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Sida Decentralised Evaluation

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Mid-Term Review of the AGIR Programme

Final Report

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January 2013**

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The views and interpretations expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAAJC	Para-legal Support and Community Development organisation in Tete
ACAMO	Association of the Blind and Partial Sighted of Mozambique based in Beira
Akilizetho	Nampula-based Organisation Focusing District Decentralisation
AMCS	Women in Social Communication Association
AMMCJ	Association of Mozambican Women in Legal Career
AWEPA	International Non-Governmental Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa
CARE	International Non-Governmental Organisation, American
CDH	Center for Human Rights
CEC	Center for Communication Studies
CEDE	Center for Studies on Democracy and Development
CESC	Center for Capacity Development and Learning of Civil Society
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIP	Center for Public Integrity
CLUSA	International Non-Governmental Organisation, American
CONCERN	International Non-Governmental Organisation, Irish
CODD	Center for Studies and Promotion of Citizenship, Human Rights and Environment
CTV	Centro Terra Viva, Environmental Organisation
DFID	Development Fund for International Development
Diakonia	International Non-Governmental Organisation, Swedish
DUAT	Land Certificate
EU	European Union
FM	Women's Forum
FORCOM	Forum of Community Radios
GBS	General Budget Support
GDP	Gross Domestic product
GMD	Mozambican Debt Group
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IBIS	International Non-Governmental Organisation, Danish
ICC	<i>Intermediaries</i> Coordination Committee
IESE	Institute for Economic and Social Studies
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

JA	Environmental Organisation
Lareira Crítica	External Advisory and Partner Support Group to SCC
LDH	Human Rights League
Livaningo	Environmental Organisation
MASC/CCSM	Civil Society Support Mechanism
MEPT	Education for All Movement
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
MONASO	Mozambican Network on HIV/AIDS
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSF	International Non-Governmental Organisation, Doctors without Borders
MULEIDE	Association for Women, Law and Development
NAFET	Women's Network in Tete
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
Nweti	Organisation addressing communication for health and HIV/AIDS
ODA	Overseas Development Agency
OE	Electoral Observatory
ORAM	Non-governmental Organisation on Communities and land
Oxfam NOVIB	International Non-governmental organisation, Dutch
PARP	Poverty Reduction Action Plan
PJ	Youth Parliament network
RBM	Results-Based Management
Rede da Criança	Children's Rights network
SCC	International Non-governmental Organisation, Swedish Cooperative Center
SDC	Swiss Development Agency
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SNV	International Non-governmental Organisation, Dutch
UNAC	National Farmers union
UPCT	Tete Provincial Farmers Union
USAID	United States International Development Agency
WLSA	Women and Law in Southern Africa
WPP	Work Plan and Policy

Preface

This evaluation of AGIR (Action Programme for Inclusive and Responsible Governance) was commissioned by the Embassy of Sweden in Maputo, Mozambique, through Sida's framework agreement for reviews and evaluations with Indevelop.

Indevelop carried out the evaluation in cooperation with Tana Copenhagen. Jessica Rothman was the Project Manager with overall responsibility for managing the implementation and the process of the evaluation, and quality assurance of the methodology and reports was provided by Ian Christoplos.

The independent evaluation team included the following key members:

- Kevin Kelpin, Team Leader: Kevin is a member of Indevelop's Core Team of professional evaluators, who specialises in evaluative thinking and methods for assessing and reporting on programme outcomes.
- Vibe Johnsen, Evaluation Specialist: Vibe is a consultant for Tana Copenhagen with many years of experience from development cooperation in Mozambique.
- Jose Macuane, National Consultant: Jose is a specialist in governance and civil society in Mozambique.

This report has incorporated feedback from Sida and the AGIR programme implementers on the draft report.

Executive Summary

This mid-term review report of the ‘Action Programme for Inclusive and Responsible Governance’ (AGIR) in Mozambique was carried out from August 2012 to its completion at the end of October 2012 by a three-member review team fielded by Indevelop. A presentation of the preliminary findings was made on October 24th, 2012 to AGIR *intermediaries* and AGIR CSO partners. Subsequent to this presentation, the review team was provided with the just-completed 2012 semi-annual report, which was written and submitted jointly by AGIR *intermediary* organisations.

AGIR has duration of five years beginning in 2010 and ending in 2014. Sweden is the only core donor, with Denmark and the Netherlands also providing support to participating INGOs (International Non-Governmental Organisations). The programme works with both national partners and with organisations in the provinces. In an effort to strengthen civil society and civil society organisations within Mozambique, the Swedish Embassy initiated the AGIR programme in 2010. The objective of AGIR is to:

Support Mozambican civil society organisations, strengthening their capacity for and impact on improving transparency, accountability, citizen’s participation, access to information, respect for human rights, and gender equality.¹

In line with the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, AGIR is structured to provide “good donor-ship” through support given for CSO ‘core funding’ that is aligned with the “strategic direction of the organisation” and to support and facilitate linkages and knowledge sharing between Mozambican CSOs.² The main support modality for this capacity strengthening of CSOs is to “work through a limited number of qualified *intermediary* organisations within the following four clusters of support:

- i) Participation, social and legal accountability, including monitoring of respect for human rights;
- ii) Social accountability in management of natural resources and community land rights;
- iii) Transparency, financial and political accountability; and,
- iv) Promotion of access to information.”³

¹ Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.1, 2010. Sida.

² Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.5, 2010. Sida.

³ The Swedish Embassy’s Support to Mozambican Civil Society Organizations, p.7; 2009.

The major **conclusions** of the mid-term review are:

- The AGIR programme is highly relevant to national priorities concerned with an active and engaged civil society. The strengthening of civil society is necessary in an environment where improvements to service delivery, transparency concerns, and measures of accountability are constantly challenged by the government and, increasingly, the private sector (primarily the natural resource sector). The CSOs (Civil Society Organisations) that the AGIR programme has partnered with have attempted to fill this void and add strength to the voice of civil society. The AGIR programme has done well in attracting and working with a large group of CSOs that work with the themes consistent with the programme's overall focus.
- While the AGIR programme continues to have low visibility as a programme among other donors, civil society organisations and the Mozambican government, those who do know of it have a high degree of praise for its innovative approach and focus for support to civil society.
- Within the AGIR programme there has been exemplary application of the Good Donorship principles, which have been enthusiastically supported by the participating CSOs. While it is still early in the programme's life, the outcomes of this approach seem to have begun to produce results in the level and focus of competency in the affiliated CSOs. The principle of good donorship has, however, posed a challenge to the consistency of the AGIR programme between *intermediaries* and in the relationships between *intermediaries* and their CSO partners. The process of identifying high-level objectives for the programme, and the meeting of these objectives in the field by the CSOs, can be problematic when implementation planning and strategies are based on the workplans of the CSOs. It was not clear to the evaluation team how the programme will ensure that, under core funding, the partner organisations will necessarily implement AGIR activities, and to what extent it avoids the risk of the organisations implementing other activities.
- Currently, there are 43 CSOs involved in the AGIR programme (it has surpassed the goal of 39 by 2014). This set of partners allows the programme to cover the wide array of activities of the four sub-programmes. Geographically, AGIR covers all provinces and districts through direct partners and AGIR CSO partner's branches. While the vast majority of direct AGIR partners are central level organisations, local direct strategic AGIR partners have been recruited (especially in 2012) in the central and northern parts of the country to reinforce horizontal linkages at the local level and expand programme impact and long-term sustainability. Nonetheless, the current portfolio still falls short of covering all the planned interventions. The freezing of funding of some partners after management problems has left some gaps in the coverage of activities. *Intermediaries* state that this has been offset by the integration of new partners.
- AGIR programme coordination by the *intermediary* organisations is improving through the focused use of the ICC (*Intermediaries* Coordination Committee) and technical groups. AGIR is conceived as a programme, but its opera-

tionalisation is still mostly done as four sub-programmes that share common areas. Therefore sub-programme consistency is better than programme consistency. Despite efforts in joint coordination, implementation and reporting (apart from the common areas), it is sometimes not clear to what extent sub-programme outcomes and results are feeding into programme impact. The mid-term review team agrees with the conclusions of the 2012 semi-annual report that, while general reporting has improved, the programme needs to start analysing how various outcomes of the thematic areas can be clustered and reported as a set of consistent programme results that clarify and strengthen the ability of AGIR to document and report on outcomes as a **cohesive programme**. A 'spheres of influence model' helps us to understand how AGIR has established these 'pathways of change', through which funding and support flow out to partners where change takes place at the organisational level of the CSO, and then through them, to the benefit of beneficiaries. This model can also help in demonstrating that the need for the programme to plan for, implement, monitor and report as a programme is critical to maintaining these pathways as a cohesive approach that decreases the threat of programme fragmentation and less effective implementation and reporting on results.

- A central mechanism for the capacity strengthening of CSOs within AGIR takes place through the provision of training on a wide range of issues, techniques and processes. This training is focused at both the organisational and individual levels. The mid-term review team however, has found a widespread low level of satisfaction among AGIR CSOs in the area of **capacity strengthening** as it relates to a range of critical issues. Furthermore, the review team has noted that there is very limited replication of training at the provincial level, where capacity is generally substantially lower than at the central level.
- Networking within the AGIR programme is generally weak, although some organisations have created networks and linkages. The objectives for AGIR state that networks should be created in relevant areas. While there are relatively strong networks vertically within sub-programmes, there are weak horizontal linkages between sub-programmes. Within AGIR, most contacted partners are part of, or are in contact with, external national and even international networks; and they are able to illustrate how some of these networks/linkages have led to advocacy results.
- Reporting on outcomes at all levels within the AGIR programme varies but has been improving with support from the *intermediaries*. As an example, Diakonia (International Non-Governmental Organisation, Swedish) works with partners to build the narrative establishing linkages between interventions and results. Similarly Oxfam, from the beginning of the programme, has been concerned with building a narrative of how outputs lead to outcomes and acknowledging the difficulties of attributing some results to the direct intervention of the programme. Generally, however, all *intermediaries* claim that partners' reporting is weak and tends to be activity-focused, hence challenging the reporting on outcomes. Training has been provided in this area, but it is still among the weakest of the skills held by CSO partners. While reporting is improving with the AGIR programme both the *intermediaries* and partner

CSOs have struggled to find an effective M&E system that is useful in terms of accountability, learning, and the reporting requirements of the programme.

- Capacity strengthening within the AGIR programme of the CSO partners is on-going and training in areas such as administrative, financial and human management, results-based management, gender, human rights and fund raising is contributing to improve organisations' internal capacities and their addressing of important issues such as gender, human rights, HIV/AIDS. Although there are some challenges, such as adjusting the approach to gender training to the conditions of the partners, improving and consolidating internal governance, and adopting results-based management, the programme has good potential to succeed in attaining the objective of strengthening organisations' internal capacity and eventually in creating the conditions for self-sustainability.
- Overall, gender and HIV/AIDS-based monitoring remains weak. The four AGIR *intermediaries* have recognised this weakness and have applied some of their first capacity strengthening efforts to this area through the testing, in 2012, of a new change-oriented gender training approach that has produced good results. The *intermediaries* have agreed to use this training method within 2012 and funds are available. It is expected that this should greatly improve the documentation of results through the use of cross-cutting gender indicators in 2013 (this is stated with the caveat that partners would need to improve their reporting of results and *intermediaries* would need to better systematise and improve their reporting in the joint results matrix so that results, not only in gender, are clearly related to indicators).
- AGIR's approach on sustainability as a multidimensional element is consistent and adequate for its purpose - to ensure that civil society is strengthened from multiple angles, and perspectives ensuring the quality of activism, the effectiveness of the participation of civil society in addressing its needs and that its voice is heard by a responsive and accountable government. As mentioned earlier, many of the AGIR partners' initiatives contribute to improving access to rights, to eliciting more accountability and to promoting good governance. Some of these results, however, are only immediate and will not necessarily lay the ground for the perpetual reproduction of a strong civil society able to hold the government responsible. Consequently, AGIR needs to continually identify those elements that are likely to produce impact and reproduce practices that will guarantee the sustainability of the results achieved.

The key **recommendations** of the mid-term review are:

Intermediaries Coordination Role

- The *intermediary* management body – ICC – needs to concentrate more on programme-level strategic planning, the coordination of implementation activities, consistent data collection, and reporting on programme results. This could be accomplished by the ICC as it exists, as this insight is not simply about the creation of another level of management but rather the need to take a

different view of the purpose of management. The need for the programme to be seen and to function as a programme is essential to its sustainability. From this perspective, harmonisation is an end in itself, and is an outcome to which the AGIR programme should work towards. While it can be said that there is recognition of this need among the *intermediaries*, each has been extremely cautious in suggesting how this process could work to make it happen. An open and focused discussion should take place between the *intermediaries* on the future and increased role of the ICC and technical support groups.

- The AGIR programme should focus on promoting a wider discussion on donor coordination in support to civil society, focusing on ways of attaining more specialisation, avoiding duplications and promoting a wider-range of areas for potential funding to other organisations that do not fall under AGIR areas. This does not necessarily mean closing the programme for additional funding, but means, above all, making the programme a good contributor to strengthen civil society sustainability and facilitating processes of diversification of funding, but in a context of better coordination and sharing of information and with a strategic focus on capacity development. This would also improve the visibility of the AGIR programme among donors and civil society in general.
- *Intermediaries* need to continue lobbying for common and core funding, and intensified capacity development in fundraising. The AGIR programme needs to increase its capacity-strengthening activities that include fund raising skills and strategies. Particular attention should be paid to strategies to enhance the emerging and local partners, which are particularly vulnerable.
- The AGIR *intermediaries* need to strategise and plan for the wider implications of intensified joint effort to improve outcomes in gender and HIV/AIDS. This should be done through a careful review of the joint outcomes for cross-cutting issues and should establish clear shared indicators for evaluation as well as for the level of attainment of the outcomes.

AGIR Monitoring and Evaluation

- The AGIR programme and the implementation of a results-based management system of collection and analysis of performance information demand considerable capacity from the partner organisations. To make this set of approaches more effective for management and impact monitoring, the AGIR programme should consider unbundling the management cycle – from planning to reporting/accountability – identify bottlenecks and the difficulties partners face at each stage of the cycle and direct its capacity strengthening support to these gaps, taking into account the specificities of the partner (organisation or network).
- The programme should pay particular attention to the information management systems involved in assessing performance and ascertaining results and

impact. However, since it is unrealistic to expect all CSO partners to manage complex information systems, the AGIR programme could focus on setting methodologies and standards for information collection and analysis, which in an initial phase could be centrally managed by AGIR and eventually replicated in organisations at a smaller scale. This could have the instrumental value of assessing the impact of AGIR as a programme, while at the same time could contribute to strengthening AGIR partner monitoring and evaluation systems to become effective instruments for results-based management.

- The adoption of results-based management is a key outcome of the AGIR programme and part of its capacity development strategy; thus the programme has to either restrict the principle of respecting partners' existing monitoring systems and put in place a more uniform system for the use by partner CSOs, or drastically ramp up its capacity-strengthening processes concerned with M&E activities.
- The AGIR programme should fine-tune the reporting on impact in the thematic areas, clarifying the results chain and revisiting the theory of change that implicitly proposed to constantly check the extent to which those specific achievements represent steps towards the intended change proposed by AGIR. This should inform incremental changes in the scope and nature of interventions that the partners make in the implementation of their strategic plans aligning them with the programme objectives. On the basis of the above, it is recommended that AGIR reviews the result matrix in light of new partner recruitment and to systematise the annual planning matrix as to clearly demonstrate how partner activities feed in to outcomes (and then adjust the result matrix accordingly).
- Many of the AGIR partners' initiatives contribute to improving access to rights, to eliciting more accountability and to promoting good governance. Some of these results, however, are only immediate and will not necessarily lay the foundation for the perpetual reproduction of a strong civil society able to hold the government responsible. Consequently, AGIR needs to continually identify those elements that are likely to produce impact and to reproduce practices that will guarantee the sustainability of the results achieved.

AGIR CSOs

- The AGIR *intermediaries* should establish a strategic plan for the graduation of CSOs who have strengthened their capacity to a point deemed sustainable by the programme (meaning survival without programme support). As discussed in the review, at some point there has to be a limit to the number of AGIR CSO partners that can be supported by the *intermediaries*, a limit based on the capacity of the *intermediary* to directly and fully support each CSO as envisioned within the programme planning. If the programme is to grow (either with more donors and/or additional *intermediaries*) how and when CSOs move from nursery to core status and finally, to graduate out of the pro-

gramme is important to the overall programme theory of change and to the sustainability of the programme. AGIR should consider taking a position on this process and put in place mechanisms, such as small grants, that help CSOs that leave the programme to continue to function.

- The AGIR programme should continue to support change in the approach for the selection of new organisations, which is now privileging locally-based partners, is a signal that the programme is sensitive to these weaknesses and is taking adequate corrective measures.

Linkages

- In order to attain the expected outcomes in the area of linkages, AGIR needs to:
 - Promote further discussion among *intermediaries* on the added value of the linkages and a definition of a theory of change linked to the networks and networking to inform support in this area;
 - Pay particular attention to questions arising from the sustainability of networks, among them the management of networks and how to monitor their impact;
 - Strengthen/include skills-oriented capacity building in communication advocacy and campaigning using innovative methods;
 - Document, share and disseminate successful advocacy experiences among partners and networks.
 - Particular attention should be paid to strengthening capacities at the local level and young/less-experienced organisations.

Other Issues

- There is a need to quicken the process involved with the transfer of resources to partners at the local level. Defining a minimum level of funding to this level would ensure that the programme is implemented with less regional imbalances (as is the case now). Alternatively, while sticking to the principle of good-donorship and limited non-interference, *intermediaries* should commence a formal dialogue with their CSO partners to assess the extent to which the implementation of strategic plans takes the balance in resources allocation along the central-local axis into account. This can easily be justified as a principle of good governance and integrated in the context of strengthening partners' capacities in internal governance. *Intermediaries* should also pay particular attention to the challenges that might appear in the process of the allocation of funds to partners' local level organisations, namely in management and reporting.
- Additional donors added to the AGIR programme could potentially result in more transaction costs, unless principles of good donorship are applied. The progress made in this area in the programme through the focus on core funding, the facilitation and lobbying efforts of the *intermediaries* to convince donors to join common funding mechanisms, and through supported reporting mechanisms to reduce the burden for CSOs, has laid the foundation for more

effective management of a multiple donor funding mechanism. Perhaps new donors' acceptance of the principle of good donorship as it is implemented within the AGIR programme is key to the discussion of adding them. While there can be (as the review team observed within the AGIR programme) management problems that are integral to its use (the difficulty of directed support), the AGIR *intermediaries* have initiated a course of action that can be instrumental in promoting good donorship in support of civil society.

- The Embassy of Sweden can contribute to the effectiveness of the AGIR program by engaging in “environmental” strategies. Environmental strategies are actions and activities that improve the environment, within which the *intermediaries* work with their partners. Perhaps the two most critical strategies for the Embassy would be to play a more visible role in the donor community regarding the benefits of a “good donorship” approach for civil society strengthening. Helping other donors understand the mechanisms (positive and negative) of this approach could lead to its use by others and a better understanding of the AGIR programme. Secondly, the review team from the donor community constantly heard comments concerning the need for a dialogue between donors regarding civil society strengthening within Mozambique. There is a real lack of understanding between donors about what each is doing or the partners each is supporting. The Embassy should take a lead role in facilitating this interaction among donors on the issue of civil society capacity strengthening in Mozambique, using its experiences with the AGIR programme as the touchstone for ongoing discussions. This lead facilitating role can only improve the visibility of the AGIR programme and that of the Embassy of Sweden in the area of civil society capacity strengthening.
- In order to increase the visibility of the programme, AGIR should, at a minimum, create a website. This site could be used to post, for example, the AGIR platform, case studies including the documentation of campaigns and advocacy processes, lessons learned and good practices in AGIR. It could also be used to share guidelines, manuals, and methodologies and highlight how AGIR makes a difference in strengthening Mozambican civil society.

Sumário Executivo

Este é o relatório da avaliação intermédia do *Programa de Acções para uma Governança Inclusiva e Responsável (AGIR)* em Moçambique, realizada entre Agosto e Outubro de 2012, por uma equipa de três consultores, a serviço da empresa Indevelop. Uma apresentação dos resultados preliminares foi feita no dia 24 de Outubro de 2012 a intermediários do AGIR e organizações da sociedade civil (OSCs) parceiras, no Fórum Consultivo Anual. Após esta apresentação, a equipa teve acesso ao então recém-concluído relatório Semianual de 2012, elaborado e submetido conjuntamente pelas organizações intermediárias do AGIR.

O AGIR tem uma duração de 5 anos, começando em 2010 e com o seu término em 2014. A Suécia é o único doador principal, com a Holanda e a Dinamarca dando apoio pontual a algumas organizações não-governamentais internacionais (ONGIs). O programa trabalha com parceiros de âmbito nacionais e parceiros baseados nas províncias. No âmbito do esforço visando fortalecer a sociedade civil em Moçambique, a Embaixada Sueca iniciou o programa AGIR em 2010. O objectivo do AGIR é:

Apoiar as organizações da sociedade civil moçambicana, fortalecendo a sua capacidade para produzirem mais impacto na melhoria da transparência, prestação de contas, participação dos cidadãos, acesso à informação, respeito pelos direitos humanos e igualdade de género.⁴

Em linha com a Declaração de Paris e a Agenda de Acra para Acção, o AGIR está estruturado para aplicar princípios de “good donorship”⁵ através do apoio institucional às OSCs alinhado com a “ direcção estratégica da organização ” e para apoiar e facilitar ligações e partilha de conhecimento entre OSCs moçambicanas⁶. A principal modalidade de apoio para este fortalecimento de capacidades das OSCs é de “trabalhar através de um número limitado de organizações intermediárias” dentro dos seguintes grupos de áreas de apoio:

- i) Participação, prestação de contas social e legal, incluindo o respeito pelos direitos humanos;
- ii) Prestação social de contas na gestão de recursos naturais e nos direitos de terra das comunidades;
- iii) Transparência e prestação de contas política e financeira; e

⁴ Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.1, 2010, SIDA.

⁵ Doador responsável (numa tradução livre).

⁶ Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.1, 2010, SIDA.

iv) Promoção do acesso à informação.⁷

As principais conclusões da avaliação intermédia são:

- O programa AGIR é muito relevante para as prioridades nacionais que incluem a existência de uma sociedade civil activa e engajada. O fortalecimento da sociedade civil é necessário num ambiente em que a melhoria na prestação de serviços públicos, preocupações sobre a transparência e medidas de prestação de contas são constantemente desafiadas pelo governo e, de forma crescente, pelo sector privado (principalmente o sector de recursos naturais). As OSCs que o AGIR apoia têm tentado colmatar esta lacuna e reforçar a voz da sociedade civil. O programa foi bem-sucedido em atrair e trabalhar com um grupo grade de OSCs com temas consonantes com o foco do AGIR.
- Embora o AGIR continue a ter uma relativa baixa visibilidade como programa entre os doadores, as OSCs e o Governo Moçambicano, aqueles que o conhecem têm um alto grau de apreço pela sua abordagem inovadora e seu foco no apoio à sociedade civil.
- No âmbito do AGIR tem havido uma aplicação exemplar dos princípios de “good donorship”, com apoio entusiástico da parte das OSCs participantes. Embora o programa ainda esteja no seu começo, os resultados intermédios desta abordagem dão sinais de estar a produzir resultados no nível e foco das competências das OSCs filiadas. Contudo, o princípio de “good donorship” tem desafiado a consistência do programa entre as intermediárias e na relação destes com os seus parceiros (as OSCs). O processo de identificação de objectivos estratégicos para o programa e a definição de como esses objectivos podem ser alcançados no terreno pelas OSCs pode ser problemático, quando a planificação e a implementação depende dos planos de acção das OSCs. Não ficou claro para a equipa de avaliação como o programa irá assegurar que a partir do apoio institucional as organizações implementem necessariamente as acções do AGIR, e até que ponto se pode evitar o risco de que estas mesmas organizações implementem acções que se desviam do programa.
- Actualmente existem 43 organizações envolvidas no programa AGIR (a meta de atingir 39 organizações em 2014 foi ultrapassada). Este conjunto de parceiros permite ao programa cobrir um espectro amplo de actividades dos quatro sub-programas. Geograficamente o AGIR cobre todas as províncias e alguns distritos através de parceiros directos e filiais locais de parceiros do AGIR. Embora a maior parte dos parceiros do programa seja de organizações de cunho nacional, também foram seleccionados alguns parceiros baseados a nível local (e o processo se intensificou no presente ano), principalmente das regiões centro e norte do país, para reforçar as ligações horizontais ao nível local e expandir o impacto do programa e a sua sustentabilidade de longo

⁷ The Swedish Embassy's Support to Mozambican Civil Society Organizations, p.7;2009.

prazo. Contudo, o portefólio actual ainda não cobre todas as intervenções previstas. O congelamento de financiamento de certos parceiros depois da constatação de alguns problemas de gestão deixou algumas lacunas na cobertura das actividades. As intermediárias afirmam que estas lacunas foram compensadas com a integração de novos parceiros e com a assunção de actividades adicionais por alguns parceiros já existentes.

- A coordenação do AGIR pelas organizações intermediárias está a melhorar através de um funcionamento mais focalizado do Comité de Coordenação das Intermediárias (ICC), apoiado por grupos técnicos. O AGIR foi concebido como um programa mas a sua operacionalização ainda é feita fundamentalmente por quatro sub-programas com algumas áreas comuns. Portanto, a consistência dos sub-programas é maior que a consistência do programa. Apesar dos esforços de coordenação, implementação e reportagem conjunta, com a excepção das áreas comuns, nem sempre fica claro até que ponto os resultados dos sub-programas contribuem para os impactos do programa. A equipa da avaliação intermédia concorda com as conclusões do relatório semianual de 2012 de que embora a reportagem tenha melhorado, o programa precisa começar a analisar como os vários resultados intermédios das áreas temáticas podem ser agrupados como um conjunto consistente de resultados do programa, que clarificam e reforçam a habilidade do AGIR de documentar e reportar os resultados como um programa coeso. Um “modelo de esferas de influência” nos ajuda a entender como o AGIR estabeleceu esses “cursos de mudança” através dos quais o financiamento e apoio fluem para os parceiros onde as mudanças ocorrem a nível organizacional das OSCs e, através destas, para o benefício dos beneficiários. Este modelo também pode ajudar na demonstração de que a necessidade do AGIR planificar, implementar, monitorar e reportar como programa é crucial para manter esses cursos de mudança como uma abordagem coesa, reduzindo assim os riscos de fragmentação do programa e de uma implementação menos efectiva assim como a reportagem dos resultados.
- Um mecanismo central para o reforço da capacidade das OSCs dentro do AGIR tem sido através da oferta de formação em várias questões, processos e técnicas. Esta formação está focalizada tanto no âmbito organizacional como individual. A equipa da avaliação intermédia, contudo, encontrou uma baixa satisfação generalizada entre os parceiros na área de capacitação em uma vasta gama de questões críticas. Ademais, a equipa de avaliação notou que há uma limitada réplica da formação ao nível provincial, onde geralmente as capacidades são mais fracas que no nível central.
- O “networking” dentro do AGIR é geralmente fraco, embora algumas organizações tenham criado redes e ligações. Os objectivos do AGIR indicam que redes devem ser criadas em áreas relevantes. Embora haja redes relativamente fortes dentro dos sub-programas, as ligações horizontais, entre os sub-programas, ainda são fracas. No AGIR muitos parceiros contactados fazem parte ou estão em contacto com redes nacionais externas ao programa e mesmo redes internacionais e são capazes de demonstrar como alguma dessas redes contribuíram para resultados positivos em acções de advocacia.
- A reportagem dos resultados intermédios (“outcomes”) a todos os níveis dentro do AGIR varia mas tem sido melhorada com o apoio das *intermediárias*. Como exemplo, a Diakonia trabalha com os seus parceiros para construir uma narrativa que permite estabelecer a ligação entre as

actividades e os resultados. Similarmente, a Oxfam desde o início do programa tem estado preocupada com a construção de uma narrativa de como os produtos/resultados imediatos (outputs) levam aos resultados intermédios, reconhecendo as dificuldades de atribuição de alguns resultados à intervenção directa de um programa. Contudo, geralmente todas as *intermediárias* afirmam que a reportagem dos parceiros é fraca e tende a ser focalizada nas actividades e desta forma torna difícil a apuração dos resultados. Foi feita formação nesta área, mas ainda está entre as que menos capacidades as OSCs têm. Embora a reportagem esteja a melhorar com o AGIR, ambos, os parceiros e as intermediárias, têm se esforçado para encontrar um sistema de monitoria e avaliação (M&A) efectivo que seja útil em termos de prestação de contas, aprendizado e requisitos de reportagem do programa.

- O fortalecimento das capacidades das OSCs dentro do programa AGIR está em curso em áreas como administração, finanças, gestão baseada em resultados (GBR), género, direitos humanos e VIH/SIDA. Embora haja alguns desafios, como o ajustamento da abordagem de formação em género às condições dos parceiros, melhoria e consolidação da governação interna e adopção de GBR, o programa tem um bom potencial de ser bem-sucedido no alcance dos objectivos de fortalecimento das capacidades organizacionais internas e no futuro na criação de condições de sustentabilidade.
- De forma geral, a monitoria de aspectos ligados ao género e VIH/SIDA é fraca. As quatro *intermediárias* reconhecem a existência desta fraqueza e têm dedicado partes dos seus esforços iniciais de capacitação à esta área através da testagem em 2012 de uma nova abordagem de formação do género orientada para mudança que tem produzido bons resultados. As *intermediárias* concordaram na adopção desta abordagem de formação em 2012 e os fundos para tal já estão disponíveis. Espera-se que isto melhore a documentação dos resultados através do uso de indicadores transversais de género em 2013 (isto é referido com a ressalva de que os parceiros podem precisar de melhorar a sua reportagem dos resultados e as *intermediárias* precisarão de sistematizar melhor a informação e melhorar sua reportagem na matriz conjunta de resultados para que os resultados, não só no género, sejam claramente relacionados aos indicadores).
- A abordagem de sustentabilidade do AGIR como um elemento multidimensional é consistente e adequado a este propósito – de assegurar que a sociedade civil é fortalecida em muitos ângulos e perspectivas, garantindo a qualidade do seu activismo e a efectividade da sua participação na resposta das suas necessidades e tendo a sua voz ouvida por um governo responsivo e que presta contas. Conforme mencionado anteriormente, muitas iniciativas dos parceiros do AGIR contribuem para melhorar o acesso aos direitos, para estimular uma maior prestação de contas e para promover a boa governação. Contudo, alguns desses resultados são apenas imediatos e não irão necessariamente criar as bases para uma reprodução contínua de uma sociedade civil forte e capaz de responsabilizar o governo. Consequentemente, o AGIR precisa, de forma contínua, identificar os elementos que potencialmente produzirão impacto e reproduzir práticas que garantirão a sustentabilidade dos resultados alcançados.

As recomendações chave da avaliação intermédia são:

Papel de coordenação dos intermediários

- O órgão de coordenação dos intermediários – CCI – precisa se concentrar mais na planificação estratégica ao nível programático, na coordenação da implementação das actividades, na colecta de dados consistentes e na reportagem de resultados do programa. Isto pode ser alcançado pelo CCI como ele existe actualmente, uma vez que este “insight” não é simplesmente sobre a criação de um novo nível de gestão, mas sim a necessidade de adoptar uma nova visão sobre o propósito da gestão. A necessidade do programa ser visto e de funcionar como um programa é essencial para a sua sustentabilidade. Nesta perspectiva, a harmonização é um fim em si, um resultado que o AGIR deveria almejar no seu trabalho. Embora se possa dizer que exista o reconhecimento dessa necessidade entre as *intermediárias*, cada uma delas tem sido cautelosa em sugerir como este processo pode ocorrer para que isso aconteça. Neste contexto, as intermediárias devem ter uma discussão focalizada e aberta sobre o futuro e o papel crescente do CCI e dos grupos técnicos no programa.
- O programa AGIR deveria focalizar na promoção de uma discussão mais ampla sobre a coordenação dos doadores no apoio à sociedade civil, focalizando nas maneiras de se obter maior especialização, evitar duplicações e promover um leque maior de áreas para potencial financiamento à outras organizações que não actuem nas áreas cobertas pelo AGIR. Isto não significa necessariamente fechar o programa para financiamento adicional, mas sim, acima de tudo, significa tornar o programa num bom contribuidor para o fortalecimento da sustentabilidade da sociedade civil, facilitando processos de diversificação de financiamento, mas num contexto de melhor coordenação, partilha de informação e com um foco estratégico no desenvolvimento de capacidades. Isto também pode melhorar a visibilidade do AGIR entre os doadores a sociedade civil no geral.
- As intermediárias precisam continuar a fazer “lobbying” por financiamento institucional e por mecanismos de fundo comum e a se dedicar de forma intensiva à capacitação em angariação de fundos. O AGIR precisa aumentar as suas actividades de fortalecimento de capacidades que incluem habilidades de angariação de fundos e de elaboração de estratégias. Uma particular atenção deve ser dada às estratégias para fortalecer parceiros locais e emergentes, que são particularmente vulneráveis.
- As *intermediárias* precisam definir estratégias e planificar para as implicações mais amplas do esforço conjunto para melhorar os resultados nas áreas de género e VIH/Sida. Isto pode ser feito através de uma revisão criteriosa dos resultados conjuntos nas áreas transversais e estabelecimento de indicadores de avaliação claros e compartilhados, assim como também no nível dos resultados imediatos.

Monitoria e avaliação do AGIR

- O programa AGIR e a implementação de um sistema de gestão baseada em resultados a necessidade de colecta e análise de informação de desempenho exigem a existência de uma considerável capacidade por parte das organizações. Para tornar este conjunto de abordagens mais efectivo para a

gestão e monitoria do impacto, o programa deveria considerar desagregar o ciclo de gestão – desde a planificação até a reportagem/prestação de contas – identificar nós de estrangulamento e dificuldades enfrentadas pelos parceiros em cada estágio do ciclo de gestão e direcionar os apoios ao fortalecimento de capacidades às essas lacunas, tendo em conta as especificidades de cada parceiro (se é uma organização ou uma rede).

- O programa devia prestar particular atenção aos sistemas de gestão de informação envolvidos na avaliação do desempenho e na avaliação dos resultados e do impacto. Porém, uma vez que é irrealista esperar todos os parceiros sejam capazes de gerir sistemas de informação complexos, o programa poderia focalizar na definição de metodologias e padrões para a recolha de informação e análise, que numa fase inicial poderiam ser centralmente geridos pelo AGIR e no futuro seriam replicados em pequena escala nas organizações. Isto poderia ter o valor instrumental de melhorar a avaliação do impacto do AGIR como um programa, enquanto ao mesmo tempo contribuiria para fortalecer os sistemas de monitoria e avaliação dos parceiros, de modo a que se tornem instrumentos efectivos de gestão baseada em resultados.
- A adopção da gestão baseada em resultados é um resultado intermédio importante do AGIR e parte da sua estratégia de desenvolvimento de capacidades. Desta forma, o programa deve afrouxar o seu princípio de respeitar os sistemas de monitoria e avaliação dos parceiros e estabelecer um sistema mais uniforme para o uso das OSCs parceiras, ou intensificar de forma substancial os seus processos de fortalecimento de capacidades relacionados com actividades de M&A.
- O programa deveria refinar a reportagem sobre o impacto nas áreas temáticas, clarificando a cadeia de resultados e revisitando a teoria da mudança implicitamente proposta, para constantemente verificar até que ponto os obtidos em áreas específicas representam passos em direcção às mudanças pretendidas, conforme propostas pelo programa AGIR. Isto poderia informar as mudanças incrementais no âmbito e natureza das intervenções que os parceiros fazem ao longo da implementação dos seus planos estratégicos, alinhando-os aos objectivos do AGIR. Nesta base, recomenda-se que o programa analise a matriz de resultados à medida que vai recrutando novos membros e para sistematizar a matriz anual de planificação para que possa demonstrar como as actividades dos parceiros contribuem para os resultados do programa. Isto também forneceria a base para o ajustamento da matriz de resultados em sintonia com os planos dos parceiros.
- A maior parte das iniciativas dos parceiros do AGIR contribuem para melhorar o usufruto dos direitos, estimular uma maior prestação de contas e para promover a boa governação. Contudo, alguns desses resultados são apenas imediatos e não irão necessariamente criar as bases para uma reprodução contínua de uma sociedade civil forte e capaz de responsabilizar o governo. Consequentemente, o AGIR precisa, de forma contínua, identificar os elementos que potencialmente produzirão impacto e reproduzir práticas que garantirão a sustentabilidade dos resultados alcançados.

OSCs do AGIR

- As *intermediárias* do AGIR deveriam definir um plano estratégico de graduação das OSCs que tenham fortalecido a sua capacidade até um ponto

considerado sustentável pelo programa (que significaria sobreviver sem o apoio do programa). Conforme discutido na avaliação, a um dado momento deve haver um limite ao número de OSCs parceiras do AGIR que podem ser apoiadas pelas *intermediárias*; um limite baseado na capacidade da *intermediária* de apoiar o parceiro de forma directa e plena conforme previsto na planificação do programa. Se o programa deve crescer (seja com mais doadores e/ou intermediários adicionais), como e quando as OSCs saem de um apoio de “nursery” para um *status* de apoio institucional e, finalmente, se graduam e se desligam do programa é importante para a teoria de mudança do programa e para a sua sustentabilidade. O AGIR deveria considerar se posicionar sobre este processo e estabelecer mecanismos como as pequenas subvenções (“small grants”) que garantem que as OSCs que deixam o programa continuem a funcionar.

- O programa AGIR deveria continuar a apoiar a mudança na abordagem para a selecção de novas organizações, que agora privilegia parceiros baseado localmente, o que constitui um sinal de que o programa é sensível à essas fraquezas e está a tomar as necessárias medidas correctivas.

Ligações

De modo alcançar os resultados esperados nas ligações, o AGIR precisa de:

- Promover uma discussão mais ampla entre as *intermediárias* sobre o valor-acrescentado das ligações e uma definição de uma teoria da mudança ligada às redes e ao trabalho em rede (“networking”), para fundamentar o apoio dado às OSCs nesta área.
- Prestar particular atenção às questões que surgem sobre a sustentabilidade das redes, dentre as quais a gestão das redes e de como se pode monitorar o seu impacto.
- Fortalecer/incluir habilidades orientadas para o fortalecimento de capacidades na comunicação da advocacia e na realização de campanhas usando métodos inovadores.
- Documentar, partilhar e disseminar experiências bem-sucedidas de advocacia entre os parceiros e redes.
- Especial atenção deve ser dada ao fortalecimento de capacidades a nível local em organizações jovens e menos experientes.

Outras questões

- Deve-se acelerar o processo de transferência de recursos para parceiros a nível local. A definição de um nível mínimo de financiamento para este nível garantiria que o programa fosse implementado com menos desequilíbrios territoriais (como tem sido o caso actualmente). Alternativamente, ao mesmo tempo que cumprem com os princípios de “good donorship” e de não-interferência em assuntos internos dos parceiros, as *intermediárias* deveriam iniciar um diálogo formar com as OSCs parceiras para avaliar até que ponto a implementação dos planos estratégicos leva em conta o equilíbrio na alocação de recursos entre o nível central e local. Isto pode ser facilmente justificado como parte de princípios de boa governação e integrado o contexto de fortalecimento das capacidades internas dos parceiros para uma boa governação interna. As *intermediárias* deveriam também prestar atenção aos

desafios que podem surgir no processo de alocação de fundos aos parceiros a nível local, nomeadamente no que concerne à gestão e prestação de contas.

- Doadores adicionais que queiram aderir ao AGIR podem implicar potencialmente em mais custos de transacção se princípios de “good donorship” não forem aplicados. O progresso feito nesta área pelo programa através do foco no financiamento institucional, a facilitação e esforços de “lobbying” das *intermediárias* para convencerem os doadores a se juntar a fundos comuns e a redução do fardo das OSCs na reportagem através da aceitação dos seus mecanismos, criaram as bases para uma mais efectiva gestão de mecanismos de financiamento com múltiplos doadores. Talvez um aspecto importante na discussão sobre a adição de novos doadores deva ser a sua aceitação dos princípios de “good donorship” como os mesmos são aplicados no AGIR. Embora possam existir problemas de gestão que são parte do seu uso (como a equipa de avaliação teve a oportunidade de observar no programa AGIR; por exemplo, as dificuldades inerentes ao apoio direccionado à certas áreas), as organizações intermediárias do AGIR iniciaram um curso de acção que pode ser importante para a promoção do “good donorship” no apoio à sociedade civil.

1 Introduction

This mid-term review report of the ‘Action Programme for Inclusive and Responsible Governance’ (AGIR) programme in Mozambique was carried out from August 2012 to its completion at the end of October 2012 by a three-member review team fielded by Indevelop. A presentation of the preliminary findings was made on October 24th, 2012 to AGIR *intermediaries* and AGIR CSO partners. Subsequent to this presentation, the review team was provided with the just-completed 2012 semi-annual report, written and submitted jointly by AGIR *intermediary* organisations.

The report will begin with a brief background to AGIR and the methodology used to undertake the review. This is a **formative** review as it focuses on the first two years of a multi-year (five) programme and as such, will discuss the ‘progress to date’ of the programme under the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact (or progress towards intended impacts). The review will end with a summary of key observations and recommendations.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE AGIR PROGRAMME

AGIR has a duration of five years, beginning in 2010 and ending in 2014. Sweden is the only core donor, with Denmark and the Netherlands also providing support to participating INGOs. The programme works with both national partners and with organisations in the provinces. In an effort to strengthen civil society and civil society organisations within Mozambique, the Swedish Embassy initiated the AGIR programme in 2010. The objective of AGIR is to:

support Mozambican civil society organisations, strengthening their capacity for and impact on improving transparency, accountability, citizen’s participation, access to information, respect for human rights, and gender equality.⁸

In line with the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, AGIR is structured to provide “good donor-ship” through support given for CSO ‘core funding’ that is aligned with the “strategic direction of the organisation” and to support and facilitate linkages and knowledge sharing between Mozambican CSOs.⁹ The main support modality for this capacity strengthening of CSOs is to “work through a lim-

⁸ Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.1, 2010. Sida.

⁹ Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.5, 2010. Sida.

ited number of qualified *intermediary* organisations within the following four clusters of support:

- i) Participation, social and legal accountability, including monitoring of respect for human rights;
- ii) Social accountability in management of natural resources and community land rights;
- iii) Transparency, financial and political accountability; and,
- iv) Promotion of access to information.”¹⁰

Emerging out of the dialogue surrounding the production of the document “Guidelines: The Swedish Embassy’s Support to Mozambican Civil Society Organisations” (2009), three INGO *intermediaries* were initially identified that had ongoing programmes in the thematic areas that coincided with the Embassy’s cooperation strategy. Each of these three key actors, or ‘*intermediaries*’ – Oxfam Novib (International Non-Governmental Organisation, Dutch), IBIS (International Non-Governmental Organisation, Danish) and Diakonia – was approached in mid-2009, with a fourth INGO, SCC (International Non-Governmental Organisation, Swedish Cooperative Center), added in 2011.¹¹ Each was encouraged to submit proposals in line with the thematic focus areas and “support modalities outlined in the guidelines.”

A central facet of AGIR is that while each *intermediary* works within what is considered a ‘sub-component’ of the overall programme, ‘strong joint features’ are shared. The commonalities shared by the *intermediaries* include:

- i) The establishment of a division of labour between the three organisations, between and within the thematic “clusters”;
- ii) The development of a joint programme results framework as well as the definition of joint capacity development activities;
- iii) A joint MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) that regulates the interaction between the three partners; and
- iv) Definitions on how to coordinate work around the Paris agenda and to strengthen linkages between each others’ CSO partners.”¹²

¹⁰ The Swedish Embassy’s Support to Mozambican Civil Society Organisations, p.7; 2009.

¹¹ The Swedish Cooperative Center – SCC began its participation in AGIR in 2011, one year later than the three original intermediaries. The initial agreement listed the intermediaries of Diakonia, IBIS, Oxfam (while SCC was not in mentioned in the initial programme proposal, the area within which it works was mentioned as an area that was to be added – Social Accountability in Natural Resource Management). According to discussions with SCC staff, its late entry into the AGIR programme was due to the required criteria that AGIR CSO partners should have a national perspective, whereas SCC has worked primarily from a local perspective with partners.

¹² Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.5, 2010. Sida.

The funding for AGIR is structured through different agreements with IBIS, Oxfam Novib, Diakonia and SCC, each implementing the following ‘sub-programmes’:

- Access to information – **IBIS**
- Financial accountability; participation, social and legal accountability with focus on underlying causes of discrimination – **Oxfam Novib**
- Political accountability; participation, social and legal accountability with focus on the legal aspects of human rights – **Diakonia**
- Social accountability in natural resource management – **SCC**

As stated in the Joint Programme Level Results Framework, AGIR has a number of joint specific outcomes. These are:

1. Supported key actors have a clear vision and strategic objectives, with full ownership of their own agenda, planning and priority setting. Constituency is involved and consulted.
2. Supported key actors strengthen internal governance, accountability and transparency.
3. Supported key actors programme management, financial and administrative systems are effective.
4. Supported key actor gender and HIV/AIDS (Human Immune Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) internal systems and policies create a safe working environment.
5. Supported key actors’ financial dependency is diversified.
6. Supported key actors’ public mobilisation and campaigning strengthened.
7. Links amongst key actors and with provincial and regional actors are improved, coalitions are built and networks are strengthened.
8. Supported key actors are effective in their work, due to knowledge on Gender and HIV/AIDS.
9. CSO’s thematic knowledge is improved by learning from their own experiences, and exchange and shared experiences with other CSOs.
10. CSOs strengthen communication and dissemination about positions and work.
11. *Intermediaries* apply principles of good donorship, respect and align to principles of core-funding, reducing burden to CSOs.
12. *Intermediaries* promote principles of good donorship for local partner support amongst other founders; achieve effective division of labour, rationalisation and coordination amongst donor partners.
13. *Intermediaries* increase coordination amongst themselves.

The ‘core’ work of the AGIR *intermediaries* is the establishment of key actor partnerships with local CSOs active in the specific theme covered by each *intermediary*. Each of these partnerships is established through an agreement between the *intermediary* and the partner. The central objective of these AGIR *intermediary*-CSO partnerships is to support the strengthening of civil society through long-term core-funding and capacity strengthening of each CSOs **that is in line with its own strategic plan**. Following the principles of ‘good donorship’, this process is intended to lead to the Swedish Embassy’s general objective of “increasing the positive impact of Mozambican civil society organisations on government transparency and accountability, citizen’s participation and access to information and the respect for human rights, including gender equality”. The current number of CSOs involved in the AGIR programme is 43. A complete list of these AGIR partner CSOs can be found in Annex 1.

1.2 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The overall purpose of the mid-term review of AGIR is to provide “existing donors and the [AGIR] *intermediaries* with recommendations on how to improve the programme guidelines or the functioning of the programme to ensure more effective and efficient implementation to reach the desired outcomes and impact”.¹³ Though Sweden is presently the only core donor to the programme, support from other donors is given to AGIR *intermediaries* (Denmark to SCC and Netherlands to Oxfam Novib) in their ongoing work connected to the programme.

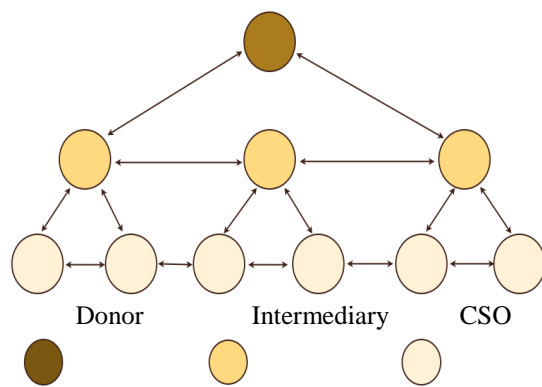
The overall analysis of the AGIR programme is to be addressed through several specific areas of inquiry (see Annex 2 for TORs):

- Determine the programme’s **effectiveness** regarding achieving results at the outcome level as well as to determine the programme’s **relevance** and potential for **impact**;
- Assess the **sustainability** of the programme;
- Serve as a basis for decisions on continued Swedish support and the possibility of accepting more donors into the programme.

Given the structure of the programme (one programme with sub-programme *intermediaries* partnering with local CSOs) and its focus on capacity strengthening processes, an understanding of the different ‘spheres of influence’ within AGIR was necessary to identify and assess outcomes related to the programme approach. In light of this, the evaluation team sought to identify these different levels of interaction and how different social actors fell within the various ‘spheres of influence’ of the programme. This perspective was critical to understanding the resulting outputs and outcomes or ‘progress towards outcomes’ related to the implementation of the programme. Often-times, a gap can exist between what takes place in the field (CSO partner work) and its connection to the broader objectives of programmes like AGIR and the support work of the *intermediaries*.

Within this formative mid-term review, the evaluation team has attempted to document the outcomes associated with the programme by identifying and unpacking the ‘**pathways of change**’ that run through these different spheres of influence. Within AGIR there are multiple spheres between a donor such as Sida (Swedish International Development Agency), the *intermediaries* with whom it works, and the local CSO partners that work with the individuals (beneficiaries) and families influenced by the work of the CSOs (see adjacent diagram).

¹³ AGIR Mid term Review, ToRs.



Understanding how AGIR *intermediary* organisations have influenced their CSO partners requires an equal understanding of the cascading levels of actors and the spheres of influence that each represent. Documenting the ‘linkages’ between these spheres of influence – essentially the ‘pathways of change’ through which influence happens – are critical to identifying and documenting outcomes (both

immediate and intermediate) achieved through the work of the programme.

The key to understanding and documenting these ‘pathways to change’ (and the linkages between outputs, outcomes and impact) is to focus on the relationships between the various actors involved in the programme – in the case of AGIR, the relationships of most interest are those between the *intermediaries* and the CSOs, and between the CSOs and the broader civil society. Each are a key part of the process through which support flows outward and outcomes/results flow back. A primary goal of this evaluative work will be to identify, analyse and document these linkages and the results that are produced.

1.2 EVALUATION PROCESSES

A review of all relevant documentation connected to the programme was undertaken. Documentation from the donors, *intermediaries*, and partner CSOs was included (a full list of these documents can be found in Annex 3). Initial discussions were also held with Sida and individuals from the *intermediary* organisations involved in AGIR. Based on these discussions and the review of documentation, a number of AGIR partner CSOs were selected for field visits (see Annex 4 for list of selected AGIR CSO partners). These selected AGIR partners were cleared with each of the *intermediary* organisations in advance of meetings with CSOs in the field. Each *intermediary* agreed with the selection and, in some cases, made suggestions of additional organisations that might also be visited by the review team.

Interviews were carried out with individuals and/or groups of individuals representing *intermediaries* and CSO partner organisations. The content of these interviews was based on a protocol of semi-structured questions directly related to the key review questions as defined in the Sida-approved inception report under “**Relevance and Evaluability of Evaluation Questions**”. With CSOs in the periphery areas, who were not always aware of AGIR, the interview protocol was more loosely applied as an interview guide. Direct interviews with individuals were followed up with, if necessary, further phone discussions to clarify specific issues. The team also interviewed a member of parliament involved in activities of the sub-programmes coordinated by IBIS and Diakonia.

Field Visits to CSOs: The AGIR mid-term review team used a ‘purposeful sampling’ process to select AGIR partner CSOs to visit. The final selection of these CSO partners sought to strike a balance between the thematic areas of each AGIR sub-programme and the geographical and territorial linkages (central and local) within which each operated. Additional criteria applied to the selection process involved the weighting of ‘core CSO partners to emerging CSO partners’, as well as the focus of each CSO’s work. Time and resource limitations for the mid-term review process also limited how many CSOs were visited and in what areas (geographical of Mozambique).

This purposeful selection process was used to ensure that the review team obtained a broad perspective of the different experiences across the different *intermediaries’* partners. Of particular interest was assessing the effectiveness of the programme in creating capacities and linkages at both central and local levels that trigger the necessary trickle down (capacities at central level being replicated at local level) and the desired trickle up effects (advocacy work informed and fed by the work and experiences at the grass-roots). The purposeful sample therefore also included locally-based organisations in the effort to assess the added value of the approach of the programme of focusing on national organisations. With this in mind, the review team decided to focus on two provinces – Nampula and Tete – and to visit AGIR CSOs in each of these areas.

The selection of Nampula province was based on its history of embracing a vibrant civil society with an active participation in governance issues. This province, along with Manica, pioneered the participative planning and financing processes at the district level in the 1990s through the Community Participatory and Consultative Institutions (IPCCs). This experience, considerably documented, is considered a hallmark in decentralisation and for local participation processes in the country. While often used as a reference for subsequent dissemination at the national level, it is also the cradle of the community participatory and consultative institutions that inspired the local councils enshrined in the decentralisation law. The province’s civil society organisations are skilled in areas aligned with critical thematic groups (governance, water and sanitation, etc.) that contribute considerably to the relative strength of the Provincial Development Observatory.¹⁴ While it is not the only province in Mozambique to demonstrate this kind of vibrant civil society, there is a solid foundation to consider Nampula; it is a province with a long history of having strong engagement with a vibrant and active civil society.

¹⁴ The province is credited with being the first to adopt the term “development observatory” instead of “poverty observatory”, as this forum was originally named.

Based on this perspective, the selected organisations in Nampula cover three sub-programmes: Electoral Observatory, Juvenile Parliament (political accountability); Rede da Criança (Children's Rights Network); Association of the Blind and Partial Sighted of Mozambique based in Beira (vulnerable people's rights – blind people), Diakonia; Forum of Community Radios, (access to information /IBIS); Mozambican Debt Group and Forum Mulher representatives and Akilizetho (Nampula-based organisation focusing district decentralisation), Oxfam; and a member of the Lareira Crítica (External Advisory and Partner Support Group to SCC) – Luisa Hoffman (SCC). The sample is particularly skewed to the Diakonia sub-programme due to the fact that it had more representative organisations in Nampula. In light of this, the review team took the opportunity to interview as many organisations as possible at the local level in the effort to assess the effectiveness of this reach. Apart from ACAMO (Association of the Blind and Partial Sighted of Mozambique, based in Beira), which has its headquarters in Sofala, each organisation's senior management was interviewed at the central level. FORCOM (Forum of Community Radios) was contacted and was sent a list of questions which were responded to in writing. One government representative was also interviewed as was a member of "Lareira Critica", an external monitoring mechanism of the SCC sub-programme.

The selection of Tete province was chosen as an example of challenges faced by the AGIR programme in central Mozambique. With a noticeably weak civil society (in the Mozambican context), Tete province is faced with acute challenges in engagement, advocacy, and human rights issues (resettlement and conflict at the local level in connection with the expanding mining industry) linked to areas of governance transparency and accountability at national and international levels.

In contrast with Nampula, where various donors have been directly represented for a number of years, Danida is the only donor with a long-term engagement with Tete province dating back to the civil war. In Nampula, a number of strong innovative international development Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) (incl. SNV (International Non-Governmental Organisation, Dutch), CONCERN (International Non-Governmental Organisation, Irish), CLUSA (International Non-Governmental Organisation, American), CARE (International Non-Governmental Organisation, American)) have, since the 1990s, provided systematic and focused capacity development for local NGOs in specialised fields such as decentralisation and governance, extension services, saving groups and farmers associations, and modern cooperative movements.

In Tete the INGO landscape has been focused on humanitarian response (MSF (International Non-Governmental Organisation, Doctors without Borders)), agriculture (World Vision), and only recently has been complemented by a range of HIV/AIDS oriented organisations. Overall, the thematic scope of INGOs and local NGOs in Tete is much more limited than in Nampula, with local CSOs not yet benefiting from the kind of solid, continuous, focused capacity development and specialisation offered by INGOs as in Nampula or from national/central CSOs. There are a number of reasons contributing to these differences. First is the fact that Tete was heavily impacted by the war and attracted a number of humanitarian organisations during the war and its

aftermath. Second, from a donor perspective, projects that provide a ‘value for money’ and the potential for outreach and impact are not as easily found in Tete due to its peripheral location to the rest of Mozambique – a location often seen as geographically unfavourable. In contrast, Nampula’s central localisation, high population and easy linkages to neighbouring northern provinces are seen as more favourable.

Other sociocultural and political factors that can be taken as indicators demonstrating the weakness of the local civil society in Tete include:

- The thematic composition of civil society organisations is less diversified than, for example, Nampula leaving gaps in thematic issue coverage;
- Fewer national level CSOs have branches or well established partnerships with organisations in Tete than in Nampula, and often negatively impact local funding and capacity development;
- Oftentimes a number of organisations can share the same leadership in Tete, which is possibly an indication of a limited qualified leadership recruitment base.

The selection of local AGIR partners was to provide examples and document the effectiveness of the programme at the local level through three different types of direct and indirect partners:

- i) Direct AGIR partnership illustrated through direct contract between AAAJC (Para-legal support and community development organisation in Tete) and SCC/AGIR;
- ii) Indirect delegation based partnership, illustrated through the Provincial Election Observatory which is a delegation of the national Election Observatory a partner of Diakonia/AGIR; and
- iii) Indirect partnership with the provincial female network NAFET (Women’s Network in Tete) that is a local partner of Forum Mulher, which is a partner of Oxfam/AGIR.

Other organisations and/or institutions were contacted in Tete with the purpose of collecting supporting documentation of local CSO networks and governance monitoring relating to the Provincial Development Observatory. To this end, the Provincial NGO Forum, FORPRONGT and the government secretariat of Provincial Development Observatory were interviewed. The local member of SCC’s external partner monitoring mechanism ‘Lareira Critica’ was interviewed in order to document the nature of this function.

External Voices: The role of civil society in Mozambique and the position of CSOs within civil society have been recognised by many international donor agencies as being critical to the development of the country. Many of these international donors support projects or programmes that, in one form or another, strive to achieve results similar to those of AGIR. In an effort to gauge the depth of understanding, interest in and opinion of these external voices about AGIR, the mid-term review team undertook a series of interviews with representatives from a range of donor organisations. These external voices are important, both in terms of current perceptions of AGIR as well as to further the discussion on this important area of development.

2 Findings

2.1 RELEVANCE TO NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

Mozambique is among the fastest growing economies of the region. However, despite the continuous implementation of poverty reduction strategies over the last two decades, poverty remains the reality for many Mozambicans. A growing allocation of budget resources is currently aimed at poverty reduction priority areas (health, education, agriculture, infrastructure, employment, social assistance, and good governance) - an increase from an average of 63% between 2007 to 2008 to more than 80% between 2009 and 2011.¹⁵ The current Poverty Reduction Action Plan (PARP) 2011-2014 aims at reducing the poverty rate to 42% in 2014.¹⁶

A considerable part of this funding has been formally channeled through General Budget Support (GBS) since 2000, accounting for 38% of the overall ODA (Overseas Development Agency) in 2010.¹⁷ GBS has been one of the drivers for the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, stimulating alignment with country programmes, public management systems and instruments, and donors' coordination. In this regard, nineteen donors (the so-called Programme Aid Partners (PAPs)), of whom Sweden is one, have been providing general budget support in combination with a process of mutual accountability via Annual Reviews and Planning meetings.¹⁸

Within Mozambique, accountability in key areas such as budget overview have increased due to public financial management reforms, however domestic accountability has generally continued to be weak. While civil society participation is both increasing and improving its capacity to stimulate or lead social change, it is still not at the necessary level to ensure strong demand-side accountability pressure. In an environment where donors provide around 39% of Mozambique's budget, there is often a

¹⁵ Ministério das Finanças (2009). Relatório de Execução do Orçamento de Estado de 2008. Maputo, Ministry of Finance; Ministério das Finanças (2011). Conta Geral do Estado de 2010. Maputo, Ministério das Finanças, page 47; Ministério das Finanças (2012). Relatório de Execução do Orçamento do Estado de 2011 Janeiro-Dezembro. Maputo, Ministry of Finance, page 24.

¹⁶ Republic of Mozambique Poverty Reduction Action Plan (PARP) 2011-2014. Approved at the 15th Regular Session of the Council of Ministers, Maputo, May 3 2011.

¹⁷ See http://www.pap.org.mz/downloads/annual_review_2012/QAD_PAPS_2011_Eng.pdf.

¹⁸ See http://www.pap.org.mz/downloads/annual_review_2012/TdR_RA2012.pdf.

tendency for the government to be held “accountable – for its decisions, policies and use of resources – to donors rather than to citizens and Parliament”.¹⁹

Acknowledging that there is a weakness in Mozambican civil society domestic accountability, some donors have been supporting civil society capacity development initiatives. Examples are the Civil Society Support Mechanism (CSSM/MASC), funded by DFID (Development Fund for International Development), Irish Aid and USAID (United States International Development Agency); support to key research advocacy and research organisations, such as the Center for Public Integrity (CIP), the Institute for Economic and Social Studies (IESE) and the League of Human Rights (LDH).

The Swedish Embassy, as reflected in its current “Swedish Cooperation Strategy with Mozambique 2008-2012”, is part of this growing awareness about weaknesses within Mozambique’s civil society. AGIR, and its focus on the capacity strengthening of selected CSOs who play a pivotal role in strengthening the capacity of citizens and citizen’s organisations to meaningfully (and actively) participate in and influence local and national agendas, is intended to address many of the key development, democratic governance issues, and challenges currently faced in the country. These issues include the participation of civil society in governance and development, rights recognition and enforcement, challenges posed by increasing exploitation of natural resources, the promotion of women’s rights, and the strengthening of civil society organisations capacities and aid effectiveness.

2.2 RELEVANCE – PERCEPTIONS OF AGIR WITHIN MOZAMBIQUE

Despite strong government resolve to improve the socioeconomic well-being of ordinary Mozambicans, many still question the strength and the role of civil society in this poverty reduction process within Mozambique. While there is a strong history of service delivery by CSOs, dialogue between these organisations and the government remains challenged. Systems of transparent governance structures and accountability mechanisms remain weak. The situation for historically marginalised groups also remains problematic. With little ability to speak for themselves or influence decision-makers, these marginalised groups are especially reliant on access to, and support from, civil society organisations to help them express their needs and to build the capacities of their communities to respond with a collective voice. At the same time,

¹⁹ Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.3, 2010. Sida.

the government often notes that it does not possess the resources (people and funds) to engage with all communities and their citizens.

CSOs therefore play an important role in both strengthening the ability of these communities to articulate their needs and rights and to link these communities with the decision-makers who are the duty bearers, and must provide the services which citizens need. Projects such as AGIR can provide the resources necessary to support CSOs that are often constrained by a lack of resources and poor internal capacity for advocacy and participatory planning.

2.2.1 External Voices on AGIR

As mentioned above, the position of civil society in Mozambique and the role of CSOs have been recognised by many international donor agencies as being critical to the development of the country. Many of these international donors are support projects or programmes that, in one form or another, strive to achieve results similar to those of AGIR.

In an effort to gauge the depth of understanding, interest in and opinion of these external voices about AGIR, the mid-term review team undertook a series of interviews with representatives from a range of donor organisations. Those donors contacted included: USAID, CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), DFID, EU Commission, Irish Aid and SDC (Swiss Development Agency). Each of these organisations have civil society-strengthening programming within their donor portfolios. Other non-donor external voices within Mozambique (but internal to civil society and civil society programmes or organisations) were also interviewed concerning the work of AGIR – this included a government official and a member of parliament. As expected, the views were mixed and sometimes contradictory. The recognition of the AGIR programme was high, as each of the external voices interviewed expressed knowledge of the existence of the programme. Some individuals, however, possessed a limited depth of knowledge concerning the focus, general operation and content of AGIR. Those external voices that did possess a more extensive and nuanced understanding of the programme had the following comments on AGIR:

Programmatic approach using sub-programme architecture: Generally the programme, and its use of sub-programme architecture, is seen as a value-added approach allowing for increased focus with clear thematic areas. Specific examples given were the role IBIS is leading in the area of access to information and the work of SCC with farmers organisations, where demonstrable results in changing the practices of a big forest exploitation programme (Chikweti) in Niassa province have been observed. This approach was contrasted with another programme supporting civil society, MASC, which has a broader scope and more diffuse impact.

Core-Funding Mechanism: The use of core-funding, and the flexibility this offers, was also seen as a comparatively efficient mechanism to respond to the constantly changing social, political and economic environment within which civil society or-

ganisations work. It was also perceived to allow for more targeted support to CSOs in that it directly meets identified needs, both internally and externally.

Management Framework: One area where there was more uniform agreement among the external voices was on the process used to select CSOs to participate in AGIR. While acknowledging that a competitive process for the selection of CSOs can be long and overly bureaucratic (the selection cycle in the European Commission programme to support non-state actors can take almost a year), and is often less efficient and unable to quickly respond to opportunities, there was some questioning of the transparency of the AGIR process for selection of CSOs.²⁰ This questioning centered on the role of the *intermediaries*, who were understood to be working mainly with their current CSO partners. This in itself was not seen as wrong (these partners can still do good work). Rather, the process was perceived to limit the recognition and inclusion of new emerging organisations and to encourage a kind of a clientelistic system. This, it was felt, could in turn contribute to the increased dependency of these CSOs and hinder their potential for sustainability. Both the perceived lack of transparency and competitiveness in the selection of CSOs, and the consequences this could entail for the general strengthening of civil society, were mentioned as potential drawbacks for some donors if they were to consider joining AGIR as funders.

However, a different view was offered by some of the external voices concerning the ‘competitive process’ for the selection of CSOs. The principle of competition has posed problems in programmes such as MASC, since CSOs often have no, or limited, capacity to write applications and project proposals. This, in addition to weak communication between Maputo and the provinces, has meant that MASC had only three grantees in the first implementation year and a few more the following year. MASC has had to invest significant effort in helping the fund seekers to write project proposals and to build institutional capacity for these organisations to become eligible for funding. While it could be argued (and was) that this is also ‘part’ of the programme and a capacity strengthening activity in itself, it does prolong the start-up period of a programme that already has a limited duration.

A further element of the management framework that was noted by the external voices was the perceived role of the *intermediaries* within the programme and its higher level of visibility vis-à-vis the overall ‘programme’ or the CSO ‘partner’ organisations. This observation was primarily centred on the belief that it is important for the AGIR programme to clarify its contribution as a **programme** to a certain set of results, instead of linking these results to specific *intermediaries*, in order to have a leg-

²⁰ It was also stated that a competitive process creates an incentive among CSOs to be ‘better prepared’ and that expectations held by these organisations are therefore more ‘credible’.

acy in terms of good practices. This is more than simple semantics and will be discussed at greater length later in the review.

A final noted element concerning the management framework of AGIR, was the use of international NGOs as *intermediaries*. While recognising that this management structure allowed for a more ‘hands-off’ approach by donors to channel support and funds, while allowing for different levels of civil society to work with each other, external voices questioned if the programme could also explore working with national CSOs as *intermediaries*. While necessitating a slower and longer start-up phase, this strengthening process would help these national civil society organisations to also grow as channels of support to other organisations and ensure a new level of sustainability within Mozambican civil society.

Inter-Donor Communication: Perhaps the most consistent comment made by the various external voices interviewed, was the observation that there is a pronounced lack of communication between donors working in similar civil society strengthening programmes within Mozambique. Almost all of the external voices interviewed commented that they had not spoken directly with other donors connected to the AGIR programme. This was not a direct criticism of AGIR; rather it was a comment about the field in general and directly about the donors who inhabit this space. Each of the external voices considered this lack of communication within the donor community to be a critical component that needed to be ‘fixed’ so as to better support civil society strengthening programmes. Reducing the duplication of supported strategies and the over or under funding of certain CSOs were mentioned as common ailments of this lack of communication. Donor coordination and dialogue in this area remain weak, and the prospect of donors supporting civil society programmes like AGIR could be seen as dependent on the improvement of dialogue and the sharing of information across these different programmes focused on strengthening civil society. AGIR would appear to have a potential role in cultivating this discussion among donors and large civil society programmes about civil society-strengthening activities.

2.3 RELEVANCE – QUALITY OF THE DESIGN OF THE PROGRAMME

2.3.1 Good Donorship, Core Funding and the AGIR Programme - Principles for Donor Participation

As noted in the programme’s Joint Programme Level Results Framework, AGIR has a number of joint outcomes specifically related to ‘use of a good-donorship approach’. Central to this approach is the mechanism of ‘core-funding’, used by the AGIR *intermediaries* to effectively support partner CSOs to undertake their work. This has been greatly appreciated by the CSOs as a new ‘funding’ model.

Most of the CSO partners commented that this financial arrangement, where CSOs are funded based on their own strategic plans, has helped them to focus their attention and concentrate resources on the work that they undertake within civil society. A ma-

major reason for this has been their ability to be less concerned about, and dependent on, consulting or project-based implementation work to cover operational costs. Additionally, the role of the *intermediaries* and their lobbying for more coordination among donors with regard to funding is also seen as a positive contribution by the partners. As an example, the results achieved with Forum Mulher and N'Weti in the adoption of common funds is a well-received result of good donorship promotion.

In the 2012 mid-term report, it is noted that *intermediaries* are increasingly involved in common funding negotiations. IBIS has agreed to a common funding arrangement with MASC and a MoU has been agreed to with IESE (Institute for Economic and Social Studies). Oxfam and MASC are negotiating concerning a common partner, Estamos, while Dikonia is mobilising support for the Electoral Observatory. The increased need for harmonisation of reporting and financial procedures, given the nature of good-donorship practices, and core-funding mechanisms are considered appropriate by the partners, apart from some complaints about late financial disbursements due to delayed reporting. In other instances AGIR has been a key force in supporting CSOs to lobby for others to join common pool funding mechanisms. However, the dramatic reduction of funding and change in some donors' strategic priorities, as regards support to civil society, is generally reducing the availability of sources of funding.

There are also, however, problems with the outward flow of resources to the provinces from the central or national organisations levels. At the local level funding is often scarce, with organisations having a relatively minor share of the funding considering the number of activities within the CSO strategic plans that fall under their responsibilities. Considerable weaknesses remain at the local level where less funds, less capacity and less visibility of the programme persist.

At the level of the *intermediaries*, the principle of good-donorship has stimulated them to set up structures for joint work – for example, the *Intermediaries* Coordination Committee and its associated technical unit(s) – bringing a degree of harmonisation of procedures, the organisation of joint training activities, as well as the sharing of training material. However promoting good donorship has also had its challenges for the *intermediaries*. For example, in the 2010 report, Oxfam Novib mentions the challenges of embarking on a dialogue with partners without imposing activities – even those in great need of capacity development. In this regard, the programme has had to learn how to provide capacity development of CSOs without imposing models.

Capacity development in administration, finance, management and planning, fund-raising has been an important element in strengthening organisations' capacities to be able to mobilise and manage funds. There has been a general need for capacity strengthening to reduce fiduciary risks. Currently, there are 43 active AGIR partners. Since the start of the programme, three core-funded partner contracts have been cancelled/suspended by Diakonia - (MEPT – Education for All Movement)), Oxfam (MONASO – Mozambican Network on HIV/AIDS) and IBIS (MISA-Media Institute

of Southern Africa) respectively due to irregularities, some of which were detected in connection with annual audits of AGIR partners.

While the three cases show that AGIR programme-oriented audits work, the question is: to what extent could such cases have been prevented? The initial partner assessment shows weaknesses in the elected structures of the organisation, i.e. the fiscal council did not meet regularly, the financial report had not been approved by the general assembly and the audit report had not been submitted to general assembly. Likewise, in the case of MEPT that was evaluated by Diakonia, it was clear from the evaluation that MEPT needed to strengthen different financial management areas. But this is not unusual. According to the *intermediaries*, it is difficult to completely avoid new cases, but they have become more alert in the in-depth partner assessment. As discussed in the evaluation methodology section, programmes such as AGIR can influence, but can not control, the organisations with which they work. This becomes even more relevant when operating under principles of good-donorship. Having an increased awareness and viable systems in place to identify and mitigate risk are therefore critical for *intermediaries*.

The centrality of the principles of good donorship and the mechanism of core-funding to the AGIR programme are perhaps most important for new prospective donors to understand. As will be demonstrated in the following sections of this review, these two elements play a central role in the character of the AGIR programme and are, in different ways, central to the outcomes (results) related to the work the *intermediaries* are undertaking with partner CSOs. Involvement in the programme would also mean endorsing this fundamental, and effective, principle of operation.

2.3.2 Viewing AGIR as a Single Programme - Adequacy of Operational Structures and Mechanisms

A central question stated in the ToR for this mid-term review focused on the need to understand how the programme is functioning as “one programme” with sub-programmes (not as separate distinct sub-programmes only). While the *intermediaries* were not to be one of the subjects of this mid-term evaluative review, identifying and assessing the functioning of the *intermediaries* and the capacity strengthening work they undertake with their CSO partners, have to be considered critical to its overall success.

A specific element of the management framework that was noted by the external voices was the perceived role of the *intermediaries* within the programme and its higher level of visibility, vis-a-vis the overall ‘programme’ or the CSO ‘partner’ organisations. Among many of the CSO partners, the face of AGIR is that of the *intermediary* as donor. This impression is widespread among CSOs in the provinces visited by the team. The relation between *intermediary* and partner was mentioned in the 2011 semi-annual report as a challenge to the consolidation of AGIR as a programme. Some interviewees even go further, expressing their impressions that this relation might lead to a kind of a clientistic relation, which can hinder sustainability.

This observation was primarily centered on the belief that for AGIR to have a legacy in terms of good practices, it is important to clarify its contribution as a **programme** to a certain set of results, instead of linking these results to specific *intermediaries*.²¹ The question has been raised if this is in fact critical – does there need to be a distinction between the programme, *intermediaries* and CSOs in the determination of results and who gets credit? This is an important question and in terms of the end result, the answer is perhaps not – civil society benefits from the result that has taken place. The point made by the external voice and with which this review agrees, is that for the programme to be **sustainable as a programme**, it must be recognised for the results it has accomplished (as a programme).

The 2011 AGIR semi-annual report states: “one of the greatest challenges of the AGIR programme is the consolidation of the diverse programme partners view of AGIR as a single programme in which each of them makes his contribution” (Relatório Semi-Anual 2011, page 26). In a follow-up to this statement, the mid-term review team agrees with the conclusions of the 2012 semi-annual report that, while general reporting has improved, the programme needs to start analysing how the various outcomes of the thematic areas can be clustered and reported as a set of consistent programme results that clarify and strengthen the ability of AGIR to document and report on outcomes as a **cohesive programme**. A ‘spheres of influence model’ helps us to understand how AGIR has established these ‘pathways of change’ through which funding and support flow out to partners, where change takes place at the organisational level of the CSO, and then through them, to the benefit of beneficiaries. This model can also help in demonstrating that the need for the programme to plan for, implement, monitor and report as a programme is critical to maintaining these pathways as a cohesive approach and decreasing the threat of programme fragmentation and less effective implementation and reporting on results.

Indeed, the programme has come a long way from its beginning, and has crossed many hurdles to improve coordination among *intermediaries* with different organisational cultures. Central to this coordination, is the *Intermediaries* Coordination Committee (ICC) and a technical team to support the coordination efforts undertaken to overcome the threat of fragmentation. The ICC is now consolidated as a steering body through which the *intermediaries* discuss programme cross-cutting issues, approaches to supporting CSO partners, the sharing of experiences and lessons learnt, and coordinating joint monitoring, reporting and outreach to the wider society. The number of

²¹ However recently, including in the last Consultative Forum, the AGIR programme's visibility has improved, signaling a positive change in the right direction and of what it can achieve in terms of the dialogue between civil society and government.

meetings of this steering body and its technical arm has increased considerably and with good results, thus showing an improvement in coordination.

The main achievements of this coordination process have been:

- i) the development of a joint results-monitoring matrix and baseline for use in the common programme areas;
- ii) the improvement and harmonisation of reporting through the jointly-written semi-annual reports;
- iii) the production of the AGIR platform (the programme newsletter); and
- iv) the organisation of the Consultative Forum where *intermediaries*, partners, government and other stakeholders meet to discuss AGIR programme areas, discuss its progress and share experiences.

Some of these coordination efforts have been directly responsible for improving the visibility of the programme, which is one of its main perceived weaknesses. In this regard, one external voice mentioned that in the last Consultative Forum (held in October 2012), the programme finally came to the public and became better known.

2.3.3 Coverage (National, Regional, Provincial, Local)

Geographically, AGIR covers all provinces and districts through direct partners and AGIR CSO partner's branches. While the vast majority of direct AGIR partners are central level organisations, local direct strategic AGIR partners have been recruited (especially in 2012) in the central and northern parts of the country to reinforce horizontal linkages at the local level and to expand programme impact and long-term sustainability. A number of the central level partners are represented at the province level, including NGO partners working through their provincial or regional branches such as GMD (Mozambican Debt Group), LDH (Human Rights League), ORAM (Non-Governmental Organisation on Communities and Land). Furthermore, various national network partners have local key partner organisations or networks, mostly at the provincial level, such as the Provincial Children's Networks, women's networks such as NAFET included in (FM-Women's Forum), provincial NGO forums (NGO forum - Joint), and the youth parliament (PJ). The community radio forum FOR-COM's members are represented directly at the province level and at many other districts, while broad membership-based AGIR partners such as the farmers union UNAC (National Farmers Union) are represented by farmers unions throughout the country at district and province levels.

2.3.4 AGIR CSO Partners and the Range of Activities

According to the approved AGIR strategic planning programme document, the quantitative target for the number of partnerships to be established by the end of the programme in 2014 was 39 CSOs. However this target has already been bypassed, as the number of active partnerships established has now reached 43.²² Additionally, other interested prospective or ‘emerging’ partners are currently in the process of being enrolled in the programme, qualifying (or not) through recently-undertaken partner evaluation processes.

One reason for this expansion of partners is the addition of the *intermediary* organisation, the Swedish Cooperative Center – SCC, that became operationalised within AGIR in 2011, one year later than the three original *intermediaries*. An additional reason is that the *intermediaries*, through early partnership assessments, soon found that very few CSOs qualified for long-term core partnerships as their capacity, particularly their institutional capacity, was lower than expected.²³ More CSOs were then supported in institutional strengthening through nursery funds, thus increasing the pool of potential partners.

In the review team’s initial contact with the AGIR *intermediaries*, it learned that the AGIR programme was originally meant to focus on national/central level CSOs. However, the *intermediaries* found that an approach that integrates relevant CSOs at the local level would ensure critical linkages and provide a much sounder and more sustainable basis for the programme. As a result, locally-based CSOs are now being recruited into the programme. This adaptation to the programme parameters will be discussed later in the report.

Within the scope of the current four thematic components of the AGIR programme, the current partners comprise different types of CSOs, which can be characterised as follows:

- **Human Rights-Based CSOs:** e.g. the Human Rights League and a range of more specialised organisations focusing on issues such as women/gender, the youth, children, the elderly, people living with HIV/AIDS and the disabled. While many of these organisations are Maputo based, at least two are locally based, i.e. Akhilizeto in Nampula province and Magariro in Manica province working with community rights and decentralised consultative councils (IP-CCs).

²²This number does not include some partner organisations whose contracts have been suspended, due to non-adherence to internal governance criteria, these measures relate to - MONASO, MEPT, and MISA.

²³ MASC was faced with a similar situation of CSOs with low capacity and as such, was also forced to start with fewer qualified CSOs than expected.

- **Natural Resource & Environment CSOs:** while most of these CSOs are Maputo based, a few local organisations relating to farmers and natural resource extraction mega projects in Tete (coal) and Nampula (heavy sands) provinces have recently joined the programme.
- **Broad Membership Based CSOs:** such as the farmers union and the journalist union, represented throughout the country.
- **Political Rights-Based CSOs:** such as AWEPA (International Non-Governmental Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa), and the Youth Parliament.
- **Resource CSOs in Investigation and Research:** such as IESE, CIP (Center for Public Integrity), CEDE (Center for Studies on Democracy and Development) and WLSA (Women and Law in Southern Africa), all of which operate at the central level.
- **Resource CSOs in Capacity Development and Learning:** such as CESC (Center for Capacity Development and Learning of Civil Society).
- **Broad CSO Networks, Forums and Platforms:** such as the Electoral Observatory, Women's Forum, National Forum of Community Radios (FORCOM).

This set of partners allows the programme to cover the wide array of activities of the four sub-programmes. Nonetheless, the current portfolio still falls short of covering all the planned interventions. The freezing of funding of some partners after management problems has left some gaps in the coverage of activities. *Intermediaries* argue that this has been offset by the integration of new partners. For example, to replace MISA IBIS, according to their comment to this report, has selected five partners including CODD (Centre for Studies and Promotion of Citizenship, Human Rights and Environment) and the CEC (Centre for Communication Studies). Dia-konia, commenting on the first draft of this report, also stated that the selection of new partners closed the gap. However, up to the end of this mid-term review, the process has not been completed, and the last semi-annual joint report, released in October 2012, states that the suspension of funding to MEPT has left a gap in the area of access to education rights (see page 3). The same report mentions that SCC is expected to increase its portfolio from 9 to 12 members by the end of 2012, and Oxfam had partners covering only 70% of the indicators for the four thematic areas of the sub-programme, with none dealing directly with the monitoring of public services (see page 2). In conclusion, the current portfolio covers most of the areas defined in the four sub-programmes, but it is still being expanded to cover some under-served thematic areas.

2.3.5 CSO Partner's Satisfaction with their Participation in AGIR

According to the interviews by the review team, there is a high level of satisfaction across the various CSO partner types (core, nursery). Many commented that AGIR is a safe platform through which to improve their organisation and to pursue their mission. As expressed by one of the more established partners: *If we did not have AGIR support, we would probably, just in order to survive, have had to accept a project, which was not quite in line with our strategic plan.* In another instance, an emerging partner expressed: *'quite honestly our finances were in a mess, now with AGIR support we have become organized, the assembly will meet in November to approve the*

gender policy, - we really hope we will pass to core funding...'. Some prominent examples of this support are:

- i) The Electoral Observatory relies on AGIR funding to become a permanent body – it is active under and between elections – and to strengthen linkages with similar organisations in Africa.
- ii) N'wety uses the AGIR funding in a very focused and strategic way for institutional development in all dimensions in order to improve their legibility for future funding by a range of donors, i.e. risk reduction and sustainability.
- iii) Centro Terra Viva uses funding not only to consolidate their organisation at the central level, but also in relation to their strategy to establish regional (south, center, north) delegations, of which the delegation in the center is active.

While overall satisfaction is high, there are numerous points where concerns have been raised regarding their interaction with the AGIR programme. These are:

Recognition of AGIR: In the visited provinces, many of the CSO sub-partners know nothing about the AGIR programme and feel their connection (and funding) comes from their connection to the CSO or to the *intermediary* with which they have a direct relationship. This is not a problem except when discussing the intended result of having AGIR establish itself and be seen as a cohesive programme. Having all partners - whether central, national level or provincial sub-partners - understand what AGIR is, and their connection to it, will help with the programme's recognition by others and the sustainability that will come with this in the future.

Funding Ratio for Staff Salaries: Some partners have expressed concerns in relation to the established ratios for the distribution of AGIR funding to partners between staff (30%) and other activities (70%). Arguing that the staff ratio is too limited, CSOs claim that this negatively affects their absorption capacity and the implementation of their strategic plan. This problem may be more pronounced for those partners with various donors than for those with only AGIR funding because, if core costs are paid by AGIR, the suggestion will be made that there is no need for another donor to also provide this financial support.

The need for a readjustment in the established ratios for financial support has merit, as it was continually seen by the review team that many of the organisations lack sufficient staff to adequately undertake activities within their strategic plans. Rather than reducing activities that can lead to or build a stronger civil society, providing additional financial room for increased staff involvement could be beneficial to both the depth and quality of existing activities, while also allowing for the exploration of new areas relevant to the CSOs' strategic plan and the work of AGIR.

Capacity Strengthening through Training and Education Activities: A central mechanism for capacity strengthening of CSOs within AGIR has been through the provision of training on a wide range of issues, techniques and processes. This training is focused at both organisational and individual levels. However the mid-term review team has found a widespread low level of satisfaction among AGIR CSOs in

the area of **capacity strengthening** as it relates to a range of critical issues. These issues included:

- *Intermediary communication and timely announcement of courses* – as an example, one CSO partner received information about a gender course given by an *intermediary* shortly before the course began and missed the opportunity.
- *Timing of specific training in relation to associated partner activities* - various partners have received training in gender, strategic planning and M&E *after* they had elaborated these instruments.
- *Form* - The courses are always classroom courses; other ways of facilitation and learning could be introduced to improve impact and skills, e.g. mentoring.
- *Continuity* – More continuity is needed, with different trainers in related issues sometimes applying different approaches.
- *Mixing of participants with different skill levels* – various partners, especially more established ones, find that the benefit of training is reduced due to the mixing of participants with different skill levels. One partner finds that ‘*the training typically assumes that the participants have the same level*’. In the experience of another partner, ‘*one of the most useful courses, was the one where we all had the same level of skill, the debate was extremely fruitful as partners at the same level could exchange experiences*’. This opinion is however not shared by all, as one person from IBIS states, ‘*training should have a mix of levels, the stronger should support the weaker*’.
- *Obligation* – many leaders of partner organisations are dissatisfied with the constant obligation of the leadership to participate in all capacity building events. Leaders feel they are called to many capacity building events, and that *intermediaries* persistently insist that leadership must always participate, even though they sometimes feel that they have knowledge in the course subject and that it would be more beneficial to their organisation for the relevant programme officer to participate.
- *Addressing needs* – many, especially more experienced partners, find that capacity development should be tailor-made to meet the partner’s specific needs to a greater extent. While this does happen with the *intermediaries*, more of these tailor-made courses would be appreciated by CSOs.
- *Tools*– Oftentimes, training does not provide tools for post-training support that the trained can use on a daily basis.
- *Training of trainers and tools* – A number of partners are forums, networks etc. with a considerable number of member organisations - replication of the training therefore becomes important. Some of the *intermediaries* already use this process to ensure sustainability.
- *Differentiation* – capacity development should be more differentiated in order to address the raised concerns.

The mid-term review confirms some of the results of two broad partner satisfaction assessments undertaken earlier in 2012 by Diakonia and Oxfam using a common methodology.²⁴ In line with the partner satisfaction assessments by Diakonia and Oxfam, the review team's interviews suggest that partner satisfaction with training is higher amongst new/nursery partners than amongst more experienced/core partners. The review team's interviews also seem to suggest a somewhat higher satisfaction with SCC training, which might result from working with direct local partners, longer training sessions of one week, and more tailor-made training. In general, however, all *intermediaries* have provided some tailor-made training.

Furthermore, the review team has noted that there is very limited replication of training at the provincial level where capacity is generally substantially lower than at the central level. The experience of SCC and its approach with direct partnerships at the provincial level demonstrates a marked difference in relation to the capacities of local representations of AGIR partners (e.g. Electoral Observatory), which have had limited benefit from AGIR training. In this context, Forum Mulher is an exception, in that they have provided adequate capacity development of a provincial female partner network in Tete (NAFET), which is operating on a voluntary basis. This training is skills-oriented and includes locally relevant themes, e.g. how to apply for funds through the District Development Fund.

Although the partner organisations contacted by the mid-term review team have suggested some changes to capacity strengthening, what has been done has generally been relevant and particularly useful to the CSOs in the following fields:

- **Administration, financial/results-based management.** The partners are receiving ready assistance from *intermediaries* when needed and are using this to reform their organisations. It has been noted that there is a manual on results-based management - a key element in project design and funding - that furthers the improvement of the quality of project proposals and the potential for funding.
- **Results-based monitoring and evaluation.** Partners find these courses interesting and relevant. However, most find they have substantial difficulties in applying this training and feel that they need considerable assistance in this field (which is received on request).
- **Gender training.** Some partners are currently working on their gender policies or are preparing to submit the gender policy for approval at their next general assembly. Many state that their organisation practices gender equality,

²⁴ Diakonia and Oxfam have carried out overall qualitative partner satisfaction assessments in 2012 using the same basic methodology, measuring satisfaction with process and impact within different dimensions: 1) Access to intermediary; 2) Confidence with Intermediary; 3) Readiness of Intermediary; 4) Tangibility; 5) Competence; 6) Results.

but they have not yet advanced with mechanisms or tools. A large number of partner organisations contacted by the review team had participated in the gender course.

Partner Satisfaction with Linkages

All contacted partner organisations agree that *'linkages and interaction between partners is not AGIR's strong side'*, and that *'linkages in AGIR happen by chance'*. On the other hand young/nursery funding partners say that *'we are constantly in contact with one another within their thematic pillar'*. Some interviewees suggest that the training events are the primary forum where most horizontal networking between AGIR partners across the thematic pillars take place, often based on personal relationships.

The partners consider the existing mechanism, the Annual Consultative Forum for all partners under the programme, to focus more on informing partners than on debate and linkages. The Annual Partner Forum for each pillar is primarily a planning exercise, which may have some linkage trade-offs as part of the annual planning. This year's Consultative Forum was better, with thematic groups outlining possible advocacy issues and providing more opportunities for networking around these points.

Networking within the AGIR programme is generally weak, although some organisations have created networks and linkages. The objectives for AGIR state that networks should be created in relevant areas. Despite weak horizontal linkages within AGIR, most contacted partners are part of, or in contact with, national and even international networks and they are able to illustrate how some of these networks/linkages have led to advocacy results. As noted by some interviewees, taking into account good-donorship principles and indicating that the focus on building new networks (especially internal to AGIR) may not be where the emphasis should lay, as existing networks and coalitions should be strengthened rather than new ones being created. According to interviewees, the priority should be to facilitate this strengthening process, and not to 'force' or promote new networks. Once again, we see the complicated issues that arise when applying good-donorship perspectives that align with what are felt to be good and necessary programme implementation practices.

2.4 EFFECTIVENESS – IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGIR PROGRAMME

2.4.1 Overall effectiveness of the AGIR Programme implementation

After an initial year of learning in 2010, the programme became more operational in 2011.²⁵ However, the 2012 semi-annual report mentions that at the end of the first half of 2012, three organisations (SCC, IBIS and Oxfam) were still seeking to fulfill their portfolios to cover all of the sub-thematic areas. Diakonia was the only organisation whose portfolio was already filled and stable (Semi-Annual Report 2012, page 1), but due to the freezing of funding of MEPT, this *intermediary* was looking for a new partner that will be locally based (Semi-Annual Report 2012, page 6).

In the case of MISA, IBIS implemented a set of activities under the so-called “Plano Inovador (Innovative Plan)”, which consisted of replacing the activities under the responsibility of this partner via alternatives (see Annual Report 2011, page 34). Five partner organisations including CEC and CODD, due to their areas of interventions, are said to have taken over MISA’s activities. It is not clear to what extent the set of “innovative activities” completely replaced those under the responsibility of MISA - because the report is not clear about this - but certainly the withdrawal of some partners has impacted the pace of implementation and the effort to fulfill the portfolio is evidence of this.

The main weakness is still the local level, which is clearly under-resourced, and reporting on the progress at this level is not evident in the programme annual reports. In the four *intermediaries*, the local level receives an average of less than 1/5 of AGIR resources. Whilst this can be a byproduct of the programme prerequisites to support national organisations, the likely effect of this concentration of resources at the central level is a clear affect on the partners’ level of the implementation of activities at the grass roots. Interviews carried out at the provincial level were all unanimous in pointing out constraints in the implementation of the strategic plans at the local level without the necessary funding. As mentioned earlier, the AGIR programme is changing its approach to CSO partner selection to include more locally-based organisations. In line with this approach, the process of preparing some partners at the local level to receive funding has also been initiated. For example, ACAMO (Association of the Blind and Partial Sighted of Mozambique) in Nampula has opened a bank account for this purpose; but as of October, it had not yet received any funding. The representa-

²⁵ The semi-annual report’s analyses of the level of implementation of the various components conclude that, on average, the implementation has been more than 90%. The implementation of some components was delayed due to the termination of funding to MONASO, MEPT and MISA. Absorption capacity is another problem that was pointed out as posing a problem to implementation (See Ibis Annual Report 2011).

tive of Rede da Criança, with experience in receiving and managing funds, was still noting the very low amount of funding received from headquarters. This has, on one occasion, forced it to fund an activity of the network in Nampula related to AGIR with its own resources. The Juvenile Parliament also expressed its concerns about a lack of funding to local level activities. These are some examples showing that the implementation of the partners' activities at the local level is still a critical point, despite attempts to solve this problem.

The problem of funds reaching the local level is being addressed with more consistency this year in the sub-programme managed by Diakonia as a result of its monitoring field missions. The evaluation team had access to 8 out of 9 partners' action plans, dated September 2012 (CEDE (Centre for Studies on Democracy and Development), Electoral Observatory, LDH, AMMCJ (Association of Mozambican Women in Legal Career), Rede CAME, Juvenile Parliament, MULEIDE (Association for Women, Law and Development). These plans include the decentralisation of funds, involvement of local level partner organisations' branches or network members in the planning process for 2013, and a mobilisation of funds by the latter to be more autonomous from the central level. This is a signal that the programme is well-aware of this gap, but with only two years remaining until the end of the programme, local-level CSOs will need extra effort to yield results attributable to the implementation of AGIR. If the experience with the central level has shown that it took almost two years for most of the organisations to be acquainted with good governance and management practices, and this was learned and improved by doing, it would be expected that the implementation of the programme at the local level will face similar problems – an even more challenging process taking into account the capacity constraints that exist at this level.

Implementation of CSO workplans

The implementation of the work plans has evolved. At the beginning of 2010, the workplan was only partially implemented. In the subsequent years, the level of implementation increased, although planned activities were not always implemented. Reporting on the work plans tends to analyse challenges and constraints and less the level of implementation. There were also cases of mismanagement that resulted in the suspension of the partners (MISA, MONASO MEPT) and a reduced pace of implementation.

CSO Partner Activities

When it comes to partners, the consistency of activities regarding their contribution to the programme's outcomes is sometimes not clear. AGIR agrees with partner organisations on a set of activities aligned to the objectives of the programme, or of the sub-programmes. Initially, the selection of these partners was made based on the fact that the partners had a strategic plan that overlaps with AGIR objectives or a history of intervention in the relevant areas. Therefore, the activities of these CSOs theoretically cannot fall outside the scope of AGIR. But since AGIR funds the CSO's strategic plan through a process of good donorship, there can be cases where activities might

be relevant for the programme, being part of its scope of intervention, but its place in the results matrix might not be clear.

The implementation of principles of good donorship in this area also poses dilemmas. For example, commenting on the previous version of this report, IBIS stated that under these principles it is not the responsibility of the *intermediary* to define results and/or select activities of the partner organisations. This is evidently a risk for the attainment of AGIR's results, since partner organisations can choose activities that fall short of contributing to the programme results. Moreover, taking into account partners' capacity problems, mainly in monitoring and evaluation, the ability of these actors to select suitable activities is potentially limited. The consolidation of the practices of results-based management (RBM) in these organisations, one of the results of the programme, might potentially change this situation. It is also worth noting however, that the adoption of RBM by CSOs will be a result, per se, of the programme and it is not realistic to expect this to happen in time to influence the planning of other AGIR activities.

Reporting has improved considerably, capturing only the set of activities that is relevant for programme results (including evidence/ indicators). This often helps link the activities to specific results, but in practice there are still many activities in the annual work plans that are relevant, because each fits into a specific area, but has a weak relationship to other undertaken activities. Most of the partners' activities in the sub-programme thematic areas fit this description. There is a set of activities for joint monitoring through a joint results matrix. These activities comprise areas relevant to the programme objectives of strengthening civil society (namely engagement with partners), capacity development, good donorship, networks and linkages, and mainstreaming of cross-cutting areas (gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights). *Intermediaries* are coordinating their approaches, sharing materials and even relying on the capacity of some partners to deliver training jointly. In these common areas, the objectives are coherent across the sub-programmes. The initiative of the *intermediaries* to define a common baseline contributes to the strengthening of a programmatic approach to their work.

On the other hand, the specific sub-programme activities, apart from some sub-components (for example, political accountability is common to the sub-programme managed by Diakonia and Oxfam Novib), are less integrated in the programme and stand as quasi-autonomous projects. As mentioned earlier in this report, even in joint-reporting, the linkages among the thematic activities are often not clear. It should be acknowledged however, that through proper reporting (e.g. Oxfam Novib reports) and a focus on showing the linkages between activities, outputs and outcomes and an analysis of the results chains, the linkages would be clearer. This has been acknowledged by both *intermediaries* and partner organisations (in 2011), and through the adoption of an 'impact matrix', the AGIR programme has improved the reporting in both 2012 plans and the recent AGIR 2012 semi-annual report.

The lack of efficient networking among these CSOs also reduces the possibility for synergies between partners' activities. One of the reasons for this networking weakness, mentioned in both programme reports and by some interviewees, is the keen competitiveness over resources by partner organisations, which makes them reluctant to form or maintain cooperative mechanisms like networks. While this competition level does seem to be decreasing as the programme ages, it does pose a serious problem for the future and development of AGIR as a cohesive programme with multiple cooperative CSO partners.

2.4.2 Interaction, Cooperation and Coordination Between AGIR INGO *Intermediaries*

The work of the AGIR programme has been generally successful when the results are gauged by the work of its CSO partners. What has come to light through the mid-term review however, is that the level of coordination between the *intermediaries* tempers this success. Generally, there are inherent barriers to coordination due to the different procedures and policies of the *intermediaries*. IBIS, Diakonia and SCC have more decision autonomy at the local level than Oxfam Novib. Beyond this however, there is a lack of shared vision by the *intermediaries* as to what AGIR is or could be. When this topic was raised with the *intermediaries*, there was almost always agreement. Each expressed, in their own way, the importance of the ICC (*Intermediary* Coordination Committee) and the technical group to the functioning of the AGIR programme and its coordination and harmonisation responsibilities (especially in work outside of the common areas).

At present, there have been varying levels of coordination across the programme regarding reporting, shared capacity training activities, and M&E actions. For the most part however, the AGIR programme still operates in many respects as four separate projects within a programme structure. For the AGIR programme to amplify the level of success that currently exists, it will be necessary to achieve a higher level of coordination among the AGIR *intermediaries* in the management of the programme 'as a programme'. While the vertical linkages are strong within the programme when following down from individual *intermediaries* to the CSOs with which they work, the horizontal linkages are less so. In the just-released 2012 semi-annual report, the *intermediaries* recognise this problem and there has been some movement on increased coordination when it comes to funding. The *intermediaries* also comment that more common or joint activities, which involve CSOs from across the different sub-programmes, will be planned and carried out in the future.

Some additional barriers to a programmatic approach continue to surface; that should be addressed by coordinated work among the *intermediaries*. The existence of a comprehensive M&E system that is consistent across the programme is weak. While there is the added complexity of the *intermediaries* having to work under the goal of good donorship and the limitations this can incur on setting overall goals and monitoring and reporting requirements for individual CSOs within the programme, AGIR suffers from reporting in a comprehensive way about its successes as a programme in a way that is more than the collection or sum of its individual parts. While recognising that

the AGIR programme has to produce results that are, in fact, a combination of partner's results, there needs to be a more consistent way to plan for AGIR to implement, monitor, and collect data on these activities across the programme. As commented on by one *intermediary* staff member, 'there is not a consistent theory of change' shared by the *intermediaries*, which makes it difficult to actually plan for and document 'change' within the programme. Reporting on its activities (and successes) is definitely improving within the AGIR programme, but there is still much room for change. This would also help the visibility of the AGIR programme as its successes are now often seen by others (external actors) as attributable to the work of specific CSOs or the *intermediaries* with whom they work – rather than AGIR.

The mid-term review team endorses the solutions outlined in the semi-annual report 2012 by *intermediaries* to improve the level of outcomes of cross-cutting issues, particularly in gender, which constitute an important step forward, not only in terms of probability of improving gender/cross-cutting results, but also in terms of the systematic joint planning (and budgeting) of common activities. AGIR *intermediaries* have decided to take a **joint approach** to improve outcomes in the area of addressing cross-cutting issues, which has been persistently weak. This joint approach will use a new 'change-oriented' gender training approach that was successfully tested by the *intermediaries* in 2012. A gender technical group, comprised of representatives of the four *intermediaries* was created in February 2012 to support the operationalisation of this approach. Furthermore, *intermediaries* will scrutinise partner plans from a gender and cross-cutting issues perspective in order to better track and identify partner results.

2.4.3 Networking Mechanisms for AGIR CSO Partners

As noted by some interviewees, taking good-donorship principles into account means that existing networks and coalitions should be focused and strengthened. The priority of the programme, it is felt, should be to facilitate and create opportunities for this strengthening process, rather than to promote new networks. However, these principles are not in line with current programme strategies and the *intermediaries* still have to devise an approach to support networks, since the ambition is to create networks that cross-cut *intermediaries* and thematic areas. Some partners raised concerns about the difficulties of networking, managing and monitoring the work of networks and their added-value is being partially addressed; and in this regard Oxfam has produced a small explicative brochure on networks. A study on how change happens has been also commissioned to this end.

Networking **within** the AGIR programme is generally perceived as weak. Although some organisations have created networks and linkages within the AGIR programme, these are mainly vertical ones (including partners of the same *intermediary*), with a limit to networks or linkages that cross-cut sub-programmes. According to many AGIR partners, opportunities for internal networking are limited to training sessions and joint meetings. The lack of a clear mechanism for partnership is also perceived as an obstacle to more effective partnership. For example, the Electoral Observatory

(OE) tried to work with other organisations on the revision of the constitution, but this was unsuccessful. There have been some networking initiatives though, for example, during the by-election of Inhambane, when OE worked with CODD (an IBIS partner), which helped in turning the Electoral Observation data into a more journalistic form of information for easier access by the public. Studies about the transparency of the extractive industries in Mozambique, based on contributions of various organisations, contributed to training sessions and joint meetings. The lack of a clear mechanism for partnership is also perceived as an obstacle to more effective partnership. For example, the Electoral Observatory (OE) tried to work with other organisations on the revision of the constitution, but this was unsuccessful. There have been some networking initiatives though, for example, during the by-election of Inhambane, when OE worked with CODD (an IBIS partner), which helped in turning the Electoral Observation data into a more journalistic form of information for easier access by the public. Studies about the transparency of the extractive industries in Mozambique, based on contributions of various organisations, contributed turning CIP into a reference organisation in this field, with the Regional Secretariat of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) discussing with this organisation the preparation of future country reports in this area.

In 2012 however, some horizontal cross-thematic issue-based linkages have been strengthened. LDH, AAAJC, and JA (Environmental Organisation) have consolidated the articulation in relation to the movement of people affected by the Brazilian mining company Vale (exploiting the coal mines of Moatize in Tete) at the International Social Forum. A strong campaign by AGIR partners JustiçaAmbiental, Livaningo (Environmental Organisation), LDH, Centro Terra Viva, Kulima, and Centro de IntegridadePública started in 2010 against the establishment of a polluting ‘bypass’ at the Mozal aluminum smelter plant that has resulted in a case against IFC (International Finance Corporation) under the World Bank Group through the Office of the Compliance Advisor/Ombudsman. According to the ombudsman’s appraisal in July 2012, a compliance audit of IFC must be implemented and envisaged to be conducted before end 2012.

Four AGIR partners - LDH, JA, AAAJC and UNAC have recently, in an open letter, protested against the injustice and violation of human rights related to the resettlement process. International attention and the substantial involvement of international CSOs on extractive industries issues (e.g. Human Rights Watch, and the Movement of People Affected by Vale), reinforces advocacy processes. While these strong advocacy processes cannot be directly attributed to AGIR (and are likely to have happened without the participation of AGIR), the programme’s partner CSOs are contributing to this process.

A similarly strong advocacy process was conducted by AGIR partners Forum Mulher, WLSA and Nwety and other CSOs, resulting in the effective implementation of the Law on domestic violence. These are examples of how interventions have improved and led to results in advocacy networks due to better thematic articulation, the

production and quality of evidence and position papers supported by research carried out by organisations like CIP, IESE, WLSA and others.

Despite weak horizontal linkages within AGIR, most contacted partners are part of, or in contact with, national and even international networks and they are able to illustrate how some of these networks/linkages have led to advocacy results.

2.4.4 Monitoring and Reporting Structures within AGIR

The need for a strong monitoring and evaluation structure/framework is important for a number of reasons. As the AGIR programme moves forward, it will be critical to make sure that there is an ‘evaluative thinking’ process that evolves in tandem with implementation activities. At the core of the evaluative thinking process is the need to develop a regular flow of monitoring information that is useful, and will be used to manage the programme well. The collection and analysis of this monitoring information will form the basis for the reflection on experience (learning) that informs future management decisions and provides data for accountability and reporting requirements. At each step of the ‘evaluative thinking’ cycle, there is a need to design monitoring, evaluation and learning processes that respond to organisational needs concerning information gathering about programme progress. This will mean balancing accountability needs with the need for processes which support and encourage learning, while at the same time also providing support for planning and management processes. These different information ‘needs’ are not in isolation. Monitoring processes meeting the needs of one area will also function in support of others. This iterative ‘evaluative thinking’ process where initial experiences with the evaluative thinking processes are used to enhance content and process in ways most beneficial to ongoing data collection are essential to a well-functioning monitoring, evaluation and learning system.

Generally *intermediaries* seek to report on activities and results achieved, but impact monitoring is still weak (Semi-Annual Report 2012). Some interviewed partner organisations have acknowledged the importance of training in results-based management for the improvement of their planning and reporting processes. The programme reports on results achieved based on CSO partner’s reporting systems following the principle to respect the existing planning, management cycles and accountability processes (such as reporting to the internal governance bodies). Organisational partners such as ACAMO and even networks like Rede da Criança have a set of procedures for reporting, comprising the process of the collection of information from local branches and local partners and regular reporting to governing bodies.

The AGIR programme produces two reports per annum, but this workload is not transferred to partners. *Intermediaries* take the necessary information from the partner organisation’s reports and feed this into the programme’s report. In this regard, it has been considered by most of the CSO interviewees to represent a good process for reporting because it does not impose an additional burden to the partners. However, apart from well-established CSOs, assessing results has been problematic for most partners with reporting focusing on activities. Reporting has also been more relevant

to understanding sub-programmes results than to contributing to the overall programme, since the linkage between partner and *intermediary* has been much stronger than the linkages with other partners across the four sub-programmes (see AGIR Semi-Annual Joint Report, 2011, page 15).

Despite a widespread approval of the RBM training and the acknowledgement of its relevance at all levels of project cycle management, the *intermediaries* have noted the difficulties experienced by partners in the shift from a Logical Framework (LFA) approach to a results-based monitoring approach. For example, Diakonia acknowledges the fact that most of their CSO partners' strategic plans contained results and indicators being still designed outside of the programme results-based framework (see page 10) as one of the risks of implementing the 2012 plan. Moreover, most of the partners acknowledge the capacity constraints they face in monitoring, and suggestions of further training in these areas have been frequent among the interviewed partners.

In some cases difficulties and challenges of impact monitoring and reporting stem from the nature of the activities being implemented by the partners, as well as the organisational format. For example, reporting impact on advocacy is considered a challenge, since organisations do a lot of advocacy work at all levels that achieves considerable results, but is not reported (Interview with Rede da Criança). Reporting on these results has been deficient due to a lack of capacity, as well as the very real difficulties in collecting evidence and attributing results to advocacy work which is about social change. The monitoring and reporting on outcomes associated with networks is equally difficult. For example, Rede da Criança comprises more than 140 organisations with different capacities and organisational cultures; some of them perform effective advocacy work that is not well reported. According to the IBIS 2012 Annual Plan, organisations still need to adopt monitoring and evaluation practices as part of their current management systems to better inform their decisions. In theory, the combination of partners' reporting, field monitoring and capacity development in results-based management is a consistent approach to improve impact reporting. Nonetheless, organisations are still struggling to adopt this approach in the full management cycle and need considerably more training to achieve the level of capacity needed to achieve operational status.

Reporting on outcomes at all levels within the AGIR programme varies, but has been improving with support from the *intermediaries*. As an example, Diakonia works with partners to build the narrative to establish the linkages between interventions and results. Similarly Oxfam, from the beginning of the programme, has been concerned with building a narrative of how outputs lead to outcomes and acknowledging the difficulties of attributing some results to the direct intervention of the programme. Generally, however, all *intermediaries* claim that partners' reporting is weak and tends to be activity-focused, hence challenging the reporting on outcomes. Training has been provided in this area, but it is still among the weakest of the skills held by CSO partners.

2.5 IMPACT OF AGIR

2.5.1 Progress Towards First 'Outcomes' Emerging from AGIR

The programme is in its third year. For the *intermediary* SCC, this is its second year of implementation. Some CSOs joined the programme in 2011. The likelihood of the programme to produce the expected impacts depends on factors both inside and outside the scope of the programme. Inside the programme, the ability of CSO partners to absorb the given capacity strengthening and the internalising of the approach of the programme are key points for its success. Outside the scope of the programme is the changing environment of development aid that has been heavily affected by the financial crisis and the challenges posed in the national Mozambican context, with the natural resources boom and the risks and opportunities it represents for civil society capacity building.

Capacity strengthening within the AGIR programme of the CSO partners is on-going and training in areas such as administrative, financial and human management, results-based management, gender, human rights and fund raising are contributing to improve organisations' internal capacities and to address important issues like gender, human rights, HIV/AIDS. Although there are some challenges, such as adjusting the gender training approach to the conditions of the partners, improving and consolidating internal governance, and adopting results-based management, the programme has good potential to succeed in attaining the objective of strengthening organisations' internal capacity and eventually in creating the conditions for self-sustainability.

Most of the contacted CSO partners have expressed their concern about the dramatic reduction of sources and opportunities of funding for civil society. The push of the *intermediaries* to convince donors to join common funds in the context of good donorship - although a consistent and adequate approach to improve alignment and harmonisation - will also contribute to reduce the number of available sources of funding. This implies that either the idea of diversification of sources of funding has to be redefined – in terms of development partners/donors and non-donors sources – or additional ways of defining access to funding should be adopted. Alternatives to this range from a definition of a percentage of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) to fund civil society, which in the current natural resources boom could be viable to some extent, to the identification of non-traditional or new donors, for example, private companies. The training on fund-raising provided to partner organisations can help them to devise ways of diversifying their sources of funding; but the success of this endeavour also depends on a strategic and creative vision and the management of civil society organisations.

Although the *intermediaries* have been very active in lobbying for core funding, in general, under the current globalised financial crisis it seems unlikely to expect overall improvement in funding or overall diversification in funding. The AGIR programme is contributing to foster the adoption of mechanisms for common funding for CSO partners. In some cases, this stems from the initiative of *intermediaries* (e.g. IBIS and MASC), in others from the initiative of well-established CSO partners in supporting common pool funding mechanisms for strategic plans (eg. Nwety, WLSA

and Forum Mulher). A positive aspect is that, backed by AGIR core funding, CSO partners are increasingly pushing for donors to finance their strategic plan, although with limited success, among others due to the reduced availability of funding and weak fundraising skills/strategies of the partners.

The main effort of the *intermediaries* has until now been concentrated on the capacity development of partners in organisational strengthening with a focus on the development of strategic plans, the revitalisation of their governance bodies, and the improvement of their internal administration, finance, management and planning systems. As a core base of AGIR, all partners had strategic plans by the end of 2011, and new emerging partners are in the process of elaborating their strategic plans. Internal financial, management and planning systems are improving as well. Financial reports have been consolidated; there is segregation of administrative and financial functions; and auditing reports are increasingly clear of critical observations. Besides, there has been improvement to fiscal commissions and participation by social bodies in the life of the organisations, especially for the core-funded partners, which are contributing to better accountability and are crucial for transparency and the sustainability of the organisations. All of this contributes to internal and external credibility and increases the potential to attract funding for the implementation of the strategic plans.

Towards outcomes in thematic sub-programme areas

Although the *intermediaries* have mostly concentrated on CSO partner's organisational strengthening, results have been achieved that mark progress towards outcomes in all sub-programmes. Generally, as noted above, results-based monitoring undertaken by CSOs is still quite weak and consequently results have been poorly documented. However improvements were noted in 2012 as a result of partner capacity development in this area and greater attention to this weakness by the *intermediaries*. Progress towards outcomes has been somewhat influenced by the suspension of three partners under each of the thematic sub-programmes administered by Diakonia, IBIS and Oxfam and to the late start of SCC. Oxfam estimates that the current partner portfolio covers about 70% of the indicators for the four thematic areas of the sub-programme due to difficulties in identifying partners for specific gaps in two of the thematic areas relating to the monitoring of public services and gender equity promotion. The possible implications of this are dealt with below.

In general, across the four thematic sub-programmes activities such as research, information, debates and similar activities supporting knowledge-related outcomes are the most advanced in terms of achievement through increasingly updated and improved websites, public debates and events, radio programmes, community awareness development initiatives and such promoted by AGIR partners.²⁶ Furthermore, a large

²⁶ For example, knowledge outcomes concerning 'Guidelines on how to access public information for the rights holders to monitor the governance process improved' (in the sub-programme Access to Information), or 'Improved access to of citizens and CSOs to legislation on natural resources' (in the sub-programme Strengthening social accountability in natural resource management and community

number of position papers have been published in relation to a variety of issues in the four sub-programmes, resulting in increased visibility or more tangible immediate results. The capacity to document and share lessons learned and publish research/studies varies across partners, with organisations with longstanding experience performing better. Although joint positioning is emerging, it still tends to be individualised among the partner organisations, where some perform better and more frequently than others.

The outcomes of the AGIR thematic areas are particularly difficult to assess, taking into account the multiplicity of activities and the scope of work of the many CSO partners. The reporting on these areas mainly focuses on activities and still reflects the repeatedly-mentioned difficulties of partners to report on results, and to impact and demonstrate them with evidence. Consequently, considerable outcomes have been achieved through the implementation of the programme, but meagre evidence about the impact has been produced in the thematic areas. Generally, the programme contributes to the strengthening of the capacity of the partners to improve in their input in the thematic areas. However there are also other organisations that do not benefit from AGIR support in most of the areas in which they operate, thus making the attribution of impact very difficult.

The reliance on partners' strategic plans, combined with a strict vision of good donorship that prevents the programme from proposing appropriate courses of action, can be an obstacle to the attainment of the AGIR objectives. It also poses a challenge to the analysis of the value of the outcomes for the programme objectives, since different organisation's strategic objectives, even if aggregated by a programme, do not necessarily demonstrate a clear process of change in the same direction. Following a coherent pathway of change through the various spheres of influence to intended outcomes within a programme like AGIR becomes much more difficult when the ability to link various organisational levels through strategic plans that show linkages between the programme to CSO to beneficiaries does not exist.

On progress towards outcomes in sub-programme managed by IBIS

The sub-programme managed by IBIS comprises four thematic specific objectives. Progress has been made towards reaching outcomes under all four objectives²⁷ through a number of activities that are fairly evenly distributed in three of the four

rights to land).

²⁷ Immediate Objective 1: Citizens are empowered to demand accountability from public bodies. Immediate Objective 2: Citizens across Mozambique have access to quality information from a plural, principled and gender balanced media; Immediate Objective 3: Citizens' right to public information is respected and supported by a strong legal framework; Immediate Objective 4: Enabling an environment for freedom of information, expression and the press.

objectives. Only one activity is implemented under objective four (enabling environment for freedom of information, expression and the press).

The following provides some examples on progress towards achieving outcomes in the Access to Information sub-programme:

- Engagement and capacity development of district platforms in governance monitoring in health and education sectors by CESC resulting in the district platforms, having positioned themselves publicly about district budgets in health and education, which feeds into outcome on CSOs and empowered citizens for rights-based interventions.
- Members of parliament are engaged in debate and the revision of the proposed law on access to information, and have conducted external consultative meetings in all provinces. This also feeds into the outcome on the media legislative sphere improved through CDH (Centre For Human Rights).
- A community radio station was closed by local authorities and a journalist was detained for having denounced bad governance practices. With pressure from civil society, the radio station was reopened and the journalist was freed. The example illustrates that, through FORCOM's interventions, the capacity of community radio stations to produce quality content has improved.

It is assessed that outcomes will be achieved in relation to all objectives and impact areas. However the degree of attainment of certain outcomes may be limited in breadth and depth. This concerns outcomes related to the improved media legislative sphere, enabling environment for the freedom of information, expression and the press, where government resistance has been high and progress therefore can be expected to be very gradual, even e.g. when concerning officially public documents such as municipal or district plans. While the number of requests for information by journalists and citizens may significantly increase, the release of information in response to requests by public officials may not increase proportionally, thereby challenging the expected outcome.

On progress towards outcomes in sub-programme managed by SCC

Under SCC, activities in 2012 have contributed to seven of the nine outcome areas. Examples of progress towards the outcomes under the sub-programme of SCC are:

- In 2012 UNAC and ORAM participated along with other CSOs in the third meeting of the Consultative Forum on Land issues in Nampula, where specific land issues were debated. In relation to the natural resources and land policy, the CSOs presented positions on specific critical land issues (land lease transfers, integrated land cadastre, taxation of land) and managed to influence the agenda of the 4th meeting of this forum to be held later in 2012.
- AAAJC undertakes the capacity development of local communities in mining areas in human rights, legal rights and community organisation, including the training of community paralegals feeding into an outcome on improved access of citizens and CSOs to legislation on natural resources.

On progress towards outcomes in sub-programme managed by Oxfam:

Oxfam, which has the largest number of partners and impact areas, is progressing towards reaching outcomes that relate to immediate objectives/thematic areas one and four regarding:

- Accountability of the government in finances and planning and
- Reduction of discrimination and respect of human rights.

Competent partner organisations with the capacity to produce change have been identified for closing wider gaps under immediate objectives two and three relating to:

- Monitoring of basic services (e.g. health and education) at the community level
- Strengthening of the demand side of gender promotion and female leadership

Examples of progress towards outcomes under the sub-programme of Oxfam are:

- Debate on rights of sexual minorities bringing evidence of continued violation of these rights in Mozambique in those cases where the government has silently refused to register the association. This activity contributes to outcomes under objective four, concerning the reduction of discrimination and respect of human rights.
- Capacity development of the Centers of Attendance of Women and Children, including police officers, has resulted in an improved quality of attendance to victims of violence and improved articulation of violence cases with health and legal authorities. This has led to a MoU signed between WLSA and Ministry of Interior contributing to outcomes under objective two.
- AGIR partners Akilizetho and Facilidade in Nampula lead the ‘Nampula governance group’ and have contributed to a major initiative for renewal and the representativeness of Local Consultative Councils. This has resulted in improved representativeness of Local Consultative Councils, important for citizens and CBOs to be able to influence planning and development in rural areas where election democracy has not yet been introduced.
- Oxfam partners have actively participated in advocacy for the approval of the anti-corruption package bill submitted to the parliament and have contributed to the approval of the Revision of the Public Prosecutor Law, and the law for the protection of witnesses and denouncers. Access to public information and accountability was improved with the intensification and consolidation of the process of district budget monitoring that contributes to better access to information about public expenditures and political accountability, since it has been reported that members of parliament have used these reports in the performance of their executive oversight role.
- Oxfam supported the participation of a group of NGOs in the Busan Conference on Aid Effectiveness and the subsequent creation of the Aid Effectiveness Forum, a government partner, to monitor the implementation of recommendations in the country. The national focal point is GMD, with Magariro and Estamos being the central and northern regional focal points, respectively. This is expected to improve knowledge and accountability about aid effectiveness in the country.
- Through AGIR, GMD has led a considerable revitalisation of the network of partners at the local level, which were very important in the collecting of evidence for the Civil Society report presented in the National Development Observatory. The quality of evidence has called attention to the poor quality of

some public works and services, and it is claimed that this is having an impact on service delivery.

On progress towards outcomes in sub-programme managed by Diakonia:

This sub-programme covers four impact areas distributed into three intervention areas: participation and social accountability, legal accountability including human rights and political accountability. The gap, resulting from the suspension of MEPT focusing on the ‘right to education’, is envisaged to be covered by the recruitment of a number of locally-based partners who are specialised in this field. This could add to improved impact at the local level where Diakonia so far does not have any directly recruited partners. The focus on local level partners for interventions in education will require effective networks by these to the central level to channel local evidence into national level advocacy.

Examples of progress towards outcomes under the sub-programme of Diakonia are:

- As a result of ACAMOs activities, mechanisms have been established for regulations regarding the exemption of tax and duties on all imports of academic material for the disabled, and special systems have been created to guarantee access to education and employment at the National Institute for Employment and Vocational Training.
- LDH is very strong in governance issues. As a result of LDH’s monitoring activities of human rights victims of torture and trafficking of body parts in Niassa, Sofala and Manica, the National Institute for Social Action has supported identified victims and the issue, long denied, has been accepted by the government. LDH’s persistence in monitoring human rights in prisons has been made complicated by denial of access of LDH to prisons. The government shows increasing awareness of the need to acknowledge human rights principles in its interventions. The Ministry of Justice has approached the Liga and has acknowledged that its work is important. As a result of LDH’s endurance and persistence, the government has accepted the need for monitoring and a MoU has been signed with the state allowing LDH access to prisons to monitor the extent to which prisoners’ rights are respected. This has contributed to a considerable increase in monitoring and respect of human rights in prisons.
- Under legal responsibility and human rights, LDH has promoted many civic education campaigns on various legislation about children’s rights and domestic violence against women, and has reached out to 150 communities in 2011-2012. The work of monitoring the prison system contributed to a considerable increase in respect to human rights in the prisons and acknowledgement of the role of LDH; and the government, through the Ministry of Justice, signed a MoU with this organisation to work in the prison system.
- AMMCJ has contributed to improve access to legal assistance by women in rural areas.
- MULEIDE is promoting campaigning on HIV/AIDS and violence against women that contributes to raise awareness on this matters.

- Through campaigns of sensitisation, radio programmes, public demonstrations Diakonia partners, MULEIDE and AMMCJ, are contributing to increases in the number of denouncements of violence against women.
- A group of civil society organisations, led by Rede da Criança and Rede CAME, are pressuring the government to regulate and enforce legislation on children's rights.
- ACAMO, through its activism and advocacy work, influenced better access of services and education to blind people, promoting training of teachers to deal with blind students and the inclusion of blind people in the Institute for Employment and Vocational training (INEFP).
- A group of organisations by the Electoral Observatory and AGIR partners and other civil society organisations have promoted debate on the revision of the electoral law and the parliament acknowledges the EO as legitimate interlocutor in this matter.

2.5.2 A Focus on National-Level CSO Partners and its Impact of the Achievement of Outcomes (Present and Future)

In accordance with Sida's initial guidelines for the programme,²⁸ key AGIRactors are defined as follows:

- a. National organisations/social movements with structures at lower levels and network organisations.
- b. National-level watchdog or research organisations which can prove their legitimacy.
- c. National-level Human Rights organisations, focusing on support to women's rights, child rights and the rights those affected by HIV/ AIDS.

The guidelines further state that outreach is important and that the Swedish Embassy considers national organisations with genuine structures at lower levels and network organisations as key actors, while – according to the guidelines – national level organisations without structures at lower levels need to prove their legitimacy to obtain support.

On this basis, the *intermediaries*, all with strong backgrounds in community-based development, focused on the recruitment of national-level partners of all three types listed in the guidelines until a more flexible approach was adopted by the Swedish embassy, which resulted in some recruitment of strategic direct local partners effectively from 2012. Although the focus on central-level partners is leading to results, as demonstrated above, there are critical aspects related to this approach as well, which

²⁸ Guidelines: The Swedish Embassy's Support to Mozambican Civil Society Organisations; 2009-02-05.

affect results at the local level. Field visits by the review team note that the approach to replicate the capacity strengthening of organisations at the local level, using national-based organisations, is not as efficient as first thought and, at least in some cases, needs complimentary measures or a different focus to be effective.

Some partner organisations, contacted at the local level, noted insufficient funding to operate effectively at the local level, in stark contrast with the optimism expressed at the central level for AGIR support. This is the case of the Youth Parliament branch in Nampula, whose representative was not even aware that the organisation was receiving funding from AGIR. Local partners of the natural resource platform in Tete also received a very small proportion of the funds available in connection with the extractive industry advocacy initiative through the national platform, and express that they could have performed more and better work if more funds had been available. Lately, due to resource constraints, some of the outreach of these local level organisations has ended at the provincial capital. For example, the Children Network representative in Nampula noted that the received resources were not enough to implement the main activities to manage the network, let alone to implement activities at the district level.

Another implication of a strong focus on central partners is that certain important issues may not be addressed. For example, district decentralisation, which is linked to outcomes in the sub-programme managed by Oxfam, is not represented in the form of a national platform, network or similar structure. This has, to some extent, negatively affected outcomes in this field, whereas at the local level there are strong organisations and networks with the capacity to generate change and impact that address decentralised district planning.

Some organisations at the local level also mentioned that the centralisation of training is limiting the participation of staff from the local level, since some of the training activities carried out at the central level only include representatives of some provinces. Generally, in the two provinces visited, Nampula and Tete, most of the interviewed local organisations had only participated in training provided at the central level and with other organisations. There were actually some training activities at the local level, but the model of replication and decentralisation has worked well with some and not with others, hence creating a risk of ineffectiveness.

For example, Diakonia provided training in Beira and IBIS and SCC have held decentralised partner forums in Tete with all their respective partners. These forums have included some capacity development content: e.g. on results-based monitoring and experience exchange. In some cases ‘training of trainers’ was adopted to allow for the replication of the training, but only in some areas and to some organisations. For example, ORAM received training on RBM that allowed it to replicate this in its organisation. This triggered interest from other colleagues and branches. ORAM requested more training to AGIR, which was provided to all delegations/branches. In a different process, the organisation was trained in gender but was not able to replicate this to other branches; although there was a high demand for this training in the provincial

offices, since this area was considered strategic but still very weak in the organisation.

In the case of networks, whilst at the central level they can take the shape of an organisation (see Forum Mulher), at the local level it is a fluid mechanism of coordination of multiple organisations, with their initiatives, different strategic interests, resources and capacities. In this situation, the allocation of resources to a network at the central level can be less effective at the local level, since the fluid nature of linkages and mutual responsibilities between the central-level network and the local-level organisations that comprise a network increases the risk of the allocation of resources benefiting only some organisations. Anecdotal evidence gathered in interviews shows that in some cases, at the local level, networks exist thanks to activism of a coordinating organisation that often uses its own resources to sustain the network.

2.5.3 Gender, HIV/Aids, and Human Rights Outcomes - AGIR and Cross-Cutting Issues

Within AGIR, cross-cutting issues in gender and HIV/AIDS are addressed at:

- 1) The partners organisational level; and
- 2) By partners in terms of activities relating to the general public, citizens, communities as well as specific target groups under each of the four AGIR themes.

Through joint capacity-building activities held by the four *intermediaries*, training has been provided that usually focuses on awareness building. Most of this training has been workshop-based and of a general standardised nature. In some cases, mainly among those organisations with already existing gender practices (e.g. Akilizetho), training was important to improve their approach on gender and was seen as an opportunity to do some networking with other relevant organisations (WLSA and Forum Mulher). This has led to concrete cooperation initiatives in the future.

While gender practices are generally strong in most partner organisations, including those contacted by the review team, in general, capacity strengthening in mainstreaming gender and HIV/AIDS has led to few results. Knowledge about these issues also depends on the area of specialisation of the organisation. For example, knowledge on gender is stronger in Forum Mulher and on HIV/AIDS in MONASO than in other organisations (see Diakonia 2011 Annual Report). Gender mainstreaming seems to be most widely integrated in partners' planning instruments, although this integration has been a slow process. Some CSO partners expect to have drafted or approved gender policies by the end of 2012, including the following partners contacted by the review team: AAAJC, CTV (Centro Terra Viva, Environmental Organisation) under SCC.

The joint outcome matrix, filled in by the *intermediaries*, provides mostly generic information. However Diakonia provides some quantitative measures, which may illustrate the level of implementation of cross-cutting issue outcomes among their partners, as does Oxfam's annual report for 2011 (May 2012) in which it notes that only 1 of 11 partners have an approved gender policy and that 10 of 11 partners have

no policy at all. According to the same source, few Oxfam partners have gender and HIV/AIDS policies in place. However, this can be misleading as most of them have activities in these areas. 7 of 11 of Diakonia's partners have activities in these areas, but do not have policies or written instruments with activities in these areas having been done in an ad-hoc way. All four SCC partners, by the end of 2011, had gender and HIV/AIDS activities noted in their strategic plans or programmes, but still needed to operationalise these plans through policies and implementation structures and processes.

Overall, gender and HIV/AIDS-based monitoring remain weak. The 4 AGIR *intermediaries* have recognised this weakness and have applied some of their first capacity strengthening efforts to this area through the testing, in 2012, of a new change-oriented gender training approach which has produced good results. The *intermediaries* have agreed to use this training method within 2012 and funds are available. It is expected that this should greatly improve the documentation of results through the use of cross-cutting gender indicators in 2013 (this is stated with the caveat that partners would need to improve their reporting of results and *intermediaries* would need to better systematise and improve their reporting in the joint results matrix so that results, not only in gender, are clearly related to indicators).

With respect to specific thematic gender outcomes, variable positive progress is noted. For example:

- Advocacy efforts by AMCS (Women in Social Communication Association) were directed at the 'The National Media Council' for a bylaw to ensure gender balance in public TV and Radio broadcast contents. This pressure received a positive response from the council. Not only did this contribute to the achievement of outcomes associated with gender violation cases exposed by the media, but also had a direct impact on media houses in ensuring the employment of more women and journalists (both men and women) and increasing their coverage of gender sensitive issues.
- Gender mainstreamed practices are strong in land and natural resources. Local partners, for example AAAJC and UPCT (Tete Provincial Farmers Union), have conducted gender sensitive interventions on information and awareness development activities at the community level. These activities have included debates on the role of women in rural development, the role of gender in legislation/policies on mining, and land rights for men and women.²⁹ A preliminary AGIR programme result monitoring exercise by AAAJC reflects gender (not HIV/AIDS), but does not yet manage to specify gender specific programme indicators, which are expected to be included in the annual monitoring report by the end of 2012.

²⁹ These activities are outcomes in AGIR's results matrix on "citizens', particularly women's, land rights", and "access to natural resources are protected in policies, legislation and regulations".

- Akilizetho has a history of gender mainstreaming practices but, with the support of the AGIR programme, their approach has improved and has become more technically proficient. The training activities were also a good opportunity for networking, which allowed Akilizetho to have access to materials and information on many themes on gender from lead organisations in the field (in this case, WLSA and Forum Mulher).
- The inclusion of gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights elements in the interventions of the OE is considered to be a key result of AGIR support. The recruitment process for OE projects requires that 50% of the recruited staff are women, although this is not always achieved, due to capacity imbalances. For example, most of the provincial coordinators (80%) are men. Among electoral observers this ratio is also low; the justification for this is that electoral observation involves physical hardship that few women will accept. Human rights are seen as a basic element in their work and electoral participation is among them. The observatory also takes advantage of having, among its members, the LDH to ensure that human rights are mainstreamed in their interventions.
- At ORAM, gender is in their strategic plan and in its interventions are also combined with human rights. For example, in the database created on land rights, they included information with DUAT (Land Certificate), who are more vulnerable to rights' violation.

Only a few organisations have formal structures concerning gender. Most often, management and programmatic practices exist that contribute to the mainstreaming of cross-cutting areas such as gender. Some examples are:

- Organisations, such as Akilizetho and Juvenile Parliament have specific structures to mainstream gender issues. In the PJ, there is a specific area of Gender and Human Rights in their internal structure.
- Many of the CSO partners have designated specific individuals in their organisations to monitor gender-related activities: In Akilizetho a specific gender officer is responsible for this area of mainstreaming these elements in the organisation's programming. A programme officer with ORAM performs the same role, while the OE has two programme officers responsible for ensuring that gender policies are incorporated in their actions. At each ORAM branch, the staff responsible for the planning and monitoring of programmatic areas are also responsible for tracking gender mainstreaming in all relevant areas. At ACAMO, the Departments of Woman and Children and of Social and Legal Assistance deal with gender and human rights issues respectively. However, these were not created under AGIR.

According to the Joint Outcome Matrix published in Oxfam's annual report for 2011, the foreseen joint outcomes and respective indicators for gender and HIV/AIDS by 2014 are:

- Joint Outcome 5.1.4: Internal systems and policies in gender and HIV/AIDS create a safe working environment in partner organisations. To be achieved by the following indicators:
 - Key Partners have an implemented and operational gender policy*
 - Key Partners have an implemented and operational HIV/AIDS policy*

iii) *Key Partners have 40% women in staff and in the leadership*

- Joint Outcome 5.2.3: Due to knowledge acquired in gender and HIV/AIDS during the support to partnerships, partners are effective in their work. To be achieved by the following indicators:
 - i) *Contextual analysis by key partners takes in consideration gender and HIV/AIDS issues.*³⁰
 - ii) *Programmatic choices of key partners show sensitivity in relation to gender.*
 - iii) *Programmatic choices of key partners show sensitivity in relation to HIV/AIDS.*

However, in other *intermediary* 2012 annual plan documents³¹ these specific joint indicators are only partially referred to, or only the joint outcome is referred to, or the expectations are reduced and indicators simplified.

In these simplified versions the expected implementation indicator/target is:

Outcome 5.1.4:

- i) *At least 80% of supported key actors have WPP (Work Plan Policy) on HIV/AIDS in place.*
- ii) *40% women in staff and in the leadership*

Outcome 5.2.3:

- i) *Partner analysis (30%) takes into account gender and HIV as part of context.*
- ii) *Gender and HIV context analysis is reflected in 30% of key actors' programmes.*

The simplified version appears more realistic considering the number of new partners AGIR has recently taken on. With some of these new partner organisations being at the local level, these local-level partners represent a further challenge to a process of centralised capacity strengthening in crosscutting themes. With this in mind it becomes clear that to attain even the simplified version of the outcomes, there will need to be an intensified joint effort required by the *intermediaries* in gender and HIV/AIDS capacity strengthening for CSO partners.

Human Rights

CSOs tend to consider their areas of specialisation as implicitly dealing with human rights, which makes further explanation unnecessary. For example, LDH considers human rights to encompass everything it does. For Forum Mulher, defending human rights is part of human rights promotion; for the Electoral Observatory, improving

³⁰The numbering (reference) of outcomes in the joint outcome matrix differs from one document to another.

³¹For example, Ibis and SCC annual plans.

political participation implies ensuring a basic human right; and finally, for ORAM, land tenure is at the core of guaranteeing access to basic rights to many people in rural areas. These arguments are all consistent, and tend to be used as a justification for the absence of explicit mainstreaming of this issue in partner organisation interventions. AGIR itself has not dedicated much time to the reflection of human rights mainstreaming, which makes the overall weakness on the interventions in this area more understandable, or even more critical to the understanding of the meaning of human rights mainstreaming among partners.

2.6 SUSTAINABILITY – SUSTAINING AGIR

2.6.1 Reaching a Sustainable Level of Donor Participation in AGIR

AGIR support to identify opportunities for local, national and international funding is critical. The programme is being implemented in a context of the financial crisis, which has considerably impacted the availability of funding and the strategic priorities of the donors. In this regard, some organisations have had their sources of funding dramatically reduced; and in some cases AGIR is the sole source of funding or accounts for a considerable part of the organisations' core funding. In relation to the AGIR programme, there is real danger of increasing donor dependence on partner organisations that are selected and involved in the programme. The addition of more donors in the AGIR programme could exacerbate this problem, with considerable funding available to a select few partner organisations, while removing this funding source from others outside of the programme.

Consequently, since the current funding of civil society in Mozambique is at a critical juncture, there is space for additional donors to join the programme. From the perspective of programme management, additional donors added to the AGIR programme could potentially mean more transaction costs, unless principles of good donorship are applied. The progress made in this area in the programme through the focus on core funding, the facilitation and lobbying efforts of the *intermediaries* to convince donors to join common funding mechanisms, and through supported reporting mechanisms to reduce the burden for CSOs, has laid the ground for a more effective management of a multiple donor funding mechanism. Perhaps key to the discussion on the addition of new donors is the acceptance by them of the principle of good donorship as it is implemented within the AGIR programme. While there can be (as the review team observed within the AGIR programme) management problems that are integral to its use (the difficulty of directed support), the AGIR *intermediaries* have initiated a course of action that can be instrumental to promote good donorship in support to civil society.

The selection process for partner organisations and its link to donor dependency is also a potential concern. This is mainly dependency to the *intermediaries*, which can be considered to extend to the (external/government) donors, the meaning here is slightly different. As noted earlier, the selection of long-time CSO partners can help perpetuate the dependency of these organisations on the *intermediaries*. While finan-

cial dependency is central to this process, it also risks the consolidation of a clientelistic relationship in which CSO partners establish a dependency on the *intermediaries* for capacity building, strategic planning and direction (harmonisation with the *intermediaries'* interests) and mobilisation for fund raising. Moreover, in long-term relationships, there is also a risk of the loss of a more critical view by the *intermediaries* concerning their CSO partners due to a certain “routinisation” of the relationship – this can truly endanger the capacity strengthening process. Ideally, it was discussed earlier, that a partner selection process that was more open could allow for the exposure to new partners for the *intermediaries*, thus avoiding an excessive routinisation of the *intermediary*-CSO partner relationship.

Some questions can help to unpack the critical points concerning this dependency issue:

- To what extent have the *intermediaries* been self critical in analysing the strengths and weaknesses of their past relations with CSO partners that transitioned to AGIR funding? To what extent have they tried to address these drawbacks (if at all)?
- To what extent was the selection of “old CSO partners” mainly a way of reducing the potential risks of working with new partners as well as assuring the achievement of results in a relatively short period of time but at the expense of overlooking other potentially better candidate organizations?
- To what extent will any of these partner CSO organisations, who have previously worked with the same *intermediaries* for extended periods of time, be ready to be graduate after AGIR ends?

Most of these questions remain unanswered and as such were a cause for concern among some donors and informants interviewed by the review team (and to which the review team concurs) that there is a real potential risk of the consolidation of a clientelistic relationship that could help perpetuate this dependency relationship.

Apart from the entry conditions for additional donors (re: agreement with core funding and good donorship principles), the programme also needs to take into account that the process of funding such a programme can be problematic for some donors due to the process used by AGIR for the selection of partner organisations. As some external donors mentioned, it would be difficult to fund AGIR because of the uncompetitive process of CSO partner selection, which could be interpreted as condoning a lack of transparency in the process. This is something to take into account if the AGIR programme is willing to attract and add additional donors, since some of them will tend to present preconditions for joining.

2.6.2 Reaching a Sustainable Level of CSOs and Their Participation in AGIR

The overall structure of the programme, with *intermediaries* heading the sub-programmes and working directly with CSO partner organisations, has so far been a relatively successful working model for strengthening the general capacity of civil society. As discussed earlier, coverage of the main thematic areas central to a strong civil society in Mozambique has been addressed through the selection of CSOs working in the relevant areas. As a theory of change this approach of *intermediaries* that

support the capacity strengthening of partner CSOs who, through this strengthening, enhance their ability to work with civil society and citizens, is a viable approach. The interaction between the different spheres of influence (donor – *intermediary* – CSO – beneficiary) is logical, and, by which the programme can determine the pathways of change allowing for the identification and documentation of associated outcomes. There is the question associated with the need for the AGIR programme to pay increased attention to its overall management of implementation activities through the lens of a programme and not as grouping of sub-programmes but this does not decrease the appropriateness of the theory of change upon which it operates.

The participation of CSO partners across the different sub-programmes continues to increase in response to the work of the AGIR *intermediary* organisations. As discussed earlier, there are now 43 active established CSO partnerships,³² surpassing the 39 partnerships that were expected by the end of 2014. This growth is important, but a few overall critical issues came out of the evaluation team's meetings with *intermediary* organisations. One concern relates to *the critical balance between quantity and quality*. By taking in many partners, are the qualitative outcomes of AGIR in danger of being compromised? What happens if AGIR capacity building and support becomes too mechanical and structured? If this is the case, is there a real danger of hampering the process of creating a vibrant civil society that requires a more dynamic approach with the support process oriented and tailored in accordance with the specific level of capacity and local circumstances surrounding an individual organisation?

At the beginning of the programme, each of the *intermediaries* started with a few well-established central-level partners who have a broad scope and proven relevant track records with respect to AGIR themes. In many cases, the *intermediary* organisations had previous collaborative relationships with these partners. The focus on national organisations can be regarded as a good approach if the intention is to ensure that there is a vertical integration of resources and outcomes.

The concept of 'trickle down support' however, where capacities at the central level are instrumental to strengthening organisations at the local level, and that, in turn, this will produce 'trickle up effects' – where results from grass roots activism and evidence gathering informs policies and national advocacy at the central level – can be flawed. As seen in the programme, there can be a narrowing of the support process that sees funds moving down and/or outwards to local areas (and sub-partners) being constrained so that local organisations do not have the resources to undertake the work that is central to their activism. Combined with a challenging governance envi-

³² This number does not include some partner organisations whose contracts have been suspended due to non-adherence to internal governance criteria, these measures relate to i.e. MONASO, MEPT and MISA.

ronment and the often-weaker internal capacity of these local level organisations, this vertical approach to capacity development can potentially be inefficient. This is especially true if these organisations do not have strong internal governance structures and processes that can ensure an adequate distribution of resources at all levels. Many organisations allocate only a small part of their annual budget to the provinces. In the case of Diakonia, the allocation of funds to the local level ranges from 3% to 40%, with an average of 12.6%. In the particular case of networks, the centralised approach to the allocation of resources is putting an additional burden on local representatives, which are using their own resources to keep the network operational.

Recently, the pattern of recruitment for new CSO partners has changed to include more young and youth-based CSO partners. While the intake of more ‘locally’ based direct partners contributes to a process of strengthening a generally weak local civil society, there is a particular need to actively support the organisations that are far from the main financial center(s), helping to diversify their donor portfolio as well as helping to lobby for common funding arrangements.

Similarly, AGIR *intermediaries* were asked if they had a plan for the ‘graduation’ of CSO partners who have strengthened their capacity to a point deemed sustainable by the programme (meaning survival without programme support). At some point there has to be a limit to the number of AGIR CSO partners that can be supported by the *intermediaries*, a limit based on the capacity of the *intermediary* to directly and fully support each CSO as envisioned within the programme planning. While *intermediaries* commented that they did have limits to the amount of CSOs with whom they could work, this limit was based more on financial restrictions than on *intermediary* capacity support limitations. If the programme is to grow (either with more donors and/or additional *intermediaries*) how and when CSOs move from nursery to core status and finally, to graduate out of the programme is important to the overall programme theory of change and to the sustainability of the programme. The concept of ‘graduation’, where CSOs who have been within the programme for a number of years and have had their organisational capacity strengthened (internal and external) before being moved out of the programme, was a topic of interest for all of the external voices spoken to, although none had any plans for this process in their own programmes. AGIR should consider taking a position on this process and should put in place mechanisms, such as small grants, that help CSOs that leave the programme to continue to function. This then frees up space for new emerging CSOs to assume a position in the programme.

Another concern relates to the balance between the basic requirements of internal democracy and transparency of CSO partners while maintaining openness to support looser organised networks and initiatives. It has been mentioned in discussions with *intermediaries* that a strong focus on requiring partners to fit one ‘mode for all’ might negatively affect their initiative and creativity. In this context, one of the *intermediaries* has expressed openness to the stimulation of loose regional CSO networks by AGIR.

The sustained participation of CSOs in the AGIR programme can also be heavily impacted by elements outside of its control or even by its influence as a programme. There are many factors, chief among them financial, which are not directly within the influence of the programme. CSO participation can be affected by other factors, like weak leadership, a wane in activism, or simply due to strategic choices by those organisations. The Nampula province has historically been a reference in participation, with a strong governance platform and Development Observatory; but lately, civil society activism has waned. There are some explanations for this reversal, among them the change of key persons in the organisations, the reduction of funding and, according to an interviewee, the increasing impression from civil society that the existing forums for participation and dialogue with the government are fictitious spaces to buy time and distract civil society. This has, according to the interviewee, led some organisations to focus on direct work with communities and to dedicate less time to participate in existing mechanisms and spaces for dialogue that are mainly influenced by the government.

These elements suggest that the AGIR approach on sustainability as a multidimensional element is consistent and adequate for its purpose - to ensure that civil society is strengthened from multiple angles, that perspectives ensure the quality of activism, the effectiveness of the participation of civil society in addressing its needs and that its voice is heard by a responsive and accountable government. As mentioned earlier, many of the AGIR partners' initiatives contribute to improving access to rights, to eliciting more accountability and to promoting good governance. Some of these results, however, are only immediate and will not necessarily lay the foundation for the perpetual reproduction of a strong civil society able to hold the government responsible. Consequently, AGIR needs to continually identify those elements that are likely to produce impact and to reproduce practices that will guarantee the sustainability of the results achieved.

Although the *intermediaries* have mostly concentrated on CSO partners' organisational strengthening, results have been achieved that mark progress towards outcomes in all sub-programmes. Generally, as noted above, results-based monitoring undertaken by CSOs is still quite weak and, consequently, results have been poorly documented. However, improvements have been noted in 2012 as a result of partner capacity development in this area and greater attention to this weakness by the *intermediaries*. Progress towards outcomes has been somewhat influenced by the suspension of three partners under each of the thematic sub-programmes administered by Diakonia, IBIS, Oxfam and to the late start of SCC.

3 Conclusions

- The AGIR programme is highly relevant to national priorities concerned with an active and engaged civil society. The strengthening of civil society is necessary in an environment where improvements to service delivery, transparency concerns, and measures of accountability are constantly challenged by government and, increasingly, the private sector (primarily the natural resource sector). The CSOs that the AGIR programme has partnered with have attempted to fill this void and add strength to the voice of civil society. The AGIR programme has done well in attracting and working with a large group of CSOs working with the themes consistent with the programme's overall focus.
- While the AGIR programme continues to have low visibility as a programme among other donors, civil society organisations and the Mozambican government, those who do know of it have a high degree of praise for its innovative approach and focus on support to civil society.
- Within the AGIR programme there has been exemplary application of the Good Donorship principles, which have been enthusiastically supported by the participating CSOs. While it is still early in the programme's life, the outcomes of this approach seem to have begun to produce results in the level and focus of competency in the affiliated CSOs. The principle of good donorship has, however, posed a challenge to the consistency of the AGIR programme between *intermediaries* and in the relationships between *intermediaries* and their CSO partners. The process of identifying high-level objectives for the programme and how these objectives are met in the field by the CSOs can be problematic when implementation planning and strategies are based on the workplans of the CSOs. It was not clear to the evaluation team how the programme will ensure that, under core funding, the partner organisations will necessarily implement AGIR activities, and to what extent it avoids the risk of the organisations implementing other activities.
- Currently, there are 43 CSOs involved in the AGIR programme (it has surpassed the goal of 39 by 2014). This set of partners allows the programme to cover the wide array of activities of the four sub-programmes. Geographically, AGIR covers all provinces and districts through direct partners and AGIR CSO partners' branches. While the vast majority of direct AGIR partners are central level organisations, local direct strategic AGIR partners have been recruited (especially in 2012) in the central and northern parts of the country to reinforce horizontal linkages at the local level and to expand the programme impact and long-term sustainability. Nonetheless, the current portfolio still falls short of covering all the planned interventions. The freezing of funding of some partners after management problems has left some gaps in the coverage of activities. *Intermediaries* state that this has been offset by the integration of new partners.

- AGIR programme coordination by the *intermediary* organisations is improving through the focused use of the ICC and technical groups. AGIR is conceived as a programme, but its operationalisation is still mostly done as four sub-programmes with some common areas. Therefore, sub-programme consistency is better than programme consistency. Despite efforts in joint coordination, implementation and reporting (apart from the common areas), it is sometimes not clear to what extent sub-programme outcomes and results are feeding into programme impact. The mid-term review team agrees with the conclusions of the 2012 semi-annual report that, while general reporting has improved, the programme needs to start analysing how the various outcomes of the thematic areas can be clustered and reported as a set of consistent programme results that clarify and strengthen the ability of AGIR to document and report on outcomes as a **cohesive programme**. A ‘spheres of influence model’ helps us to understand how AGIR has established these ‘pathways of change’ through which funding and support flow out to partners where change takes place at the organisational level of the CSO, and then through them, to the benefit of beneficiaries. This model can also help in demonstrating that the need for the programme to plan for, implement, monitor and report as a programme is critical to maintaining these pathways as a cohesive approach to decrease the threat of programme fragmentation and less effective implementation and reporting on results.
- A central mechanism for capacity strengthening of CSOs within AGIR has been through the provision of training on a wide range of issues, techniques and processes. This training is focused at both the organisational and individual levels. However, the mid-term review team has found a widespread low level of satisfaction among AGIR CSOs in the area of **capacity strengthening** as it relates to a range of critical issues. Furthermore, the review team has noted that there is very limited replication of training at the provincial level where capacity is generally substantially lower than at the central level.
- Networking within the AGIR programme is generally weak, although some organisations have created networks and linkages. The objectives for AGIR state that networks should be created in relevant areas. While there are relatively strong networks vertically within sub-programmes, there are weak horizontal linkages between sub-programmes. Within AGIR, most contacted partners are part of, or are in contact with, external national and even international networks; and they are able to illustrate how some of these networks/linkages have led to advocacy results.
- Reporting on outcomes at all levels within the AGIR programme varies, but has been improving with support from the *intermediaries*. As an example, Diakonia works with partners to build the narrative to establish linkages between interventions and results. Similarly Oxfam from the beginning of the programme, has been concerned with building a narrative of how outputs lead to outcomes and acknowledging the difficulties of attributing some results to the direct intervention of the programme. Generally, however, all *intermediaries* claim that partners’ reporting is weak and tends to be activity-focused, hence challenging the reporting on outcomes. Training has been provided in

this area, but it is still among the weakest of the skills held by CSO partners. While reporting is improving with the AGIR programme, both the *intermediaries* and partner CSOs have struggled to find an effective M&E system that is useful in terms of accountability, learning, and reporting requirements of the programme.

- Capacity strengthening within the AGIR programme of the CSO partners is on-going and training in areas such as administrative, financial and human management, results-based management, gender, human rights and fund raising are contributing to improve organisations' internal capacities and to address important issues such as gender, human rights, HIV/AIDS. Although there are some challenges, such as adjusting the approach to gender training to the conditions of the partners, improving and consolidating internal governance, and adopting results-based management, the programme has good potential to succeed in attaining the objective of strengthening organisations' internal capacity and eventually in creating the conditions for self-sustainability.
- Overall, gender and HIV/AIDS-based monitoring remains weak. The four AGIR *intermediaries* have recognised this weakness and have applied some of their first capacity strengthening efforts to this area through the testing in 2012 of a new change-oriented gender training approach that has produced good results. The *intermediaries* have agreed to use this training method within 2012 and funds are available. It is expected this should greatly improve the documentation of results through the use of cross-cutting gender indicators in 2013 (this is stated with the caveat that partners would need to improve their reporting of results and *intermediaries* would need to better systematise and improve their reporting in the joint results matrix so that results, not only in gender, are clearly related to indicators).
- AGIR's approach on sustainability as a multidimensional element is consistent and adequate for its purpose - to ensure that civil society is strengthened from multiple angles, that perspectives ensure the quality of activism, the effectiveness of the participation of civil society in addressing its needs and that its voice is heard by a responsive and accountable government. As mentioned earlier, many of the AGIR partners' initiatives contribute to improving access to rights, to eliciting more accountability and to promoting good governance. Some of these results however, are only immediate and will not necessarily lay the foundation for a perpetual reproduction of a strong civil society able to hold the government responsible. Consequently, AGIR needs to continually identify those elements that are likely to produce impact and to reproduce practices that will guarantee the sustainability of the achieved results.

4 Recommendations

The key recommendations are as follows:

Intermediaries Coordination Role

- The *intermediary* management body – ICC – needs to concentrate more on programme-level strategic planning, the coordination of implementation activities, consistent data collection and reporting on programme results. This could be accomplished by the ICC as it exists as this insight is not simply about the creation of another level of management, but rather the need to take a different view of the purpose of the management. The need for the programme to be seen and to function as a programme is essential to its sustainability. From this perspective, harmonisation is an end in itself, and is an outcome that the AGIR programme should work towards. While it can be said that there is recognition of this need among the *intermediaries*, each has been extremely cautious in suggesting how this process could work to make it happen. An open and focused discussion should take place between the *intermediaries* on the future and increased role of the ICC and technical support groups.
- The AGIR programme should focus on promoting a wider discussion on donor coordination in support to civil society, focusing on ways of attaining more specialisation, avoiding duplications and promoting a wider-range of areas for potential funding to other organisations that do not fall under AGIR areas. This does not necessarily mean closing the programme for additional funding, but means, above all, making the programme a good contributor to the strengthening of civil society sustainability, facilitating processes of diversification of funding, but in a context of a better coordination, sharing of information and a strategic focus on capacity development. This would also improve the visibility of the AGIR programme among donors and civil society in general.
- *Intermediaries* need to continue lobbying for common and core funding, and intensified capacity development in fundraising. The AGIR programme needs to increase its capacity strengthening activities that include fundraising skills and strategies. Particular attention should be paid to strategies that enhance emerging and local partners, which are particularly vulnerable.
- The AGIR *intermediaries* need to strategise and plan for the wider implications of intensified joint effort to improve outcomes in gender and HIV/AIDS. This should be done through a careful review of the joint outcomes for cross-

cutting issues and should establish clear shared indicators for evaluation as well as for the level of attainment of the outcomes.

AGIR Monitoring and Evaluation

- The AGIR programme and the implementation of a results-based management system of collection and analysis of performance information demands considerable capacity from the partner organisations. To make this set of approaches more effective for management and impact monitoring, the AGIR programme should consider unbundling the management cycle – from planning to reporting/accountability – identify bottlenecks and the difficulties partners face at each stage of the cycle and direct its capacity strengthening support to these gaps, taking into account the specificities of the partner (organisation or network).
- The programme should pay particular attention to the information management systems involved in assessing performance and ascertaining results and impact. However, since it is unrealistic to expect all CSO partners to manage complex information systems, the AGIR programme could focus on setting methodologies and standards for information collection and analysis, which in an initial phase could be centrally managed by AGIR and eventually replicated in organisations at a smaller scale. This could have the instrumental value of assessing the impact of AGIR as a programme, while at the same time contributing to the strengthening of AGIR partner monitoring and evaluation systems to become effective instruments for results-based management.
- The adoption of results-based management is a key outcome of the AGIR programme and part of its capacity development strategy, then the programme has to either restrict the principle of respecting partners' existing monitoring systems and put in place a more uniform system for the use by partner CSOs or drastically ramp up its capacity strengthening processes concerned with M&E activities.
- The AGIR programme should fine tune reporting on impact in the thematic areas, clarifying the results chain and revisiting the theory of change implicitly proposed to constantly check to what extent those specific achievements represent steps towards the intended change proposed by AGIR. This should inform incremental changes in scope and the nature of interventions that the partners make in the implementation of their strategic plans, aligning them with the programme objectives. On the basis of the above, it is recommended that AGIR review the result matrix in light of new partner recruitment and systematise the annual planning matrix so as to clearly demonstrate how partner activities feed into outcomes (and then adjust the result matrix accordingly).

- Many of the AGIR partners' initiatives contribute to improving access to rights, to eliciting more accountability and to promoting good governance. Some of these results, however, are only immediate and will not necessarily lay the foundation for a perpetual reproduction of a strong civil society able to hold the government responsible. Consequently, AGIR needs to continually identify those elements that are likely to produce impact and to reproduce practices that will guarantee the sustainability of the achieved results .

AGIR CSOs

- The AGIR *intermediaries* should establish a strategic plan for the graduation of CSOs who have strengthened their capacity to a point deemed sustainable by the programme (meaning survival without programme support). This discussion can include partner organisations for their input. As discussed in the review, at some point there has to be a limit to the number of AGIR CSO partners that can be supported by the *intermediaries*, a limit based on the capacity of the *intermediary* to directly and fully support each CSO as envisioned within the programme planning. If the programme is to grow (either with more donors and/or additional *intermediaries*), how and when CSOs move from nursery to core status and finally graduate out of the programme is important to the overall programme theory of change and to the sustainability of the programme. Increased capacity-strengthening processes aimed at fund-raising for CSOs would also help to make this transition easier. AGIR should consider taking a position on this process and should put in place mechanisms, such as small grants, that help CSOs that leave the programme to continue to function.
- The AGIR programme should continue to support change in the approach for the selection of new organisations, which now privileges locally-based partners, and is a signal that the programme is sensitive to these weaknesses and is taking adequate corrective measures.

Linkages

In order to attain the expected outcomes in the area of linkages, AGIR needs to:

- Promote further discussion among *intermediaries* on the added value of the linkages and a definition of a theory of change linked to the networks and networking to inform support in this area;
- Pay particular attention to questions arising from the sustainability of networks, among them the management of networks and how to monitor their impact;
- Strengthen/include skills-oriented capacity building in communication advocacy and campaigning using innovative methods;

- Document, share and disseminate successful advocacy experiences among partners and networks.
- Particular attention should be paid to strengthening capacities at the local level and for young/less experienced organisations.

Other Issues

- There is a need to quicken the process involved with the transfer of resources to partners at the local level. Defining a minimum level of funding to this level would ensure that the programme is implemented with fewer regional imbalances (as it is the case now). Alternatively, while sticking to the principle of good-donorship and limited non-interference, *intermediaries* should commence a formal dialogue with their CSO partners to assess the extent to which the implementation of the strategic plans takes the balance in resources allocation along the central-local axis into account. This can easily be justified as a principle of good governance and integrated in the context of strengthening partners' capacity in internal governance. *Intermediaries* should also pay particular attention to the challenges that might appear in the process of the allocation of funds to partners' local level organisations, namely in management and reporting.
- Additional donors added to the AGIR programme could potentially result in more transaction costs, unless principles of good donorship are applied. The progress made in this area in the programme through the focus on core funding, the facilitation and lobbying efforts of the *intermediaries* to convince donors to join common funding mechanisms, and through supported reporting mechanisms to reduce the burden for CSOs, has laid the foundation for more effective management of a multiple-donor funding mechanism. Perhaps key to the discussion of the addition of new donors is their acceptance of the principle of good donorship as it is implemented within the AGIR programme. While there can be (as the review team observed within the AGIR programme) management problems that are integral to its use (the difficulty of directed support), the AGIR *intermediaries* have initiated a course of action that can be instrumental to promoting good donorship in support of civil society.
- The Embassy of Sweden can contribute to the effectiveness of the AGIR program by engaging in “environmental” strategies. Environmental strategies are actions and activities that improve the environment within which the *intermediaries* work with their partners. Perhaps the two most critical strategies for the Embassy would be to play a more visible role in the donor community regarding the benefits of a “good donorship” approach for the strengthening of civil society. Helping other donors understand the mechanisms (positive and negative) of this approach could lead to its use by others and a better understanding of the AGIR programme. Secondly, a constant comment heard by the review team from the donor community was the need for a dialogue between donors regarding civil society strengthening within Mozambique. There is a

real lack of understanding between donors about what each is doing or the partners each is supporting. The Embassy should take a lead role in facilitating this interaction among donors on the issue of civil society capacity strengthening in Mozambique, using its experiences with the AGIR programme as the touchstone for on-going discussions. This lead facilitating role can only improve the visibility of the AGIR programme and that of the Embassy of Sweden in the area of civil society capacity strengthening.

- In order to increase the visibility of the programme, AGIR should, at a minimum, create a website. This site could be used to post, for example, the AGIR platform, case studies including documentation of campaigns and advocacy processes, lessons learned and good practices in AGIR. It could also be used to share guidelines, manuals, and methodologies and highlight how AGIR makes a difference in strengthening Mozambican civil society.

Annex 1 – AGIR Partners

	LIST OF ACTIVE AGIR PARTNERS, mid 2012³³
	DIAKONIA
1.	ACAMO (Beira,national)
2.	AMMCJ
3.	AWEPA
4.	CEDE
5.	Electoral Observatory
6.	Human Rights League
7.	MULEIDE
8.	Rede Criança
9.	Rede CAME
10.	Youth Parliament
	Oxfam Novib
11.	CIP
12.	GMD
13.	N'weti
14.	WLSA
15.	Forum Mulher
16.	RENSIDA
17.	JOINT
18.	Magariro, (Manica)
19.	Akilizetho, (Nampula)
20.	Lambda
21.	Estamos (Niassa)
22.	CEMO
23.	National Human Rights Platform (Sofala)
24.	Third Age Forum
25.	Social Protection Platform
	IBIS

³³ Source: semiannual report 2012. Province of location of direct local partners are indicated in parenthesis. Three partners, MEPT, MONASO and AMMO included in partner list in AGIR semi-annual report 2012 are not included in this list as they are not active partners. MONASO's contract was cancelled, AMMO did not have a contract in 2012, and MEPT has been suspended.

26.	CEC
27.	FORCOM
28.	AMCS
29.	CESC
30.	ACDH
31.	CODD
32.	AEJ
33.	SNJ
34.	IESE
	SCC
35.	AAAJC (Tete)
36.	AENA (Nampula)
37.	AMPCM
38.	CTV
39.	JÁ
40.	Livaningo
41.	ORAM
42.	UNAC
43.	UPCT (Tete)

Annex 2 – Terms of Reference

TOR – AGIR Mid-Term Review

Intervention background

The Swedish support to civil society in Mozambique is structured through a programme called AGIR whereby four international NGOs (INGOs) with a common overall objective, support local *partner organisations*. The programme was created and started in 2010, fully operational in 2011 and has an agreement period ending in December 2014.

The joint overall objective of AGIR is:

“Active citizens(ship) and a strong, vibrant civil society (that) participates in and influences democratic process, contributing to more accountable governance, deepened democracy, gender equality and human rights in Mozambique”

The four INGOs (called *intermediaries* in the programme) are IBIS, Oxfam Novib, Diakonia and the Swedish Cooperative Center (SCC) and they implement four different “sub-programmes”, as follows:

- Access to Information – IBIS
- Financial accountability; participation, social and legal accountability with focus on underlying causes of discrimination – Oxfam Novib
- Political Accountability; participation, social and legal accountability with focus on the legal aspects of human rights – Diakonia
- Accountability in natural resources and land management – SCC

Sweden has individual agreements with the four intermediaries, but the programme is seen as a whole and large parts of the reporting is done jointly. The core of each of the “sub-programmes” is the establishment of partnerships with a number of local CSO partners active in the specific thematic area. Each partnership is regulated in an agreement between the INGO and the partner. The nucleus of these partnerships are core-funding, with a strong focus on capacity development.

The overall Swedish objectives are to increase the positive impact of Mozambican civil society organisations on government transparency and accountability, citizen’s participation and access to information and the respect for human rights, including gender equality. This is done by supporting the intermediaries to:

- a) Provide long-term core-funding and capacity development support to civil society partner organisations, based on these organisations’ own strategic plans.
- b) Support and facilitate linkages, mutual learning and knowledge and experience sharing between civil society organisations.

- c) Actively promote the implementation of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action in relation to civil society (“good donorship”).

Sweden is so far the only core donor to the AGIR programme. Denmark supports one intermediary (SCC) and the Netherlands will support one intermediary (Oxfam Novib), with the Netherlands intending to enter as core donors after the current agreement period.

Evaluation purpose, intended use and intended users

The Mid-Term Review is meant to provide **the existing donors and the intermediaries** with recommendations on how to improve the programme guidelines or the functioning of the programme to ensure more effective and efficient implementation to reach the desired outcomes and impact.

The Mid-Term Review is also supposed to give **new donors** interested in joining the programme valuable insights to guide their decisions on support.

The Mid-Term review should:

1. Assess the value added of the AGIR programme approach;
2. Determine the programme’s effectiveness regarding achieving results at outcome level as well as to determine the programme’s relevance and potential for impact;
3. Advice on changes needed in the programme guidelines or in the general functioning of the programme;
4. Serve as a basis for decisions on continued Swedish support and the possibility of accepting more donors into the programme.

Evaluation questions and expected results

1. To learn if the programme is having the intended outcomes – and if not, why.
2. To learn if the programme is likely to also produce the expected impacts (and also if the initial focus on national partners has had a negative influence on this).
3. To advice on impact reporting and results-based management.
4. To assess how effectively the programme is being implemented and to recommend improvements to the implementation.
5. To learn about partner satisfaction with the programme and about how the programme has contributed to their internal development from the start.
6. To suggest changes to the general guidelines or functioning of the programme (an update of the requirement for partner organisations to have a national impact for example).
7. To suggest improvements that will make the programme more likely to achieve expected outcomes and impact.
8. To advice on how to better address cross-cutting issues (especially gender).
9. To determine the suitability of accepting more donors to the programme.
10. To advice on the underlying principles for accepting more donors, as well as formats for cooperation between donors.

11. To learn about how the programme is perceived and accepted in civil society as a whole and among other donors as an alternative approach to support civil society.
12. To learn the level of interaction and cooperation between the *intermediaries* and how they have managed to pursue AGIR as *one* programme, with four sub-programmes, and how synergies are being sought and achieved.
13. To determine if the balance between the need for local partners to have necessary capacity to receive core funds and the interest of intermediaries to disburse funds is kept at an adequate level as to ensure quality and minimising fiduciary risks.
14. To learn if AGIR has had the intended effect in the Swedish Embassy, i.e. more time for programme officers to focus on content and qualitative follow-up of local partner organisations, and more programme officers involved in monitoring our civil society support.

Methodology

The evaluating team will be expected to gather and analyse information through document reviews, interviews and field visits to produce an evaluation report. An outline of the planned methodology should be described and justified in the tender documents.

It is important that “second opinions” are gathered from other sources than actors involved in the programme.

A meeting should be held with all intermediaries and partner organisations to present draft conclusions, discuss the implications of these and gather completing information.

The consultants are expected to have an open and transparent discussion with key stakeholders on *each* of their main conclusions, on the type of sources they were able to use, the extent to which they were able to corroborate or triangulate the conclusion by other sources with a different perspective or stake, or if they have any alternative explanation of their observations.

Stakeholder involvement

The evaluation team is expected to meet with the donors, intermediaries and a representative sample of partner organisations and beneficiaries both in Maputo and in several provinces. In addition to this, the team should gather information from independent sources to be able to get a comprehensive picture of the programme and its outcomes.

The donors, intermediaries and partner organisations should furnish the evaluating team with documents, briefings and interviews as requested by the team.

The rights and welfare of participants in the evaluation should be protected. Anonymity and confidentiality should be protected when requested and as needed.

Work plan and schedule

The evaluation shall start no later than 2012-08-01. The final report should be submitted to the Embassy of Sweden no later than 2012-10-15. In their tender, the consultants should submit a draft overall time plan. A detailed work and time plan should be presented at the beginning of the assignment.

Reporting

The final report should not exceed 30 pages (excluding annexes) and should be submitted electronically.

The report should be written in English and should include an executive summary in English and Portuguese. The final report must be presented in a way that enables publication without further editing, which means that it must for example be adequately proof-read.

The format and outline of the report should, to the extent possible, follow the guidelines in the Sida Evaluation Manual.

The Evaluation team should be available for a presentation and discussion seminar with the donors and intermediaries (and possibly selected partner organisations) at the end of the assignment.

Qualifications of the Evaluation team

The assignment should be carried out by a team of one or more international expert(s) and one or more national expert(s) familiar with the context and fluent in Portuguese (and possibly other local languages). One of the evaluators should be team leader with overall responsibility for the whole evaluation. The evaluators should be independent of the evaluated activities and have no stake in the outcome of the evaluation. The consultants shall submit CVs that document the following required qualifications:

1. International expert

- Relevant academic background
- Extensive relevant professional experience from development cooperation in the areas of democracy, accountability, human rights, national resource management and/or civil society support.
- Extensive experience in evaluating projects/programmes within international development cooperation in the areas mentioned above. Experience of Sida evaluations is an asset.
- Fluency in written and spoken English. Knowledge of Portuguese is a great asset.

2. National expert

- Relevant academic background
- Extensive relevant professional experience from development cooperation in the areas of democracy, accountability, human rights, natural resource management and/or civil society support.

- Extensive experience in evaluating projects/programmes within international development cooperation in the areas mentioned above. Experience of Sida evaluations is an asset.
- Fluency in written and spoken Portuguese. Knowledge of other local languages is an asset.

Annex 3 – Inception Report

Executive Summary

Indevelop has been commissioned by Sida to undertake the mid-term review of its Civil Society Support programme AGIR in Mozambique to take place within the period from August to 15 November 2012.

Managed by the Swedish Embassy in Maputo, Swedish support to civil society in Mozambique is structured through the AGIR programme. The overall Swedish objective for this programme is to increase the positive impact of Mozambican civil society organisations on government transparency and accountability, citizen's participation and access to information and the respect for human rights, including gender equality. The AGIR programme was initiated in 2010 and became fully operational in 2011. It has an agreement period ending in December 2014. Four *intermediary* INGOs, IBIS, Oxfam Novib, Diakonia and the Swedish Cooperative Center (SCC) have been contracted to implement four different “sub-programmes”:

- Access to information – **IBIS**
- Financial accountability; participation, social and legal accountability with focus on underlying causes of discrimination – **Oxfam Novib**
- Political accountability; participation, social and legal accountability with focus on the legal aspects of human rights – **Diakonia**
- Social accountability in natural resource management – **SCC**

The core of each of the “sub-programmes” is the establishment of partnerships with a number of local CSO partners that are active in a specific thematic area. Each partnership is regulated in an agreement between the INGO and the partner. The nucleus of these partnerships is core-funding, with a strong focus on capacity development.

Objectives and scope of mid term review according to Terms of Reference

According to the Terms of Reference the mid-term review is supposed to give **new donors**, who are interested in joining the programme, valuable insights to guide their decisions on support as well as to provide **existing donors and the intermediaries** with recommendations on how to improve the programme guidelines or the functioning of the programme. Furthermore, the mid-term review should:

- Determine the programme's **effectiveness** regarding achieving results at the outcome level as well as to determine the programme's **relevance** and potential for **impact**;
- Assess the **sustainability** of the programme;
- Serve as a basis for decisions on continued Swedish support and the possibility of accepting more donors into the programme; and
- Assess the **value added** of the AGIR programme approach – is it an effective use of funds?

Recommendations on scope

Since the AGIR programme is still in its early formative years and there is the real possibility that the capacity strengthening processes may have not, as yet, achieved the intended but long-term ‘outcomes’, the evaluation team recommends a focus on the identification and assessment of outcomes at the **immediate and intermediate level** of the capacity development process.

The evaluative assessment of the mid-term review will have a primary focus on the CSO partners involved in the AGIR programme. It is at this level that the achievement of programme ‘outcomes’ is expected. A critical part of the evaluation will be the information collected through semi-structured interviews with selected CSO partner organisations, examining both internal and external capacity of the CSO partner organisations and their work in the AGIR programme. Out of the total of the current 47 partners it is suggested that 8-10 are to be selected for in-depth semi-structured interviewing. A set of criteria is proposed to guide the selection of these partners.

A key component of the evaluative review will be an examination of the partnership strategies used by the *intermediaries*, which will be critical to assessing the sustainability of the programme and the ability of the *intermediaries* to continue with the level of support that they currently provide to their CSO partners.

Proposed Approach and Methodology

The proposed approach in this inception report will focus its evaluative analysis on issues of capacity strengthening, partnership development, monitoring and reporting processes and the effectiveness of the programme. These will be addressed using the evaluative criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact.

A central perspective taken by this evaluation is that there are multiple ‘spheres of influence’ in the AGIR programme that are linked together through relationships between donors and *intermediaries*, *intermediaries* and partner CSOs, and CSOs and their own partners in the communities in which they work. Given the structure of the AGIR programme (one programme with sub-programme *intermediaries* partnering with local CSOs) and its focus on capacity strengthening processes, a clear understanding of the different ‘spheres of influence’ within the AGIR programme is necessary to identify and assess outcomes related to the programme approach. Identifying and documenting the ‘change pathways’ and outcomes associated with this capacity strengthening process of CSOs will be central to understanding the progress, to date, of the AGIR programme and its ability to sustain this progress in the near and long-term future.

The approach to the evaluation will require evidence collecting in both Maputo and in the provinces of Mozambique where many of the CSO partners work. The two main sources of evidence to be used in this evaluation will be the review of programme documentation at the donor, *intermediary* and CSO partner level, and the use of information gathered primarily through interviews with individuals at the donor, *intermediary* and CSO partner levels.

An additional source of evidence will be obtained through interviewing individuals or organisations that are not connected to the AGIR programme, but that work in, or have knowledge of, the context of AGIR within Mozambique.

In terms of time schedule, the original work plan for the mid-term review is still considered realistic.

Assessment of Scope of the Mid-Term Review

Background

Mozambique is located in the Southern Africa Region, with a population of about 22 million people who are unevenly distributed across an area of approximately 799,380 square kilometers. While recent discoveries of gas and other natural resources, as well as the beginning of the exploitation of mineral coal, have increased the interest of international investors in the country, it has also raised the concern of civil society activists and local communities about environmental, land and natural resource rights. With an average GDP growth rate of 6.7% in the last 5 years,³⁴ Mozambique is among the fastest-growing economies in the region and is considered the third most attractive African country for direct foreign investment.³⁵ However, even with these areas of economic promise and, despite the continuous implementation of poverty reduction strategies over the last two decades, poverty remains the reality for many Mozambicans. From 1997 to 2003 the country experienced a steady reduction in the poverty rate from 69% to 54.1%. From 2003 to 2009 however, the poverty rate actually increased to 54.7%.³⁶ This is despite the growing allocation of budget resources to poverty reduction priority areas (health, education, agriculture, infrastructures, employment, social assistance, and good governance) – an increase from an average of 63% between 2007 to 2008 to more than 80% between 2009 and 2011.³⁷ The current Poverty Reduction Action Plan (PARP) 2011-2014 aims to reduce the poverty rate to 42% in 2014.³⁸

³⁴ See data of Ministry of Finance at http://www.mf.gov.mz/c/document_library/get_file?p_l_id=11402&folderId=34858&name=DLFE-3908.pdf

³⁵ See <http://www.mozahub.com/en/mozambique-news/1482-mozambique-is-3rd-most-attractive-country-in-africa-for-foreign-investment>

³⁶ Republic of Mozambique Poverty Reduction Action Plan (PARP) 2011-2014. Approved at the 15th Regular Session of the Council of Ministers, Maputo, May 3 2011. Page 6.

³⁷ Ministério das Finanças (2009). Relatório de Execução do Orçamento de Estado de 2008. Maputo, Ministry of Finance; Ministério das Finanças (2011). Conta Geral do Estado de 2010. Maputo, Ministério das Finanças, page 47; Ministério das Finanças (2012). Relatório de Execução do Orçamento do Estado de 2011 Janeiro-Dezembro. Maputo, Ministry of Finance. page 24.

³⁸ Republic of Mozambique Poverty Reduction Action Plan (PARP) 2011-2014. Approved at the 15th Regular Session of the Council of Ministers, Maputo, May 3 2011.

A considerable part of this funding has been also formally channelled through General Budget Support (GBS) since 2000, and accounted for 38% of the overall ODA in 2010.³⁹ GBS has been one of the drivers for the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, stimulating alignment with country programmes and public management systems and instruments (plans, programmes and public financial management systems), and donors' coordination. In this regard, 19 donors (the so-called Program Aid Partners (PAPs), of whom Sweden is one, have been providing general budget support in combination with a process of mutual accountability via Annual Reviews and Planning meetings.⁴⁰

However, while accountability in key areas such as budget overview have increased due to public financial management reforms, domestic accountability has generally continued to be weak. Civil society participation is both increasing in numbers and improving in its capacity to stimulate or lead social change, but it is still not at the necessary level to ensure a strong demand-side pressure for accountability concerns. In an environment where donors provide around 50% of Mozambique's budget, there is a tendency for the government to be held "accountable – for its decisions, policies and use of resources – to donors rather than to citizens and Parliament".⁴¹

Acknowledging that there is a weakness in civil society domestic accountability, some donors have been supporting civil society capacity development initiatives. Examples are the Civil Society Support Mechanism (CSSM/MASC), funded by DFID, Irish Aid and USAID; support to key research advocacy and research organisations, such as the Center for Public Integrity (CIP), the Institute for Economic and Social Studies (IESE) and the League of Human Rights (LDH).

The Swedish Embassy's current "Swedish Cooperation Strategy with Mozambique for 2008-2012 mirrors many of these same intentions. A main "modality" for support to the government of Mozambique by Sweden is through budget support for poverty reduction. The long-term objective of this cooperation is to address development needs and to decrease absolute poverty levels through a "poor people's perspective on development that privileges a rights perspective with a special focus on women and children". However, a strong and engaged civil society is critical to implementing this approach and its meaningful application in development cooperation.

³⁹ See http://www.pap.org.mz/downloads/annual_review_2012/QAD_PAPS_2011_Eng.pdf.

⁴⁰ See http://www.pap.org.mz/downloads/annual_review_2012/TdR_RA2012.pdf

⁴¹ Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.3, 2010. Sida.

The Swedish Embassy, as part of this growing awareness about weaknesses within Mozambique's civil society, is supporting civil society capacity strengthening through its cooperation strategy with Mozambique. CSOs work widely and, most often, directly with citizens, marginalised or disenfranchised communities and those living in poverty. With fostering democratic governance through accountability and a focus on pro-poor and environmentally sustainable economic growth “as critical elements in Sweden's cooperation strategy with Mozambique,”⁴² support to CSOs is an integral part of the Swedish Embassy's cooperation strategy with Mozambique. As noted in “Guidelines: The Swedish Embassy's Support to Mozambican Civil Society Organisations” (2008-2012), civil society organisations have a pivotal role to play in strengthening the capacity of citizens and citizen's organisations to meaningfully (and actively) “participate in and influence local and national agendas” as well as to hold to account public and market sector actors.

With this growing focus on civil society capacity development, the Swedish Embassy is endeavouring to strengthen the “... preconditions for citizens' and CSOs' to monitor and hold the state and market actors accountable for their performance. Support is also [given] to strengthen citizens' and CSOs' capacity to participate in development processes that affects their lives, and their actions to demand accountability”.⁴³ The Swedish Embassy's main support model for CSOs within Mozambique is to “work through a limited number of qualified *intermediary* organisations within the following four clusters of support; 1) participation, social and legal accountability, including monitoring of respect for human rights; 2) Social accountability in management of natural resources and community land rights; 3) transparency, financial and political accountability; and, 4) Promotion of access to information.”⁴⁴

The Swedish Embassy initiated the AGIR programme in 2010 as a response to the need to strengthen civil society and civil society organisations within Mozambique. The objective of the AGIR programme is to support Mozambican civil society organisations, strengthening their capacity for, and impact on, improving transparency, accountability, citizen's participation, access to information, respect for human rights and gender equality.⁴⁵ In line with the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, the AGIR programme is structured by the Swedish Embassy to provide “good donorship” through support given for CSO ‘core funding’ that is aligned with the

⁴² Swedish Cooperative Strategy with Mozambique, 2008-20012.

⁴³ The Swedish Embassy's Support to Mozambican Civil Society Organizations, p.4; 2009.

⁴⁴ The Swedish Embassy's Support to Mozambican Civil Society Organizations, p.7; 2009.

⁴⁵ Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.1, 2010. Sida.

“strategic direction of the organisation” and to support and facilitate linkages and knowledge sharing between CSOs.⁴⁶

The total funding available for the AGIR programme is 405,200.00 SEK over a five (5) year period. Emerging out of the dialogue surrounding the production of the document “Guidelines : The Swedish Embassy’s Support to Mozambican Civil Society Organisations” (2009), three INGOs were initially identified as having ongoing programmes in the thematic areas that coincided with the Embassy’s cooperation strategy. Each of these three ‘*intermediary*’ INGOs – Oxfam Novib, IBIS and Diakonia – were approached in mid - 2009 (a fourth INGO SCC was added in 2011)⁴⁷ and encouraged to submit proposals in line with the “support modalities outlined in the guidelines” and falling within the thematic focus areas or “clusters”.

While each of the *intermediary* organisations work in different thematic areas, there are “strong joint features”. While considered as ‘sub-components’ within the larger AGIR programme the commonalities shared by the *intermediaries* include “(i) the establishment of a division of labour between the three organisations, between and within the thematic “clusters”; (ii) the development of a joint program results framework as well as definition of joint capacity development activities; (iii) a joint MOU that regulates the interaction between the three partners; and (iv) definitions on how to coordinate work around the Paris agenda and to strengthen linkages between each others’ CSO partners.”⁴⁸

The funding for the AGIR programme is structured through different agreements with IBIS, Oxfam Novib, Diakonia and SCC, each implementing the following ‘sub-programs:

- Access to information – **IBIS**
- Financial accountability; participation, social and legal accountability with focus on underlying causes of discrimination – **Oxfam Novib**
- Political accountability; participation, social and legal accountability with focus on the legal aspects of human rights – **Diakonia**
- Social accountability in natural resource management – **SCC**

⁴⁶ Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.5, 2010. Sida.

⁴⁷ The Swedish Cooperative Center (SCC) started up in 2011, one year later than the three original intermediaries. The initial agreement was with the intermediaries of Diakonia, IBIS, Oxfam. (SCC was not in mentioned in the initial programme proposals, but the area within which SCC works was mentioned as an area that was to be added – Social Accountability in Natural Resource Management). According to SCC, their late entry into the programme has to do with the fact that an important criteria for AGIR partners is that their programme and partners should have a national perspective, whereas SCC has primarily worked in a local perspective with local partners. Other intermediary organisations have also challenged Sida’s centralised perspective, which according to the intermediary organisations has led to an opening for local dimensions in the programme.

⁴⁸ Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.5, 2010. Sida.

A brief discussion of the role of each of these partners follows:

IBIS

IBIS is a Danish non-governmental organisation that works at global, national and local levels for the empowerment of civil society and underprivileged communities. IBIS (earlier WUS) has been active within Mozambique, and started before independence. During the war and through independence, their focus was on capacity building of government institutions. This gradually changed after independence with a shift to an emphasis on civil society.

The work of IBIS focuses on equal access to education, influence and resources. Currently, IBIS Mozambique has three thematic programmes: Constructing Citizenship in Mozambique, Participative Quality Education for Community Development and Access to Information. Prominent areas in IBIS's thematic programme implemented within the AGIR framework on Access to Information are to improve access to information and to ensure freedom of expression in Mozambique.

Oxfam Novib

Oxfam Novib began as Novib in 1956, the first politically independent and non-religious development organisation in the Netherlands, having merged with Oxfam in 1993. Different national branches of Oxfam have been in Mozambique since independence, working with poor and disadvantaged groups including women and smallholder farmers. It operates with a community- and rights-based approach to development. Throughout the years Oxfam national branches have covered a broad range of development needs through the strengthening of community organisations and support networks. This work has included disaster preparedness, responding to emergencies, developing sustainable food production and livelihoods, supporting partners and communities to become more actively involved in influencing key government decisions that impact on the community, HIV/AIDS awareness, raising awareness of domestic violence, educating women about their rights and improving women's leadership and participation in decision making.

The Oxfam group has recently reorganised and all national affiliates are now working on the basis of a unified strategy covering emergency response, long-term development programming and campaigning and a unified approach to the strategic management of country programmes. In each of the 99 countries where Oxfam currently works, one affiliate is taking the lead. As part of this process, Oxfam Novib has recently become the lead affiliate in Mozambique.

Diakonia

Diakonia is a Christian development organisation working together with local partners promoting sustainable change for the marginalised and vulnerable people. In Mozambique, Diakonia works through organisations, forums/platforms and networks of national outreach and is present in 11 provinces of the country through delegations, membership (of networks) and/or focal points. Diakonia's programme in Mozambique focuses on four substantive thematic areas: Participation and social accountability; legal accountability and the rule of law and respect for human rights; political accountability in a multiparty democracy system; and capacity building of civil society.

The Swedish Cooperative Centre - SCC

The Swedish Cooperative Centre is a development organisation founded by the Swedish Cooperative movement in 1958 and now working in 20 countries. SCC's primary target group is poor women and men living in rural areas and who are members or potential members of democratic organisations (co-operative organisations or farmers associations) or informal groups working for common goals. SCC supports social mobilisation and the development of member-based organisations with the aim of indirectly, and with a long-term perspective, reaching the most vulnerable among the poor. Before joining the AGIR programme in 2011, SCC worked, for the past decade, to strengthen the institutional capacity of local branches of farmer union enhancing democratic participation and decision making in Manica province. In Niassa province, SCC has been supporting the Civil Society Support Program (PASC) through capacity development that facilitates community-based groups, and civil society participation in political processes and the influencing of national and provincial strategies in decision-making processes among district consultative councils.

CSO Partnerships

The 'core' work of the INGO *intermediaries* in each of these AGIR sub-programmes is the establishment of key partnerships with a number of local CSO partners being active in the specific theme covered by the INGO. Each of these partnerships is established through an agreement between the INGO and the partner. The central focus of these partnerships is 'core-funding' with a "strong focus on capacity development."⁴⁹

According to the approved strategic planning programme document, the quantitative target for the number of partnerships to be established by the end of the programme in 2014 is 39 CSOs. However this target has already been bypassed, as the number of active partnerships established has now reached 47.⁵⁰ Additionally, other interested prospective partners are currently in the process of being enrolled in the programme, qualifying (or not) through recently-undertaken partner evaluation processes.

One reason for this expansion of partners is the addition of one more *intermediary* organisation to the programme, the Swedish Cooperative Center – SCC, who started up in 2011, one year later than the three original *intermediaries*. Another reason is that the *intermediaries*, through early partnership assessments, soon found that very few CSOs qualified for long-term core partnerships as their capacity, particularly their institutional capacity, was lower than expected. More CSOs were then supported

⁴⁹ Strengthening Civil Society – Enhancing Democratic Governance, p.7, 2010. Sida.

⁵⁰ This number does not include some partner organisations whose contracts have been suspended, due to non-adherence to internal governance criteria, these measures relate to i.e. MONASO, MEPT, and MISA.

in institutional strengthening through nursery funds, increasing the pool of potential key partners.

In the evaluation team's initial contact with the AGIR *intermediaries*, the team was told that the AGIR programme was originally meant to focus on national/central level CSOs. However, the *intermediaries* found that an approach that integrates relevant CSOs at the local level would ensure critical linkages by providing a much sounder and more sustainable basis for the programme. As a result locally-based CSOs are now being recruited into the programme.

Within the scope of the current four thematic components of AGIR programme, the current partners comprise different types of CSOs which, on a preliminary basis, can be characterised as follows:

- *Human rights-based CSOs*, e.g. the Human Rights League and a range of more specialised organisations focusing on issues such as women/gender, youth, children, the elderly, people living with HIV/AIDS and the handi-capped. While many of these organisations are Maputo-based and have a limited membership base, at least two are locally-based, i.e. Akhilizeto in Nampula province and Magariro in Manica province, working with community rights and decentralised consultative councils (IPCCs).
- *Natural Resource & Environment CSOs*, most of which are Maputo-based with a limited membership base, while a few local organisations relating to farmers and natural resource extraction mega projects in Tete (coal) and Nampula (heavy sands) provinces have recently joined the programme.
- *Broad membership-based CSOs* such as the farmers union and the journalist union, represented throughout the country.
- Political rights-based CSOs – such as AWEPA, and the Youth Parliament.
- *Resource CSOs in Investigation and Research* such as IESE, CIP, CEDE and WLSA, all of which operate at the central level.
- *Resource CSOs in capacity development and learning*, such as CESC
- *Broad CSO networks, forums and platforms*, such as the Electoral Observatory, Womens Forum, national Forum of Community radios (FORCOM).

The Terms of Reference

The overall purpose of this mid-term review of the AGIR programme is to provide “existing donors and the [AGIR] *intermediaries* with recommendations on how to improve the program guidelines or the functioning of the program to ensure more effective and efficient implementation to reach the desired outcomes and impact”.⁵¹ While presently Sweden is the only core donor to the AGIR programme, support from other donors is given to AGIR *intermediaries* (Denmark to SCC and Nether-

⁵¹ AGIR Mid term Review, ToRs.

lands to Oxfam Novib) in their ongoing work connected to the programme. The mid-term review is also supposed to inform possible new donors about the AGIR programme, providing insights to guide their decisions on support.

The overall analysis of the AGIR programme is to be addressed through several specific areas of inquiry:

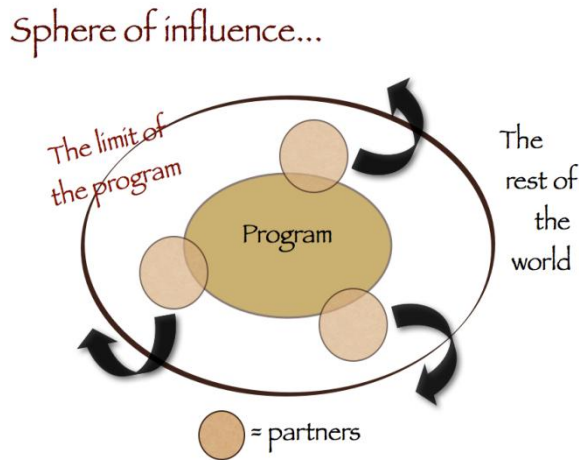
- Determine the programme’s **effectiveness** regarding achieving results at the outcome level as well as to determine the programme’s **relevance** and potential for **impact**;
- Assess the **sustainability** of the programme;
- Serve as a basis for decisions on continued Swedish support and the possibility of accepting more donors into the programme; and
- Assess the **value added** of the AGIR programme approach – is it an effective use of funds?

Assessment of the Terms of Reference

The overall objective of the AGIR programme is to contribute to building and supporting “a strong vibrant society that participates in and influences democratic processes, contributing to more accountable governance, deepened democracy, gender equality and human rights in Mozambique”. With this goal in mind, the AGIR programme supports a capacity strengthening process aimed at increasing the capacity of civil society organisations (or CSO partners) to “participate in development processes that affect their lives and [informs] their actions to demand accountability”. Working through selected INGOs (or *intermediaries*), each working in separate (and different) sub-programmes, this capacity strengthening process of CSOs forms the core of the AGIR programme.

With the intensive focus on capacity development of the partner organisations within the AGIR programme, it will be necessary to be very clear with respect to the scope of the evaluative review when identifying and assessing the type and depth of the outcomes associated/linked to the AGIR programme. Based on the results of this examination, an assessment can be made on the current functioning of the AGIR programme – what is working well and where further attention is needed – and how this will lead to the more long-term outcomes associated with the overall objective of the AGIR programme.

The AGIR programme’s ‘theory of change’ is that by supporting these *intermediaries*, they will in turn support local civil society through long term core-funding and capacity strengthening processes in line with each CSO partner’s own strategic plans. This will lead to the overall Swedish objective of “increasing the positive impact of Mozambican civil society organisations on government transparency and accountability, citizen’s participation and access to information and the respect for human rights, including gender equality”.

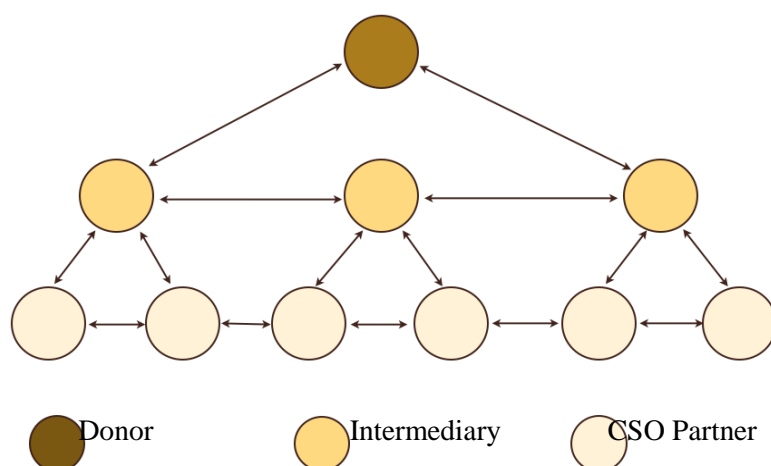


Given the structure of the AGIR programme (one programme with sub-programme *intermediaries* partnering with local CSOs) and its focus on capacity strengthening processes, a clear understanding of the different 'spheres of influence' within the AGIR programme is necessary to identify and assess outcomes related to the programme approach. Understanding these different levels of in-

teraction, and how different social actors fall within the various 'spheres of influence' of the programme (see adjacent diagram), is critical both to an understanding of the resulting outputs and outcomes related to its implementation, as well as to the sustainable implementation of programme strategies (how each level of actors interacts with both the programme's activities and with each other).

However what often happens is that, when reporting on results within this theory of change, there can be gap between what takes place in the field (CSO work) and the connection to the broader objectives of programmes like AGIR. Monitoring, and therefore reporting on results, tends to focus on activities and outputs of the programme. What results from this focus is that there are 'missing outcomes' that bridge between the level of activities and outputs and the level of impacts. Initial discussions with Sida and with the *intermediary* organisations have noted that this is a shared concern – a concern that will be directly addressed through this evaluation by examining the monitoring and reporting structures currently in place as well as by actively documenting immediate and intermediate outcomes that demonstrate this 'bridge' towards intended impacts associated with the programme.

Crucial to documenting the outcomes associated with the AGIR programme will be establishing the '**pathways of change**' that run through these different spheres of influence. There can be, for example, many spheres between a donor, the *intermediaries* it works with, the local CSO partners that work with the *intermediaries*, and then finally the individuals (stakeholders) and families influenced by the work of the CSOs (see diagram below). Tracing how capacity strengthening processes have influenced certain actors in their actions with others is dependent on understanding how these linkages cross these social boundaries.



Understanding how AGIR *intermediary* organisations have influenced their CSO partners requires an equal understanding of the cascading levels of actors and the spheres of influence that each represent. Documenting the linkages between these spheres of influence – essentially the

‘pathways of change’ through which influence happens – are critical to identifying and documenting outcomes (both immediate and intermediate) achieved through the work of the programme. As stated by Patton, “Interacting elements and agents respond and adapt to each other, and to their environment, so that what emerges is a function of ongoing adaptation both among interacting elements and the responsive relationships interacting agents have with their environment” (2011;131). The key to understanding and documenting these ‘pathways to change’ (and the linkages between outputs, outcomes and impact) is to focus on the relationships between the various actors involved in the programme – in the case of the AGIR programme, these are the levels of donor, *intermediaries*, CSOs and finally, local communities. All are part of the results change through which support flows outwards and outcomes/results flow back. A primary goal of this evaluative work will be to identify, analyse and document these linkages and the results that are produced.

Recommendations Regarding Evaluation Scope

The scope of the evaluation needs to be considered both in terms of the period of Sida support to be assessed and concerning the range of the programme components to be examined.

Time Period

The AGIR programme is still in its early formative years. The AGIR programme was initiated in 2010, however a large part of its active operation has taken place in 2011-12. With this in mind, there is the real possibility that intended but long-term ‘outcomes’ (or impact) of the capacity strengthening processes by the *intermediary IN-GOs* with their CSO partners may not have, as yet, been achieved. Therefore a focus on identifying and assessing outcomes at the **immediate and intermediate level** of this capacity development process will be the focus.

Program Components and Evaluative Focus

The evaluative assessment within the mid-term review will have a primary focus on the CSO partners involved in the AGIR programme. It is at this level that the achievement of programme outcomes is expected. Our initial review of programme documentation, as well as through direct discussions with AGIR *intermediary* organisations, indicates that the ‘pool’ of CSO partners across the different sub-programmes

continues to increase in response to the work of the *intermediary* organisations. As discussed earlier, active established CSO partnerships have now reached 47⁵² surpassing the 37 partnerships that were expected by the end of 2014. This growth is important. A key component of the evaluative review will be an examination of the partnership strategies used by the *intermediaries*. Examining these strategies will be critical to assessing the sustainability of the programme and the ability of the *intermediaries* to continue with the level of support they currently provide to their CSO partners.

It should be mentioned that a few overall critical issues came out of the review team's initial meetings with the *intermediary* organisations. One concern relates to *the critical balance between quantity and quality*. By taking in many partners, are the qualitative outcomes of the AGIR programme in danger of being compromised? What happens if AGIR capacity building and support become too mechanical and structured? If so, is there a real danger of damping the process of creating a vibrant civil society that requires a more dynamic approach with support process oriented and tailored in accordance with the specific level of capacity and local circumstances surrounding an individual organisation?

Another concern relates to the balance between the basic requirements of internal democracy and transparency of CSO partners while maintaining openness to support more loosely organised networks and initiatives. It has been mentioned in initial discussions with *intermediaries* that a too-strong focus on requiring partners to fit one 'mode for all' might negatively affect their initiative and creativity. In this context, one of the *intermediaries* has expressed openness to, and stimulation of, loose regional CSO networks by AGIR.

Finally, as addressed in the ToRs "Evaluation Questions", the need to understand how the program is functioning as "one programme" with sub-programmes (not as separate distinct sub-programmes only) will be an important element of the mid-term review. While the *intermediaries* are not directly the subjects of this mid-term evaluative review, identifying and assessing intended outcomes associated with the functioning of the *intermediaries* and the capacity strengthening work that they undertake with their CSO partners, is a primary focus.

Relevance and Evaluability of Evaluation Questions

⁵² This number does not include some partner organisations whose contracts have been suspended, due to non-adherence to internal governance criteria, these measures relate to i.e. MONASO, MEPT and MISA.

Recommendations regarding evaluation questions

In the terms of reference for the Mid-Term Evaluative Review, a number of evaluation questions are proposed by Sida to guide the evaluative process. These questions take into account issues of capacity strengthening, partnership development, monitoring and reporting processes, and the effectiveness of the programme and will be addressed in this section using the evaluative criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact. Additional questions have been added and will be used to structure the overall evaluative process and in interview protocols.

(a) Relevance

Four questions are proposed in relation to **relevance** and are to be addressed within this evaluative review. The questions are:

- i) To what extent are the CSO partners satisfied with the programme and how it has contributed to their internal development?
- ii) How is the programme perceived and accepted within civil society as a whole? Is it seen by other donors as an alternative approach to supporting civil society?
- iii) How can the programme better address cross-cutting issues (especially gender)?
- iv) What should be (and what are) the current underlying principles for accepting more donors? What formats for cooperation between donors would be best?

Additional questions to be considered are:

- i) Do the CSOs feel that the internal capacity development they have received through the AGIR programme has strengthened them in terms of their external work with local communities?
- ii) Are there additional areas of capacity strengthening that CSOs believe would be beneficial to their work?

(b) Effectiveness

Four questions are proposed in relation to effectiveness and are to be addressed within this evaluative review. The questions are:

- i) How effectively is the programme being implemented and what recommended improvements would help in its future implementation?
- ii) What changes can be made to the general guidelines for function of the programme?
- iii) What is the level of interaction and co-operation between *intermediaries* and how they have managed to pursue AGIR as one programme, with four sub-programmes? How are synergies being sought and achieved?
- iv) Are the monitoring and reporting structures within the AGIR programme adequate? Do these structures/mechanisms assess all levels of results from outputs to immediate, intermediate and long-term outcomes? Do baselines exist?

Additional questions to be considered are:

- i) What is the level of interaction and co-operation between CSO partners?
- ii) Are there effective networking mechanisms for CSO partners both internally within the programme and externally to the wider civil society?

- iii) Why is there a tendency for reporting and M+E to focus on activities rather than on results? What is required to change this practice?
- iv) How are programme results being evaluated throughout the programme (i.e. at various levels from grassroots level to partner, from partner to *intermediary*/theme level, and from theme level to joint program reporting)?
- v) Are there effective programme structures that ensure that adequate work is being done in the dimensions of gender and human rights-based approaches?

(c) Efficiency

Two questions are proposed in relation to efficiency and are to be addressed within this evaluative review. The questions are:

- i) Is the balance between the need for local partners to have necessary capacity to receive core funds and the interest of *intermediaries* to disburse funds kept at an adequate level to ensure quality and minimise fiduciary risks?
- ii) Has the operation of the AGIR programme had the intended effect of allowing the Swedish Embassy officers to spend more time on content and qualitative follow-up with local partner organisations and to be involved in the monitoring of civil society support?

Additional questions to be considered are:

- i) In comparison to similar projects in Mozambique, is this programme efficient in its use of donor funding?

(d) Sustainability

Two questions are proposed in relation to sustainability and are to be addressed within this evaluative review. The questions are:

- i) Is it possible (and suitable) to accept more donors into the AGIR programme?
- ii) What is the level of CSO partnerships that is necessary to sustain the programme? Is there a tipping point where there are too many partners for the programme to remain effective and sustainable?

Additional questions to be considered are:

- i) Is there a point within the AGIR programme when CSOs ‘graduate’ out of the programme? What mechanisms could be put in place to assist CSOs who have graduated out of the programme to allow them to continue their work?

(e) Impact

Three questions are proposed in relation to sustainability and are to be addressed within this evaluative review. The questions are:

- i) Is the programme having its intended outcomes – and if not, why?
- ii) Is the programme likely to produce the expected impacts? Did the focus on national partners have a negative influence on this?
- iii) What improvements will make the programme more likely to achieve expected outcomes and impact?

Additional questions to be considered are:

- i) What is the relationship between sub-programme content and the achievement of intended outcomes? Are there content areas that are more difficult to work in and therefore prove to be more difficult to achieve results?
- ii) Can territorial linkages (national, regional, provincial, local) contribute to sustainability? How? What kinds of mechanisms are involved to make this happen?
- iii) What outcomes have resulted within the programme that can be specifically linked to its work in gender and human rights-based approaches? Are these outcomes unique?

Proposed approach and methodology

Evaluation approach

A central perspective taken by this evaluation is that there are multiple ‘spheres of influence’ in the AGIR programme linked together through relationships between donors and *intermediaries*, *intermediaries* and partner CSOs, and CSOs and their own partners in the communities in which they work. Given the structure of the AGIR programme (one programme with sub-programme *intermediaries* partnering with local CSOs) and its focus on capacity strengthening processes, a clear understanding of the different ‘spheres of influence’ within the AGIR programme is necessary to identify and assess outcomes related to the programme approach.

While the assessment of each *intermediary*’s ‘internal’ organisational capacity⁵³ to undertake its work with its CSO partners can be more directly linked to the support provided by the Swedish Embassy through the AGIR programme, outcomes related to the work of the *intermediaries* with their CSO partners are more downstream. Identifying and understanding these different ‘spheres of influence’ through a relevant ‘theory of change’ will be necessary to produce a strong evidence-based narrative that plausibly links the contribution of the programme and the work of the *intermediary* organisations to downstream outcomes at the CSO partner level. As mentioned earlier, documenting these ‘change pathways’ and the linkages they represent between outputs, outcomes and impact will be central to understanding the progress to date of the AGIR programme. These ‘pathways’ exist as a result of the AGIR programme focus on the relationships between the various actors involved in the programme and are critical to its ability to sustain this progress in the near and long-term future. This ‘theory of change’ will be used to stimulate and structure critical reflection about

⁵³ Internal Organisational capacity can consist of many elements from training, to financial management and human resource capacities. In each case, it is the development of the ‘capacity’ the organisation has to support others in a more effective way.

these change pathways within the AGIR programme and will focus the analysis of the support that is central to the work of capacity strengthening of CSO partners.

Evaluation Methodology

The approach to the evaluation will require evidence collecting both in Maputo and in the provinces of Mozambique where many of the CSO partners work. The two main sources of evidence in this evaluation used will be the review of programme documentation at the donor, *intermediary* and CSO partner level and the use of information gathered primarily through interviews with individuals at the donor, *intermediary* and CSO partner levels.

An additional source of evidence will be through the interviewing of individuals or organisations not connected to the AGIR programme, but who work in or have knowledge of the context of AGIR within Mozambique. These ‘second opinions’, or external informants, are important for balancing the information collected through documents and interviews related to the AGIR programme and could play an important role in the triangulation of evidence. These sources can be:

- Donors not currently involved in the programme, government departments and/or agencies, and local CSOs. Donors with or without interest in joining the AGIR programme including Danida,
- Other major civil society programmes including MASC, ‘Dialogo’ (DFID-funded civil society program focusing on five municipalities)
- Commissions/working groups in the parliament.

A primary step in the construction of this evaluative narrative is a review of the documentation produced by and/or associated with the AGIR programme. This process has already begun with documentation collected from Sida and all of the *intermediaries*. Interviews with the Swedish Embassy/Sida staff and other donors associated with the AGIR programme, as well as those individuals working within the INGOs involved in the programme, have also already begun. The focus of these interviews, while preliminary at this inception stage, has been on unravelling the relationships between the *intermediaries* and their *CSO partner organisations* from the perspective of the *intermediary*.

Perhaps the most critical part of the evaluation will be the information collected through semi-structured interviews with selected CSO partner organisations. Examining both the internal and external capacities of the CSO partner organisations and their work in the AGIR programme is crucial to understanding and assessing the progress made so far by the AGIR programme. Semi-structured interviews shall be carried out with a selection of 8 to 10 current AGIR partners. There is no intention to obtain a representative sample among the CSO organisations, which are all very different. Rather, the CSO partners will be selected so as to capture partner diversity, issue-based partner linkages, local, regional, national dimensions and special aspects such as gender or specific rights-based approaches. While the evaluation team will make the final selection of these partner organisations, this selection will be informed through the current ongoing discussions with the *intermediary* organisations.

More specifically, the partners should, as far as possible, be selected using the following criteria:

- Emphasis will be on core partners, and will include some nursery-funded partners.
- Represent each of the four thematic clusters of AGIR.
- Represent each of the above-mentioned partner categories (Human rights-based CSOs, Natural Resource & Environment CSOs, Broad membership/outreach based CSOs, Investigation and Research CSOs, capacity development and learning, Broad CSO networks, political rights-based CSOs, forums and platforms).
- Represent the three socioeconomic and geographical main regions of the country: North, Center, South.
- Illustrate issue-based linkages.
- Illustrate local, regional, central linkages.

In addition to direct CSO partners, a few sub-partner/grassroot organisations shall be interviewed in order to assess the success of the program at the grassroots level, e.g. one of the community radios within the community radio forum (FORCOM), and the farmers union in Tete under the national farmers union for example. While further down the ‘pathway of change’, these downstream outcomes can be crucial to understanding the ‘reach’ of the AGIR programme. In all cases, the relevant TORs evaluation questions will be used to focus and structure the interviews (see section 3.2 above).

Work Planning and Travel

The original work plan for the mid-term review is still considered realistic. During initial consultations however, the *intermediary* organisations alerted the team to the fact that the upcoming Frelimo Party Congress takes place during the period from the 20th of September to the 1st of October. Based on past experience with this event, there can be serious disturbances to travel (especially air flights). The team will try its best to work around this event by travelling to areas unaffected by the congress. However, some delays in site visits to CSO partners might take place. Please see attached work-plan in Annexes.

Utilisation

An important component of this evaluation will be the validation of the findings of this evaluation with donors, *intermediaries* and CSO partners. There are a number of different options on how this consultative process may be undertaken to ensure that learning from the evaluation contributes to the future development of the AGIR programme. Either joint meetings of donor, *intermediary* and partner organisations can be held or, if necessary, these discussions can be held in smaller more focused groups where the findings of the draft report can be discussed.

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Annex 5 – People interviewed

List of CSOs Visited in the Field

	<i>Intermediary</i>	Name of organisation
	Diakonia	
1		Observatório Eleitoral/Electoral Observatory
2		Parlamento Juvenil/Youth Parliament
3		Rede da criança
4		Liga de Direitos Humanos
	IBIS	
5		CESC-Centro de Capacitação e Aprendizagem da Sociedade Civil
6		COOD, Centro de Estudos e Promoção da cidadania, direitos humanos e meio ambiente
7		FORCOM – Fórum Nacional das Rádios Comunitárias
8		IESE Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos
	Oxfam	
9		Akhilizeto (Nampula)
10		Forum Mulher
11		GMD – Grupo Moçambicano de Dívida
12		Nweti
	SCC	
13		AAAJC -Associação de Apoio e Assistência Jurídica às Comunidades (Tete)
14		CTV- Centro Terra Viva
15		ORAM - Organização Rural de Ajuda Mútua;

AGIR Individuals Meet

NAME	FUNCTION/ORGANISATION	DATE
MAPUTO		
Anne Hoff	Director/IBIS	Sept. 04. 2012
Ericino de Salema	Program Manager/IBIS	Sept. 04. & Oct. 15 2012
Iraê Baptista Lundin	Director/Diakonia	Sept. 04. & Oct. 15 2012
William Mulhovo	Senior Programme Officer/Diakonia	Sept. 04. & Oct. 15 2012
Natália Zimba	Finance and Administration/Diakonia	Sept. 04.2012
Antoinette van Vugt Chilaule	Director/Oxfam Novib	Sept 05.2012
Inez Hackenberg	Oxfam Novib	October 3, 2012
Marco van Hackenberg	Oxfam Novib	October 2, 2012
Artur Furtado	Oxfam Novib	October 2, 2012
Lourenco Maganhela	Oxfam Novib	October 2, 2012
Mauricio Sulila	Oxfam Novib	October 3, 2012
Boaventura Zitha	Electoral Observatory	Sept. 26.2012
Abdul Carimo Sau	Electoral Observatory	Sept. 26.2012
Guilherme Mbilana	Electoral Observatory	Sept. 26.2012
Salomão Muchanga	President/Youth Parliament	Sept. 26.2012
Estela Zunguze	Communication Office/Youth Parliament	Sept. 26.2012
Alice Mabota	President/Human Rights League	Sept. 27.2012
Souza Chelli	M&E officer/Human Rights League	Sept. 27.2012
Amílcar Andela	Area Director/Human Rights League	Sept. 27.2012
Amélia Fernanda	Director/Rede da Criança	Sept. 28.2012
Ulisses Temporário	Institutional Development/Rede da Criança	Sept. 28.2012
Dulce Davone	Coordinator/ORAM	Sept. 28.2012
Eufrigina dos Reis	Coordinator/GMD	Sept. 28.2012
Gerónimo Napido	Training and Communication/GMD	Sept. 28.2012
Iracema Duarte	M&E officer/GMD	Sept. 28.2012
Nzira de Deus	Programme Director/Forum Mulher	Oct.8.2012
Júlia Fumo	Institutional Strengthening coordinator/ Forum Mulher	Oct.8.2012
Nilza Chipe	Coord. Gender Economi Programme/Forum Mulher	Oct.8.2012
Arsélio Simbine	Accountant/Forum Mulher	Oct.8.2012
Francisco Joaquim	M&E Officer/Forum Mulher	Oct.8.2012
Paula Monjane	Executive Director/CESC	
Danubio Lihale	Executive Director & investigation officer/ CODD	Oct. 05.2012
Dulcinho Megisso	Programme Officer/COOD	Oct. 05.2012
Denise Namburete	Executive Director/Nwety	Oct. 03.2012
Alda Salomão	General Director/ Centro Terra Viva	Oct. 08. 2012
Cristina Louro	Programme officer/ Centro Terra Viva	Oct. 08. 2012
Sérgio Jose Falange	Executive Director/Civil Society Plat-form-Social Protection	Oct. 12. 2012

Diamantino Nham-possa	Executive Director	Sept. 04 & Oct.16. 2012
Célia Enosse	Natural Resources officer	Sept. 04 & Oct.16.2012
Salomão Moyana	‘Critical Friend’ of IBIS and Editor of ‘Magazine’	Oct. 17. 2012
João Pereira	Director/MASC	Oct. 16. 2012
Alfredo Gamito	Chair/Committee Public Admin. And Media	Oct. 17. 2012
NAMPULA PROVINCE		
José Soares	Coordinator/Youth Parliament	Oct. 1. 2012
Momade Canivete	Representative/ACAMO	Oct. 1. 2012
Ana Francisco	Women area and head of prov Assem- bly/ACAMO	Oct. 1. 2012
Periha Amade	Provincial Secretary/ACAMO	Oct. 1. 2012
José Victor	Treasurer/ACAMO	Oct. 1. 2012
Carlos Segundo	Representative MUGENA /Forum Mul- her	Oct. 1. 2012
Luisa Hoffman	Member of Lareira Crítica/Forum Terra	Oct.2.2012
Manuel Conta	Coordinator Solidariedade Zambezia Representative/Rede da Criança	Oct.2.2012
Sérgia da Graça	Project Manager/ Solidariedade/Rede da Criança	Oct.2.2012
Odete Muchanga	AMASI/Coordinator/GMD	Oct.2.2012
Felicidade Muiocha	Director/UCODIN	Oct.3.2012
Pedro Dzucule	Director/Provincial Directorate of Agriculture	Oct.3.2012
Artur Colher	Coordinator/Electoral Observatory	Oct.3.2012
Amade Ismael	Coordinator/FORCOM (responded to the questionnaire)	Oct.3.2012
Pedro de Carvalho	Executive Director/Akilizetho	Oct.3.2012
Jamal Ibraimo	President/Akilizetho	Oct.3.2012
Olga Loforte	Gender officer	Oct.3.2012
TETE PROVINCE		
Rui de Vasconcelos Caetano	Executive Director/ AAAJC	Sept.25.2012
Rui Agnaldo,	Activista/ AAAJC	Sept.25.2012
Raul Luis Pensado	Presidente Conselho Directivo/ AAAJC	Sept.25.2012
Julio Calengo,	Coordinator/Electoral Observatory	Sept 27.2012
Rosário Ventura	Planning and finance officer/NAFET	Sept.26.2012
Ernesto Fernando de Assis	Coordinator/Forprongt and member of ‘ Lareira Critica’ of SCC	Sept.24.2012
Samuel Matusse	Community officer/Rio Tinto	Sept.26.2012
Luis Bongissa	Provincial Department of Planning and Finance/Development Observatory secre- tariat	Sept.28.2012
Carlos Tomo	Provincial Department of Planning and Finance/Development Observatory secre- tariat	Sept.28.2012



Mid-Term Review of the AGIR Programme

The Embassy of Sweden initiated the 'Action Programme for Inclusive and Responsible Governance' (AGIR) in Mozambique in 2010 in the effort to strengthen civil society organizations. The mid-term review team found that the AGIR Programme is progressing well in strengthening the civil society organizations with which it works. Its application of 'good-donorship' principles is well received and has added value to the programme's approach. Although there are some capacity training challenges and a struggle to find an effective M&E system, AGIR has good potential to succeed in attaining the objective of strengthening the internal capacity and in creating the conditions for self-sustainability among the civil society organizations with which it works. Using its experiences with the AGIR programme as the touchstone for ongoing discussions, The Swedish Embassy should also play a more visible role in the donor community regarding the benefits of a "good donorship" approach for civil society strengthening.

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