

Integrating conflict prevention and civil society participation into national development strategies: Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda

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Africa Peace Forum, InterAfrica Group, Saferworld

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Objectives and methodology

The overall aim of this study is to examine the extent to which conflict prevention and civil society participation are incorporated into the development frameworks of three countries in the Horn of Africa – Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda – and to recommend ways of enhancing participation and strengthening the role of development assistance in conflict prevention. The research focuses on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) of each country, which identify World Bank and European Union priorities for development assistance respectively. Thus, the key objectives of this study are:

- To assess the extent to which civil society participated in the formulation of the PRSPs and CSPs in each country and to identify the factors that contributed to civil society participation or lack of involvement.
- To assess the extent to which the PRSPs and CSPs in each country are conflict-sensitive and aim to prevent or address violent conflict.¹
- To recommend ways of enhancing civil society participation in the next generation of PRSPs and CSPs and of mainstreaming conflict prevention into these development frameworks.

The following approaches were used during the process of conducting the study:

- **Document and literature review** This included a review of PRSPs and CSPs for Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda as well as other relevant documents, such as the mid-term reviews (MTRs), joint annual reviews (JARs), Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (I-PRSPs), and submissions from civil society organisations in the PRSP and CSP consultations.
- **Interviews** This included discussions with EC Delegation and World Bank staff, civil society representatives, including NGOs and the private sector, government representatives, as well as inter-governmental organisations.

The original study was edited and shortened to serve as a briefing note.

¹ For a comprehensive analysis of this issue in Kenya and Uganda, see forthcoming research by Sarah Bayne, 'Integration of small arms and conflict issues into development frameworks and programmes in Kenya and Uganda' (working title).

Acronyms

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
AU	African Union
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DAG	Donor Assistance Group
EC	European Commission
ERS	Economic Recovery Strategy (Kenya)
EU	European Union
IFI	International Financial Institution
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
I-PRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
JAR	joint annual review
JAS	Joint Assistance Strategy
MTR	mid-term review
NIP	National Indicative Programme
NPEP	National Poverty Eradication Plan (Kenya)
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NSA	non-state actor
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan (Uganda)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RSP	Regional Strategy Paper
SDPRP	Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (Ethiopia)

Executive summary

THE HORN OF AFRICA is gravely affected by widespread and protracted violent conflicts, with interlinked regional, national and local dimensions. These conflicts often involve disputes over access to natural resources (including water, grazing land and oil) and are frequently cross-border in nature. Undemocratic and exclusive political systems, and weak and unaccountable security forces, further limit the capacity to resolve disputes peacefully and contribute to chronic insecurity.

Peace and security are fundamental to sustainable development and poverty reduction in the region. Conflict and insecurity severely constrain development efforts, destroying infrastructure, disrupting trade and markets, and diverting resources to security forces. Conflict imposes huge economic and social costs, including displacement, violation of basic rights, human suffering and the destruction of livelihoods. These costs disproportionately affect poor and marginalised groups, including women and children.

Given the prevalence and high risk of conflict in the Horn of Africa and the clear link between conflict and poverty, conflict prevention should be a key priority for development and poverty reduction strategies. Furthermore, greater involvement of civil society in establishing programming priorities will be critical to addressing the root causes of poverty and conflict in the region.

The European Union (EU) and the World Bank are both major international donors in the Horn of Africa. The Cotonou Partnership Agreement, the trade and aid agreement between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states, provides the framework for EU development co-operation and is implemented through Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) that identify the strategic priorities for EU assistance in each country. World Bank assistance is implemented through Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), which similarly outline a country's policies, programmes and priorities for poverty reduction.

Both the Cotonou Agreement and the World Bank recognise the importance of involving civil society in the development of programming priorities. Likewise, both acknowledge the damaging impact of conflict on development and the importance of conflict prevention. This study aims to assess the extent to which these commitments to conflict prevention and civil society participation are implemented in practice.

This study analyses the PRSPs and CSPs of three countries in the Horn of Africa: Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. It assesses the extent to which civil society actively participated in formulating the PRSPs and CSPs and the degree to which these strategies address violent conflict.

The study finds that conflict prevention is not comprehensively addressed in the PRSPs and CSPs in Kenya and Ethiopia. The exception is Uganda, where the issue of peace and security is one of the pillars of the government's Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), which the World Bank has accepted as the PRSP. In all three countries, further steps are required to mainstream conflict prevention into all sectoral policies and programmes, not just those that specifically relate to conflict and security issues. Furthermore, although there is some effort to address conflict risks in CSPs, conflict-related activities have not been given priority in spending allocations.

With regard to civil society participation, the study finds that civil society organisations in all three countries actively participated in aspects of the PRSP and CSP processes. However, dialogue between the government and civil society in Kenya and Uganda was much more open and transparent than in Ethiopia. The ability of civil society to influence policy outcomes was limited to varying degrees in the three countries due to factors such as the weakness of systems and processes for co-ordinating participation, the lack of capacity (at all levels, including government, civil society and donors), and mistrust between government and civil society.

The study recommends that conflict prevention should be mainstreamed into national development frameworks and that development priorities should always be informed by a conflict analysis in order to ensure that sectoral policies and programmes are conflict-sensitive and maximise their potential to prevent conflict. It also recommends a number of measures to improve dialogue between government and civil society in the PRSP and CSP processes, including capacity-building, developing transparent structures and processes for consultation and participation, and harmonising the PRSP and CSP processes.

1

Introduction: conflict in the Horn of Africa

The Horn of Africa has suffered the effects of widespread and protracted violent conflicts, with interlinked regional, national and local dimensions. Many countries in the region have fallen into a so-called 'conflict trap' – a vicious cycle of recurring and deepening conflict.² Conflicts have aggravated poverty and severely constrained development efforts, destroying livelihoods and infrastructure, causing massive displacement and deepening social divisions. Peace and security are therefore fundamental to poverty reduction and sustainable development in the region.

Conflicts in the region have multiple causes. Among the many factors that cause and aggravate conflict, some of the more prominent ones include:

- Competition over scarce resources such as grazing land and water points, especially between pastoralist groups
- Social and economic exclusion
- Political inequalities and unaccountable or unrepresentative governance
- Unfair and uneven distribution of wealth
- Historical relationships based on subordination.

Conflicts are often cross-border in nature and have specific regional dynamics, including:

- Ethnic groups divided by national or administrative boundaries
- Support for insurgents by neighbouring countries (proxy warfare)
- Displacement and refugee flows
- Arms trafficking and regional 'war economies'.

Poverty and underdevelopment further aggravate conflict. Poverty exacerbates tensions as groups compete over access to natural resources, such as grazing land, water and oil. Unfair distribution of wealth and social and economic exclusion also increase the risk of conflict. This often includes regional disparities such as the lack of infrastructure, social programmes and policing in marginal areas and border zones. Undemocratic and unrepresentative political systems, and weak or

² World Bank, *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*, (Oxford University Press, 2003).

unaccountable security forces, further limit the capacity to resolve disputes peacefully and to establish security.

Development can play a positive role in conflict prevention by addressing the long-term structural causes of conflict, such as poverty, injustice and poor governance. However, it is also important to recognise that development interventions can exacerbate tensions or trigger conflict, for example, by reinforcing inequalities, intensifying competition over resources or privileging one group over another.³ It is therefore essential to ensure that development assistance is 'conflict sensitive' by analysing the causes and risk factors for conflict and using this analysis to inform programming priorities.

Some argue that war erupts suddenly, and therefore cannot be targeted through development programmes. However, by taking a longer-term approach, conflict prevention can be mainstreamed into development strategies. This is not only limited to conflict and security related programmes designed to manage conflict once it erupts. It also includes conflict-sensitive development strategies that use conflict analysis to ensure that programmes, at a minimum, do not exacerbate conflict risks, or at the other end of the spectrum, positively address the root causes of conflict.

Civil society can play an important role in ensuring that development strategies reflect the needs of their populations and are sensitive to the risks of conflict and insecurity. Strengthening the capacity of civil society to influence programming priorities is central to increasing transparency and accountability between governments and citizens and to ensuring that development programmes address the root causes of conflict and poverty. This is particularly important where governments are not fully representative and lack the capacity or political will to involve their populations in the policy-making process.

The fact that conflict prevention and transformation are not universally incorporated into development frameworks is a cause for concern. "At present, reducing the global incidence of civil war is not included as a Millennium Development Goal. Yet because war is so powerfully development in reverse and because peace is a fundamental good in its own right, it is surely appropriate to include conflict prevention as a core development objective"⁴.

³ For example, large-scale irrigation projects in the Awash River basin of Ethiopia in the 1980s displaced Afar clans and disrupted grazing patterns, intensifying conflict between the Afar and Issa groups.

⁴ *Ibid.*

2

World Bank and European Union development co-operation

The Cotonou Agreement and Country Strategy Papers

The Cotonou Agreement is a trade and aid agreement between the European Union (EU) and 78 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states, signed in 2000. It provides the political and financial framework for EU development co-operation with ACP countries, including the countries of the Horn of Africa.

Cotonou builds upon a long history of ties between the EU and the ACP countries. With the end of the colonial period, the relationship between ACP and European countries focused on economic and political ties. Economic co-operation between the EU and ACP countries was at the heart of the Lomé Agreement, signed in 1975. For example, non-reciprocal trade preferences gave agricultural products from ACP countries special access to European markets. Lomé was renewed and revised, and from 1990, political dimensions such as the respect for human rights and democratic principles were introduced into the agreement.

Many of the provisions of Cotonou can be traced back to Lomé. However, Cotonou contains a number of innovations that are particularly relevant to this study, including:

■ **The role of non-state actors (NSAs) including civil society** Cotonou refers to the need to involve NSAs in policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.⁵ The EU and ACP countries are legally committed to involve NSAs in the Cotonou process and NSA participation is a condition that should be met in order for ACP states to receive funds. Governments and NSAs are responsible for initiating consultations on development strategies.⁶

⁵ NSAs are defined as the private sector, economic and social partners (trade unions) and civil society (articles 4, 6, and 7).

⁶ Article 19 of the agreement states that the "cooperation framework and orientations shall be tailored to the individual circumstances of each ACP country, shall promote local ownership of economic and social reforms and the integration of the private sector and civil society actors into the development process" and that "governments and non-state actors in each ACP country shall initiate consultations on country development strategies and community support thereto".

- **Funding mechanisms for NSAs** Cotonou creates new opportunities for NSAs to access funds. Article 58 establishes the eligibility of these actors for financial support.
- **Political dialogue** Cotonou creates a forum to discuss important political issues such as performance criteria, human rights, the rule of law and good governance. The EU intends to develop more flexible and diversified institutional arrangements to deepen and widen political dialogue between ACP countries, the EU and NSAs.
- **Conflict prevention** Cotonou explicitly includes peace-building and conflict prevention provisions (article 11). Political dialogue is seen as central to conflict prevention and should include co-operation between EU and ACP countries on conflict resolution and peace-building.
- **'Failed states'** Cotonou takes into account the exceptional circumstances of Somalia and includes co-operation with dysfunctional states (article 19).
- **Economic and trade co-operation** The trade preferences granted to ACP countries need to be abolished in accordance with WTO rules. Negotiations are currently underway to adopt Economic Partnership Agreements involving new trade regimes by the end of 2007.

These new aspects of Cotonou were motivated by several factors, including the perception that the Lomé conventions failed to integrate ACP countries into the world economy. It was felt that 25 years of co-operation under Lomé and non-reciprocal free trade arrangements had not had much positive impact on the living standards of people in ACP countries.

At the national level, Cotonou is implemented through Country Strategy Papers (CSPs), which identify the priority sectors, programmes and activities for support in each country. CSPs are complemented by National Indicative Programmes (NIPs), which allocate resources to particular activities and set a timetable for their implementation. Aid is provided via the European Development Fund (EDF), largely as grants toward programmes outlined in the CSPs.

Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) outline a country's macro-economic, sectoral and social policies to promote development and alleviate poverty. They also describe the country's external financing needs. Governments are responsible for designing PRSPs, in collaboration with civil society and the World Bank and IMF staff. The PRSP process is supposed to be country-driven, so that the final strategy is nationally 'owned'. PRSPs are prepared every three years, however they may be revised annually.

PRSPs provide the basis for World Bank and IMF assistance as well as debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. World Bank assistance is outlined in Country Assistance Strategies (CAS), which are closely aligned to PRSPs. In addition, other donors are encouraged to align their assistance with the programmes and goals outlined in the PRSPs.

PRSPs were developed as a response to discontent with the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) sponsored by the World Bank and IMF during the 1980s and 1990s. Far from reducing poverty, structural adjustment failed to reduce inequalities, redistribute wealth to the poor, or bring about development in many countries. Furthermore, there was growing concern that reforms had to be nationally 'owned' if they were to be effectively implemented and sensitive to local realities. PRSPs were developed as new country-driven development strategies based upon the principles of partnership and participation. They aimed to increase governments' accountability

to their own citizens and to increase the poverty focus of development assistance.

According to the World Bank and the IMF, the PRSPs are based on six core principles:

- Results-oriented – should have tangible and verifiable targets
- Comprehensive – should integrate macro-economic, structural, sectoral and social factors
- Country-driven – there should be consensus on the actions to be taken
- Participatory – all relevant stakeholders should participate in the formulation and implementation of policies as well as in monitoring and evaluation
- Based on partnerships – governments and other actors including donors and civil society should fully participate
- Long-term and short-term goals of reforming institutions and building capacity to achieve sustainable development and have a positive impact on the poor.

Moreover, poverty reduction strategies should meet the following criteria:

- Promotion of anti-poverty policies and programmes
- Encouragement of civil society to participate in policy formulation and the establishment of priorities
- Promotion of the collaboration of governments, the media and NSAs to tackle vested interests and corruption
- Targeting of inequalities and exclusion.

3

Overview of the PRSP and CSP processes in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda

The processes and content of the PRSPs and CSPs in the three countries are very similar. This reflects the similarities between the development challenges each country faces and between the conditions of EU and World Bank assistance. Though the situations are not identical in the three countries, they have similar challenges to overcome. Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda are all affected by violent conflict and insecurity, although it manifests itself differently in each country. They face many similar conflict risks, particularly in the areas along their shared borders, although the causes, dynamics and intensity of conflicts vary across areas. The three countries also face similar problems of poverty: the majority of the population lives in rural areas and depends on subsistence agriculture or pastoralist activities for their livelihoods, while unemployment and inequality prevail in urban centres. And, in all three countries, the decentralisation and devolution of power would contribute to poverty alleviation and democratisation.

Ethiopia Ethiopia's PRSP, known as the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP), was presented to the World Bank and approved in July 2002. The SDPRP was developed through a participatory process and is based on four pillars: agricultural development and food security; justice system and civil service reform; governance, decentralisation and empowerment; and capacity-building.

Ethiopia's CSP, signed in 2002, is aligned with the PRSP and will be amended as the PRSP changes. Transport, macro-economic support and capacity-building for economic reform, and food security have been identified as focal sectors for EC support to Ethiopia.

Kenya The PRSP process has been slightly different in Kenya because of the change of government in 2002. The Moi government designed a national strategy to eradicate poverty, the Kenya National Poverty Eradication Plan (NPEP). In 2000, the World

Bank accepted an Interim PRSP (I-PRSP)⁷, based on the NPEP, as the basis for developing a full PRSP. Although the government developed a draft PRSP, this was never submitted to the World Bank because of elections held in December 2002. The new government developed its own national strategy, the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERS) in order to reflect its new political and economic agenda. This was presented to the World Bank and IMF in May 2004. The ERS is based upon three pillars: economic growth, supported by reforms of financial services and an expansion of investments in infrastructure; equity and poverty reduction, which would be aided by actions to improve the access of the poor to basic services (education, health, and HIV/AIDS), and the revival of agricultural growth; and governance, including strengthening public safety, law and order.

The Government of Kenya and the EC Delegation signed the CSP in October 2003. The CSP focuses on two priority sectors identified in the PRSP: agriculture and rural development and physical infrastructure with a focus on roads.

In the materials examined during the study, there was no evidence of collaboration among countries developing poverty reduction strategies and CSPs. Civil society representatives and government officials alike would benefit greatly from such international co-operation in the development of PRSPs and CSPs.

Uganda Uganda's PRSP is based upon the government's Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), a comprehensive development framework prepared in 1997. Although the PEAP predated the PRSP, it was developed through a participatory process and was approved as a PRSP in 2000. Uganda was the first country to present a full PRSP to the IMF and the World Bank. The PEAP was revised for the third time in 2003. The PEAP is based on five pillars: economic management; enhancing production, competitiveness and incomes; security, conflict resolution and disaster management; good governance; and human development.

Uganda's CSP is also aligned with the PRSP. Macro-economic support and economic reform, as well as transport and rural development are the focal sectors for EU support.

⁷ The Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP) is the document that each country prepares for the World Bank and the IMF's approval before the full PRSP is developed.

4

Assessment of conflict prevention

Conflict prevention in PRSPs

As it stands today, conflict prevention is not comprehensively addressed in the PRSP documents in Ethiopia and Kenya. Only the Ugandan PEAP includes peace, stability and conflict prevention as one of the key pillars of Uganda's development strategy. Governance, including public safety, law and order is a pillar of Kenya's ERS. In all three countries, further steps are required to mainstream conflict prevention into all sectoral policies and programmes, not just those that specifically relate to conflict and security issues.

In the Kenyan ERS, conflict prevention, management and resolution are addressed, although there is a very strong focus on narrowly defined security issues such as police and judicial reforms. There is therefore a need for broader recognition of the links between conflict and development across all sectors of the ERS. Moreover, some of Kenya's key security concerns seem to stem from the flow of refugees from neighbouring countries and the proliferation of small arms.

Ethiopia's PRSP is based on four pillars: agricultural development and food security; justice system and civil service reform; governance, decentralisation and empowerment; and capacity-building. The key sectors identified for support are rural and agricultural development, food security, pastoral development, roads, water resource development, education and health.

Conflict prevention is marginal to Ethiopia's PRSP. Conflict prevention is not included as a cross-cutting issue, nor is it identified as a key objective. There is limited discussion of conflict as an obstacle to development. For example, the PRSP mentions peace and stability as a condition for attracting investment and mentions violent conflict as a challenge to pastoral development. However, it does not propose specific programmes to prevent or manage conflicts as a means of achieving policy objectives in these areas.

Decentralisation, justice system and civil service reform and capacity-building are core objectives of the PRSP that have the potential to impact conflict risks. The PRSP claims that "overall, the democratisation process has helped to create peace and stability in Ethiopia".⁸ The PRSP emphasises the importance of capacity-building as a central priority for good governance, and includes a focus on strengthening democratic institutions. Although good governance and the sharing of political power is one of the factors that can address the root causes of conflict, development

⁸ *Ibid*, p 109.

frameworks need to adopt a more comprehensive approach to conflict prevention.

The main World Bank financed initiative to address conflict and security issues in Ethiopia predates the PRSP. In 2000, the World Bank provided US\$400 million to assist Ethiopia with a post-conflict recovery programme to address the consequences of the Ethiopian-Eritrean war. The Emergency Recovery Program (ERP) included support for the demobilisation and reintegration of 150,000 combatants (US\$170.6 million) and for rehabilitation and reconstruction activities for war-affected and displaced communities, including support for de-mining activities. At the time the PRSP was signed in 2002, 137,980 combatants had been demobilised under the programme.

Conflict issues are not comprehensively addressed in Ethiopia's PRSP despite the fact that participants in the consultations and interviews during the PRSP process expressed concern about the impacts of conflict and recommended the inclusion of strong conflict prevention mechanisms in order to effectively reduce poverty. This was the case in the consultation that took place within the Ethiopian Government structures, including local administrations from the district level to the federal government.

In Uganda, the third revision of the PEAP, which started in 2003, refers to peace, stability, conflict prevention, management and resolution as one of the pillars of the PEAP and identifies conflict prevention as a strategic element of poverty reduction. In addition, the World Bank has provided US\$150 million over four consecutive years as social action fund outside the PEAP process, which can be used for conflict prevention and other priority areas.

This is a very positive step and the challenge will be to ensure that consistent linkages are made to conflict prevention throughout the other pillars as well.

Conflict prevention in CSPs

As described above, Cotonou explicitly recognises that violent conflict is an obstacle to sustainable development and affirms the importance of conflict prevention and peace-building. Article 11 specifically mentions the need for "preventing violent conflicts at an early stage by addressing their root causes in a targeted manner, and with an adequate combination of all available instruments." The EU has also begun to recognise that development interventions can actually undermine peace and stability, and therefore need to be implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner.

The EU has taken some initial steps to operationalise this commitment through CSPs. In 2001, the EU Conflict Prevention Unit developed the 'Checklist for Root Causes of Conflict', which aims to increase awareness of conflict risks among desk officers and EC Delegation staff and encourage conflict-sensitivity and conflict prevention. The checklist refers to eight indicators of conflict risks and is supposed to be consulted when CSPs are drafted – although this does not seem to be a widely accepted practice in EC Delegations yet. Though not a comprehensive conflict analysis, the checklist does provide an opportunity for integrating conflict prevention into CSPs.⁹

The CSPs for Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda include some analysis of conflict risks. However, this analysis has not significantly influenced the choice of supported

⁹ Africa Peace Forum, Eurostep, InterAfrica Group and Saferworld, 'Mid-term reviews 2004: priorities from African Civil Society – Influencing Country Strategy Papers to advance poverty reduction and conflict prevention', Report of a meeting between civil society representatives from the Horn of Africa, ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly Members and the EU, 19 February 2004, Addis Ababa.

sectors.¹⁰ The majority of support focuses on transport, macro-economic support and reform, rural development and food security (see table 1).

Table 1 Country Strategy Paper spending allocations¹¹

	Selected focal sectors in the CSP	CSP focus on specific conflict prevention initiatives and capacity building for NSAs
Ethiopia	Transport infrastructure (55%) Macro economic support and economic reform (25%) Food security (14%)	Capacity-building for civil society including conflict prevention. Governance including legal and judicial reform, civil service reform and decentralisation (6%)
Kenya	Macro economic support (40-50%) Agriculture and rural development (25-35%) Roads/infrastructure (20-30%)	Other programmes including private sector development, NSAs, regional projects and programmes including in the area of trade, environment and regional integration (5-10%)
Uganda	Macro economic support and reform (38%) Transport (38%) Rural development (15%)	Capacity-building for good governance, including human rights, rule of law governance, and decentralisation (6%) Institutional support to NSAs (3%)

¹⁰ Africa Peace Forum, InterAfrica Group and Saferworld, 'Cotonou mid-term reviews – a lost opportunity for peace and development?', February 2005.

¹¹ EC Country Strategy Papers, cited in Saferworld and International Alert, 'Assessment of changes in the EU architecture - institutions, policies and instruments - resulting from the raised profile of global conflict and security issues', November 2004.

5

Assessment of civil society participation

Civil society participation in PRSPs

Ethiopia

At the federal level there is a relatively poor working relationship between government and civil society in Ethiopia, although this has improved in recent years. Government regulation and control of civil society and the right of civil society organisations to advocate or lobby on behalf of supporters are contentious issues. Government officials generally recognise the need for a partnership with civil society in planning and implementing both government policy and civil society interventions, however there is limited space for a pluralistic approach. Despite these limitations, civil society organisations did have the opportunity to participate in the PRSP and CSP processes in Ethiopia.

Some, particularly within the donor community, saw the consultation with civil society as part of the PRSP process as an important step forward in government-civil society relations, which opened the door to improved dialogue in other areas.¹² However, others felt that participation was nominal, and that there was a need to build trust between government and civil society, to improve transparency, and to establish clear structures and processes for participation. The following concerns were highlighted by some respondents in the interviews conducted as part of this study:

- Government officials and civil society representatives identified a problem of 'mutual suspicion' and 'mistrust'. In part, this is because government officials fear that the objective of NGOs is to expose the weaknesses of the government to the international community, whilst many NGOs are distrustful of governmental initiatives.
- Both the government and some civil society organisations expressed the view that civil society organisations were not well enough organised or informed to effectively engage in the PRSP process, however since then, civil society capacity has improved.
- Some civil society representatives expressed concern over the lack of transparency in the consultation process, which was related to the lack of clear structures and processes for participation. For example, the Interim PRSP (I-PRSP) was exclusively prepared by the government in a short period of time and civil society organisations were unable to get a copy of the I-PRSP until it was produced and submitted to the IFIs. The fact that the I-PRSP was drafted in September 2001 and submitted to the

¹² British Council, 'Mapping Non-State Actors in Ethiopia: A research study commissioned by the European Union and the Ministry of Capacity Building', April 2004.

IFIs in November of the same year undermined the ability of civil society to participate in this stage of the process.

- Some civil society organisations have expressed concern that the government's own structures for popular participation, from the district to the federal levels, do not provide sufficient opportunities for civil society engagement. In particular, some government officials feel that the role of civil society should be limited to providing feedback on documents drafted by the government and civil society should not to participate as full partners in the policy development and drafting process. The main civil society networks requested to be members of the drafting committee for the PRSP but were turned down by the government. They felt that their feedback could have enriched the PRSP much more, had their recommendations been incorporated earlier.

Ethiopian NGOs recommended that a legal framework be established to recognise civil society organisations as major stakeholders and partners in the PRSP process with regular dialogue meetings held on poverty issues, including public financing reviews, access to information about budget allocation, transfer and expenditure.

The commitment and willingness of Ethiopian civil society organisations and other NSAs to participate in the PRSP and CSP processes is very high and encouraging. Civil society has played an increasingly assertive role, often providing input outside of the formal government structures and consultation processes. Several civil society organisations and networks submitted comments during the design of the PRSP. The PRSP Task Force, now renamed PAN-E, was formed to enhance the contribution of NGOs and other stakeholders to the PRSP. They submitted a comprehensive review and recommendations on the following issues, among others:

- Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI)
- Economic reform programmes
- Civil service and judicial system reforms
- Decentralisation
- Capacity-building

PAN-E is now officially registered and has been active in providing inputs to the national consultation on the government annual report on the PRSP. This is an encouraging sign that civil society organisations have made great progress in getting organised in order to influence policies.

The Ethiopian Economic Association (EEA) prepared teaching manuals on the nature of the poverty reduction strategy and conducted training and awareness-raising activities in nine regional states. The EEA initiative aimed to ensure that poverty reduction processes are properly understood by Ethiopians in most regional states of Ethiopia as well as in Addis Ababa.

The Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA), an umbrella organisation of international and national development NGOs, which houses PAN-E, independently sponsored various discussions on the I-PRSP and completed a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the document.

Forum for Social Studies (FSS) made the I-PRSP available to other civil society organisations for analysis and discussion. FSS organised a series of meetings on the I-PRSP and submitted its findings and recommendations to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED).

The Chamber of Commerce formed eight sectoral committees to discuss the content of the PRSP and made recommendations. Most of the debates focused on the concerns of the business community, who feel they can have a positive impact on

poverty reduction by creating employment and contributing to economic growth and development. The submission of the Chamber of Commerce stressed that the concerns of the business community were not sufficiently addressed in the I-PRSP.

Many Ethiopian civil society organisations are based in Addis Ababa but many of them have activities in the regions. With the decentralisation process taking place from the federal to the woreda (district) level civil society should also decentralise their work so that their programmes have greater impact on the rural people at the grassroots level. It is necessary for civil society to be effective in the rural areas because the government has an acute capacity problem at the district and regional levels. The government, donors and civil society should work together in order to improve the capacity of local governments. All three should co-operate not only in capacity-building but also in the formulation of sectoral policies and poverty reduction.

Kenya The introduction to Kenya's Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP) refers to the commitment to involve civil society:

“While Government has a particular responsibility for spearheading action and creating a positive framework, the private sector, non-governmental and community based organizations all have a vital role to play in meeting the challenge of poverty reduction. Kenya must mobilize all available resources and use them efficiently and effectively in the fight against poverty. ... [T]he government working together with civil society and development partners, will take a number of targeted short term measures to directly address some critical causes and manifestations of poverty.”¹³

According to the I-PRSP text, Kenya's National Poverty Eradication Plan (NPEP) was formulated with broad and extensive consultations with various stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, NGOs and government agencies. The Kenyan Government created a 'stakeholders consultative forum' as a medium for participation in the I-PRSP process. This brought together over 300 Kenyans from various sections of the society including the media, civil society, the private sector, women's groups and research institutions. The issues raised in the consultative forum and integrated in the I-PRSP focused on the areas of expertise of NGOs: gender mainstreaming, affirmative action for vulnerable groups, improvements to education and health, HIV/AIDS, security and good governance as priority actions, improvements in infrastructure, and weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation policies and development programmes.¹⁴

Kenyan civil society organisations have built capacity and expertise on a broad range of development and governance issues, which makes their participation in development frameworks all the more relevant. They have been involved in democratisation, governance, the rule of law, accountability and transparency projects and will continue engagement in these areas during the implementation stage of the poverty reduction strategy. Networks of organisations such as the Kenyan Civil Society Alliance (KCSA) and the NGO Council have a role to play in the implementation of poverty reduction strategies. Kenyan civil society organisations have also been fighting corruption by exposing corrupt officials.

Kenyan civil society have also been concerned with fair distribution issues, particularly improving national health services, increasing employment opportunities and improving access to social services.

¹³ Government of Kenya, 'Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2000-2003', 13 July 2000, p 1-2.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

However, Kenyan civil society organisations have experienced several constraints in their attempts to engage with the government on the PRSP process. For instance, some organisations voiced concern about the difficulty in accessing documents on the PRSP process prior to meetings. They also complained that during consultation meetings the number of representatives from civil society groups such as the KCSA or from the NGO Council was too small. Some people indicated that invitations sometimes came only a few hours before the scheduled meetings.

With the change of government in December 2002, the PRSP became the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERS) in order to include the vision of the new Government of Kenya. However, the development of the ERS did not go through wide consultations with stakeholders. As a result, the difference between the PRSP and the ERS is not clear for civil society groups that were involved in the initial PRSP process.

Given the strength and capacity of civil society in Kenya, one would have expected greater participation in the PRSP process than has been the case. The elections and change of government in 2002, which led to the development of a new PRSP, were among the reasons why civil society participation was not as expected. Civil society engagement in the CSP process in Kenya was much stronger.

Uganda The Ugandan PRSP is based on a national poverty reduction strategy, the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), which was adopted in 1997. It evolved into a fully-fledged PRSP in 2000. The PEAP has shaped sectoral plans at the national level as well as district and local action plans. The National Planning Authority is responsible for ensuring that the plans are consistent with the needs of the people and for monitoring activities. Because the Ugandan PRSP was based on the PEAP, some believe that ownership is more genuine than in Ethiopia and Kenya. Ugandan civil society organisations have been working on the PEAP since 1994.

Ugandan civil society has been relatively active and influential. Ugandan civil society provided input into the establishment of the Poverty Action Fund (PAF)¹⁵ and are involved in monitoring its allocation and expenditure. Districts participated in poverty assessment and planning and have provided essential feedback on poverty reduction objectives. Networks of organisations such as the NGO Forum, the Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations, and Development Alternatives-Uganda facilitated civil society input.

Ugandan civil society organisations submitted a report: *In Search of A New Development Path for Uganda*, which put “emphasis on policy actions and programmes by government, development partners, the private sector and civil society that would promote pro-poor development strategies”. Some of the recommendations of the report focus on rural agricultural development, pastoralism and the informal sector. Civil society in Uganda established an institutional framework for participation – such a mechanism is necessary to avert the tendency by government to prioritise the participation of some actors over others.

¹⁵ The Poverty Action Fund is a mechanism to ensure that specific resources from debt relief and donors are allocated towards key programmes within the PEAP. The PAF has attracted additional funding for reallocation to public services that directly reduce poverty, for example, primary education, primary health care (including control of HIV/AIDS), agricultural extension, feeder roads, water and sanitation, and law and order. The criteria used for accessing the PAF funds are hinged on whether the planned activities/programmes are mentioned in the PEAP; directly reduce poverty; offer service to the poor; are well developed; and have a budget for a specific financial year.

Civil society participation in CSPs

The Cotonou Agreement refers to the need to involve NSAs in policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. Participation is based on the principle that all the stakeholders have the responsibility for reducing poverty and that this task should not be left to governments alone. As outlined in articles 4 to 7, the rationale for the participation of NSAs is to create ownership, effectiveness and efficiency in reducing and eventually eradicating poverty. The concept also involves the sharing of responsibilities and ensuring accountability and transparency.

Within Cotonou, NSAs are defined as the private sector, economic and social partners (trade unions) and civil society (articles 6). Article 58 further establishes the eligibility of these actors for financial support. This broad definition of NSAs, which includes groups with diverse and sometimes competing interests, further complicates efforts to develop systems for involving civil society. For example, it is necessary to distinguish the private sector working for profit – who do not directly represent the interests of marginalised groups – from voluntary organisations, such as professional associations, NGOs, community-based organisations, teachers' associations, unions, and faith-based organisations. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that civil society organisations have constituencies to legitimise their actions.

Despite the strong commitment to civil society participation, efforts to hold consultations with civil society in the Horn of Africa have often been *ad hoc*, with no serious preparation. Furthermore, local awareness of Cotonou and of opportunities for consultation and participation is weak. Principles and procedures for civil society consultation need to be established in order to ensure a more consistent and systematic approach.¹⁶

Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia have all taken steps to rectify these problems. Civil society alliances in all three countries have been established to provide a formal structure for ordinary people to consult with EC Delegations and their own governments. The EC Delegations within all three countries have established civil society focal points that are specifically responsible for engaging with civil society.

However, a number of obstacles to civil society participation remain. There have been significant delays in disbursing funds to NSAs across the Horn of Africa and a lack of clarity about who is eligible for support. Uganda is the only country where funds for NSA capacity-building have been successfully disbursed.¹⁷ In addition, information has not always been disseminated to civil society sufficiently in advance of consultations, and as a result civil society has not had adequate time to prepare.

Although civil society has had the opportunity to participate in aspects of the CSP process in all three countries and some progress has been made in developing institutional structures to facilitate participation, the ability of civil society to influence programming priorities remains limited. According to the EC's own assessment of civil society participation in the 2004 mid-term review process, NSAs were consulted in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia, but actual input was limited and did not significantly impact the outcome of the review process.¹⁸

¹⁶ For further analysis of civil society participation in the Cotonou process see, Africa Peace Forum, InterAfrica Group and Saferworld, 'Cotonou mid-term reviews – a lost opportunity for peace and development?', February 2005; Africa Peace Forum, Eurostep, InterAfrica Group and Saferworld, 'Mid-term reviews 2004: priorities from African Civil Society – Influencing Country Strategy Papers to advance poverty reduction and conflict prevention', Report of a meeting between civil society representatives from the Horn of Africa, ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly Members and the EU, Addis Ababa, 19 February 2004; Africa Peace Forum, InterAfrica Group and Saferworld, 'Developing Ethiopian civil society engagement in the Cotonou Agreement: Report of a consultation between civil society representatives, the Ethiopian Government and the European Union', Addis Ababa, 3 November 2003.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ European Commission, Assessment of non-state actors (NSA) participation in the 2004 mid-term review process in ACP countries, Draft, 6 April 2005.

Comparison of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda

Civil society organisations in all three countries had the opportunity to participate in the PRSP and CSP processes both within the government structures and through civil society led initiatives. However, participation is relatively more advanced in Kenya and Uganda than in Ethiopia. This reflects differences in the strength and capacity of civil society and the attitude of the government toward their participation. Kenya has a strong civil society sector that is engaged in economic activities, good governance, democratisation, and anti-corruption as well as in conflict prevention, management and resolution. Uganda also has an active civil society, a history of positive government engagement, and relatively well-developed structures for managing participation.

Ethiopia is lagging behind in this respect, however, there are signs of real progress and notable efforts on the part of civil society to gain recognition. Some of these shortcomings stem from the fact that institutional mechanisms to structure the relationship between the government and civil society are in the early stages of development. Participation has also been compromised by mutual suspicion and government resistance to involving civil society.

In Uganda and Kenya, civil society organisations have a greater presence in rural areas and are therefore better able to represent rural constituencies. Ethiopian civil society organisations are mainly based in Addis Ababa, although they implement activities in rural areas.

The partnership between civil society and the government is strongest in Uganda. For example, Ugandan NSAs played a vital role in the establishment of the Poverty Action Fund and closely monitors how these resources are allocated and used in different districts with the objective of ensuring greater transparency and accountability. Mechanisms of this kind do not exist in Kenya and Ethiopia.

6

Joining up PRSPs and CSPs

Both the PRSP and CSP are participatory frameworks that require the involvement of civil society at multiple stages in the process (formulation, review, monitoring, etc). The presence of multiple frameworks for donor assistance places a strain on already limited civil society capacity and resources. These processes should be streamlined and simplified to enhance the capacity of civil society to participate in all stages of the programme process. Respondents for this study felt that the PRSP and CSP processes had similar aims and objectives and could therefore be integrated into a single unified framework. Efforts to enhance donor co-ordination and harmonisation should be strengthened and should incorporate coherent structures and processes for the participation of civil society.

Most CSPs are already aligned with the programmes and sector plans outlined in PRSPs and efforts are underway to further harmonise donor policies. Donors are starting to co-ordinate their assistance through initiatives such as the Joint Assistance Strategy (JAS) in Uganda and the Donor Assistance Group (DAG)¹⁹ in Ethiopia. For example, Uganda's JAS involves a joint donor mission conducting an assessment and matching it with financial commitments (linked to the full poverty reduction strategy). The advantages of the JAS are greater mutual accountability from donors for the poverty reduction strategy, co-ordinated donor feedback to government on how the process might be improved, more predictable financing and reduced duplication of government's effort in reporting to individual donors.

The harmonisation of donor frameworks would be a positive step towards addressing the significant strain on government and civil society capacity caused by the need to manage multiple donor conditions, requirements and consultation processes. However, care must be taken to ensure these frameworks are conflict-sensitive and to establish coherent structures and processes for civil society participation.

¹⁹ The principal mechanism of donor co-ordination is the UN Development Assistance Group (DAG), co-chaired by the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank. Support to the sustainable development and poverty reduction paper, in the form of strategic support for implementation and strategic studies, is co-ordinated through this framework and it also provides a forum for information sharing and arranging multi-donor reviews and joint missions. Other joint government/donor groups are also being established to facilitate better co-ordination.

7

Recommendations

The analysis has shown that in all three countries, further steps are required to ensure that conflict prevention is mainstreamed into PRSPs and CSPs. In particular, it found that while in some countries development frameworks incorporated specific conflict and security related programmes, conflict prevention still was not systematically integrated into all sectoral policies and programmes. With regard to civil society participation, the analysis has shown that to varying degrees civil society organisations participated in the PRSP and CSP processes in all three countries. However, there remains a need to improve dialogue and to ensure that civil society is able to make a substantive contribution to the policy-making process.

The following steps should be taken by donors, governments and civil society:

■ **Ensure that all development interventions are conflict-sensitive.**

International donors should adopt a more comprehensive approach to conflict and mainstream conflict prevention into development frameworks. A conflict assessment or analysis should always be conducted as part of the process of developing PRSPs and CSPs and used to ensure that all sectoral policies and programmes are conflict-sensitive. The analysis should be used to inform programme priorities and develop specific conflict prevention programmes to address conflict risks. Conflict analysis should also be incorporated into evaluation and review processes, to consider how an intervention has impacted on conflict dynamics.

■ **Incorporate conflict and security related programmes into development frameworks and ensure they are adequately resourced.**

In addition to ensuring that all development interventions are conflict-sensitive, national development frameworks should also include programmes that focus specifically on conflict and security related issues (such as conflict resolution and security sector reform) where they are appropriate to the country's needs and are likely to improve the security and well-being of the poor. Similarly, the EU should ensure that conflict and security issues are given sufficient priority and resources within the CSPs.

■ **Harmonise the PRSP and CSP processes and develop a coherent system for civil society participation.**

The PRSP and CSP processes should be harmonised and joint frameworks to coordinate donors' initiatives should be developed. As part of this process, clear and coherent systems should be established to facilitate civil society participation in all stages of the programming process. Conflict analysis should be incorporated into joint assessments and should be used to inform the choice of priorities to ensure interventions are conflict-sensitive.

■ **Build the capacity of civil society to participate in the PRSP and CSP processes.**

Lack of capacity remains a key constraint on civil society participation in the PRSP and CSP processes. Capacity-building for civil society should include improving understanding of all stages of the PRSP and Cotonou processes, building capacity for policy analysis, and strengthening internal structures.

■ **Build the capacity of government officials and donor agency staff to engage with civil society.**

Capacity-building is a cross-cutting issue that affects all actors, including governments and international donors. Specific activities should also be undertaken to build the capacity of government officials and donor agency staff to engage with civil society.

■ **Strengthen civil society networks and mechanisms for structuring dialogue.**

There is a particular need to strengthen alliances or networks that co-ordinate civil society input into the PRSP and CSP processes. This would facilitate participation, as it is easier for donors and governments to liaise with coalitions of civil society organisations than with individual organisations. Thematic networks, umbrella organisations and working groups are being established or already exist in all of the three countries. Processes, mechanisms and standards for structuring dialogue with governments should be developed.

■ **Ensure that national and regional poverty reduction strategies take account of the regional dynamics of conflict.**

Given the regional dimensions of conflict in the Horn of Africa, national poverty reduction strategies should take account of the regional causes and impacts of conflict. IGAD has a conflict prevention mandate and a conflict early warning response mechanism (CEWARN) and should therefore facilitate co-operation among governments on conflict prevention and specifically contribute to ensuring that development programmes are implemented in such a way that they do not exacerbate regional conflicts. In addition, the information collected through CEWARN and similar structures should lead to early and targeted actions. Regional Strategy Papers of the EC (under Cotonou) and other donors provide a further opportunity to address regional dimensions of conflict.

■ **Improve consultation and strengthen the capacity of civil society in rural areas.**

The majority of civil society organisations in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda are urban based, but the majority of the poor live in the rural areas. Many marginal rural areas are also particularly vulnerable to violent conflict and insecurity. Governments, donors, and civil society should work to build the capacity of civil society in more remote areas and to ensure that rural populations are adequately consulted. This will be an essential component of developing conflict-sensitive development strategies in conflict-prone rural areas.

Organisations consulted

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Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce
Forum for Social Studies
Ethiopian Economic Association
Poverty Action Network – Ethiopia (PAN-E)
Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA)
EC Delegation
World Bank
Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)
African Union

Kenya Africa Peace Forum (APFO)
EC Delegation
Action Aid
Econews

Uganda Development National Indigenous Voluntary Association (DENIVA)
URAFIKI
NGO Forum
UNOCHA
GTZ
EC Delegation
DANIDA
HURINET
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Africa Peace Forum (APFO), based in Kenya, contributes to the prevention, resolution and effective management of conflict by engaging state and non-state actors in developing collaborative approaches towards lasting peace and enhanced human security in the Greater Horn of Africa and beyond.

InterAfrica Group (IAG) is an independent regional organisation based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which focuses on advancing peace, justice and respect for humanitarian law in the Greater Horn of Africa.

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