridges, has been destroyed by war or neglect.

72. The presence of NGOs is relatively weak in the Angolan enclave of Cabinda. There are several possible explanations for this weak presence. First, the province was much less affected by the civil war between MPLA and UNITA and thus had less influx of INGOs during the war. Second, separatists are waging a low-intensity insurgency for the independence of the enclave where most of the offshore oil is located. Third, as a result of the separatist movement and international attention to issues of transparency and corruption, the government has been more restrictive toward civil society in Cabinda. Fourth, NGOs in Cabinda have limited contact and fewer opportunities for networking with civil society in the rest of Angola.

VI: CSO-Government Relations

Introduction to CSO-Government Relations

73. Civil society cannot be analyzed in isolation from the state. CSOs and government are mutually dependent on each other. The state provides the legal framework for CSOs, and may assure rules of engagement, procedures for consultations, and even financial resources. Governments can also create an unfavorable enabling environment as in Togo. Civil society can contribute to the state as a link between state and citizens, in promoting democratic values, building institutions, producing information and ideas, and building social capital (Huetter 2002). In the specific context of weak states, this relationship takes a different form and is often much narrower. In its most extreme form, CSOs substitute for an absent state and perform tasks normally carried out by the state.

74. As pointed out by Manor (forthcoming), parallel structures to government institutions are harmful in the long term. While Manor was referring to large social funds, a similar case could be made for social service delivery detached from the state more generally. First, donor funded or donor-created non-governmental structures exclude government from organizational development and approaches introduced by development investments. Second, lack of government presence contributes to the dismissive attitude of citizens toward the state, even when these are elected bodies. Third, concerns relating sustainability, scale, accountability and the need for multi-sectoral approaches are best addressed in partnership between CSOs and governments. While CSOs may be the principal development actors in the short and even medium term, there is clearly a role to be played by government institutions. A critical challenge for countries recovering from conflict is thus to ensure that the state is capitalizing on the experience of CSOs, while gradually building its own institutions and capacity that can co-exist with a vibrant civil society. This chapter examines CSO-government relations and identifies some key obstacles to a more productive co-existence.

Transition out of Conflict and the Recovery of Public Institutions

75. As conflicts end and public institutions gradually recover, the dynamics between citizens, CSOs, and government institutions can be expected to change. This is demonstrated in the case of Angola where changing dynamics are causing tensions. A post-conflict transition will often be characterized by new financing from donors to governments, shifting the resources from the private sector to the public sector. This may challenge the previously dominant position of CSOs, particularly NGOs. Furthermore, activities change from distribution of emergency aid to more complex development activities, and concerns and expectations on sustainability and cost-effectiveness become more prevalent. Finally, the need for coordination will gradually become more obvious as access to, and information about, larger parts of the country improves.

76. The relationship between CSOs and government in Angola has been in post-conflict transition since the end of the war in 2002 and remains tenuous. For the last three decades, CSOs have provided most of the social services. With peace secured, a Poverty Reduction Strategy formulated, and donor-government relations slowly resuming, government and CSOs will have to learn to co-exist. CSOs complain that the government is too restrictive, while government officials call for better coordination and quality control. Both sides have valid points. The government has a stake in reestablishing itself as a provider of basic social services. Recovery and public investment in social sectors have been slow, and CSOs will likely continue to play a key role in social service delivery in the medium term. Years of conflict have led to a multitude of CSO activities, albeit with limited coordination. As longer-term development resumes, there are efficiency gains to be captured from a more concerted effort to supporting national strategies. Yet these gains may imply restrictions on organizations operating in the field.

77. There is little tradition of participation and democracy within the MPLA as multi-party democracy was installed during the war and only briefly tested in 1991 before war broke out again. While the government wants to better coordinate efforts, and to ensure efficiency and coherence with national plans, NGOs, media, religious groups, and unions argue the importance of an independent civil society, not merely to implement government strategies and plans, but also to serve as an alternative voice. Finding a solution that gives space to both parties requires a process of sustained dialogue and clarification of mutual obligations and respective objectives.

Perceptions about CSO-Government Relations and their Respective Roles

78. Citizens in Angola and Guinea Bissau have higher expectations of NGOs than of government institutions when it comes to development. While actual resource constraints are not the case in oil-rich Angola, social sectors remain underfunded alongside more affluent INGOs. Despite this dependency,

only sporadic efforts are made to bring the two together. Citizens still have expectations of government institutions, but citizens seem to accept that CSOs are their main development partners. Most of those interviewed turn to CBOs, NGOs or religious groups to solve their problems. Local government institutions are gradually recovering, and a few development projects are already making efforts to strengthen partnerships between CBOs and government structures locally. Quasi-governmental interventions such as the Bank-financed Social Fund (FAS) Project appear to have improved the image of the state in the eyes of the citizens.

“We are in a learning process, both NGOs and the government, because we do not yet have a democratic culture, but in the longer term we believe the relations will improve.”(CSO leader, Angola)

79. All the Guinea Bissau research sites perceived the state to have a very low capacity to address poverty. Urban areas have slightly higher expectations of government institutions, but mainly in areas of security and justice. In the areas with more CSO presence, most people (86 percent) look to these to address their concerns. In the national capital, where security concerns ranked high, a significant share (20 percent) referred to the police as an important institution. Nationwide, only one in four refer to the government at all as a potential service provider. For the most part, impact evaluations of CSO interventions are positive, in particular with regards to religious associations. Even where the government does invest in social services, notably through two Bank-financed projects, CSOs are the main implementing partners on the ground. The necessity of mobilizing private resources for the delivery of essential services, while paying state taxes, further entrenches citizen lack of confidence in the government.

“I know there is a poverty reduction program, but I have no faith in it.” (Member of men’s focus group, Angola)

“Who can help us is really the Government, especially the Ministries of Agriculture, Education, and Health. But since they are not able to support the entire population, international and national NGOs may also help us.” (Member of focus group, Angola)

80. In Togo, a weaker civil society constrained by a more dominant state and donor cutbacks have created a situation where neither government nor CSOs provide essential services. Unlike the other two cases, the large majority (80 percent) of the respondents in Togo report that they turn to public institutions for basic services. The general weak presence of CSOs likely relates to two important factors. First, a centralized government wary of political challengers has not created an enabling environment for NGOs and other civil society groups. Second, the decline in donor financing has weakened NGOs as well as the public sector. While some donors retain smaller programs in support of community activities, including CSOs, total inflow of funds has been dramatically reduced.

“The government spends its time telling the population: ‘be quiet – we will develop you’. (...) The roofs, the roads, they’re in a bad shape and the state says: ‘We will fix it’, instead of telling people to take charge. We need to re-educate the population.” (Retiree, community member, Togo)

“We no longer know where to go. Everyone has promised but they are all broken promises. (...) We expect nothing from the government: the regime forgot about us a long time ago”. (Elderly, community member, Togo)

81. In Angola, most stakeholders see CSO-government relations as improving but still tense, and in need of more systematic coordination and communication. The great majority (85 percent) of CSOs described initial relations with government agencies as tense. Most (79 percent) of them said this relationship had significantly improved in the last few years and remained hopeful that it could develop into a more balanced partnership. Government officials considered the working relationship with civil society as “mostly constructive”. Government officials admitted that the relationship may at times be

tense due to poor understanding among some government staff of the autonomy of civil society. Local and sector based CSO-government partnerships remain sporadic and are usually initiated by INGOs. Specific projects increasingly seek to build partnerships between CSOs and government institutions, and there are good examples that could be built upon.

“Government institutions need to be better versed on the role of civil society. The majority thinks that civil society is trespassing on their own activities. It is necessary for the importance of civil society to be better known by the state, as well as by civil society itself.” (CSO leader, Angola)

82. The situation is quite different in Guinea Bissau, where problems relate to a perpetually weak and fragile government rather than a recovery process from a protracted conflict. A new government elected in March 2004 has embarked on a Poverty Reduction Strategy and is on track to address key governance issues. Most government officials seem quite content with the prominent role of CSOs in social service delivery. In fact, they express few ambitions to take over the functions now performed by CSOs in basic social service delivery, seeing the state more as a ‘facilitator’ for civic engagement,¹⁰ at least in the short to medium term. The challenge will be to gradually build government capacity in social service delivery while simultaneously capitalizing on the experience of CSOs.

Government-CSO Communication, Coordination, and Control

83. The paucity of institutionalized communication affects relationships between government and CSOs in the three countries. In Angola, both government officials and CSOs complain that they only hear about each other’s activities through personal contacts or the media. Communication is generally ad-hoc on specific initiatives or through personal connections. Government and CSOs agree that there should be more frequent and constructive dialogue between the two. Communication on humanitarian assistance between government and civil society is institutionalized in a Technical Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UTCAH) in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Reintegration (MINARS), but there is no such forum for development activities. While full consensus between government officials and civil society is probably neither likely nor desirable, misunderstandings rooted in lack of communication could be overcome. Lack of understanding about respective objectives and activities tends to cause suspiciousness. The absence of an overall strategy against which to assess ongoing activities compounds misunderstandings. In Guinea Bissau and Togo, CSOs complain that there is no clear interface with the government, but that relations are divided among several ministries who do not see themselves as focal points.

84. Legal frameworks in all three countries are unclear, not well known, and rarely enforced. Most CSOs believe existing legal frameworks do not provide clear rules of engagement. CSOs in Guinea Bissau are concerned that the legal definition of NGO is so broad that it serves as a tax exemption for consulting firms and entrepreneurs. It can be difficult to distinguish between NGOs and the private sector. Some organizations that present themselves as NGOs bear more resemblance to private sector companies.

85. CSOs complain that the legal registration process for their organizations is subject to arbitrary variations. In some cases, the relevant ministries demand documents that are not required by law. Most NGOs, interest groups, associations, and unions report that the level of difficulty in obtaining legal status depends on the individual with whom they interact. Almost a third of CSOs in Togo complained of the excessive slowness of the legal status recognition process as being the main handicap to the effectiveness of CSOs, many having to wait 3 to 4 years to receive their certification. Regional NGOs and national associations especially thought that there is a general lack of transparency around the process.

¹⁰ The Minister of Social Affairs and Solidarity, who spoke at the workshop launching the final reports of the Civil Society Assessment Tool, Bissau, December 8, 2004.

86. New legislation in Angola has created tensions. A Code of Conduct for NGOs¹¹ attempted to clarify the role of NGOs, relations between national and international organizations, and between NGOs and the government. However, the law was articulated with barely any consultations and would drastically reduce the space for civic engagement. The law has been met with strong protests, but it seems unlikely to be enforced.

“(The Code) constraints the organizations, creating an asphyxiating environment. It is used to condition all the work of the organizations (NGOs). Beyond controlling nothing is being done.” (CSO leader, Angola)

87. CSOs involved in advocacy in Togo and Angola face greater difficulties with government legal hurdles than social service providers. In Angola, the major hurdles to legalization affect human rights organizations. This is another area where the new legislation is particularly troubling because of requirements for pre-approval of activities. In Togo, very few organizations work explicitly on issues of governance, democratization and human rights. The government is also very critical of elements within the Church that it sees as inappropriately venturing into the political arena by working on issues of human rights and democracy. The law in Togo requires NGOs to be ‘apolitical’. Conversely, several informants from religious organizations complained about excessive government control and interference in their organizations. In Angola, Radio Ecclesia, an independent radio run by the Catholic Church, has repeatedly been prevented by the Government from establishing local transmitters.

“The state tortures the morale of the population. It has taught them to be quiet. It stifles the population and inhibits them from expressing their opinions. It is time to liberate the spirits.” (CSO leader, Togo)

“The major obstacles occur in relations to the organizations promoting human rights.” (CSO leader, Angola)

VII: Summary of Recommendations

88. This report illustrated the complexity of CSOs that are indispensable for many development activities in conflict-affected and fragile states. It discussed a number of concerns about the effectiveness and efficiency of CSOs in these contexts as well as coordination across CSOs and between CSOs and government. The report has identified the need to rethink donor and government approaches to working with CSOs. Many of the concerns identified can be attributed to the lack of an overall framework for donor and government engagement with CSOs. In the countries studied, donor coordination and co-financing of CSOs rarely takes places in an overall agreed framework. Institutional development does not appear to be a priority, and engagement tends to be short term, largely through discrete interventions and isolated projects or training events. One of the results is that as public institutions gradually recover or are strengthened, the shift is not only one of CSO to government, but of little or no coordination to PRSP formulation and prioritization of activities. A common denominator for many of the identified CSO constraints seems to lie in lack of necessary trust and long-term commitment for donors to hand over responsibility to CSOs

Some preliminary recommendations emerged based on findings from the three case studies. Although further contextual analysis would be required in each country setting before applying these recommendations, the basic message of the report is for donors to move away from a project-by-project approach to supporting CSOs, toward more sustained engagement focused on institution building among CSOs and networks. This would entail a strategic shift with less ad-hoc project funding and one-off training events, and more systematic cooperation and commitment, including partnering and funding

¹¹ Council of Ministers Decree No 84/02, also referred to as Code of Conduct for NGOs.

long-term institutional development of CSOs. Future analysis could explore the possibility of developing a joint strategic compact governing the relations between donors, government, and CSOs. Such a compact would entail joint efforts from donors, governments and civil society, and could improve conditions for CSOs and their beneficiaries. It would represent an overall strategic framework for engagement, and entail mutual obligations monitored by all parties.

89. The following recommendations are addressed to donors, to governments, and to CSOs in partnership:

90. **More rigorous and systematic analysis prior to engagement.** The CSAT pilots revealed limited understanding of civil society with its very diverse needs, capacities and competencies. More rigorous and systematic analysis of civil society and CSOs is clearly necessary prior to more strategic engagement. Analysis should be carried out in partnership with key stakeholders, and with a focus on the quality of the process as well as the product. This could be incorporated into social analysis, conflict analysis, or other socio-political analyses. Methodological aspects are elaborated upon in an annex to this report. Donors may have a comparative advantage in leading and financing this effort, but analysis needs to take place in active partnership with all relevant actors.

91. **Broadened financing modalities.** Investments in CSOs tend to be short-term and project-based and do not provide sufficient incentives or possibility for specialization nor long-term engagements with communities. Longer-term engagement with CSOs could improve their planning skills and their relationships with beneficiary communities. At present, CSOs are donor driven—their accountability to a large extent goes upward to donors rather than downward to beneficiary communities. With negligible alternative financial resources beyond scarce donor funds, CSOs often respond to shifting donor preferences instead of beneficiary priorities. Longer-term financing arrangements between donors and CSOs, or between international and national CSOs, with mutual and clearly defined obligations, could benefit all parties.

92. **Incentives to invest in capacity building.** Investing in capacities of CSOs coupled with longer-term financial commitments could benefit donors as well as CSOs and beneficiaries. While donors benefit from more capable and reliable partners on the ground, CSOs benefit from needed capacity and institution building, as well as more predictability to support strategic planning. For the ultimate beneficiary, people and communities, longer-term donor commitments to CSOs could translate into longer-term engagement between CSOs and their beneficiaries. Training needs include management, accounting, technical specialization, and evaluation. This could include joint training and capacity-building events, establishment of forums for consultation and dialogue, and scaling up partnerships between local governments and CSOs.

93. **Long-term partnerships between international and national CSOs.** Identify partners and establish long-term mentoring relations to enhance quality and accountability. Invest in institutional capacity among partner organizations to promote more balanced relations.

94. **Support to umbrella organizations to function as networks.** Given the atomistic, uncoordinated nature of the CSO community, umbrella organizations that represent the collective interest of members are particularly important. Currently, financing modalities do not allow for sufficient investment in networks. Allocating resources to these networks could enhance quality and efficient distribution of resources, intra-CSO coordination, improve sharing of lessons learned, strengthen the voice of CSOs vis-à-vis governments, and provide a more clear point of communication between the two.

95. **Strengthened forums for government-CSO communication.** The lack of communication between government and CSOs, and lack of knowledge about each other's activities, appears to make the transition to stronger government involvement more difficult. Donors could make an important contribution by providing and supporting space for dialogue. In terms of operations and activities, scaling

up of existing experiences in development partnerships could enhance dialogue, sustainability, and capacity.

96. **Systematic engagement with CSOs in policy formulation and strategies.** It is widely recognized that PRSPs and other participatory policy processes greatly benefit from the active involvement of CSOs. Countries emerging from conflict or prolonged periods of poor governance face particularly difficult challenges in engaging with civil society and supporting participatory processes. Analysis of CSOs, as suggested in this report, could be a useful precursor to PRSP processes. A more systematic and contextualized analysis of CSO dynamics and capabilities could assist governments and donors identify knowledge on poverty and social conditions, and potential partners in developing and monitoring PRSPs. In post-conflict societies, where trust in government representatives and institutions is understandably low, reputable and effective CSOs can play an important role in engendering trust and bridging the government-citizen divide.

97. **Clear and transparent rules of engagement with CSOs.** Clear and simple legal frameworks agreed to and known by all parties could make interaction less arbitrary. Moreover, a clear interface between government and CSOs, including regular venues for coordination and communication, could improve coordination and effectiveness. Resource allocation to CSOs based on transparent criteria can help reduce CSO dependency on donors. There is significant experience in CSOs that can be tapped by government agencies. Working in partnerships entails facilitating CSO activities, agreeing on division of labor, and establishing venues for regular coordination and communication.

98. **Improved accountability systems and internal checks.** Weak internal checks and non-enforced—or arbitrarily applied—legal frameworks permit the existence of a few fraudulent CSOs to the detriment of the hard-working and effective majority. Experience is being accumulated on mechanisms for self-imposed accountability measures, for example those managed by umbrella organizations. By strengthening peer review among CSOs and introducing accountability standards, CSOs can protect themselves from the negative effects of fake or fraudulent CSOs. This may also help differentiate between private sector and NGOs. Efforts to improve accountability would require additional resources as well as strong commitment from CSOs themselves.

99. **Long-term partnerships with CBOs.** Better understanding of existing local dynamics and decision-making processes can help identify more effective and sustainable CBOs. With investment in their capacity and organization, CBOs become more empowered and may be sustained beyond a single project. Legalization of CBOs can in some cases contribute to their sustainability.

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Annex 1: CSAT Methodology

The Civil Society Assessment Tool (CSAT) consisted of three outputs: (i) a contextual preparatory study; (ii) top-down interviews with CSO leaders and government; and (iii) a bottom-up beneficiary assessment.

Following good practice in participatory research, the products were placed in a context of broader consultations on design and progress. Oversight committees included CSOs, government officials, and donors.

1. The Outputs

A. Context study

The context study provided a brief account of the enabling environment for civic engagement, including legal, financial, and political conditions. The context report was prepared as a desk review, at the outset of each exercise, either by Bank staff or local consultants. The review was conducted in the course of two to three weeks.

B. Top-down Assessment

The second output was a ‘top-down’ assessment of civil society, based on semi-structured interviews with 40-60 civil society organizations and a few government officials in specified ministries (see interview guide A). The top-down assessments were conducted by individual local or international consultants. The work consisted of two weeks interviewing and two weeks report writing.

C. Bottom-up study

The third output was a ‘bottom-up’ beneficiary assessment conducted as a field research to assess people’s experiences with civil society organizations through conversational interviews, focus groups, and participant observation case studies (see interview guide B). The work was conducted by local research institutes and included two weeks of preparation and training of field researchers, four to six weeks in the field, and three to four weeks report writing.

The bottom-up research would cover: (i) the structure of CSOs locally, (ii) the capacity of CSOs in service delivery to communities; (iii) the capacity of CSOs in advocacy at a local and community level; (iii) communities’ perspectives on civil society actors; (iv) communities’ perceptions on fairness and inclusion in their interaction with civil society groups; and (v) the structure, functioning, achievements, and ambitions of CBOs. Finally, the report should provide some policy recommendations on how to engage with civil society, and in what areas capacity needs to be strengthened.

The sampling would cover rural and urban communities in all main regions of the country. In rural villages, selection would be split between villages with known civil society dynamism, and villages with no *known* civil society dynamism. Sampling within communities would seek to balance gender, religion and ethnic groups. Respondents would be a cross section of the communities, with special groups for community leaders.

- In Guinea Bissau, the sample included a total of 513 respondents in 12 communities of all five regions of the country (Bissau and Byombo, North, South, Islands, and East)
- In Angola, 568 people were interviewed in 7 provinces and 21 communities
- In Togo, a total of 587 respondents in 25 villages of the five regions plus three arrondissements of Lome were included in the sample

2. Interview Guides

A. Top-down Assessment

Interview Guide for Civil Society Organizations

Theme 1: What do you do? The three most important activities—ranked

Theme 2: Who do you work with, and how?

1. Government (official, traditional, local or central)
2. Other civil society organizations (national or regional)
3. Community Based Organizations
4. Directly with citizens

Theme 3: Channels of information

Through what channels do you receive information on the activities of government and other civil society organizations, and through what and to whom do you transmit information on your own activities?

Theme 4: Is there a legal framework that facilitates or inhibits your work? Informal/ formal

Theme 5: Do you have access to financial resources? Where?

Theme 6: Number of beneficiaries, by regions

Theme 7: Constraints to activities

1. Accessibility of qualified staff
2. Security in the field
3. General working environment

Theme 8: Assessment of working environment in terms of security, stability, and socioeconomic conditions

Interview Guide for Government Officials

Theme 1: Experience with working with civil society, who and what.

Theme 2: Perception of this experience. Positive? Negative? Elaborate.

Theme 3: How can links between government and civil society be improved?

Theme 4: Through what channels of information does one get information on civil society activities?

B. Bottom-up study

Theme 1: Most important needs, where people go to have them met, and their experience with results and ownership regarding the provision of these services.

- Identify the (3) needs considered most important, ranked
- Identify the entities to which people turn for these needs (NGO, government, CBO, religious community, other associations...)
- Assess the changes and results incurred by these entities in meeting the particular needs
- Assess the sense of ownership and influence people had regarding the activity

Theme 2: Active involvement in association(s) or organization(s) and achievements of this entity.

Theme 3: Channels of information on opportunities, activities, and services provided (radio, market, grapevine...)

Theme 4: Perception of equity in provision of services. Is any group being excluded? If so, ask for elaboration.

Theme 5: What people think is needed in order for local development to be improved.

Theme 6: Hopes for the future. Are hopes limited to day-to-day survival, or do people plan for the future? If there is lack of hope, does this translate into resentment? Anger? What are people doing about the situation?

Added themes for community leaders:

- Are activities in their CBO limited to one sector or are they more general? Has there been accumulation of activities over time?
- The criteria for participation in the group.
- The potential for progress and improvement of the group

3. Definitions

By virtue of the methodology employed by CSAT, the span of organizations covered by the bottom-up studies is largely defined by the interviewees themselves. The top-down assessments covered a slightly different universe of organizations than the bottom-up study. This was in fact part of the rationale for using both approaches. It provided a reality check on how well perceptions in the capital and city centers match those of the populations. Informal community-level organizations and religious organizations are mostly discussed in the bottom-up reports, while advocacy groups and international NGOs are more predominant in the top-down assessments. The starting point of analysis was to define CSOs as informal and formal non-governmental and not-for-profit organizations that have a presence in public life, including NGOs, labor unions, religious groups, associations, traditional authorities, and the press.

Annex 2: Lessons on Methodology

The CSAT pilots provided lessons on analytical approaches to CSOs in conflict-affected and fragile states. The methodology used was difficult to operationalize in a weak capacity environment, and delays limited the operational relevance of the findings as they came too late to feed into country level strategies. Nevertheless, useful information on CSOs and their relations to citizens and the state was generated. Moreover, the process that was sparked by the pilots was just as useful as the analysis itself. In all three countries, the establishment of oversight committees consisting of donors, CSO networks and government officials were the first sustained attempt to institutionalize coordination and communication on a general rather than project specific level.

The review of other literature carried out in writing this report confirmed that existing analytical approaches such as social analysis and conflict analysis only to a limited extent cover the institutional aspects of development. Two sets of lessons can be drawn from the pilot experience. First, analysis of civil society in conflict-affected and LICUS countries needs to be guided by an efficient methodology realistically responding to urgent needs and existing analytical capacity and constraints. Second, such analysis should focus on process and involve the right mix of stakeholders. This annex first evaluates the experience of the top-down and bottom-up studies carried out as part of CSAT. It then consolidates a few lessons and recommendations for future analysis of CSOs in conflict-affected and fragile states. A matrix of building blocks for analyzing CSOs responding to different demands, timelines, and budgets is presented in Table 1.

Evaluation of CSAT

Top-down assessment

The top-down analysis was useful because it provided a nuanced presentation of perspectives among CSOs and government officials. It was the most useful of the two approaches, and the one that best informed the adjacent process in the oversight committees. To some extent the analysis itself and the process around it provided a venue for more systematic dialogue between the two. The authors of the top-down work need to be, and to appear, as neutral observers, knowledgeable about but not representing either government or civil society. This may mean employing a foreigner familiar with the country's culture and institutions, as was successfully done in Guinea Bissau.

Bottom-up assessment

The bottom-up work had the highest expectations attached to it, and provided the most novel and the deepest understanding, but was also flawed by delays, capacity constraints and unclear objectives. Beneficiary assessment approaches are particularly useful to gain an understanding of the perspectives of community members regarding civil society; these could be complemented with an analytical framework to guide the analysis and better assure the operational relevance of CSO-oriented inquiry. The general lesson is that the qualitative research methods employed in the bottom-up surveys and the need to quantify qualitative findings to the degree possible proved to be difficult with the technical capacity available in the three pilots. For future analysis, methodologies and analytical framework should be adapted to existing capacities and their application be preceded by training.

First, the sampling frames employed were probably too ambitious, both as to magnitude and stratification, and could thus usefully be simplified. The key is relevance and representativity, not statistical exactitude. Sample size should allow the field work for the entire survey to be completed within a four to six week period. For a prototypical developing country, one can assume major regional deviations (regarding agro-ecological, ethnic and economic variables) that would permit three major regions, plus the capital city, to represent the diversity of the country. For each of these three, two rural and one urban community would

be chosen at random; for the capital city, three neighborhoods, urban and peri-urban (all poor). For each community, the sample would comprise 15 households, interviews being conducted with adults divided roughly equally by gender. In addition, in each community three focus groups would be conducted: with adult males, adult females and youth (mixed). Participant observation involving on-site residence for a period of 7-10 days would be conducted in one community per region and one neighborhood of the capital city; five case studies would be done in each site. Two of the four sites for this intensive qualitative technique would be rural, two urban. In this way, the typical sample for the CSAT bottom-up survey would cover a total of 410 persons, of whom 41 percent would be interviewed individually (59 percent in focus groups), roughly half would be women, and 60 percent would be urban, a disproportionate number justified by the greater heterogeneity of the urban population.

Second, the interview guides were too general. To guide the fieldwork, and ensure a common understanding of the type of information sought, detailed analytical frameworks should be elaborated with researchers. An example of an analytical framework is provided in Annex 6. The interview guides used in the pilots begun with the topic of peoples' prioritized needs, which then often took over as the paramount concern of the interview. For future research, it is now recommended to focus more exclusively on institutions. After giving a general rationale for the presence of the interviewer, the discussion should lead with and maintain focus on, the institutional dimension. This would include:

- Active involvement in CBOs; perceptions regarding achievements, constraints, needs;
- Institutional recourse for resolution of needs (community-based, NGO, religious, government, none);
- Perceived collaboration between government and identified institution(s) sought for assistance;
- Channel of information used regarding institutional providers of services;
- Perceived equity in provision of services—elaborating on excluded groups; and
- Recommendations for improvement regarding institutions that might and should assist local development.

Third, complex research requires extensive prior training both to familiarize field researchers and to build consensus on objectives and realistic expectations. This training should involve both classroom teaching and discussion, and experimentation with all techniques in the field using a draft interview guide which is tested and refined in the process. Training should be done by person(s) familiar with the national culture and with qualitative research techniques, men and women. It is expected that the time for training should be approximately one working week.

Even with prior training, delays should be expected. Long-distance supervision and follow-up, limited experience with demanding beneficiary assessment methodologies, political instability, and bureaucratic hurdles together delayed the pilots. Supervision from Washington proved to be more cumbersome than would have been a close follow-up from field based staff. Unstable working environments with special needs for technical assistance and flexibility contrast with small local Bank presence and may require more follow-up than can be offered from Washington. That being said, in Guinea Bissau, the capacity that was built through the pilot may now benefit qualitative research to be undertaken by the same institute under an ongoing Integrated Poverty and Social Assessment.

Finally, participant observation was only used at a few sites, and was not the most useful part of the analysis. Since the assessment did not look at any specific project or site, but sought to generalize findings, the case studies resulting from participant observation were interesting, but rather anecdotal.

Integration of CSO analysis into social analysis

Integration with existing analytical tools

CSO analysis can be integrated into other analytical work or it can be self-standing. A number of tools and techniques for social analysis are already developed and can incorporate analysis of CSOs. These include conflict analysis, the Civic Engagement Analytical Framework (CEAF) under elaboration, and broader Country Social Analysis (CSA). This section discusses how analysis of CSOs can be better integrated into overall social analysis. The advantages of integrated analysis include cost-effectiveness and enhanced accessibility for practitioners. In Guinea Bissau and Angola, CSA work is benefiting from CSAT findings. The CSAT approach could be integrated into social analysis designs to gain a better understanding of institutional aspects and dynamics of CSO-government and CSO-citizen relations.

Social and conflict analyses generally provide only limited insights on development institutions. Among the other analytical pieces reviewed, the Nigeria Strategic Conflict Assessment, the Somalia Conflict Analysis, and the Rapid Social Assessments for Liberia and Sierra Leone all include some useful information on CSOs, but most only briefly cover the relations between CSO, governments, and CBOs. The Liberia Rapid Social Assessment in particular offered detailed insights to local decision making processes and risks of exclusion. It also included discussions of *sodalities* (secret associations) that were not discussed during fieldwork but known by local researchers. CSAT offered less depth on local decision making processes outside the realm of CSO delivery of social services. The Nigeria Conflict Assessment includes actor analysis, where the role of CSOs in conflict management is addressed. However, this is limited to conflict response analysis, and does not cover service delivery. CSAT on the other hand, offered some but limited insights to socio-political factors, and sources of poverty, vulnerability, and conflict. Alongside analysis of CSOs, other analytical approaches add value to our understanding of conflict factors and socio-political settings.

Mixed methods

A mixed methods approach can enrich analysis by providing both depth and breadth. While the methodology employed in the CSAT pilots provided insights that are probably unique to qualitative methodologies, important knowledge could have been added by supplementing it with more quantitative tools. For example, the combination of the quantitative survey and inventory led by UNDP in Togo with the CSAT work led to a more comprehensive understanding of CSOs.

What methodologies are most appropriate will depend on end-use, timeline and budget. To accommodate varying cost and time constraints, the mix-and match matrix in Table 1 provides some guidance to building blocks of analysis. The bottom-up and top-down studies used in CSAT can be combined with any set of other analysis to maximize relevance of information. A set of additional components for CSO analysis are listed below.

Desk review of enabling environment

CSAT assessed the internal conditions for civic engagement, viewed through the lens of its stakeholders. For more specific analysis of institutional conditions impacting civic engagement, external analysis and review can add significant value. Such reviews have been carried out as part of analytical work undertaken in Ecuador and Albania.¹²

Inventories/surveys

While CSAT did not attempt to map organizations, their sizes, activities, and locations, this can be useful information and a basis for more in-depth analysis. In Guinea Bissau, such an inventory already existed,

¹² The methodology used is termed ARVIN, which is an acronym for Association (A); Resources (R); Voice (V) and freedom of expression, and the functioning of the media; access to Information (I); and opportunities, mechanisms and rules for public debate and Negotiation (N) with the state.

and in Togo, it was developed in parallel with the CSAT pilot. Where such inventories do not exist, they can be useful additions to a more qualitative understanding of CSOs. Inventories may vary from very simplistic listings, to more comprehensive surveys including questionnaires on perceptions, opportunities, and constraints of CSO leaders.

In-Depth Participant Observation

The role civil society plays in development can sometimes best be understood by the use of in-depth participant observation. This social research technique, commonly associated with cultural anthropology, may be employed to better appreciate the meaning of one or more CSOs within a community or the inner workings of a CSO itself. For instance, the survey used in the bottom-up work may reveal a community where there is reported to be an unusually successful pairing of a CBO with a CSO, yet a number of key aspects of this success are not clear from the interviews held:

- Which elements of the community participate in the CBO and why?
- What form does this community participation take: labor, resources, decision-making?
- How did the CSO become involved with the CBO?
- What role does the government play in this CBO-CSO relationship?
- How do key actors (the community members, the officers of the CBO and CSO) feel the situation might be improved?

Table 1: Building Blocks for Analyzing Civil Society					
Research modality	Methodology	Type of information	Time and cost	Typical relevance	Country experience
Top-down assessment	Semi-structured interviews w/ CSO leaders and government officials	Relationships, resources, constraints, Relative strengths and weaknesses	4 weeks, \$15,000 ¹³	Create basis for dialogue and identify main constraints to effectiveness	Angola Guinea Bissau Togo Ecuador Albania
Top-down assessment	Survey of CSO leaders and government officials	activities, size, budget, human resources, types of organizations, internal governance, constraints, engagement strategy with government	\$25,000	Identify and quantify main constraints to effectiveness of CSOs and existing partnerships	Ecuador Albania Senegal
Bottom-up assessment	Focus groups, conversational interviews and participant observation with citizens	Perceptions on CSOs, trust in different organizations and institutions, community-level dynamics, existence and types of CBOs	10 weeks, \$50,000 ¹⁴	Identify main constraints to CBOs and perspectives on CSOs	Angola Guinea Bissau Togo
Desk review of enabling environment	Literature review	Legal frameworks and participation in public debate	3 weeks, \$5000	Identify possible constraints in legislation and financing mechanisms	Ecuador Albania
Inventories	Survey among CSOs	activities, size, budget, human resources		Map organizations, localities, resources, and activities	Guinea Bissau Togo
In-depth study of specific organizations	Extensive participant observation in CSOs including CBOs	Composition, partnerships, internal decision making processes	4 weeks, \$8000	Identification of local partners for reintegration and CDD	-

¹³ Cost based on mid-level international consultant

¹⁴ Costs for bottom-up work varied from \$37,000 in Guinea Bissau to \$65,000 in Angola

Lessons on process and consensus building

Process can be just as, or even more, important than the final research product. While this is probably true for countries other than conflict-affected and fragile states, it deserves to be emphasized. Given that information is thinly spread, often resides in institutional memory rather than studies, and that the topic can be sensitive, close collaboration between stakeholders throughout the process is helpful. In all three pilot countries, an oversight committee with members from civil society, government, and donors was convened at the outset to follow and validate the research. This group was presented with Terms of Reference, regular updates, and draft reports, and was invited to comment. In all three countries, this was positively perceived and was the first attempt to bring the three groups of actors together regularly. As a result, coordination potential was improved, and some controversies could be discussed in a more informal format than a large workshop or written documents. In Togo, the composition of the oversight committee, combined with a dynamic Bank country office, strengthened the ownership of the undertaking among stakeholders and consequently the follow-up process. As a first step, UNDP, the EU and the Bank have defined a common civil society support action plan, which seeks to leverage the efforts of these three donors around civil society support. The next step will include additional donors in this dialogue and coordinated effort.

Four key lessons came out of the experience that could have strengthened their impact:

- **Involve the right mix of stakeholders.** The right group of CSOs, government officials, and donors in an oversight committee for this type of research can be crucial for the impact and follow-up of findings. The composition of individuals from the three groups should ensure linkages with a maximum amount of stakeholders; authority to make commitments; and knowledge about existing initiatives and previous analyses. In Guinea Bissau, a resource person from one NGO with knowledge of Bank operations was initially included instead of a representative from the national umbrella organization, an error that was criticized and soon rectified.
- **Keep the momentum going.** A key lesson in Angola was that momentum was lost as a result of significant delays in report writing. The delays could have been reduced with a more comprehensive analytical framework from the outset, a smaller and less ambitious sample, and more intensive follow-up from the Bank.
- **Attach resources to the recommendations.** This is related to the former lesson. One of the problems with CSAT was that expectations were created that could not be met. While it was very clear from the outset that the pilots were analytical work and not operations, engagement of the Bank and involvement of multiple stakeholders becomes very visible in a country where support levels are relatively low. The oversight committees raised needs for follow-up events that were not budgeted for. Similarly, a few of the identified good practices could have merited scaling up or replication.
- **The proper functioning of civil society is everyone's business.** The acceptance and ultimate impact of this work will be enhanced if it is not seen as primarily sponsored by the World Bank. The Bank should appear as one coordinator, or catalyst, for this work, but it is clearly of interest to all donors, to government, to civil society, and ultimately, to the people who should be the primary beneficiaries of pluralistic institutional development.

Annex 3: Summary of Angola Pilot Synthesis Report

Civic engagement and civil society organizations in Angola saw a significant upsurge after multiparty democracy was introduced in 1991. Before that, most organizations were associated with the state party, the *Movimento Popular da Libertação de Angola* (MPLA). The most salient findings from the Angola study include the presence, capacity, and dominance of INGOs, the reliance on mass-party organizations and religious groups in areas less exposed to development projects, and the tense relations between CSOs and the government.

CSO landscape

Actual numbers of CSOs in each country is difficult to assess. The umbrella organization operates with an estimate of 500 NGOs, but warns that this is not very reliable data. Activities tend to concentrate in a few more established organizations.

International NGOs

The conflict has and influx of resources has also led to a high presence of INGOs. Most national NGOs work with INGOs as implementing partners. At a national level, a significant number of organizations also work in areas of advocacy and rights promotion.

National NGOs

With one exception, INGOs have much capacity and financially stronger than their national counterparts. NGOs mostly work in partnerships with INGOs, often as sub-contractors for specific activities.

Church groups

Churches in Angola have a tradition of seeing their mission as broader than evangelization, and are among the most trusted and turned to institutions in the country. Church groups and affiliations are numerous, with small villages, especially in the peri-urban areas, often being served hosting a dozen or more different parishes.

To some external CSOs, partnerships with church related groups in beneficiary communities is seen as an advantage for community-driven development, as required community contributions are more easily mobilized with the extra motivation provided by a religious authority. Churches tend to be more active in social service delivery where other CSOs are less present.

Mass party organizations

A number of community organizations are closely tied with political parties and religious institutions. In the 1970s and 1980s, state structures penetrated communities much more deeply than is the case today. Until 1992, most organizational forms were related the only political party, as mass organizations of the MPLA, or created by ministerial decrees, such as residents' commissions¹⁵ and parents-teachers' associations.¹⁶ Local farmers associations were also established during the one-party state, that would guarantee agricultural inputs to their members, support commercialization of agricultural products, and support in sale and distribution. These associations originated under the Ministry of Agriculture, until the National Union of Farmers' Associations (UNACA) created a semi-autonomous structure in 1990, however still closely linked to the MPLA.

¹⁵ Provincial Government of Luanda – *Regulamento das Assembleias e Comissões de Moradores* (1993)

¹⁶ Ministry of Education/ National Agency for Basic Education – *Regulamento do Ensino de Base – Artº. 28* (1990)

In areas that have been less exposed to external interventions during the war, organizations at a community level tend to be either linked to traditional authorities, to religious institutions, or to party structures. In Lunda Sul province, there is a relatively low presence of international and national NGOs. In this province, the most solid organizations are extensions of the MPLA, its youth branch, JMPLA, or the MPLA women's organization, OMA. Generally, community-level women's associations are often part of OMA, the MPLA women's branch, or PROMAICA in the Catholic Church. UNITA has its own associations and women's groups, but is much less widespread.

Community Based Organizations

Most development projects establish CBOs as interlocutor between the population and the external funding. In a few cases, community groups established through a specific external intervention have remained in the community after the end of the project in question, and have become important change agents in their community, translating the project specific capacity into longer-term development and in particular soliciting funds from other sources to new activities, including civil society and the state. Sabnta Teresa community outside Huambo is an example. Occasionally, these surviving community groups have even inspired neighboring communities to get organized or solicit specific interventions from local CSOs. A national NGO, ADRA, has facilitated legalization of a number of CBOs, to better ensure their empowerment and sustainability.

CBOs also exist independently of external interventions. These provide emergency credit for major or unexpected events (funerals, weddings, etc), savings schemes, and rotating help in labor intensive productive activities. Traditional solidarity groups tend to be linked to construction work and harvesting, coupled with a social events and sharing of food. However these groups were weakened during the conflict. This type of organization is also mostly observed in more isolated areas that have benefited less from external interventions. Solidarity groups have been revived in the last few years mainly as rotating credit and savings groups to allow purchase of costly items such as refrigerators, stoves, and other electric equipment. These groups may represent an opportunity as partners in micro-credit and income generation activities.

Traditional authorities

While not considered CSOs, traditional authorities are referred to by citizens as a key institution in their lives. Generally, traditional authorities tend to have a stronger position in rural than in urban areas. Often, the councils of leaders also have a function of controlling the local chief, and are the primary responsible for educating youth and transmitting the indigenous knowledge of their community. The designations and compositions of these councils vary greatly even within countries. A process of more modern democratization of traditional authorities has been observed in Angola through the representation of women and youth, and even through election of chiefs. A soba in Caala argued that the *onjango* (council) should integrate women, since 'after all there were women in the national parliament'. In Uíge and Huambo, elections between candidates that represent lineages traditionally linked with power have taken place in a few communities. Traditional leaders can provide necessary leverage to project-related CBOs.

Key characteristics

Capacity constraints

Despite the significant upsurge in civil society organizations in the last decade, civil society itself is still grappling with defining its role and identity. This process is accentuated by the end of the civil war, and a shift in activities from emergency to development, at the same time as government increasingly seeks to steer and coordinate a reconstruction and development process. Fiduciary requirements are getting tougher in a context of development than they were during emergency operations.

Networks

Networks such as the FONGA (Forum of Angolan NGOs) exist along with thematic, regional, and local platforms. The umbrella Committee for NGOs working in Angola, CONGA, was established in 1988. It was followed by the Forum for National NGOS, FONGA, in 1991. 38 of the 62 interviewed CSOs are involved in coordination forums at a provincial or municipal level. Some are convened by the Government with the participation of civil society (Forums of Social Consultation, Municipal Councils), others are initiated by civil society organizations with the participation of government institutions, (Forum of Kilamba Kilamba Kiayi).

Other networks are thematic, for the most part without the involvement of any government institution. One important such network is the Land Network, which has been active in lobbying for amendments to the new Land Law, as well as educating citizens about its impact. While their influence on the former has been limited, they have succeeded in raising awareness about the issue and associated risks.

Financial resources

CSOs depend on international donors and income generation such as direct service provision (research, organization of events etc). Most funds managed by civil society organizations come from external sources, national organizations acting as intermediaries for international organizations and donors. These funds are occasionally supplemented by government funds, and beneficiary co-financing. Donor funds are unpredictable and shifts as sector priorities shift. Furthermore, donors have low confidence in the capacity and accountability capacities of most organizations, which may penalize even those working well. Overhead costs are usually low and do not cover general administrative costs. 7 of the interviewed organization have service delivery as their main source of income. 10 interviewed organizations have benefited from one-time government financing. 10 organizations have accessed funds from the private sector, mainly the oil companies.

Participation

CSOs, mostly INGOs, have contributed to strengthened social capital in the midst of war. Ironically, the conflict in Angola also introduced participatory development and notions of social accountability to many rural communities. To mitigate the emergency situation created by the civil war, international NGOs with state of the art methodologies and approaches introduced new methodologies and more inclusive collective action through development projects. As the war had disrupted the formerly top-down government-run community structures, what remained in many communities were mostly religious organizations, far less participatory and inclusive in their organization. In some cases, the new methodologies are now promoting improved relations between local governments and citizens, the former modeling NGO consultations. While efforts have been made to establish more inclusive structures, women remain an excluded group.

CSO-government relations

The relationship between the government and civil society is challenged by a weak tradition for civic engagement and multi-party democracy and by the transition from war to peace.

Post-conflict transition

With the end of the civil war, and with the government playing a more active role in poverty reduction efforts, both the public and civic sectors are redefining their roles and responses to poverty. While the government wishes to better coordinate efforts and to ensure efficiency and coherence with national plans, CSOs maintain the importance of an independent civil society. CSOs argue they should not merely be implementing government plans but also serving as an alternative voice. The distinction between politics and civic engagement is still subject to some controversy. The government has demonstrated

more patience with social service delivery organizations than the ‘watchdog’ agencies and human rights organizations. 85 percent of the organizations interviewed describe initial relations with government agencies as tense.

79 percent of the interviewed CSOs expressed that relations with the government had significantly improved in the last few years, and remain hopeful that this relationship would develop into a more balanced partnership. Government officials consider the working relationship with civil society to be mostly constructive. Some admit that the relationship may at times be tense due to poor understanding within certain government entities of the autonomy of civil society.

Citizens interviewed see the government as the primary responsible for providing social services. Yet the impact of government interventions is considered low. As a result, people see it as necessary to turn to CSOs.

CSO-government partnerships

A number of partnerships between CSOs and local government already exist. Examples include local development forums in Kilamba Kiaxi and Hoji ya Henda in Luanda, Dombe Grande in Benguela, and Dande in Bengo. In areas where the Bank-financed social action fund, FAS, is active, citizens report that direct communication with local public institutions has improved.

The paucity of institutionalized forums for communication and coordination is a major obstacle to improved relations. Most organizations are informed about government activities via mass media or word of mouth. Some complain that channels of communication are not more direct.

Legal framework

New legislation is subject to controversy. The Angolan government has elaborated a Code of Conduct for NGOs that is seen by CSOs to tighten the government’s grip on their activities. The regulation stipulates rules of engagement, coordination with and complex government approval procedures, restrictions on recruitment and employment, curbing of international recruitments and more. While the Code does seek to address some legitimate concerns about coordination, holistic strategies, and national capacity, many CSOs feel that it is restricting rather than facilitating. Only 3 of the interviewed organizations find that the recent code of conduct for NGOs is making it much clearer what the government anticipates from NGOs.

Despite efforts to negotiate between CSOs and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Reintegration (MINARS), stakeholders do not feel that their inputs have been taken into account. In the view of the interviewed CSOs, there is need for a thorough debate about the role of civil society followed by a revision of the Code with the participation of interested parties. Generally, knowledge of laws and regulations are limited. As argued by government officials in the issue, however, so far there are few indications that the code will actually be implemented.

Annex 4: Summary of Togo Pilot Synthesis Report

Civil society as it is known today in Togo started emerging in the 1990s, spurred by the Togo National Conference in 1991. The key findings from the Togo study relate to the restricted space for CSOs resulting from a centralized and dominant state, weak accountability mechanisms for CSOs and extremely low trust in both government institutions and CSOs.

CSO Landscape

A legal framework for NGOs in Togo was provided in 1992. Since then the number of NGOs have seen a rapid increase, from 14 registered in 1970, to 70 in 1989, to 325 in 2004. These operate in 7 main sectors, of which around 35 percent in agriculture, followed by education (around 20 percent), and the rest in roughly equal proportions (9-12 percent) in the areas of culture, community infrastructure, micro-credit, health and environment.

NGOs

NGOs operate mainly in agriculture, education, culture, community infrastructure, micro-credit, health and environment. There are relatively few INGOs in Togo, and a concentration of NGOs in Lomé.

Associations

Associations have a different legal status from NGOs and are legally recognized in Togo since 1934. As NGOs, associations grew exponentially in the 1990s from 1,975 in 1990 to 2,968 in 2004, now largely outnumbering NGOs. However, of the associations registered in the Ministry of the Interior, there are no figures of how many are actually operational. Associations broadly cover the same thematic areas as NGOs (agriculture, health, education, community infrastructure, micro-credit, environment, culture). However, by not being required to operate ‘apolitically’, associations have moved into additional areas where NGOs have not ventured, particularly in the field of human rights (including children and women’s rights). As opposed to NGOs that often work nationally, associations generally operate at the local or regional levels. Many associations seem to suffer from technical, human resource and financial constraints. For example, of the 50 interviewed for the study, 72 percent only rely on in-kind resources and mostly from abroad. Only 8 percent declared having access to internet.

Religious groups

Before 1992, only 3 religious confessions were permitted in Togo (the Catholic Church, the Evangelical-Presbyterian Church and Islam). In the new constitution of 1992, the state was proclaimed non-religious, and religious freedom was established. As a result, a number of religious confessions have emerged in Togo in the last decade, some Catholic, other Protestant and Muslim. As associations, they also have to be registered with the Ministry of the Interior. Although religious organizations are apolitical, some have stronger ties to the state than others. According to the research, the evangelical-presbyterian church is more closely associated to the state than the Catholic Church.

Trade unions

In 1973, the CNTT was created by the state, as an arm of the state-party (RPT). In 1992, when the constitution established the right to unionize and associate freely, the CNTT distanced itself from the state-party and a number of other trade unions were created in several domains. Today, the largest trade union remains the CNTT (with more than 60 base unions), followed by UGSL (General Union of Free Trade Unions), with more than 45 base organizations, and UNSIT (National Union of Independent Trade Unions in Togo). A majority of union members (54 percent) believe their leaders to be manipulated by the government. Several informants commented on the perceived politicization of some trade unions and their bases.

The media

The 1992 constitution recognizes freedom of the press and independent and private media is allowed to operate freely. Since then, Togo has seen a proliferation of private news reports, including both those with pro- and anti-Governments stances. In addition, there are currently 5 television channels in Togo and 60 FM radio stations. Of all the media, radio is the most widely used media form in Togo, both because of its wide territorial reach and the high rate of illiteracy in the country. Most radios function autonomously, although they all operate under the coordination of URATEL (Union of Free Radio and Television). Many of the stations are affiliated with foreign radio stations.

Key characteristics

Lack of specialization

Many, particularly national NGOs, work in 8 to 10 sectoral and thematic areas simultaneously. Few—if any—work explicitly on issues of governance, democratization and human rights, probably because of a non-enabling environment and the legal requirement that NGOs maintain an apolitical character. The constitution recognizes four different types of civil society organizations: (i) non-governmental organizations (NGOs); (ii) associations and movements; (iii) trade unions; and (iv) religious confessions. Overall, the enabling environment for civic engagement is weak. Despite liberalizations since 1992, the government under President Eyadema was not positively inclined toward CSOs. In addition to a limiting policy environment, drastic cutback in donor funding has weakened both public services and CSOs

Capacity

Many, particularly national NGOs, work in 8 to 10 thematic areas simultaneously. 47 percent considered that poor technical and human resource capacity is the main limitations to the sector's effectiveness. This phenomenon is perceived as more accentuated among regional and national organizations than among international NGOs.

Networks

Until recently, there were two main NGO federations in Togo (FONGTO and UONGTO) and 5 regional federations that cover each of the country's regions. Following pressure from several donors and civil society organizations themselves, FONGTO and UONGTO decided to merge into one federation in late 2004, which could potentially help to solidify collaboration within that sector. Some have linked FONGTO to the opposition and UONGTO to the party of the president, but the research does not provide any conclusive evidence on this. There is little collaboration and insufficient coordination among NGOs. Out of 325 NGOs interviewed, 23 percent consider that lack of coordination among NGOs is the main handicap limiting the effectiveness of NGO engagement.

Financial resources

Most NGOs considered lack of and poor access to financial resources was the main handicap facing them. The cut of EU aid to Togo and a general decline of foreign aid in the last decade, has contributed to accentuate this problem. According to public officials interviewed there are budgetary lines within the national budget which provide support to NGOs and other civil society organizations. The actual contribution was even considered substantial by some. Tax exemption to NGOs was also mentioned as an important financial advantage provided by the state. However, exact figures could not be provided. On the other hand, of the 10 NGOs interviewed, only 2 declared having received financial assistance from the state and 2 having been granted tax exemptions. Several were not aware of the existence of budgetary lines to NGOs and others knew of organizations that had received support, but considered that this was provided only selectively and not transparently. 8 out of the 10 organizations also considered tax exemptions to be provided on a discretionary and non-transparent basis. The private press perceives itself as struggling financially, due to lack of government support.

Accountability

The existence of fraudulent CSOs threatens to undermine trust in CSOs more generally among the population. Community respondents also pointed out lack of ability of CSOs to promote adequate beneficiary participation at the community-level. Concern was also raised about fictitious and fraudulent NGOs, especially in savings and credit and different advisory activities. Furthermore, CSOs and government officials alike raised concerns that loopholes in the legal framework and a lack of government supervision have led private consulting firms to register as NGOs to avoid tax collection.

CSO-government relations

The dominance of a centralized state has given very limited space to CSOs. Very few CSOs consider the enabling environment for civic engagement in Togo to be favorable. As a result, neither the state, nor CSOs have been able to provide the necessary services to the population.

Although many NGOs were reticent to answer this question (only 27 percent answered), 5.4 percent of these considered that the enabling environment for NGOs in Togo is not favorable, while 2.5 percent consider it positive. Some respondents provided examples of attempts of government control and supervision of NGO federations by sending government representatives to ensure that meetings do not turn into political gatherings.

Governance and advocacy

The main point of tension between some religious organizations and the state seem to revolve around the some religious organizations' work on governance issues. Although the government officials interviewed consider that most religious organizations stick to their mission of evangelization and humanitarian work, some of them are perceived to inappropriately venture into the political arena, working on issues of human rights and democracy. Conversely, several CSO informants from religious organizations complained about excessive government control and interference into their organizations, particularly when working on issues of governance and human rights.

Freedom of speech and the press

The practice of freedom of press is disputed. Government officials from the Ministry of Communication consider that there is freedom of expression both in theory and practice, but complained about the media not using it appropriately. On the other hand, the private press complained about the pressure they feel from the state and the resistance of the latter to allow opposition opinions, the seizure and control of opposition news reports and incarceration of journalists and leaders of the private press. Some radios have been threatened with closure for airing programs considered of political character. Journalists have been persecuted for publication of non-founded information.

Conversely, there is a perception that pro-Government media is being strongly supported by the state, not only by being allowed to operate more freely, but also by providing it with financial subsidies.

Legal framework

32 percent of organizations complained of the excessive slowness of the legal status recognition process as being the main handicap to the effectiveness of NGOs, many having to wait 3 to 4 years to receive their certification. Particularly regional and national NGOs considered that a certain degree of discretion applied to the recognition of NGOs, and that there is a general lack of transparency around the process.

Annex 5: Summary of Guinea Bissau Pilot Synthesis

Restrictions on organizations and civic engagement were gradually lifted starting in 1986. The key observations to be made from the Guinea Bissau study include the fragility of the state and the dynamism yet weak capacity of a high number of CSOs, especially CBOs.

CSO Landscape

In 1992, a statute gave legal existence to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The term NGO is broadly applied to most types of CSOs, except CBOs and religious groups. According to UNDP data, about 118 NGOs and associations exist. However, the total number is difficult to estimate because since 1995-1996 the government has ceased to compile and publish any oversight. More than 70 international NGOs were active in the country in 1996, but this has dropped substantially since.

NGOs

NGOs are considered by the population to have a high development impact. NGOs are concentrated in the south and on the islands. The north has far fewer organizations, but significantly benefits from remittances from the Diaspora. The east has the weakest presence of NGOs. Activities include institutional support to local CBOs, community radios, credit, provision of agricultural inputs and technology equipment, construction of schools, resource management, sensitization in human rights, and literacy training.

The term NGO also encompasses trade associations, producer groups, consulting firms and service providers, advocacy organizations for specific social groups (women, youth, the disabled), and even one-person undertakings with unclear objectives and motivations. Due to the broad interpretation of what constitutes an NGO, concerns have been raised that this creates a convenient way to avoid taxes and fees owed to the state, creating a situation that discredits civil society.

Community-based organizations

A large number of CBOs are the main development actors in Guinea Bissau. Quite often, community members themselves establish CBOs in response to specific problems. In commerce and agriculture, women's organizations appear particularly numerous. Many CBOs are directly financed by remittances, especially in the north. In health and education, particularly in rural areas, many services are delivered by private NGOs and religious missions, and frequently maintained by community-based organizations (CBOs). While this demonstrates an expression of valuable social capital at the community level and a responsive civil society, efforts are not coupled with public services and sector strategies, hence sustainability is often limited.

CBOs represent an interlocutor for the community towards external agents and to leverage external funds and are considered to have significant impact on the well-being of interviewed beneficiaries. They also organize community contributions towards specific initiatives such as schools construction, teachers' salaries, health centers and maternity wards, where these services are not offered by other entities. Finally, community associations are considered a key source of information about ongoing activities and opportunities by 80 percent of the informants. Community radios are in the process of taking over this role as they gradually expand their outreach.

Religious Groups

Religious groups – the Catholic Church in particular – have come to play an important role in the education sector. Parents have contributed in cash contributions towards the education of their children. Religious groups also constitute key providers in the areas of health and sanitation. Activities include

basic infrastructure, medicine and equipment for primary health care, wells construction to provide improve access to potable water, and sewer sanitary/ disposal. Mosques occasionally provide one-time cash contribution towards urgencies such as wakes and funerals.

Traditional authorities

Along with CSOs, traditional authorities are the most trusted institution in most communities. Traditional authorities are highly respected by community members despite not possessing the financial means necessary to meet even a fraction of the needs of the populations. This is both a rural and an urban phenomenon. The authority of traditional leaders is applied in daily life through organization of the economic and social life of the village. This includes management of production, harvesting, and access to natural resources, traditional and religious ceremonies, representation of the village in external fora, and resolution of conflicts. The role of traditional leaders in conflict resolution is weaker in the urban areas, where conflict and security are causes of more concern than among rural populations but where police and judiciary are generally resorted to when disputes occur.

Diaspora

The Diaspora makes significant contributions towards development activities, either individually or through organized associations. The emigrants send money via porters traveling to the country for several months, who then follow up the activities funded by the remittances. Alternatively, transfers are made through informal financial structures with intermediaries in each country. While formal money transfer agencies such as WesternUnion charge 10 percent fees for this service, informal transfers cost about a fifth of this. In Cacheu, 18 kilometers of regional roads were constructed with funds from manjoca expatriates, mostly residing in France. Similarly, in Contuobel in the east and Canchungo in the north, emigrants provided communities with generators that enabled nightlife in the villages, with movie projection, dancing events, and other cultural activities.

Key characteristics

Participation and accountability

There is improvement potential in participatory development and accountability of CSOs. Problems often relate to lack of planning and implementation capacity in CSOs, as well as limited experience in participatory development. Citizens complain about low levels of consultation and community participation. Concern is also raised about the technical capacity and lack of specialization among many CSOs. A certain level of tension and frustration is expressed with unpredictability and lack of transparency. Suspiciousness vis-à-vis external organizations is illustrated by the case of community members traveling from Iemberem in the south to the capital to verify that designated funds to a given activity corresponded with what was being implemented in the field. In Bissau, one resident's association was convinced that it could have managed funds better than organizations with which the community has experienced delays and discontinuities.

Financial resources

From the interviews with civil society and government leaders, the study airs some concern that issues are often defined by donor priorities and supply-driven fields of interest than by exigencies from the population, and even asks whether this contributes to discrediting the civil society organizations vis-à-vis the population.

Networks

CSOs have their own umbrella organization, PLACON. A few organizations regarded as the most reliable and best connected to networks tend to capture most available funding. There is some concern that this further solidifies their position and could lead to monopolistic situations.

CSO-government relations

Absence of the state

Rural communities lament the absence of government in their lives. Urban communities are slightly more likely to resort to government institutions, partly due to their more visible presence. Overall, 86 percent rely on CSOs to meet their needs. There is low confidence in the government.

In only four out of twelve localities, public institutions are not among those to which people turn to resolve their problems. In eight of twelve localities, a majority look to CBOs or traditional authorities to address their needs. CSOs have more capacity and experience in social service delivery than government institutions. Resources have been concentrated among a few favored civil society organizations, in stark contrast to weak government structures lacking the necessary funds to run key ministries and institutions.

CSO-government dialogue and partnerships

Unlike other countries where this imbalance prevails, the government in Guinea Bissau is very open to civil society organizations, and cognizant of their capacity and experience. Some CSOs are concerned that the government is a little too comfortable with this division of labor. With its newly formulated PRSP, however, the government is expected to become more proactive in social service delivery, and will need to elaborate a working relationship with civil society that ensures a sound division of labor, coordination of activities, and local government capacity to capitalize on civil society experiences in the last decade.

Very few partnerships exist between CSOs and government institutions. Local development planning has been facilitated by an INGO, but activities planned have no funding. These lessons in local development planning could be further explored as the government steps up its investment and engagement in the social sectors.

Legal framework

There is no clear interface between the government and the civil society. A declaration at the Ministry of Justice is sufficient to obtain NGO status, but organizations must register at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation to be able receive the tax exemptions stipulated by law. It is the Planning Directorate at the Ministry of Economy and Finance that grants these exemptions after verifying that such accreditation is in effect. The law on is not very restrictive and therefore allows many organizations to declare themselves NGOs. The legal framework for civic engagement is not very comprehensive, the only provisions being registration processes that allow for tax exemptions, and these are loosely sanctioned.

Annex 6: Analytical Framework for Beneficiary Assessment

	Observation/interviews/analysis		Policy implications
Province/Region	Theme (from interview guide)	Sub-questions/ findings	Implications for outreach
	Active involvement in community-based organizations; perceptions of same re: achievements, constraints, needs	Functioning of CBOs, emergence, sustenance, decision making, voice, priorities, motivation, results, impact, constraints, composition (risks of exclusion)	How can projects ensure the voice of vulnerable groups? How should CBOs be strengthened?
	Institutional recourse for resolution of needs (community-based, NGO, religious, government, none); assessment of same	Types of development activities implemented in community; Role played by various CSOs (who intervenes how?) Engagement, consultations, methodologies, between communities and CSOs	How can vertical links be capitalized upon for service delivery and outreach?
	Perceived collaboration between government and identified institution(s) sought for assistance	Access to state institutions Existing state-CSO partnerships benefiting community Are messages consistent? Is division of labor clear?	How is the impact of state-citizen relations of CSO-state collaboration? How can state-CSO partnerships be supported?
	Channel of information used regarding institutional providers of services	Information sharing, communications, transfer of lessons from other communities, knowledge about opportunities and interventions	What is the best channel for communication and IEC? How can information sharing be improved and what forums should be supported/ facilitated given existing capacities and resources? (is radio widespread? Are newsletters better?)
	Perceived equity in provision of services - elaborate on excluded groups	Who are included in development programs? Is any particular group at risk of exclusion? What are the organizations/ groups in	

		the community? What is their origin? Who are included in decision making?	
	Recommendations for improvement re: institutions that might and should assist local development.		

Annex 7: Country Summary Findings

Country	Political context	Key actors	Main CSO characteristics	CSO-state relations	CSO coordination	Capacity constraints
<i>Angola</i>	<p>Recovery from 40 years of conflict</p> <p>Dominant incumbent party</p> <p>Governance and transparency issues in natural resource revenue management</p>	<p>International donors</p> <p>INGOs</p> <p>Church</p> <p>Project-related CBOs</p>	<p>High presence of INGOs</p> <p>Church groups and mass-party organizations important in areas less exposed to INGOs</p> <p>CBOs established by projects</p> <p>Active CSO role in peace building</p>	<p>The transition to a more active government in the social sectors is creating tensions between government and CSOs.</p> <p>Weak CSO-government communication</p> <p>Indirect government restrictions on CSOs</p>	<p>Weak umbrella organizations, some stronger thematic networks</p> <p>CSO services concentrated in coastal and highland provinces</p>	<p>Weak fiduciary capacities</p> <p>Concentration of funds and capacities in INGOs and a few NGOs</p> <p>Lack of specialization</p>
<i>Guinea Bissau</i>	<p>Perpetual state of instability</p> <p>Weak government institutions</p> <p>CSO dominant development actor</p>	<p>CBOs</p> <p>NGOs</p> <p>Catholic Church</p>	<p>Strong CBO mobilization</p> <p>Remittances directly financing CBOs in north</p> <p>Strong women's CBOs</p> <p>Few INGOs</p> <p>Active CSO role in peace building</p>	<p>No clear interface CSO-government</p> <p>Suspected misuse of NGO status for tax exemptions</p> <p>Few CSO-government partnerships</p>	<p>Weak CSO Coordination</p> <p>Weak institution building of CBOs</p> <p>CSO services concentrated in capital and south</p>	<p>Weak participatory approaches</p> <p>Weak fiduciary capacities and weak accountability</p> <p>Lack technical capacity</p> <p>Lack of specialization</p> <p>Lack of long-term funds</p>

<i>Togo</i>	<p>Power concentrated in executive</p> <p>Repressive environment for CSOs</p> <p>Existence of fraudulent CSOs</p>	CBOs	<p>Few CSOs operating in governance</p> <p>Few INGOs</p> <p>CBOs operating with little external assistance from government or CSOs</p>	Indirect government restrictions on CSOs	<p>CSO coordination is improving</p> <p>Common donor framework is being elaborated</p> <p>Weak internal accountability mechanisms</p> <p>CSO services concentrated in Maritime (south) region</p>	<p>Lack of specialization</p> <p>Lack of technical capacities/human resources</p> <p>Lack of funds</p>
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