

# **Final Evaluation of Phase 1 of the EC Civil Society Fund in Ethiopia**

This evaluation is supported and guided by the European Commission and presented by B & S Europe. The report does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the European Commission.

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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACORD	Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development
ACP	Africa, Caribbean and Pacific
AFM	Association for Forced Migrants
APDF	Afar Pastoral Development Forum
APMC	Association for the Prevention and Management of Conflict
BVEAA	Beza Vision Ethiopian Aid Association (formerly BIDA0)
CB	Capacity Building
CBO	Community Based Organization
CfP	Call for Proposals
CIDA	Canadian International Development Association
CRDA	Christian Relief and Development Association
CS	Civil Society
CSBI	Civil Society Budget Initiative
CSF	Civil Society Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSOCBP	Civil Society Capacity Building Programme
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
CSSP	Civil Society Support Program
CTF	Cotonou Task Force
DAG	Donor Assistance Group
DFID	Department for Foreign and International Development
EC	European Commission
ECD	Delegation of the European Commission
ECS	Ethiopian Catholic Secretariat
EDF	European Development Fund
EID	Ethiopian Initiative for Development
EIDHR	European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights
EIFDDA	Ethiopian Interfaith Forum for Development, Dialogue & Action
EOC-DICAC	Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Interchurch Aid Commission
ESAP	Ethiopian Social Accountability Project
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
EU	European Union
EWLA	Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association
FA	Financing Agreement
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FSS	Forum for Social Studies
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
GPSDO	Sebat Bet Guraghe People's Self-Help Development Organization
GTZ-IS	German Technical Cooperation-International Services
IA	Initiative Africa
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IAG	Inter Africa Group
INGO	International Non Governmental Organization
I-ROME	Internal Results-Oriented Monitoring tool
JAR	Joint Annual Review
LNGO	Local Non-Government Organization
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoCB	Ministry of Capacity Building
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MoV	Means of Verification

MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NAO	National Authorizing Officer
NEWA	Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations
NGO	Non governmental Organization
NIP	National indicative Programme
NRM	Natural Resources Management
NSA	Non State Actor
PANE	Poverty Action Network Ethiopia
PASDEP	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty
PBS	Protection of Basic Services
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PFE	Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia
PRMT	Participatory Resource Monitoring Tool
PRSP	Poverty Reduction strategy paper
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SEK	Swedish Kroner
SEPDA	Southern Ethiopia People Development Association
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SLUF	Sustainable Land Use Forum
SNNP/SNNPRS	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples National Regional State
SPDF	Somali Pastoralist Development Forum
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
TA	Technical assistance
TAU	Technical Assistance Unit
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
TYA	Tigray Youth Association
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WB	The World Bank
ZEMASEF	Zema Setoch Lefiteh Mahiber

# 1. Executive Summary

## I. Introduction

1. The Civil Society Fund in Ethiopia is a joint initiative of the European Commission and the Ethiopian Government, implemented through two Financing Agreements under the 9<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund, for a total of €10m. The Programme has been implemented in two phases, under two Financial Agreements (FAs): the first phase with a budget of €4.35m from 2006 to 2008, and the second phase with a budget of €5.65m from 2009 to 2011.
2. The overall aim of the CSF programme is to promote a stable and democratic political environment through the integration of all sections of society into mainstream political, economic and social life. The purpose of the programme is to increase and improve NSA dialogue with their constituency, with the Ethiopian Government and amongst themselves, and also to increase NSA's capacity to play their role in the national development process. The results of the programme are intended to be:
  - a. Increased capacity of Ethiopian NSAs to engage in the development and democratisation processes;
  - b. Strengthened independence and self-sufficiency of NSAs;
  - c. Improved coordination and networking amongst NSAs;
  - d. More effective and efficient delivery of services in the governance area; and,
  - e. Greater capacity to dialogue with government and the European Commission on the implementation of Country Support Strategy as part of a more extensive and productive dialogue between NSAs and Government authorities, and also between NSAs and their constituencies.
3. The CSF is guided by a Programme Steering Committee (PSC) which is composed of representatives of the EU, the Ethiopian Government and civil society drawn from the Cotonou Task Force. The day to day implementation of the CSF Programme has been performed by the European Commission as Contracting Authority, with assistance from a Technical Assistant Unit (TAU), which also serves as the secretariat of the PSC. The programme operates through Technical Assistance provision and grant funding to Non-State Actors (NSA) in Ethiopia.
4. Phase I of the programme ended on December 31<sup>st</sup> 2008 having disbursed the available grant money in the form of 16 large grant contracts and seven small grant contracts. Through these grants the CSF's projects have benefited almost 100 CSOs as lead organizations and official partners. A large number of CSOs all over the country have also benefited from the projects indirectly.
5. The objective of the current evaluation is to assess the overall performance of CSF Phase I implementation, advise the Government of Ethiopia, the European Commission and other stakeholders on strengths and weaknesses and make subsequent recommendations for the ongoing CSF programme phase II. In line with

the structure used for the EC's Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) system the evaluation has focused on assessing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the CSF programme. In doing so the evaluation used three data collection methods, namely document review, structured interviews and observation of ongoing projects and of current operations of NSA previously supported by the CSF.

## **II. Major Findings**

### **Relevance (Graded B)**

6. The CSF programme is highly relevant to the context of Ethiopia's development policies Both the overall aim of the CSF and the goal set out for democratization and governance in the PASDEP emphasize building a democratic system through ensuring the participation of all sections of society. Moreover, the CSF result areas directly contribute to several governance related outcomes within the PASDEP. The CSF is also coherent with both the EU's 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> CSPs and the corresponding NIPs. The design of the Programme is in general appropriate to the problems to be solved and the national and NSA contexts. It is consistent in the relationship among components. The logical framework would have been stronger if more specific objective and result indicators had been identified. The CSF is unique among most donor funded civil society support initiatives in Ethiopia for its tri-partite governance arrangement and for its inclusion of a stand-alone objective to fund institutional capacity building of NSA. The CSF has done very well in ensuring the participation of key stakeholder in the design and implementation of the Programme. However, continued efforts to deepen coordination with other similar initiatives are necessary.

### **Efficiency (Graded B)**

7. The innovative tri-partite arrangement in the governance and management structures of the CSF has contributed to efficiency despite the inherent challenges of accommodating multiple interests. The composition of the voting membership of the PSC (four NSA, two GoE) favours the NSA sector. The inclusion of representatives from other government organs with a direct or relevant mandate in regulating the activities of NSAs would have contributed more to promoting dialogue between government and NSA on more structural/policy issues affecting the capacity of NSA. In the management of the CSF, the EC Delegation has acted as Contracting Authority on behalf of the GoE. This arrangement has been very important in strengthening relationships, confidence and understanding between the various stakeholders.
8. The implementation of the CSF, particularly the grant component, has faced delays. Factors for this include the late start of the Programme, the rigidity and complexity of the EC's global procedures on grant management, problems related to tax/custom exemptions, and the issuance of Proclamation 621/2009. The NAO, EC and TAU have done their best to address these problems. The services provided by the TAU have been characterized by all stakeholders as very important, professional and of high quality. Balancing the expectations and interests of the NSA and the EC has in some cases been challenging for the TAU. The introduction of the JROME in the monitoring and evaluation system of the CSF has improved the quality of M&E activities. In light of the high importance attached to non-grant form of capacity building support by most stakeholders as well as comparison of allocations to TA in

other similar types of programs, the CSF could have been more efficient if a higher proportion of the total CSF budget had been allocated to TA.

### **Effectiveness (Graded B)**

9. The total amount available for grants in the FA for Phase I (€3 M) was contracted in 2006 and 2007. The first phase of CSF allocated €3,085,000 for large and small grants. During the second phase of the CSF, €4,300,000 was available for grants. €53,928 has already been transferred for small grants and €3,000,000 has been allocated for 15 large grants. The remaining balance of €1,246,072 is expected to be fully allocated in the 2009 CFP for large grants. This was launched in late October 2009, and had not closed when this evaluation was carried out. The CSF programme has been effective in terms of expenditure rate and timing. The scope of the projects supported through grants indicates that all five result areas of the programme have been covered. The programme has progressed well in achieving each of the result areas, although with varying degrees. Faced with the inherent limitation of CFP based support, the CSF found it difficult to proactively and strategically engage in institutional capacity building of NSAs. Inevitably, there were some trade-offs between overall programme effectiveness and the objectives of promoting regional equity, partnerships and in promoting Ethiopian-led, rather than INGO-led NSA interventions. The TAU was creative and effective in its use of TA resources, but would have been even more effective if TA had received a larger allocation of resources.
10. The various approaches and strategies used by the CSF, in particular the partnership approach promoted by the calls for proposals, have enabled the programme to support different categories of NSA. Although a certain level of dissatisfaction on the Programme have been created among some sections of NSA due to the limited number of successful grant application, all the major stakeholders are in general satisfied with the performance and achievements of the programme.
11. The programme has contributed to enhanced dialogue between NSAs, between NSA and their constituencies in civil society, and between NSA and the GoE. This is particularly observable at the local and regional levels. A wide range of forums for the exchange of perspectives and priorities have been supported, and in some cases an ongoing interaction and collaboration can be observed.

### **Impact (Graded B)**

12. The intended impacts of the project relate to changes in policy, practice and behaviour, and these can only be reliably observed and assessed in a longer time-frame. However, clear trends towards the desired impacts have been identified. Impacts that can already be clearly observed include increased policy dialogue between NSA and government (particularly at the regional and local levels); coordination and networking within the civil society sector; increased institutional capacity of CSOs; increased partnerships between NSA and regional and local government on rights; and increased awareness and protection of rights. The programme faced constraints arising from the operational environment, particularly an association of advocacy with partisan politics, and a corresponding reluctance to engage on the part of some GoE stakeholders. Related to this is a continued lack of clarity on advocacy's potential contribution to development and poverty reduction. It is not clear to what extent advocacy on development and

poverty reduction themes by Ethiopian resident NSA will be tolerated by the authorities. Donors are still waiting for the GoE to indicate how Proclamation 621/2009 will be interpreted in this regard.

13. By the time of this evaluation, the CSF has supported 29 projects implemented by Ethiopian NSAs, which have directly or indirectly involved more than 400 NSAs as partners and associates. A large number of NSAs have also been reached with capacity building interventions within the TA component of the programme. Taking these two components together, the programme has had a significant impact in terms of increasing NSA capacity to engage in Ethiopia's development and democratization process. This impact can be clearly seen in the increased number and scope of NSA consultations by the government, particularly at regional and local levels, an increased number of development projects in which NSA participate, and a greater involvement of NSA in monitoring the PASDEP process and other key development activities. The CSF has also had an impact through strengthening the independence and self-sufficiency of NSA. This has included enhancing their fundraising capacity, strengthening their institutional and management systems, and deepening their understanding of and capacity to engage on policy issues. The programme has also assisted NSA in adapting to a very new regulatory environment. Improved coordination and networking among NSA is another area where the CSF has had a notable impact. The CSF interventions have resulted in the establishment of a large number of new networks and partnerships as well as the strengthening of existing ones. The inclusion of a governance component in the capacity building projects and the funding of innovative NSA projects in the governance area have also led to more effective and efficient delivery of services in the governance area in Ethiopia. Most large grants are at closure stage, and a significant number of external evaluations of the relevant projects have been produced. Many of these report generally good achievements and a clear positive impact in a variety of governance challenges. CSF grant support and mentoring under the TA component has strengthened institutional capacity of the CTF which has impacted the capacity of NSA to dialogue with the government and EC and engage in the governance of the NSA support programme itself.
14. Some potential and actual changes in policy, practice and behaviour resulting from the CSF interventions can be observed, though mainly at the local and regional, rather than the federal level. These include: positive changes of attitude among government institutions on the role of NSAs in governance; institutionalization of CSOs participation on government policy development processes; incorporation and institutionalization of ADR in the justice system; and increased frequency and effectiveness of women claiming their rights. The main challenges to greater achievement in these areas are constraints arising from the operational environment and lack of adequate experience and skill on advocacy among NSA.

### **Sustainability (Graded B)**

1. Sustainability considerations have been incorporated in the design of the Programme emphasizing issues like ownership by beneficiaries, cross sector sustainability, alignment with government policies, building institutional management capacity of CSOs, and ensuring financial sustainability. Most of these issues have also been promoted in the implementation of the Programme. Commendable efforts have been made with regard to the mainstreaming of gender issues. However, other cross-cutting



issues such as HIV/AIDS and the environment have been given less emphasis and their integration is less marked.

2. Most of the results achieved in terms of increased institutional capacity and improved coordination among NSA are likely to survive the phasing out of CSF support. However, the sustainability all CSF results could be affected by changes in the operating environment of NSAs. Most of the grantees that have been implementing projects on governance issues have decided to reregister as Ethiopian Resident Charities. This is likely to lead to underutilization of the governance area capacities built through the CSF. The projects implemented by TROCAIRE, ACCORD, Oxfam/GB, FSS, SLUF, HUNDEE, Zema Safe, and GPSDO are the most likely to make an effective contribution to the Programme objectives. These projects had the highest quality of project implementation, size of impacted NSAs or other actors, and the greatest actual and potential results and sustainability.

### **Mutual Reinforcement, EC Added Value and Visibility**

1. The activities and results of the CSF have a significant degree of linkage with and mutual reinforcement of other development programs of the EC, the GoE and other donors. However, any successor programme should make more targeted efforts to align or facilitate CSF's support to the sectoral/thematic priorities of the country and EC cooperation. The CSF's activities and results are highly complementary to the NSA support programmes and activities of EU Member States. The United Kingdom and the Netherlands are engaged in a multi-donor initiative that will support capacity building in service delivery but not governance, while Sweden is focusing its governance-related support on a number of core NSA network partners, rather than an open and competitive process. The relative large size of the CSF fund and its tri-partite governance arrangement emanating from the Cotonou Agreement represent added value of the EC programme. The objectives and activities of the CSF have been publicised using various communications media. These have significantly contributed to the visibility of the CSF and of the EC among the public at large as well as among the various stakeholders. The fact that all of Ethiopia's regional states are covered by projects supported by the CSF has ensured the widest geographic visibility of the programme.

### **III. Key Observations and Recommendations**

Phase I of the CSF Program has been an overall success across all the assessment criteria. The CSF has attained results that clearly contribute to enhanced capacity of NSAs in Ethiopia and their increased engagement in the development and governance processes of the country. The following are forwarded as ideas for consideration to improve the programme during the remainder of its implementation period. They are also intended to capture the lessons of the current programme as a contribution to the design of the successor programme under the 10th EDF.

#### **On Relevance**

- The EC and GoE should consider raising the allocation for NSA support under EDF10 from the current €10m towards €15m.
- The PSC should increase its efforts to obtain from the GoE clear and written confirmation that activities supported through the CSF are exempt from the provisions of the law under the exemption provision of the proclamation. A similar

confirmation should be sought as part of the preparation of any successor programme.

- The PSC should increase its efforts to obtain from the GoE clear and written confirmation that funds allocated through the CSF should be considered as Ethiopian funds, at least for the purposes of the new CSO law. A similar confirmation should be sought as part of the preparation of any successor programme.
- The PSC and the TAU should develop strategies and approaches for the provision of grant aid and TA, in particular in terms of targeting and delivery modalities, that enables the CSF and any successor programme to continue its governance related objectives under the new CSO law.
- CSF should make efforts to deepen coordination with other similar initiatives, in particular with PBS (social accountability), the multi-donor NSA Adaptation Facility and the CSSP.

#### **On Efficiency**

- Any successor initiative should maintain the tripartite character of governance at least at the same level.
- The representation of NSA should be strengthened by including representatives of the various categories of NSA which the successor project intends to support.
- Advice and mentoring should be offered to the Cotonou Task Force, which has allowed CSF governance to overshadow its core activities related to broader issues of EC cooperation with Ethiopia and with the ACP countries in general.
- The representation of the GoE should be strengthened by including representatives of other bodies that have a mandate to support NSA. Exploratory discussions could be held with the Charities and Societies Agency and the Ministry of Justice.
- If the successor project is a similar stand-alone project, contracting authority should again be delegated to the ECD.
- Irrespective of the overall budget for the successor programme, the proportion of the budget allocated to non-grant capacity building should increase from 23% in Phase One and 17.7 % in Phase Two to at least 27%.
- All efforts should be made both to improve EC global procedures for dealing with NSA in a context like Ethiopia, and to offer greater flexibility and discretion to ECD managing projects of this type.

#### **On Effectiveness**

- The capacity building component of the CSF should focus on assisting NSA engaged in governance issues to cope with the requirements of the new law. This means supporting Ethiopian Charities and Societies and those Ethiopian Resident Charities that wish to re-register as Ethiopian Charities in increasing their capacity to generate national streams of income, and assisting Ethiopian Resident Charities to explore and expand the 'development advocacy' space that is permitted or tolerated for them.
- Specific Technical Assistance should be provided to NSAs in emerging regions. The budget for the TA component should be large enough to enable a realistic consideration of options including a regional TAU presence or regional help-desks.
- Specific Technical Assistance should be provided to NSA potential applicants and to selected grantees regarding the challenges and opportunities of working in partnership. The drafting of a sample MoU between coalition partners should be considered.

- The possibility for Ethiopian applicants to include one or more INGOs as partners should be maintained.
- In any successor programme, the PSC should focus more closely on attainment of the specific result areas of the project. Monitoring procedures should ensure that progress towards all result areas is tracked consistently and specific remedial measures taken regarding any result areas where the project risks to fall short.

### **On the Mainstreaming of Cross-cutting Issues**

The FAs emphasise the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues like gender, HIV/AIDS and Environment in programme implementation. This is recognised as one means of ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of the Programme. Although commendable efforts have been made to integrate gender issues in the CSF Programme including the development of a gender mainstreaming strategy, more could be done to integrate the other cross-cutting issues. Accordingly, the following future actions are suggested to strengthen the integration of cross-cutting issues in the CSF programme:

- Expressly include the integration of cross-cutting issues, in particular gender, HIV/AIDS and environment, as one consideration in the evaluation grids for the selection of grant projects.
- Provide trainings and other technical assistance to grantees on mainstreaming/integrating cross-cutting issues.
- Include the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues as one element in the monitoring and evaluation system (periodic reports of grantees and TAU, external evaluations, JROME, etc.).

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. Background about the Civil Society Fund Program

Phase 1 of the Civil Society Fund (CSF) is a joint initiative of the European Commission and the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) under the 9<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF). The project was designed under the framework of the EC Country Strategy Paper (CSP) for the period of 2002-2007. This identifies capacity building for governance and civil society as one area of non focal sector support,

The overall objective of the EC Civil Society Fund is to promote a stable and democratic political environment through the integration of all sections of society into the mainstream of political, economic and social life. The purpose of the programme is to increase and improve Non-State Actors (NSAs) dialogue with their constituency, with the Ethiopian government and amongst themselves, and also to increase NSAs' capacity to play their role in the national development process. The results of the programme are intended to be:

- Increased capacity of Ethiopian NSAs to engage in the development and democratisation processes
- Strengthened independence and self-sufficiency of NSAs
- Improved coordination and networking amongst NSAs
- More effective and efficient delivery of services in the governance area
- Greater capacity to dialogue with government and the European Commission on the implementation of Country Support Strategies as part of a more extensive and productive dialogue between NSAs and government authorities, between NSAs and their constituencies.

The National Indicative Programme (NIP) under the CSP for the period of 2002-2007 allotted €10 million in support of capacity building for Non State Actors. Of this, €7,700,000 is allocated for grant aid to NSAs, while €2,000,000 is allocated for technical assistance. The remaining €300,000 is reserved for evaluations and external audits. The Programme was designed to be implemented in two phases of Financial Agreements (FAs): the first phase with from 2006 to 2008, and the second phase from 2008 to 2010. Under the second phase, €4.3m is intended for grants, €2m for TA, €0.4m for contingencies, €0.15m for evaluations and €0.15m for audits.

The National Authorizing Office (NAO) under the Ethiopian Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) and the EC Delegation are co-responsible for programme policy and implementation. For the management of the CSF project, the European Commission acts as Contracting Authority on behalf of the GoE through express delegation given by the latter as per article 35.1 of Annex IV of the Cotonou Agreement. A tripartite Project Steering Committee (PSC) is responsible for guiding the strategic management of the programme. The meetings of the PSC are chaired by the NAO. The PSC comprises four civil society representatives and one representative each from the MoFED and Ministry of Capacity Building (MoCB) as voting members. The EC Delegation has an observer status in the PSC. The other major organ in the management of the CSF Programme is the tripartite Programme Evaluation Committee, which is composed of three voting member, one from each of the NAO, the EC Delegation and Civil Society. The Evaluation Committee is chaired by the EC Delegation and is responsible for the review of grant applications and selection of awardees.

The civil society representatives in the PSC and Evaluation Committee are all members of the Cotonou Task Force (CTF), which in turn are elected by the Cotonou General Assembly that comprises more than 90 NSAs at its 2008 General Assembly. The CTF Secretariat, which is

responsible for providing support, information and documentation services to NSAs in respect of the Cotonou Agreement, acts as a link between the CSF Programme and the NSA community in the country.

In the day to day management of the implementation of the CSF Programme, the EC Delegation, as Contracting Authority, has been assisted by a Technical Assistant Unit (TAU), which was selected through international tender. The TAU also serves as the secretariat of the PSC.

Towards achieving its objectives, the CSF programme uses two major types of intervention modalities, namely provision of Technical Assistance and grant funding to NSAs in Ethiopia. The grant component of the CSF finances two broad categories of projects proposed by NSAs. The first category concerns projects on capacity-building for the NSAs themselves. This category is open to all NSAs. The second category supports projects on capacity building for delivering services on governance-related issues. This category targets NSAs working in the specific areas of conflict prevention, democratization, human rights, rule of law, and women's empowerment. Although the CSF Programme is designated as a support programme to NSAs in general, the beneficiaries of the Programme have been more tightly defined in the FA, and the private sector has been excluded. The Programme has also tended to work with larger and more professionalised NSA that receive most of their funds from abroad, rather than the large number of small and very small "grass roots" NSA that make up the major part of Ethiopian civil society.

The FA for the first phase of the CSF Programme was signed in February 2005. The FA included a provision for the immediate start of the Programme through the launching of the first Call for Proposals (CfP) by the Delegation. However, the implementation of the CSF Programme began with the establishment of a Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) in January 2006. Phase I of the programme ended on December 31<sup>st</sup> 2009. All available grant money under the phase I FA had been committed in the form of 16 large grant contracts and seven small grant contracts. As of October 2009, five of the 16 large grant projects were still ongoing, while all the small grant projects had been finalized. Under phase II FA six small grant contracts were signed in 2008 and their implementation had been finalized. At the time of the evaluation, the signing of a further 14 large grant projects from the CfP 2008 was expected shortly, while the final CfP under phase II FA was launched in late October 2009.

The projects supported by the CSF Programme so far have been implemented by 26 lead organisations and more than 80 partner organisations. Thus, more than 100 Ethiopian NSAs have directly benefited from the Programme so far. These projects cover all of the units of the federation: the nine regional states and the two city administrations.

In addition to grants, the TAU has been providing information and advice to NSA on the CSF, other sources of funding and on other issues related to their work. The TAU has also produced various manuals and guides that can be used by grantees and other NSA in the implementation of projects. Training sessions were also organized for NSAs on topics such as Project Cycle Management (PCM) and Logical Framework Approach (LFA).

## **2.2. Overall Country and NSA Context**

### **2.2.1. Brief Country Profile**

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) is a land-locked country in north-eastern Africa, in the area commonly called the Horn of Africa. Ethiopia is the oldest independent country in Africa and one of the oldest in the world. The total population in July 2006 stands at 75,067,000 making it the second most populous country in Africa next to

Nigeria.<sup>1</sup> Some 84% of Ethiopians live in rural areas while the remaining 16% live in cities and towns.<sup>2</sup> Ethiopia is a nation of more than 70 ethnic groups who speak more than 80 languages.

For most of its history Ethiopia had authoritarian forms of government. The imperial system of government which had dominated the modern history of the country was abolished with the coming into power of a leftist military government in 1974. The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) defeated this regime in 1991 and has ruled the country ever since.



The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, which was adopted on 8 December 1994, establishes a federal form of government. It further guarantees a parliamentary democratic system and recognizes a wide range of fundamental rights and freedoms of the population. Ethiopia has a tiered government system consisting of a federal government

and nine ethnically-based regional states and two chartered city administrations. The regional states are further subdivided into zones, districts (woredas), and neighbourhoods (kebeles).

In terms of socioeconomic development, Ethiopia is a least developed country (LDC) as defined by the United Nations (UN). From the development perspective, the country is characterized by its small economic size, land locked geography, economic dependence<sup>3</sup>, and very low macro-economic, social and demographic indicators.<sup>4</sup> In recent years, however, Ethiopia has registered very positive economic growth rates as well as positive trends in different socioeconomic indicators. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the African Development Bank, Ethiopia was the fastest growing non-oil driven African economy in 2007, with 8.2% real GDP growth. The most recent global development projections for 2009 expect the Ethiopian economy to be among the four fastest growing economies in the world.<sup>5</sup>

### 2.2.2. The NSA/CSO Context in Ethiopia

Although traditional and community based structures have existed in Ethiopia for most of the country's history,<sup>6</sup> more formal NSAs/CSOs started to emerge in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The sector continued to grow until the coming into power of the military junta in 1974. The military government co-opted the sector by prohibiting the activities of most CSOs and establishing new communist style 'mass' associations. Those CSOs that were able to operate under the regime were mostly small traditional and religious organizations, as well as

<sup>1</sup> Central Statistical Authority, Statistical Abstract 2005, P. 20: The latest census for which figures are available was performed in 1994; this figure is the July 2006 official estimate. The CIA World Fact Book (2006) puts the population at 74,777,981 while UNICEF (mid-2005) estimates are 77,431,000.

<sup>2</sup> Urban areas refer to all capitals of regions, zones and Woredas, and it also includes localities with urban Kebeles whose inhabitants are primarily engaged in nonagricultural activities.

<sup>3</sup> heavily indebted and often reliant on development assistance for a significant part of its budget  
<sup>4</sup> UNICEF ranked Ethiopia 169<sup>th</sup> among 192 countries on the basis of under-five mortality rates in 2005.

<sup>5</sup> According to recent reports quoting the Economic Intelligence Unit of The Economist magazine, the Ethiopian economy is expected to grow by more than 7% in 2009, with GDP exceeding \$31 billion, despite the global economic slowdown anticipated in 2009. This would make it the fourth fastest growing economy for the year.

<sup>6</sup> Desalegn Rahmato: *Civil Society Organizations in Ethiopia*, in Bahru Zewdie and Siegfried Pausewang (eds): *The Challenge of Democracy from Below*, Stockholm, 2002.

international relief agencies that came into the country in response to cyclic famines, which attracted global attention during the 1980s.

The defeat of the socialist Derg regime in 1991 allowed an expansion and diversification of NSA, which has continued to the present day. Nevertheless, the NSA/CSO sector in Ethiopia is still less developed in terms of size, capacity and diversification than some other East African countries with much lower populations.

The NSA sector in Ethiopia is comprised of a wide range of social and legal organizations. These include traditional and other Community Based Organizations (CBOs), faith-based organizations, 'common interest' associations such as cooperatives, professional associations and trade unions, international and national Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and ethnic/region based development associations. However, due to their relative greater capacity and size, NGOs have been the most visible component of civil society in Ethiopia.

The geographic spread of the NSAs is very uneven. Those NSAs/CSOs that are based in the 'emerging regions' of Afar, Benshangul Gumez, Gambella and Somali are far less developed in terms of size and capacity than those in the other regional states. In terms of thematic engagement, NSAs in Ethiopia have mainly focused on service delivery in the different fields of socioeconomic development. Due to the circumstances of the emergence of the sector as well as the prevailing operational environment, engagement in rights and policy advocacy has not been strongly pursued by Ethiopian NSAs. Recent years have, however, seen the development of rights advocacy NSAs and of networks with some policy dialogue and advocacy functions, particularly in the federal capital and those regions with strongest traditions of civil associations (Amhara, Oromia, and Tigray). The NSA sector in Ethiopia, in particular the NGO sector, is characterized by its heavy dependence on external source of income from foreign donors.

The FDRE Constitution recognizes and gives protection to freedom of association (Article 31) as well as the right to participate in public affairs and national development (Articles 38, 43, etc.) The recognition of these rights provides a policy and legal basis for the establishment of NSA and their engagement in the development and democratic process of the country. Moreover, current GoE development policy documents, notably the PASDEP, recognize the legitimate role of CSOs in the country's development processes. PASDEP also recognizes the role of CSOs, in particular that of mass-based associations, in the country's governance and democratization processes.

Following the overthrow of the military regime, the imperial-era laws that governed the registration and operation of most types of NSAs/CSOs notably the 1960 Civil Code of the Empire of Ethiopia and the Associations Registration Regulation of 1966,<sup>7</sup> were increasingly considered unsuitable by all stakeholders. The need to reform the legal framework governing CSOs has long been felt and the Ministry of Justice started drafting legislation in the area as early as 2003. However, the new CSO law (Charities and Societies Proclamation No. 621/2009) was finally issued only in February 2009. This law classifies charities and societies into three broad categories based on country of origin and source of income.

- 1) Ethiopian Charities and Societies: which are established by Ethiopians and obtain more than 90% of their income from local sources;
- 2) Ethiopian Resident Charities and Societies: which are established by Ethiopians but obtain more than 10% of their income from foreign sources; and
- 3) Foreign Charities and Societies which have registered to work in Ethiopia.

The law allows only Ethiopian charities and societies that generate more than 90% of their budget from domestic sources to work on human rights and governance related activities. This

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<sup>7</sup> Some types of CSOs like trade unions and cooperatives are governed by different legal regime.

prohibition on foreign-funded NSA from engaging in governance and rights related works has been one of the most controversial parts of the new charities and societies law.

Proclamation No. 621/2009 established the Charities and Societies Agency as a government body which is responsible for the registration and supervision of charities and societies. The Agency has started a comprehensive re-registration of the country's charities and societies. Anecdotal evidence suggests that most of the Ethiopian NSAs that have been working on rights and governance related areas have already re-registered or have decided to re-register as Ethiopian Resident Charities or Societies. This entails discontinuing their engagement on all the restricted activities. This situation will have significant impact on the capacity of the NSA/CSO sub-sector working on governance/rights issues, which was already small and low in capacity compared to the NSA community that is engaged in relief and development work in Ethiopia.

The various policy documents and the new CSO law reflect the clear and consistent desire of the GoE, on the one hand to increase the governance role of community- and membership-based NSAs and, on the other hand to reduce what it considers an exaggerated role in policy dialogue, lobbying and advocacy of NGOs heavily dependent on foreign funding. The Government has also questioned the transparency, governance and accountability of parts of the NSA sector, which has expanded dramatically in recent years. Moreover, following elections in 2005, the government openly accused some NGO leaders of being partisan and of meddling in politics. This led to a growing polarization between the government and some NSAs.

The level and quality of coordination and dialogue between government organs and NSAs varies between the different levels of government structures and from one region to another. In general, the relationship between NSAs and government agencies at local and regional levels tends to be stronger and more positive than at the federal level. NSA projects are often implemented jointly with the relevant local and regional government authorities, which is certainly one factor contributing to a better understanding and stronger relationship.

### **2.3. Background of the Evaluation**

The global objective of this Final Evaluation is set out in the ToR as follows:

*To assess the overall performance of CSF Phase I implementation, advise the Government of Ethiopia, the European Commission and other stakeholders on strengths and weaknesses and make subsequent recommendations for the ongoing CSF programme phase II.*

The ToR further elaborates the specific objective of the mission as being to: “conduct a final evaluation of the implementation of Phase I of the CSF programme, assess the context and verify the extent to which it achieved its objectives.” The evaluation is not meant to be an evaluation on the entire programme but focuses mainly on the activities under the first Financing Agreement. It should focus on the overall operation of the programme, including its management bodies and tri-partite arrangements, the work of the TAU, and a selection of grant projects. The evaluation is expected to provide important lessons learnt to improve the programme during the remainder of its implementation period, as well as for further EU-Ethiopia cooperation in strengthening NSAs. Since the Country Strategy Paper for Ethiopia under EDF 10 includes a provisional commitment of €10 M for “Institutional Support to NSAs”, the evaluation is expected to link results of the current CSF programme to that future objective.

The evaluation is also expected to capitalize on previous assessments of the programme, such as the Mid Term Review of March 2007, the Results Oriented Monitoring of November 2008 as well as the EC AIDCO NSA Capitalisation Study of April 2009.



Following the structure used for the EC's Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) system, the evaluation should award a grade between A and D to each aspect of the programme: Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability. The evaluation will substantiate this grading, taking into account the programme's environment. It should document strengths and weaknesses of the programme and make recommendations to improve the CSF phase II which will be in operation until the end of 2011. It was also agreed with the NAO and ECD at the start of the evaluation mission that the evaluation report should also make recommendations relevant to the intended successor programme under EDF10. The specific issues/questions which the evaluation has to address under each aspect of the Programme are listed in Annex Six.

## 2.4. Methodology of the Evaluation

This Final Evaluation was prepared concurrently with an identification of options for a possible successor programme. The Final Evaluation process faced two last-minute constraints; firstly the starting date for the evaluation mission was delayed by 2½ weeks, creating a difficulty in meeting the initial deadlines for approval of the Evaluation Report and the Project Identification Fiche for the proposed successor programme; and secondly one of the three consultants engaged for this mission fell sick very shortly before departure. The mission therefore continued with only two consultants, one European and one Ethiopian, under very tight time constraints.

The final Call for Proposals under the CSF programme was launched the week that the evaluation began, and there is little room for manoeuvre in the allocation of the remaining non-grant Technical Assistance funds. Since it became quickly apparent that all stakeholders had a broadly positive impression of the programme, and since a further €10m has been earmarked for NSA capacity building support under EDF10, the main focus of this final evaluation was determined to be the identification of lessons from this programme and preparation of recommendations for a successor project.

The mission combined three methods of data collection.

**Review of documentation:** A comprehensive range of CSF documentation was requested, and promptly provided. The TAU also proposed a series of documents which they felt the evaluators may wish to consult. The consultants also referred to recent evaluations by other donors with NSA support programmes, relevant GoE and EC aid strategies, and documents produced as part of donor coordination efforts. This documentation is listed in Annex One.

**Semi-structured interviews:** Master lists of questions for the evaluation and preparation of the PIF were prepared (these are attached as Annexes Three and Four). These served as a guide in interviews, but the evaluators preferred to give respondents space to formulate their own detailed observations regarding the CSF. The great majority of respondents were interviewed once only, discussing both the CSF so far (evaluation) and lessons learned or priorities for future NSA support (identification of options). Combining these two enquiries did not pose any significant problems, indeed respondents seemed motivated by the opportunity not only to look back but also to make recommendations for the future. Evaluators discussed with all respondents what criteria of impact and sustainability of NSA governance activities were particularly relevant in the Ethiopian context.

Interviews were sought with five circles of respondents: Beneficiaries and stakeholders of ongoing projects financed under the CSF; NSA grantees, unsuccessful applicants and non-applicants to the CSF; other donors operating or planning NSA support programmes; key staff of the TAU; and members and observers of the Project Steering Committee, including EC Delegation and Government of Ethiopia representatives (Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Ministry of Capacity Building). Almost all persons contacted consented to be

interviewed despite the very short notice, and all spoke freely, thoughtfully and constructively, for which the evaluators are very grateful. A full list of persons interviewed is given in Annex Two.

**Observation of ongoing projects and current operations of NSA previously supported by the CSF:** In selecting projects for further examination, extensive use was also made of the external evaluations commissioned by project implementers. The evaluators then selected for their own enquiry projects complementary to those already evaluated independently, so as to achieve an overall representative sample along five axes:

- Large, medium and smaller projects
- Projects funded in the early, middle and last CfPs.
- Network, coalition and single-organisation projects.
- Organisations generally perceived (however accurately) as ‘close to government’ ‘in the middle’ and ‘very critical of government’ or ‘closer to the opposition’.
- Geographical regions, ranging from regions with relatively dense networks of traditional and modern NSA to ‘emerging’ regions where there are few modern NSA and few traditional NSA not based on kinship. In addition to organisations based in or with representatives in Addis Ababa, field visits were made to ongoing or terminated projects in SNNPRS, Oromia, Tigray and Afar.

It quickly became apparent that responses were fairly uniform across all categories of respondents, so the evaluators focused on eliciting qualitative statements and proposals for improvement of NSA support under the EDF.

In the last week of the evaluation, initial findings were presented to a broad stakeholder meeting, attended by some 15 former grantees, other NSA, and representatives of the EC Delegation and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

### 3. Main Findings

The main findings of the evaluation are presented under five major thematic areas: relevance and validity of design, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Each of these are graded between A and D following the EC's Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) system. The Programme scored B in all five areas, reflecting solid positive results in a difficult operating environment. The discussion of the main findings of the evaluation is guided by the specific evaluation issues/questions set out for each of the thematic areas in the mission's Terms of Reference.

#### 3.1. Relevance and Quality of Design (Graded B)

##### 3.1.1. Relevance of the CSF in the Context of Ethiopia's Development Policies

The CSF Programme is highly relevant to the context of Ethiopia's development policies. Comparison of the CSF's overall aim, purpose and result areas with Ethiopia's development policies, most notably the PASDEP, reveals the existence of significant coherence between the CSF and the overall development goals of the country, especially in the governance sector. The overall aim of the CSF programme is the promotion of *"a stable and democratic political environment through the integration of all sections of society into the mainstream of political, economic and social life."* This overall aim is coherent with the Democratization and Governance Goal in the PASDEP policy matrix which is stated as the development of a *"fully operational democratic, accountable and responsive constitutional federalism, ensuring citizen' empowerment and participation."* Both objectives emphasize on building democratic system through ensuring the participation of all sections of society.

Moreover, the CSF result areas directly relate to specific programme areas of the PASDEP. The PASDEP Policy Matrix for the Governance and Democratization sector identifies 'improved local participation and democratic consultation' among the sub-outcomes for decentralization programme. The two specific outputs for this outcome are "democratic participation of membership-based civil society", and "consultation with CSOs conducted in a structured manner on a regular basis at federal and regional levels". The engagement of CSOs, especially membership based civil society, in democratization processes is thus clearly recognized within the current policy framework.

Another relevant area of the PASDEP policy framework where the role of NGOs is specifically identified is human rights awareness and capacity building, under outcomes and outputs relating to the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC). Activities under two of the outputs (PASDEP Policy Matrix, Governance and Democratization, Sub-Outcome 1, Output 1.1, and Sub-Outcome 2, Output 2.3) emphasize the role of NGOs in "the promotion and protection of human rights", "provide for the development of human rights awareness programs through government – NGO partnerships". PASDEP instructs the EHRC to develop guidelines on creating partnerships with NGOs. The inclusion of these activities within the Policy Matrix reflects recognition of the governance service delivery role of NGOs as well as the need for dialogue and partnership between government and non-government actors on issues of human rights. Moreover, in relation to pastoral development objectives, the PASDEP calls for *"A strong network between pastoral concerned forums, NGOs and policy makers"* (PASDEP, p. 196).

In general, the PASDEP policy framework for governance and democratization underlines NSAs engagement in governance and democratization as well as the importance of dialogue between NSAs and government actors. These issues go hand in hand with the CSF results on

NSA capacity building, institutional development, coordination, governance service delivery and dialogue with the government. The CSF result areas directly contribute to the above stated governance outcomes within the PASDEP. The CSF is therefore coherent with the overall development and governance policies of Ethiopia.

However, it is important to note that the PASDEP emphasizes or gives broader roles in relation to participation, governance, and democratization issues to mass/membership-based CSOs (PASDEP, pp. 176-177 and PASDEP, p. 185). In contrast, NGOs are allocated roles that are predominantly service delivery and financing oriented. For instance, the role of NGOs has been recognized in terms of mobilizing external resources of finance to address the anticipated resource gap for the implementation of development plans (PASDEP, p. 211). Even in the case of human rights awareness and capacity, NGOs are perceived as targets or providers of related services rather than primary actors capable of initiating structural change. This distinction has recently been given legal form through the provisions of the Charities and Societies Proclamation No. 621/2009. This new law effectively reserves engagement in the advancement of human and democratic rights, and the promotion of other equality and justice related issues to ‘mass-based organizations’. These CSOs are also given privileged status as beneficiaries of government capacity building support. What is more, the Proclamation extends the distinction based on membership profile to the arena of sources of funding and excludes charities/societies receiving more than a tenth of their finances from foreign sources from the governance sector.

This GoE policy approach and Proclamation No 621/2009 in particular, are expected to bring about a significant change in the internal dynamics of the NSA sector, in particular in the role of the different categories within the sector. For instance, as far as NSA’s engagement in the area of governance is concerned, community and mass-based organizations are expected to become the main and important actors, as opposed to the situation so far in which NGOs have been the dominant actors. This is likely to have significant implications for the CSF Programme and any successor programme, in particular as regards any governance related objectives. The CSF and any successor programme might be required to modify its approaches and strategies, in particular in terms of targeting and funding modalities so as to continue its governance related objectives.

### **3.1.2. Coherence of the CSF with the EU’s 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> CSPs and NIPs**

The CSF’s overall objective and purpose are highly coherent with both the EU’s 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> CSPs and the corresponding NIPs. Capacity Building for Civil Society and Governance was included as a non-focal sector in the EU’s 9<sup>th</sup> CSP (2002-2007). The 9<sup>th</sup> CSP stresses the need for more structured dialogue between the Government and NSAs and identifies the provision of capacity building for NSAs as a means to enhance their capacity to play an active role in the development and democratic process. These elements are exactly the results intended to be achieved by the CSF Programme.

The EU’s 10<sup>th</sup> CSP, running from 2008-2013, gives even more emphasis to NSA support by making it part of the focal sector “Macro-Economic Support and Governance.”<sup>8</sup> This focal sector identifies *enhanced participation of NSAs in policy dialogue and development* as one of the three activities under ‘strengthening democratic governance.’ The corresponding Indicative Programme for the focal sector also incorporates institutional support to NSAs. Moreover, the launching and implementation of a new phase of the CSF has been explicitly identified as the strategy for the achievement of institutional support to NSAs. This explicit

<sup>8</sup> Ethiopia – European Union, Country Strategy Paper and Indicative Programme for the period 2008-2013, Done at Lisbon on 9 December 2007, Part IV, pp 52-53.

reference to the CSF as the implementation framework for the programme targeting NSA under the 10<sup>th</sup> CSP as well as the partnership, dialogue and capacity building aims of the Programme ensure the coherence of the CSF with the 10<sup>th</sup> CSP.

### **3.1.3. Validity and Quality of Design**

The problems to be solved by the CSF Programme are stated as: the underdevelopment of NSA, particularly civil society, and lack of capacity of existing organizations.<sup>9</sup> These problems have been identified as major barriers to sustainable development and democratization in Ethiopia. The CSF objectives focus on NSAs' increased institutional capacity, independence and self sufficiency, coordination and networking, effective delivery of governance services, and capacity for dialogue.

The limited capacity of Ethiopian civil society sector to play its indispensable role in the country's development endeavours has been recognized in various studies and programmatic documents, including that of the government. For instance, the draft CSO Capacity Building Programme designed by the MoCB in 2004 recognized that promoting development requires partnership between government, the private sector and civil society, but described Ethiopian civil society as "currently weak, fragmented and disparate." It called for mobilization of resources to build the sector's capacity.<sup>10</sup> The EC's NSA Mapping Study Update (2008) also revealed the underdevelopment of the NSA sector in Ethiopia and the limited capacity of existing organizations. The major factors identified as contributing to the weak status of the NSA in Ethiopia include: lack of capacity for effective participation and engagement, lack of constructive relationship and weak coordination with government, lack of coordination among CSOs at national and regional levels, and uncertain or disempowering operational context.<sup>11</sup> According to the Mapping Study Update, facilitating positive developments in the sector should include removing these obstacles through a comprehensive intervention framework. Considered in light of the above descriptions of the NSA sector in Ethiopia by GoE and the EC, the objective of the CSF to improve NSA's capacity to dialogue with their constituency, with the Ethiopian government and amongst themselves as well as to increase their capacity to play their role in the national development process has been highly relevant and valid. Indeed, all respondents interviewed for this evaluation concurred that the objectives of the CSF that had been set in the initial design were valid and remain so today. Most emphasized the importance and validity of the CSF's objective by stressing its exceptional nature in that it is the only operational donor programme that presently supports the institutional capacity building of NSAs as a 'stand-alone' programme objective.

An issue that can be raised with regard to the objectives of the CSF is the absence of an express objective or result area on promoting an enabling operating environment for NSAs. The existence of an enabling operational environment is the basis for the success of any capacity building programme targeting NSAs. Since this issue is one of the factors often identified for the weak status of the civil society sector in Ethiopia, the inclusion of an express objective related to the issue would have made the list of CSF's objectives more complete.

In terms of intervention approaches or modalities to build the capacity of NSAs, the design of the CSF employs mainly the provision of project grants to NSA's activities, supplemented by the provision of technical assistance. The project grant component thematically focuses on

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<sup>9</sup> Technical Assistance Unit for the Civil Society Fund, Inception Report (January-March, 2006), Submitted to: Delegation of the European Commission to Ethiopia, March 2006

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of Capacity Building, Civil Society Organizations Capacity Building Program, Zero Draft: Program Design, May 2004, p. 3

<sup>11</sup> Civil Society Organizations Institutional Concerns in Ethiopia, Cotonou Taskforce Contributions to the JAR 2006, pp. 4-5

two broad capacity building areas, capacity-building for the NSAs themselves and capacity building for delivering services on governance-related issues. These thematic focus areas of building support are highly relevant to the objectives of the CSF. They were considered as important and relevant by contacted representatives of NSAs in terms of addressing the needs of the sector. In particular, the focus given to NSAs working on governance issues is very much appreciated in light of the relative weakness of rights advocacy CSOs as compared to NSAs working on other development fields.

The CSF Programme design adopts the Call for Proposals (CfPs) system for selection of projects to be supported. There was some concern among respondents that this mode of support affects the achievement of the set objectives and result areas in two major ways: 1) by promoting competition among NSAs and 2) by narrowing the opportunity for proactively and strategically address the capacity needs of NSAs. Moreover, most interviewed informants expressed concern that the CfPs mechanism inherently disfavours those NSAs most in need of capacity building support. However, the Programme design gave the PSC the flexibility to adjust the targeted NSAs and thematic focus areas of each CfP, and this has to some extent enabled the Programme to overcome these challenges.

Another issue raised by stakeholders concerns the size of the intervention. EDF funded NSA Support Programmes in many other ACP countries have a similar allocation, despite a much smaller population size. According to almost all representatives of NSAs and many other stakeholder respondents, the €10 million allocated for the CSF is very small when considered in light of the vast needs of capacity building of local NSAs. The allocated amount of the CSF represents just 2% of the indicative resources allocation of the 9th CSP. Funds are also distributed through NSA under other EDF programmes. But it would seem that total spending through NSA is below the 15% suggested by DG DEV programming guidelines (Note No. 6 of 9.3.2001). However, government representatives suggested that the amount allocated for the CSF could be considered adequate, because some other donors are also supporting NSAs.

The overall objective, project purpose and the four results stated in the logical framework matrix annexed to the Financial Agreement (Phase I) are sufficiently clear. The interlink among results 1 through 3 as well as direct linkages with the project purpose are adequate to ensure that the achievement of any one of the results will go a perceivable distance towards achievement of the objective.

The very general statement of indicator for overall objective in terms of *improved socio-economic and political indicators* could be made more sector specific. Moreover, some of the indicators are difficult to measure; almost all lack benchmarks of progress and emphasize outputs over processes.

Table 2: Comments on Indicators for Project Purpose

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Consultations by the government of NSA as part of standard government procedures;	Since such consultations could occur across sectors and at different levels, benchmarks are needed to measure progress
Consultation by Regions and Woredas of NSA on development activities	Same as above
Results achieved through NSA acting as a representative group (organized sector) in policy processes	This is difficult to measure both in quantitative and qualitative terms; simpler indicators such as number of thematic forums formed/organized could be considered

NSA are increasingly engaged with government and third parties to ensure that government policies addressed poverty and sustainable development and that they are effectively implemented	Baseline information as well as specific benchmarks are needed to measure progress
Recognition of NSA contribution by authorities in the Press	The number of NSA, levels of recognition, etc... make it difficult to measure; more meaningful indicators of recognition such as the 1 <sup>st</sup> indicator could be considered

### 3.1.4. Complementarity of the CSF with Other Initiatives

The only major initiative by the Government of Ethiopia towards supporting the capacity of CSOs/NGOs was the CSO Capacity Building Programme (CSO CBP) initiated by the Ministry of Capacity Building (MCB) in 2004. The Programme was designed to improve the enabling environment for civil society, support government-civil society partnership, and, strengthen civil society capacity. The programme design document, which was finalized in June 2004 by a specialized CSO CB Unit within the Ministry, was approved by MoCB in early 2005. However, it was never approved by the Council of Ministers and the CSO CBP unit in MoCB has been since disbanded. The failure of the initiative to take off can be attributed to the strong resistance expressed by CSOs to the idea of a government led CSO capacity building programme, as well as the lack of adequate donor support to the initiative. Some NSA remain extremely wary about government-led initiatives regarding civil society organisations.

On the other hand, donor agencies have initiated a number of other civil society support initiatives through multi-lateral and bi-lateral arrangements. Prominent among these are the multi donor PBS- ESAP, some WB initiatives, and the bilateral programmes of USAID, DFID and Swedish Sida. A multi-donor CSSP was under design during the life of the CSF but suffered repeated delays; at the time of evaluation its start date and final design could not be reliably established. These other programmes have focused on service delivery, with some element of capacity building for service delivery. Only a small amount of support has been available for capacity building in the governance area, and this has been gradually falling during the life of the CSF Programme.

There are various frameworks which potentially provide opportunities for the harmonization and coordination of the CSF Programme with similar initiatives by other donors. One such opportunity is afforded by the establishment of a joint EU strategy and Road Map for 2008-13, signed by nine of the twelve EU donors present in Ethiopia, with the EC playing a facilitating role. Another basis for harmonization of donor initiatives is the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) through which donors have entered into a commitment to orienting country strategies in support of national development strategies of the host/recipient countries..

There have been efforts to enhance complementarity and coordination between the CSF and the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), through taking measures to avoid overlap and competition as well as through coordination of the provision of technical assistance to CSOs, for example by jointly conducting training on final reporting. However, the CSF Programme remains a stand-alone intervention.

The CSF is unique among donor funded civil society support initiatives for its tri-partite governance arrangement and for its funding of institutional capacity building of NSA as a stand-alone objective. These elements, which represent added value of the EC contribution, would have been lost if EDF funds had instead been directed into a multi-donor initiative like the CSSP, even if that initiative had managed to start during the period in question. Most other donor initiatives on NSAs and governance were winding down during the period in question, largely because, since those initiatives lacked the active support and participation of GoE, the donors felt unable to maintain their support in the evolving legislative and regulatory environment. The only other initiative that benefits from GoE and NSA participation in governance and a strong capacity-building focus is the PBS-ESAP, a multi-donor initiative. In general, therefore, the design of the CSF as a stand-alone programme was a realistic decision and has helped to start the programme timely and run it efficiently and effectively. The CSF Phase II Financing Agreement envisaged the launching of the programme in coordination with other donors. The EC Delegation has participated in an ongoing dialogue with other donors, particularly through DAG.

However, some greater level of coordination with the PBS-ESAP, the most similar other initiatives could perhaps have been explored. This would also seem to be of potential benefit looking forward to the design and operation of a successor programme under EDF10. Options such as each programme inviting the other to take observer status in its PSC could be explored. If the CSSP initiative goes forward, there may be opportunities to strengthen complementarity – since that initiative is likely to offer considerable capacity building for service delivery, but not for governance. Within the community of donors supporting NSA, more systematic information sharing strategies could have further enhanced performance.

### **3.1.5. Stakeholders Participation**

The CSF Programme has been very successful in ensuring the effective participation of key stakeholders in programme design, implementation and monitoring. In particular, the tripartite governance structures of the CSF's PSC and Evaluation Committee, unique feature of the Programme, have significantly contributed to the meaningful participation of key stakeholders. The tripartite governance arrangement has also created an opportunity for cooperation between the Government and NSAs on practical issues related to the NSA sector which helps to foster a process of mutual confidence and cooperation. According to one NSA representative, his participation in the PSC has helped him to realize that it is possible and important to work with the government on various issues.

The key stakeholders have also participated in the monitoring and evaluation of the Programme. In particular, the mid-term evaluation, other external monitoring exercises of the Programme and this final evaluation have been based on extensive discussions with representatives of the key stakeholders, and validation of these results with key stakeholders before finalisation.

The participation of NSA stakeholders in the CSF Programme could have been greater if the CTF, which nominated all NSA representatives in the PSC and evaluation committee, was more representative. In particular, grassroots and regional CSOs are relatively under-represented in the CTF, as are categories of NSA that do not seek foreign funding.

The participation of GoE in the CSF was ensured through the MoFED and MoCB. During the life of the CSF Programme, other GoE organisations increased their interface with NSAs. In particular, the Charities and Societies Agency was established under the Ministry of Justice, and the Tigray Regional President established a Civil Society Advisor as an interface between the GoE at regional level and NSA. Looking forward to the successor programme under EDF10, there may be ways to broaden and strengthen GoE participation in the EDF NSA



support programme through identification and integration of representatives of GoE institutions with a strong specific mandate to support the NSA sector.

## **3.2. Efficiency (Graded B)**

### **3.2.1. Efficiency of Governance and Management Arrangements**

The overall guidance and oversight of the CSF Programme is the responsibility of a tripartite Project Steering Committee (PSC), which comprises four civil society representatives and one representative each from the MoFED and Ministry of Capacity Building (MoCB) as voting members. The EC Delegation has an observer status in the PSC. The meetings of the PSC are chaired by the NAO. The CSF also has a tripartite Programme Evaluation Committee, which is composed of three voting members, one from each of the NAO, the EC Delegation and civil society. The Evaluation Committee is chaired by the EC Delegation.

Representatives of all stakeholders participating in the PSC consider that the organ has performed well in terms of overall strategic management. It has provided an effective forum for the discussion of strategic issues on the implementation of the Programme. The PSC has operated by consensus, which has contributed to smooth implementation of strategic decisions, though sometimes at the cost of delay in decision-making. All stakeholders stated that the tripartite arrangement has contributed significantly to the effectiveness of the Programme by promoting ownership of the Programme by the government and civil society in Ethiopia, as well as by promoting constructive relationships between the key stakeholders. Most informants considered the tripartite governance arrangement to be an innovative and effective arrangement that should serve as a model for similar initiatives or programmes.

However, the tripartite governance arrangement is not without its challenges, partly since each stakeholder has its own particular institutional/sectoral interests. One practical challenge has been overcoming the tension between the NSA representatives' organizational and collective interest in accessing funds from the Programme and their role in providing unbiased guidance and oversight in the PSC. Partly due to this challenge as well as due to the heterogeneous nature of the NSA sector, divergent positions were held among the CSO representatives in the PSC on many strategic issues, particularly related to grant management. This contributed significantly to delays in decision making. There were several instances where PSC meetings were adjourned to allow the NSA representatives to go back to the CTF for broader discussions among the NSA reference group so as to resolve their differences. Apart from conflict of interests, lack of proper and adequate understanding among CSO representatives about the respective roles of the different governance and management structures of the CSF as well as about the EC rules and procedures on grant management has in some cases affected the smooth and efficient performance of the PSC.

Concerns over potential conflict of interest of the NSA representative in the Evaluation Committee created delay in processing grant applications, in at least one instance. In the second CfPs, the member of the evaluation committee nominated by the CTF was employed by an NGO that was a member of the PANE and CRDA networks, both of which had submitted applications. This situation was rightly identified as a conflict of interest and the member was replaced, though the delay to the Programme could not be avoided.

All the decisions of the PSC so far have been made by consensus. Although this practice is widely appreciated by stakeholders, some stakeholders raised concern that this has inevitably resulted in delays in decision making that have on occasion affected the efficiency of the Programme. The effect would have been minimized by resorting to a voting procedure in some cases, after exploratory discussions, where it seems that consensus would be difficult to achieve without delay to the Programme.

The composition of the voting membership of the PSC (four NSA, two GoE) favours the NSA sector, and this concerned one government representative interviewed. Others were less concerned, stressing the consensual and collegial nature of the PSC and the common goals of all stakeholders. “The programme is meant to benefit the NSA, so it is normal that they have the biggest weight in the PSC,” commented one GoE representative interviewed.

The day-to-day management of the programme is delegated by the GoE to the EC, which acts as Contracting Authority. The Contracting Authority is responsible for operational and financial management of the CSF, including the launching of CfPs, signing of the grant contracts, monitoring and execution of payments. The CSF is the only EDF funded project in Ethiopia that is centrally managed by the EC Delegation. In all other cases the Contracting Authority is the GoE through the NAO. However, according to one recently conducted study,<sup>12</sup> centralized management is the most common modality across the ACP countries in the management of resources allocated to NSA under the 9th EDF. The major factors identified as justifying this management modality are the capacity limitations of host governments to efficiently run the management of the Programme and the need to put the operational management under a neutral party due to the lack of the required level of trust and confidence between the government and NSAs in most ACP countries.

As far as Phase 1 of the CSF in Ethiopia concerned, the centralized management arrangement with the EC Delegation as Contracting Authority is considered appropriate and efficient by all stakeholders including the GoE. The arrangement has contributed significantly to the efficiency of the management of the Programme by avoiding capacity concerns if managed by the government as well as by ensuring the broad participation of the NSA sector in the Programme.

However, the key stakeholders have differing views on the issue of whether the EC Delegation or the GoE should be the Contracting Authority for any successor programme. Government representatives both at the MoFED and MoCB clearly stated that the capacity of the NAO and GoE more generally has increased to the point where the GoE can and should be the Contracting Authority. Government representatives rejected the suggestion that the EC could be a more neutral Contracting Authority, and dismissed NSA concerns as unfounded or as the views of an unrepresentative minority.

A few NSA respondents stated that they would not mind if the GoE becomes the Contracting Authority, but most opposed such a move, expressing concerns about the efficiency and neutrality of such a body. Some NSA said that such an arrangement would have a strongly negative effect on institutional independence of NSAs. Several respondents suggested that the written response of CSOs submitted to MoCB in relation to its attempted CSO Capacity Building Programme initiative clearly shows the existence of significant uneasiness and resistance to a government led CSO capacity building Programme among many NSAs.<sup>13</sup>

### **3.2.2. Performance of the Management of the Programme**

#### **Overall performance of the management**

With the strategic guidance of the PSC, the EC Delegation has been managing the day-to-day activities of the CSF Programme as the Contracting Authority. The TAU provides assistance in day to day management. The overall management performance of the CSF was considered efficient by all involved stakeholders in terms of adequate planning, efficient management of the budget and delivery modalities and coordination with relevant stakeholders. However,

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<sup>12</sup> M FLORIDI, B SANZ CORELLA and S VERDECCHIA, The Capitalisation Study on the NSA Capacity Building Programmes under the 9th EDF, 2009.

<sup>13</sup> Preliminary Observations of CSOs on the Draft Document Entitled “Civil Society Organizations Capacity Building Program” prepared under the auspices of the Federal Ministry of Capacity Building (MCB), Undated.

there are some, mostly external factors that have created delays in the implementation of the Programme, in particular in the timely implementation of the grant modality.

Delay in the implementation of the project grant support started to occur from the beginning of the Programme. Although phase I of the FA, which was signed in February 2005, envisaged for the immediate start of the Programme through the launching of the first Call for Proposals (CfP) by the Delegation, it was only after the TAU was established in January 2006 that the actual implementation of the grant support started. This late start led to a decision by the PSC to launch only two annual CfPs under phase I of the FA. The first CfP for large grants was launched only in June 2006, and remained open for 90 days. Mainly due to the large number of applications received, the selection of grantees and signing of agreements took a further six months. Thus, more than 24 months elapsed between the signing of phase I of the FA and the signing of the first round of large grant contracts. The delay made it necessary to extend the implementation period of Phase I of the CSF by one year, which resulted in an overlap with phase II of the CSF.

Another major delay in the implementation of the CSF Programme relates to the signing of grant contracts with projects selected from the 2009 CfP for large grants under the second FA. This delay seems to have had multiple causes. Firstly, the NSA representatives delayed the launch of the CfP through complaints regarding the previous CfP. As a result, Concept Notes (CN) were submitted before the issuance of the Charities and Societies Proclamation, No. 621/2009 in February 2009, but Full Proposals (FP) were received after the Proclamation was issued, though before it came into effect. Projects funded under this CfP would however be implemented mostly after the Proclamation took effect. Some NSA were unsure whether they were required to adjust their FP in the light of Proclamation No. 621/2009, and whether submitting a FP that was significantly different to the CN would affect their eligibility. When some proposals were finally accepted, the EC Delegation decided to wait until the selected NSAs had reregistered as per Proclamation No. 621/2009 before signing the grant contracts. The cumulative effect has been a significant delay which has affected the efficiency of the CSF Programme.

While the above delays are specific to the Ethiopian Programme, the complexity of EC global procedures and processes on grant management has also created delays both at the CSF Programme level and at the level of individual supported projects. Almost all stakeholders in all categories perceive the global EC procedures and rules regarding tender and procurement, cost eligibility, accounting of foreign currency transactions and origin of goods as unnecessarily rigid, and incompatible or inappropriate in the Ethiopian context. This has impacted the efficient implementation of the CSF by creating delays in implementation, financial losses to grantee NSAs, increased workload on the TAU, and some tensions between NSA, TAU and EC Delegation.

The TAU's efficient technical assistance and close follow up of the grantees as well as the EC Delegation's understanding and cooperation to recognize some of the problems arising from the specific country context and find pragmatic solutions have helped to minimize the adverse effects of the problems arising from the EC rules and procedures. However, there are still areas where undesired effects of the EC's procedures could be reduced through modifications to the Special Conditions of grant contracts.

Regarding national legislation and regulations, some delays occurred in relation to processing Value Added Tax (VAT) and import duty exemptions. This was another major factor that affected the financial management and efficiency of the CSF Programme. The budgets of all grant contracts under the CSF were calculated taking into account the tax exemption privileges incorporated in the Cotonou Agreement and the FAs. However, partly due to lack of proper understanding among NSA regarding the applicable conditions and procedural rules on tax and custom duty exemptions, problems and delays occurred in processing tax refunds.

With the support of the NAO and continuous efforts of the TAU and the EC, some of the NSAs managed to receive the tax refunds. However, this created additional burden on the TAU and delayed the implementation of some projects funded by the CSF, in some cases it made necessary the extension of the projects beyond the original end date.

### **Quality of the services rendered by the Technical Assistance Unit**

The TAU is responsible for four major activities: technical and administrative assistance to the EC Delegation in the management of the CSF; policy advice to the EC Delegation and coordination; information and support to NSAs; and secretariat to the PSC. There is a consensus among the major stakeholders of the Programme that the quality of services rendered by the TAU in relation to all of its tasks is of a high quality.

In particular, with regard to the TAU's task in providing information and support to NSAs, most NSA respondents expressed the opinion that the TAU has been very professional, qualified and understanding in dealing with them. In fact, most grantees stated that had it not been for the support of the TAU, they might not have been able to meet the requirements of the EC and implement the projects effectively. Only one NSA representative expressed scepticism regarding the quality of service provided by the TAU, though this was expressed in very general terms and not associated with concrete examples.

With regard to the provision of technical assistance to project grantees, in particular with regard to preparation of periodic activity and financial reports, the TAU was highly commended by all stakeholders for its willingness to provide not only generic trainings but individual mentoring to NSA leaders, project officers and financial and administrative staff. However, in some instances the TAU go beyond the provision of TA and rework the reports on behalf of the grantees. The TAU has felt compelled to assume such responsibility, partly to meet the expectation of the EC for efficiency and effectiveness, and partly to protect the grantees from further delays in approval of their reports and authorisation of future payments. The responsibilities of the TAU towards NSA and EC have in some cases been conflicting and balancing the interests of both key stakeholders in such cases has been difficult.

### **Quality of programme monitoring undertaken (M&E system).**

A Programme Monitoring Strategy was drafted by an international consultant in 2006 and finalized by the TAU in 2007. The strategy was developed based on the logical framework of the CSF Programme. It includes a Monitoring Matrix which is organized under eight themes with corresponding indicators, which are aligned with the result areas of the CSF set out in the logical framework. Moreover, in 2009 the TAU started using the EC Delegation's Internal Results-Oriented Monitoring Tool (IROME), later renamed Joint Results-Oriented Monitoring Tool (JROME). Moreover, the TAU has adapted its own monitoring to bring it into line with JROME indicators.

Guided by its Monitoring Strategy, the TAU has been conducting continuous monitoring and close follow up of the projects implemented by the grantees through their periodic reports, regular personal communications and formal monitoring missions. Many of the grantees have offices in Addis Ababa and the TAU has maintained a regular contact, at least once a week, with most of the grantees. These regular contacts and close follow ups have been complemented by field visits to project areas by the TAU staff, although most of them have been event-based, i.e. to attend trainings, meetings and other events organized by project grantees. More planned field missions to monitor the overall implementation of projects were conducted in 2009 as part of the assessments conducted on 7 projects using the JROME tool. The assessment process involved desk-based and field-based review of each project against a set of indicators, focused on assessing impact and establishing benchmarks for ongoing review.

Based on the results of its monitoring activities on grant projects as well as other activities carried out under the Programme, the TAU has also been producing quarterly and annual reports on the overall operation and management of the CSF Programme. Review of the periodic reports of the TAU shows that in general there has been adequate and proper monitoring and evaluation of the Programme. In particular, the periodic reports produced after the Monitoring Strategy was adopted discuss not only activities and processes, but also progresses made towards result areas. The introduction of the JROME has also contributed in enhancing the quality of monitoring and evaluation activities of the TAU and its periodic reports.

The quality of information provided by project grantees naturally has a significant impact on the quality of M&E. As grant support constitutes the major component of the CSF, the bulk of information required to monitor and evaluate the Programme is in fact generated by the project grantees. The TAU developed and provided project grantees with a periodic reporting format and a template of terms of reference for an external project evaluation using the JROME model. However, according to some TAU representatives, most grantees fail to give adequate attention to the collection and analysis of the relevant data, and do not have proper monitoring and evaluation systems. This inevitably affects the quality of information obtained from them. Moreover, unlike some other donor programmes, the selection of evaluators and auditors of the projects funded by the CSF is left to grantees themselves. This practice has the potential to influence the independence of the evaluators and the objectivity of their findings, and hence could undermine the value of project evaluations in terms of lesson learning. One TAU respondent observed that “none of the local audit exercises came up with any critical comments so far.” Some respondents also claimed or suspected that on occasions, grantees had attempted to influence the contents of external evaluations.

An external, Mid-term Evaluation of the CSF was conducted in 2007 as a pre-requisite for signing of FA II. While the timing of that evaluation was necessary to allow EC and GoE to go forward with the second FA, the utility of the evaluation in informing the design of the programme was somewhat limited, since it could only focus on the procedures and systems which had been set up at the time at which it was conducted, rather than on the major part of the activities funded under FA I. Other external monitoring and evaluation of the CSF included the External Audit conducted by the European Court of Auditors in 2007 and the EC Result-Based Monitoring mission carried out in 2008.

### **3.2.3. Cost/Benefit and Input/Outputs & Outcomes**

The CSF’s Programme objectives relate to ‘software’ rather than ‘hardware.’ Only a limited number of indicators were identified at the programme design stage, though others have been used on an ad hoc basis. Considering the results achieved in terms of enhancing the capacity of the NSA and promoting good governance, which are discussed in sections 3.3 and 3.4 below, the costs of the Programme could be considered justifiable when seen in light of the benefits accrued to the key stakeholders as well as to the general public in Ethiopia.

In general, taking into account the total amount and the relative importance and resource requirements of each component, most representatives of key stakeholders considered the allocation as appropriate. However, the proportion allocated for technical assistance under the CSF seems on the low side when compared to similar NSA support programmes. For instance, the SIDA Civil Society Programme allocated 25% of the total budget for technical assistance.

Moreover, most informants agreed that although the cost of the TA seems expensive in absolute terms, by Ethiopian standards, this cost is fully justified in light of the importance and quality of the service being provided by the TAU. Some even suggested that in light of its

relative importance and effectiveness, the allocation for TA should have been somewhat higher. Considering the huge need for technical assistance among the CSOs and its relative effectiveness in reaching a wider range of CSOs as well as its appropriateness for strategic capacity building of NSAs, a slightly increased allocation for TA would have been more appropriate. This would also be true for any successor programme.

### 3.3. Effectiveness (Graded B)

#### 3.3.1. Progress towards Set Targets

The target of first Financing Agreement was to build the capacity of NSA to dialogue with their constituency, with the Ethiopian government and amongst themselves as well as to play their role in the national development process through the provision of project grants and technical assistance. The first phase ended on December 31st 2008 providing support to 16 large grant contracts, as well as a number of small grant contracts. As of October 2009, 5 of the 16 projects are still ongoing. The grants during this first half of the Programme have benefited more than 100 CSOs directly. The projects supported in the first FA through large grant under the CfPs 2006 and 2007 are presented in the tables below.

**Table 3: Large Grants (2006) = 12**

<b>2006 Large Grants Capacity Building</b>		
1. Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development	Promotion of Iddirs' Role in Good Governance and Development	Gambella, Oromiya, Dire Dawa, Addis Ababa
2. Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Interchurch Aid Commission	Constituency Building in 40 Dioceses	Nationwide
3. Forum for Social Studies	Building FSS Institutional Capacity Enhanced Impact	Addis Ababa
4. Oxfam/GB	Capacity Building for Research and Action Against Domestic Violence	Addis, Gambella, SNNPRS, Benishangul-Gumuz, Amhara, Oromiya, Dire Dawa
5. TROCAIRE	Support for Organizational Strengthening in Key Civil Society Networks in Ethiopia	All regions
6. Sustainable Land Use Forum	Land Use Information and Database Management	All regions
<b>2006 Large Grants Governance</b>		
1. Agency for the Assistance of Refugees, Displaced and Returnees	Enhancing Rule of Law through Building the Capacity of Social Court Judges	Amhara
2. HUNDEE (Oromo Grassroots Development Initiative)	Women's Empowerment Project in Seven Woredas of Oromia	Oromiya
3. Initiative Africa	Building Conflict Prevention Capacity	SNNPRS, Benishangul-Gumuz
4. Zema Setoch Lefitih Mahber	Support to the Establishment & Functioning of a Women's Rights Promotion Centre as one	Addis, SNNPRS, Oromiya

	Dissemination of Enhancing Good Governance in the 6 Zones of Addis Ababa City Administration, SNNPRS and Oromia Region	
5. Southern Ethiopia People Development Association	Women's Empowerment in SNNPRS	SNNPRS
6. Sebat Bet Guraghe People's Self-Help Development Organization (GPSDO)	Alternative Dispute Resolution: Strengthening local good governance through improved system of Guraghe traditional law	SNNPR

**Table 4: Large Grants (2007) = 4**

<b><i>Capacity Building and Technical Assistance to NSA to support quality project design and implementation</i></b>		
Ethiopian Initiative for Development (EID)	Enhancing the Technical and Institutional Capacity of Indigenous CSOs/NGOs and CBOs in Ethiopia	Tigray; Amhara; Oromiya; Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples; Afar; Gambella; Benishangul Gumz; Hareri and Somali and the 2 City Administrations of Addis Ababa and Diredawa.
<b><i>Capacity Building of NSAs to Interact in the Framework of the Cotonou Agreement</i></b>		
Poverty Action Network of Civil Society in Ethiopia (PANE)	Capacity Building of NSAs to Interact in the Framework of the Cotonou Agreement	Amhara, Tigray, Southern Nations Nationalities and peoples, and Oromia
<b><i>Capacity Building of NSA in Advocacy, Lobbying &amp; Policy dialogue in emerging pastoral areas of Ethiopia.</i></b>		
Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia (PFE)	Capacity Building of NGOs/CSOs in Advocacy and Dialogue for Sustainable Pastoralist Development in the Afar Regional State	Afar National Regional State
Somali Pastoralist Development Forum (SPDF)	Capacity Building Support for Pastoralists Civil Society in Advocacy, Lobbying & Policy Dialogue in Somali Region	Somali National Regional State

The first phase of the CSF allocated €3,085,000 for the 16 large grants as well as for the small grants. This shows that the total amount available for grants in the FA for Phase I (€3 M) was contracted in 2006 and 2007. The second phase of the CSF has already transferred €53,928 for small grants and has allocated €3,000,000 for 15 large grants. The remaining balance from the total of €4.3 Million allocated for Phase II is, therefore, €1,246,072, which is expected to be fully allocated in the 2009 CFP for large grants, which was launched in late October. Thus, the CSF Programme has been effective in terms of project allocation and expenditure rate.

The first round of calls for proposals for large grants focused on institutional capacity building and good governance objectives. Five proposals seeking to build the capacities of CSOs, NGOs and networks were supported under the capacity building component. These projects most directly contribute to the CSF results 1 and 2, i.e., enhancing NSA capacity to

engage in the development and democratization processes, and independence and self-sufficiency of NSA. The remaining six proposals supported under this round are good governance projects focusing on the selected thematic areas of the CSF. These projects contribute strongly to CSF result 4, the more effective and efficient delivery of services in the governance area, with possible positive implications for CSF result 1.

The four proposals supported through the second call for large grants, on the other hand, focused on very specific areas of CSO capacity building. These capacity building areas were engagement in the framework of Cotonou (1 project), project design and implementation (1 project), and policy dialogue in pastoral areas (2 projects). The first grant clearly falls under CSF result 5 in light of the explicit reference to tri-partite engagement and Cotonou while the second is more of an institutional capacity building initiative leaning towards CSF result 2 with possible contribution to the other result areas. The last two mainly contribute towards coordination and networking falling under CSF result 3. The capacity building emphasis in all four proposals also links to the CSF result 1.

The Programme has supported diverse thematic areas that cover all five expected result areas of the Programme. However, some expected result areas seem to be more focused than the others. For instance three of the six large grant supports provided by the Programme in the area of improved service delivery in governance focused on women empowerment, while the CSF supported no project in the thematic areas of rule of law and democratization, with the possible exception of the project carried out by the Agency for the Assistance of Refugees, Displaced and Returnees.

The mode of providing project grant based on CfPs has its own limits in terms of ensuring the effective achievements of the set result areas of the Programme. The expected results, in particular promoting dialogue between NSA and government or EC may best be achieved by require targeting key/strategic NSAs. While the PSC was able to define CfP on narrower criteria to encourage particular types of NSA proposals, the CfP system is ultimately incompatible with precise targeting of key NSA. As has already been mentioned, the TA component of the Programme was insufficient to allow for targeted or tailored support that could have made a larger contribution to the result areas of the Programme.

The Programme has covered almost all regions of the country, which is not common in other initiatives with similar objectives. However, although the concern for regional equity has its own strong rationale and is in line with the provisions of the CSF ToR that emphasizes the need for targeting inaccessible areas of the country, this consideration has inherent risks on the effectiveness of the Programme. Since the civil society sector in the four emerging regions, is much less diverse than in other areas, the application of regional equity consideration may have reduced the balanced distribution of grants across result areas of the Programme. Prioritising civil society in the emerging regions will also tend to lead to provision of grants to newer and less capable NSAs than in some other areas. For instance, based on regional equity consideration a lot to Somali region was allocated under the second CfPs for large grants. This resulted in the selection of the Somali Pastoralist Development Forum (SPDF), which was a fairly new organization. Despite TAU's provision of more technical assistance to SPDF than any of the other grantees, the SPDF's project faced greater implementation difficulties than any other, due to lack of the required organizational commitment and capacity. This case demonstrates how the application of regional equity could lead to providing grants to CSOs that lack the minimum organizational capacity to implement the agreed projects. It also shows the inherent risk in the project grant intervention modality, in particular when organisational strengthening of nascent institutions is the



objective. The CSF is to be commended for its willingness to take these risks, and its ability to provide graded levels of support and mentoring to grantees with differing capacities. However, in any successor programme, thought should be given to balancing the objectives of regional equity and Programme effectiveness.

Most respondents, from all stakeholder groups, supported the exclusion of INGOs from being a lead applicant in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and subsequent CfPs, on the grounds that capacity building must give greater priority to NSA established by Ethiopians. Most respondents supported the CSF policy of allowing INGOs to participate as partners in funded projects, recognising their experience, skills and capacity. A significant number of respondents suspected that the exclusion of INGOs as lead applicants reduced the average level of management capacity, innovation and capacity building of project proposals, but most felt that this was a necessary short-term cost, justified in terms of capacity building.

The information and technical assistance provided by the TAU to NSA in general and to project grantees in particular has significantly contributed to the effectiveness of the Programme. However, the resource limitations of the TAU meant that some opportunities to engage in building the capacity of NSA in a more proactive and strategic manner had to be ignored.

The existing project selection procedure does not adequately ensure that organisations which have defaulted in the past, or individuals responsible for poor management or mismanagement of previous projects are excluded from subsequent round of funding.

### **3.3.2. Effectiveness of Programme Approaches and Strategies in Supporting Different Categories of NSA**

The various Programme approaches and strategies used by the CSF have contributed to supporting different categories of NSA. The networking and partnership approach promoted by the calls for proposals is the most notable approach in terms of reaching different categories of NSA. By the end October 2009, the 29 projects supported by the CSF through 25 lead partners have also involved more than 80 official partner organizations. The networking and partnership approach has enabled the CSF to support a large number of NSA, and also to reach diverse categories of NSA, which would have otherwise been unable to access CSF support due to their lack of capacity or their not being officially registered. For instance, the ACORD project supported by the CSF was implemented in partnership with 10 *Iddir* (traditional CBOs) networks in Shashemene, Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa and 4 local NGOs in Gambella (one of the 'emerging' regions).

Although the partnership approach has contributed to the CSF Programme reaching a wider and diverse profile of NSA and promoting collaboration and coordination among the NSAs, some partnership arrangements initiated under the CSF have functioned poorly. Due to lack of experience on working in partnership, an opportunistic practice of forming partnership just to access the CSF fund, and a tendency not to formulate partnership agreements at the time of application, there have been conflicts and an unbalanced sharing of benefits and burdens within some of the partnerships supported under the CSF. This has affected the effectiveness of the concerned projects.

The Small Grant System which allows grantees a maximum amount of €10,000 without ascribing to the elaborate procedures of the CfPs for large grants has also contributed to supporting different categories of NSAs. The CSF Small Grants System, which was not

anticipated at the launching of the CSF, was utilized as a one-time strategy to introduce the CSF in its early stage of implementation. The success of the small grants in achieving this objective by accessing a large number of CSOs with a limited budget has led to the use of the modality to support other related activities such as event-based youth and human rights training and awareness activities. The small grant system has the potential to create access for a large number and diverse types of NSA to CSF funds. However, this mode of support creates a significant work load on the TAU and EC. In the design of the successor programme, the administrative burden, and the increased training and mentoring needs associated with a large number of small projects must be taken into account, and adequate TA resources allocated.

The comprehensive geographical coverage of the country by the CSF, including the calls for proposals with lots earmarked for under-served and under-represented Regional States also has an aspect of outreach to diverse categories of NSA. Two projects in the emerging states of Afar and Somali were ambitious networking initiatives of pastoralist NSA and traditional leaders, types of civil society organisation not typically addressed by donor programmes.

The private sector was excluded from the CSF by the FA, which identified the target as “*non-governmental organisations, associations, unions, or other registered civil society organisations.*” Within this target group, the Programme has had praiseworthy success in reaching out to and supporting different categories of NGO dependent on foreign funding, in different sectors and regions. However, there has been only moderate success in the inclusion of ‘grass roots’ and traditional NSA, unions or ‘mass’ organisations. Interviews with TAU, EC and GoE representatives give the impression that this was done chiefly for pragmatic reasons. It is certainly true that the CSF gradually extended the geographic and sectoral range of NSA it served. However, it could be desirable in any successor programme to be more explicit about the categories of NSA targeted and to link this to OVI.

### **3.3.3. Stakeholders’ Satisfaction with the Programme**

Government, NSA and EC respondents are generally satisfied by the performance and achievements of the Programme. In particular, government agencies and community leaders at the local level that have been involved in the various projects supported by the SC highly appreciate the Programme.

The launching of the CSF in early 2006 and the attendant publicity created high levels of expectations among CSOs/NGOs especially in terms of funding opportunities. The first call for proposals for large grants received 208 applications, but only 12 applicants could be approved, due to the limited funding available. Some of the unsuccessful applicants were again frustrated when the the second call for proposals for large grants was divided into quite narrow thematic and geographic lots. This was necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the Programme by targeting key/strategic NSA actors and/or underserved thematic and geographic areas. But it inevitably disappointed some potential applicants. On the other hand, the reduction in the number of applications for the second and subsequent calls also reflects a greater understanding among NSA of the demanding application procedure and strict administrative and managerial procedures necessary for successful implication. Additional reasons which have discouraged applicants in the second round include the complex

assessment and selection procedure, stiff competition from more established organizations, and lack of experience with EC criteria.<sup>14</sup>

This has led to negative perceptions of the fund among some sections of the Ethiopian civil society sector. For instance, routine monitoring missions of the TAU to Mekelle, Awassa and Bahir Dar in 2008 revealed that some CSO leaders believed themselves to be victims of deliberate discrimination by the proposal evaluation process within CSF. Responding to this threat, the TAU organized a series of meetings with unsuccessful applicants of both the 2006 and 2007 Calls for Proposals with a view to ensuring transparency; strengthen CSO's understanding of the CSF operational modalities, and maintaining their continued engagement with the Programme.

The feeling among grantees is significantly different. Almost without exception, grantees are highly satisfied with the technical assistance provided by the TAU and key informants describe the delivery of services in the most positive of terms. Even sensitive issues such as institutional independence and cautious engagement in organizational issues, which often become points of tension between donor and grantee, seem to have become less problematic. Key informants have also underlined the individualized treatment and responsiveness of the services as the strongest aspect of the CSF and a major factor contributing to the success of individual projects.

### **3.3.4. External Factors with Impact on Effectiveness**

Most of the external factors that have affected the efficiency of the CSF Programme, such as the problems related to processing tax and custom duty returns and the EC global procedures on grant management, have also exerted their influence on the quality and effectiveness of the projects supported by the CSF.

High price inflation in the last three years has also posed a challenge; most grantees underestimated the prices of the goods and services they intended to purchase using the CSF grants. High rate of staff turnover and the limited size of the labour market for qualified experts also affected the implementation of some projects.

## **3.4. Impact (Graded B)**

Some of the projects supported under phase I of CSF are still running, while the other are completed only recently. As a result, it is still early to assess the full impacts of the CSF Programme, in particular the achievements related to the overall objective of the Programme. However, it is clear that the Programme has shown significant potential to positively impact the overall development and governance processes of the country. It has already resulted in concrete impacts related to all the result areas of the Programme.

### **3.4.1. Impacts against Targeted Result Areas**

The activities so far implemented under the CSF have already started producing positive impacts related to each targeted result areas of the Programme. There are also good indications of further potential benefits in the future.

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<sup>14</sup> Audit of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other Non-State Actors (NSAs) in EC Development Cooperation: Statement of Preliminary Findings Mission to Ethiopia (19 November to 6 December 2007), p. 22

### **Increased capacity of Ethiopian NSAs to engage in the development and democratisation processes:**

The capacity building interventions of the CSF, both the grant and technical assistance components, has increased the capacity of a large number of CSOs. The 29 projects supported by the CSF have directly involved more than 100 CSOs as applicants and partners. When the numerous CSOs that have been unofficially involved in the implementation of the projects or have participated in capacity building trainings are added, the total number of CSOs reached by the CSF is probably more than 400. This has presumably led to the increased engagement of these CSOs in the development and democratisation processes of the country.

One of the indicators set in the log frame of the CSF to assess the achievement of this result area is increased consultation of NSAs by the government at different levels. The CSF has made tangible contributions towards increased consultation, dialogue and cooperation between CSOs and government bodies in two significant ways.

Firstly, some of the projects supported through the grants, such as the projects of PFE/APDF and SPDF, specifically focused on CSO-government engagement as an objective. Under these projects, a series of policy dialogue forums have been organized for government and non-government actors on diverse issues at regional and local government levels. This is a significant achievement of the CSF Programme, since such consultations of CSOs by government agencies on policy issues were previously virtually non-existent in the regions.

Secondly, most of the projects supported through the CSF grants, in particular in the governance area, are implemented in partnership with different government agencies, mainly with justice sector institutions and women's affairs bureaux. These projects enabled CSOs to develop linkage and cooperation with different government institution at regional and woreda levels. In some cases these GoE institutions had little or no experience of working with CSOs. Apart from consultations on the implementation of the CSF supported projects, a number of grantees have reported that due to the linkages and cooperation developed through the CSF supported projects, they have been receiving an increased level of invitations from GoE institutions to attend and participate in policy dialogue and other forums. It has to be noted, however, that such progress in consultations of NSAs on policy issues has been taking place essentially at regional or lower government levels, while such consultations remain very limited at the federal level.

Another indicator in this area is the increased number of development projects in which NSA participate. In addition to the projects directly funded by the CSF, some contacted grantees reported that the implementation of the CSF projects has significantly enhanced their organizational capacity in project management and donor relations, which in turn, has enabled them to implement an increased number of projects, with the support of other donors.

Involvement of NSA in monitoring the PASDEP process and other key development activities is another indicator of increased capacity of NSA to engage in the development and democratisation process. Some of the capacity building grants incorporated projects aiming to enhance the institutional capacities of partners with a view to enhancing their engagement in development and governance processes, including the monitoring of government policy. For instance, the project called "Support for Organizational Strengthening in Key Civil Society Networks," which was implemented by TROCAIRE in partnership with four major CSO

networks, PANE, ECS, NEWA and EIFDDA,<sup>15</sup> included the development and translation of a “Monitoring Government Policy” toolkit. Another project, implemented by the FSS, contributed to the independent monitoring of government policy with the publication of a policy digest reviewing more than 32 government policies, strategies, programmes and action plans.

#### **i. Strengthened independence and self-sufficiency of NSAs**

Through the project grants and the accompanying technical assistance, the CSF has impacted a whole range of institutional capacity aspects of the grantees and their partners, which in turn, has strengthened the organizations independence and sustainability. In fact, all grantees interviewed for this evaluation stated that their experience with the stringent EC grant management and reporting procedures has strengthened their administrative and managerial skill and systems, and that they are now confident that they can meet the requirements of any other donor working in Ethiopia. The CSF Programme has already brought significant impacts on the independence and sustainability of CSOs through:

- ***Enhancing their fundraising capacity:*** Apart from skills acquired by a number of CSOs through trainings, the CSF has significantly contributed to CSO’s familiarization with and acquisition of skills on accessing CfP based funds.
- ***Strengthening their institutional policies and systems:*** For instance, the TROCAIRE project has resulted in changes in organizational policies on human resource management, creation of organizational information management and knowledge transfer strategies, and development of operation manuals, rules and regulations, procurement procedures and other guidelines by and for the four networks involved.
- ***Improving their preparation for the new regulatory environment:*** As shown in the evaluation report of the TROCAIRE project and expressed by some grantees, their enhanced capacity in terms of fundraising, constituency building, networking and partnership, etc. acquired through the CSF Programme has improved their ability to cope with the new regulatory framework.

#### **ii. Improved coordination and networking amongst NSAs**

The CSF Programme has clearly increased the coordination and networking among NSAs in Ethiopia. Indicators of this impact include the establishment of new networks or partnerships as well as the strengthening of already established networks or partnerships.

- ***Establishment of new networks or partnerships:*** The implementation of the CSF Programme has resulted in the establishment of different long-term networks and short-term partnerships. In terms of networks, the establishment of the civil society network in the emerging region of Afar (APDF) is directly attributable to the CSF Programme. Although this CSF-backed network is still in its infancy and in need of capacity development, it has already made notable contributions in terms of coordinating CSOs in their respective regions and acting as a one stop shop for those regions’ civil society relations with other development actors. The CSF project has also contributed to the establishment of new networks or umbrella organizations of Community Based Organizations (CBOs). For instance, the ACCORD project

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<sup>15</sup> Poverty Action Network Ethiopia (PANE), Ethiopian Catholic Secretariat (ECS), Network of Ethiopian Women’s Associations (NEWA) and Ethiopian Interfaith Forum for Development, Dialogue & Action (EIFDDA)

supported by the CSF contributed to the formation of the Addis Ababa Umbrella *Iddir* Association, of which the FDRE President is the honorary chair person.

Moreover, the partnership approach which is promoted by CSF in providing project grants has led to the establishment of a number of new partnerships among NSAs. The 28 projects supported by the CSF have been implemented by 25 lead applicants and more than 80 partners. These projects have involved hundreds of other CSOs during project planning and implementation, on a more informal basis. The grantee coordination meetings organized by the EC/TAU have also served to share best practice and strengthen relations between CSOs.

Some partnerships initiated under the CSF programme have continued beyond the duration of the CSF project, such as the network partnership initiated by Trocaire or the alliance around HUNDEE.

- ***Strengthening of existing networks and partnerships:*** The technical assistance and projects supported under the CSF have also resulted in increased coordination and networking among NSAs through strengthening of already existing networks. Although the establishment of the Cotonou Task Force (CTF) predates the CSF Programme, the institutionalization and continuity of its activities have been ensured with the support of the CSF. Since the CTF started receiving support from the CSF, the size and diversity of its GA members have significantly increased. For instance, in the General Assembly meeting held in 2008, over 200 NSAs including representatives from regions took part. With the technical assistance and project grant from the CSF, the CTF has been coordinating and serving as the interface for NSAs dialogue with the EC and the government, mainly within the framework of the implementation of the EC CSPs. Other CSF funded projects implemented by networks or umbrella organizations such as SLUF and SEPDA have strengthened these networks and increased coordination among their members.

### **iii. More effective and efficient delivery of services in the governance area**

The CSF has supported six projects that are aimed at improving delivery of service in the governance area, particularly as regards the rule of law, women's empowerment, and conflict management. Moreover, many of the projects supported under the capacity building component of the CSF grant involved interventions aimed at enhancing the role of CSOs in governance through institutional capacity building. In particular, the projects implemented by ACCORD, TROCAIRE, Oxfam GB/EWLA and FSS incorporated governance issues into their capacity building objectives. The successful implementation of these governance and capacity building projects has led to an increased number of NSA contributions to activities in areas of democratisation, human rights, rule of law, and women's empowerment.

### **iv. Greater capacity of NSA to dialogue with the government and EC in the implementation of EC CSP**

The CSF's support to the CTF, through provision of small and large grant project supports to hosting organizations as well as through provision of continuous technical assistance by the TAU, has resulted in a greater capacity to dialogue with government and the European Commission on the implementation of Country Support Strategy as part of a more extensive and productive dialogue between NSA and government authorities, between NSA and their constituencies. The regional workshops organised by the CTF on the Cotonou Agreement and

EPAs have raised the awareness of NSAs in the area, and hence increased their capacity to dialogue with the government and EC. Moreover, the existence and activities of the CTF have facilitated NSA's structured and organized dialogue with the government and EC in Joint Annual Reviews (JAR) of the EU-Ethiopia cooperation.

### **3.4.2. Policy, practice and behaviour change achievements**

As stated under 3.4.1 above, the implementation of various projects supported by the CSF has resulted in an increased number of NSA consultations on different policy issues, in particular at the regional and local government levels. Assessment of what policy changes have been achieved as the result of the policy dialogues that took place between CSOs and the government within the framework of the CSF Programme is constrained by different factors. Policy changes occur over a long period of time through incremental changes making the assessment of changes in policy a difficult task at this point. For instance, the expected policy change achievements of the dialogue forums organized under the PFE/ADPF project in the Afar region on the regional development plan, pest management and food security and famine relief policies are yet to be seen, since the forums were held recently and the discussed draft legislation and other programmes are not yet finalized. However, considering the high level of appreciation expressed by the regional government representatives on the importance and value of the dialogue forums, the first such events in this emerging pastoral region, there is a high possibility that the consultations will result in policy changes in relation to the discussed topics. Certainly, the practice of consultation reflects an encouraging attitude among all stakeholders in this emerging region.

Another factor hampering adequate assessment of policy changes resulting from the implementation of the CSF Programme is the existence of a significant information gap on the results of the policy dialogues in which NSAs have participated due to lack of adequate follow up and analysis of actions taken after the consultations. Although most contacted grantees have reported that they participated in various policy dialogue forums, such reports are not usually accompanied with information and analysis on the possible policy changes resulted from their participation on the forums. "The NSA have got to the stage of organising multi-stakeholder dialogues, which is a great step forward, but as a civil society, we don't yet know what to do with these forums, and what our next steps should be," observed one TAU representative.

Nevertheless, there are trends towards policy changes and tangible results in practice, as well as behaviour changes among various government institutions as well as among community structures and members as a result of the implementation of the CSF Programme. While some of these changes are attributable to the whole Programme, others are attributable to a specific project supported by the CSF. As in other areas, most of the potential and actual results are at regional or local government levels and less policy, behaviour and attitude changes are expected at the federal level. Some of the major policy changes, in particular changes in institutional practice and behaviour are the following:

***Positive changes of attitude among government institutions on the role of NSAs in governance:*** Most of the CSF supported projects, in particular the projects in the area of service delivery in governance, have been implemented in partnership or collaboration with local government departments, mainly with women affairs and justice sector institutions. From the field visits to project sites of SEPDA, ZEMA and GPSDO, the evaluation team has been able to clearly see the strong partnership created between grantees and local government organs on governance issues as a result of the projects supported by the CSF. These

partnerships resulted in significant change of attitude on and increased recognition of the role of CSOs in governance issues. For instance, a representative of the Gurage Zone Justice Department stated that:

*Our Department did not have any prior experience of working with an NGO. As a result, we were reluctant to become a partner with GPSDA on the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) project. We were not sure about the value of NGOs' involvement in the justice system. Our participation in the project and the partnership with GPSDA has helped us to enhance our organizational capacity. Based on our experience in this project, we are interested to work with NGOs in the future as long as it is within the legal framework.*

***Institutionalization of CSOs participation on government policy development:*** Some of the projects supported by the CSF have resulted in the establishment of regular forums for policy dialogue between government and CSOs, while others have led to the institutionalization of CSOs participation in policy development. For instance, the PFE/APDF project succeeded in establishing a government-NGO dialogue forum to regularly raise and discuss policy issues in the Afar Regional State. Meanwhile, the ACCORD project contributed to the establishment of the Addis Ababa Umbrella *Iddir* (traditional CBO) Association and the representation of *Iddir* umbrella organizations in the Addis Ababa administration (both at the sub-city and city administration levels). This institutionalization of CBOs participation in the administration of the capital city is by itself an important achievement of policy, practice and behaviour change.

***Incorporation and institutionalization of ADR in the justice system:*** The implementation of the GPSDO project on alternative dispute resolution in the Gurage zone of the SNNPRS have resulted in important change in policy, practice and attitude on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). According to contacted government representatives, the GPSDO project resulted in a significant change of attitude on the part of judicial and law enforcement officials on the role and importance of ADR in improving the justice system. Accordingly, now courts and other law enforcement agencies in the Zone routinely refer minor disputes to be resolved through ADR. This has significantly reduced the work burden of the institutions and has resulted in improved delivery of justice by the institution both in terms of quality and efficiency, and a greater sentiment within the public that justice is within their reach.

***Increased empowerment and practice of claiming rights among women:*** Despite the short period of time under evaluation, the women's empowerment projects implemented by Oxfam GB/EWLA, HUNDEE, Zemasafe, and SEPDA have already resulted in visible attitudinal and practice changes in terms of protecting women's rights. The projects implemented by Oxfam GB and Zemasafe have resulted in an increased reporting of cases of violence against women in targeted communities, improved efficiency of law enforcement in handling complaints, and reduction of attitudinal barriers preventing victims from seeking remedies. Similarly, assessments conducted in areas where HUNDEE implemented its project have revealed that thanks to this project, women are being accepted in the leadership of traditional institutions such as *Iddir*/Afoshaa and traditional arbitration/reconciliation processes.

### **3.4.3. Challenges in Achieving Policy, Practice and Behaviour Changes and Unexpected Outcomes**

The main challenge for the achievement of policy changes through the CSF Programme was the operational environment for the Programme. Before the commencement of the Programme in 2006, the operational environment for the civil society sector was characterized by polarized perceptions among CSOs and government actors. The policy, legal and political



context was defined by lack of an appropriate regulatory framework, persisting tensions in relationships especially arising from perceptions of legitimate and actual roles, and the alleged role of some CSOs in the crisis following the May 2005 elections.

Other more specific challenges include the absence of clear guidelines for the creation of partnerships between CSOs and government agencies, the misconceived narrow association of advocacy with partisan politics and lack of clarity on advocacy's possible contribution to development and poverty reduction by government and even by some CSOs.

Another challenge for the achievement of policy changes relates to a lack of adequate experience and skills among Ethiopian NSAs on policy advocacy and lobbying. Policy advocacy is a targeted as well as a systematic and organized action and its effectiveness depends, among others, on the existence of a strategy that guides the advocacy intervention. However, most of the engagements of CSF grantees on policy dialogue could have been better planned and organized. Whether the skills acquired during the implementation of CSF projects leads to better interventions of these NSA in the future will become apparent over the next couple of years.

The major unexpected and strongly positive outcome is the contribution of the CSF Programme towards building the capacity of local government and increased collaboration among government institutions. Though the Programme was designed to support NSA, especially CSOs, the activities of the TAU as well as projects supported through grants have resulted in a strengthening of the capacities of local government agencies. In particular, the governance related projects have brought significant changes in enhancing cooperation among the justice sector institutions. For instance, according to a representative of the Gurage Zone Justice Department, the GPSDA project on ADR has contributed to the creation of joint forum and coordination mechanisms among the police, justice department and the courts in addition to enhancing the institutional capacity of each institution.

#### **3.4.4. Unexpected Developments and Countermeasures**

The major unexpected development with significant impact on the CSF Programme is the preparation and promulgation of the new CSO law, or Charities and Societies Proclamation No. 621/2009. The limitations imposed on the engagement of some categories of CSOs on governance related issues have the effect of reducing some CSF grantees' involvement in policy issues. This inevitably tends to reduce the programme's potential achievements in bringing about policy changes.

The CTF has served as an important structure for organizing CSO discussions and comments on the draft law. One of the chairs of the CTF has been leading the Civil Society Task Force for an Enabling Environment in Ethiopia and four CTF members are actively engaged in the process. The Civil Society Task Force coordinated a number of civil society discussions and compiled comments on the draft law, which were submitted to GoE. Although the highly contested issues of the law remained unchanged, some improvements on less contested issues of the law have been achieved due to the dialogue between the CSOs and government.

The EC has been discussing and negotiating with the GoE to reduce the impact of the law on the CSF Programme. These efforts focused on two areas. The first is securing government's agreement that the activities of the CSF be exempt from the application of the law. This would enable Ethiopian resident organisations supported by the CSF to carry out governance-related work that is normally now restricted to Ethiopian charities and societies.

The second area where the EC is negotiating with the GoE concerns an EC request that the CSF funds be considered as local resources for the purposes of the law. This would allow Ethiopian charities and societies supported by the CSF to obtain more than 10% of their resources from foreign sources, without losing their entitlement to engage on governance themes.

Both of these concessions would smooth the transition towards implementation of the new legislation, while maintaining and encouraging NSA to engage in governance issues. Since the general tendency seems to be for many groups to abandon governance issues and re-register as Ethiopian resident, these two concessions would significantly improve the ability of the CSF, and any successor programme, to attain its objectives in all areas.

### **3.5. Sustainability (Graded B)**

#### **3.5.1. Incorporation of Sustainability Consideration in Programme Implementation**

The Financial Agreement and ToR for the Programme have treated the issue of sustainability in detail. More specific treatment of sustainability measures was provided in the TAP attached to the Financing Agreement. The issues given particular attention are: ownership by beneficiaries, cross sectoral sustainability, alignment with government policies, building institutional management capacity of CSOs, and ensuring financial sustainability.

The implementation of the CSF Programme has accordingly sought to ensure sustainability of activities and results through various strategies including maintaining the focus of the programme on capacity building, provision of technical assistance to transfer essential skills and institutional resources, emphasis on funding through stronger NGOs and networks, promoting partnerships in selection procedures, and providing tailor-made support based on ongoing monitoring of supported projects. The tri-partite governance and management framework involving the GoE and the CTF has also been instrumental in promoting ownership and sustainability of the Programme. The selection of projects has consistently taken into account capacity development issues at the institutional level covering human resource, material and structural dimensions.

In relation to cross-sectoral sustainability, the FAs particularly identify the empowerment of women as one focus area of the Programme. Accordingly, emphasis has been given to women's empowerment projects in the selection of projects under the governance component of the CSF grant. However, the proactive integration of gender issues in the Programme requires the mainstreaming of gender in all activities and projects supported by the Programme. Accordingly, a CSF Gender Mainstreaming Manual was developed and distributed to all CSF grantees in 2007. The TAU has also been following up and providing feedback and support to ensure the implementation of gender considerations by CSF grantees. Thus, incorporation of gender issues in the implementation of the CSF as part of promoting cross-sectoral sustainability has been strongly pursued. However, there has been less effort to mainstream other cross-cutting issues, such as HIV/AIDS and environment in the implementation of the CSF Programme. Given the success with gender mainstreaming, it may be worth considering a specific commitment to mainstreaming of these other cross-cutting themes in any successor programme.

Most of the results achieved by the CSF Programme in terms of organizational capacity development (systems, structures, skills and materials) of grantees are already acquired and

are likely to survive the phasing out of funding. However, the inherent limitations of a project approach in creating sustainable institutions as well as the lack of adequate room and flexibility in CfP based support to target strategic/desired institutions, have an impact on quality and sustainability of institutional capacity building achievements. With a greater proportion of more flexible non-grant funding, the programme could support NSA institution building in a more effective and sustainable manner.

Moreover, if institution building is to be supported, implementation periods of projects and TA should be longer than the 18-24 months typically allowed under this Programme. Any successor programme should consider structuring its first and possibly second CfP so as to encourage specific types of longer-term project proposal from key sectors of NSA working in priority sectors.

Some of the partnerships initiated under the CSF programme have continued beyond the duration and widened outside the scope of the CSF project, which indicates the sustainability of some of the results achieved in relation to increased coordination and networking of NSAs. For instance, contacted representatives of the major networks that participated in the partnership initiated by Trocaire stated that collaboration among the networks has continued after the completion of the CSF project and they are now considering the idea of establishing a network of networks. Strong collaboration among the five CSOs that formed an alliance around HUNDEE has also continued beyond the duration of the CSF project. Initiatives to submit new joint project proposals to EC and other donors by some partners have also been reported, showing the continuation of collaborations formed under CSF Programme.

Most of the projects related to service delivery in the governance areas have involved community members and structures, other CSOs and government bodies in their projects. This would contribute to ensuring the sustainability of the achievements, in particular in cases where permanent local structures or mechanisms have been established. For instance, HUNDEE's project on women's empowerment has the potential to be taken over by the women's affairs offices. However, a more conscious and comprehensive integration of sustainability issues in project design, especially in terms of creating permanent structures, would have increased the chances of sustainability of the projects in the governance area.

### **3.5.2. Government Support and Actions for Smooth Programme Implementation and Maximization of Impacts**

Through participation in the governance and management of the CSF Programme, the government has been providing support that facilitated the smooth implementation of the Programme. Although the process has faced serious procedural challenges and delays, the government has provided the anticipated tax exemptions for CSF funded projects.

The sustainability of programs like the CSF could be affected by policy changes related to the operating environment of NSAs. Understanding the importance of an enabling policy environment for the operation of CSOs, the Financing Agreement for Phase I, included a provision in which the GoE undertook to facilitate the implementation of the CSF Programme by actively promoting legislation aimed at facilitating the registration and activities of NGOs.<sup>16</sup> Progress made in this respect was made a condition for proposing the second financing agreement to utilize the remaining balance of the funds made available by the EC. In accordance with these undertakings, the government issued a law on Charities and

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<sup>16</sup> Financing Agreement, Article 3.5: Special Conditions and accompanying measures to be taken by the government

Societies (Proclamation No. 621/2009) and addressed the gap in the legislation. However, there is no consensus on whether the contents of this legislation are in line with the anticipation in the financing agreement. It is difficult to say the law has facilitated the smooth implementation of the Programme. Rather, the new law is posing a challenge to the sustainability or continuity of some of the achievements of the Programme. Most of the grantees of the CSF have already registered or decided to register as Ethiopian Resident Charities or Societies, which could lead to underutilization of the capacities built through the Programme in relation to governance area.

### **3.5.3. Projects Expected to Contribute More Effectively to the Programme Objectives**

The relative contributions of specific projects supported by the CSF Programme have to be seen in light of the multiple results anticipated and the different areas of focus identified for Programme components. The assessments under effectiveness and impact reveal that all of the five project results have been served by the activities and outputs of the Programme as a whole. With varying degrees, all the projects supported by the CSF have contributed towards the achievements of the Programme objectives. When the differential challenges to sustainability are taken into account, it may be that the capacity building grants make a greater contribution to Programme objectives than the governance grants.

Among the NSA capacity building projects, and considering the relative quality of project implementation, the size of impacted NSAs or other actors, the nature of the actual and potential results and their sustainability, the projects implemented by TROCAIRE, ACCORD, Oxfam/GB, FSS and SLUF appear to make the most effective contribution to the Programme objectives. Although the institutional sustainability of APDF is still uncertain, considering the achievements already realized in terms of promoting and institutionalizing policy dialogues between the Afar regional government and CSOs as well as considering that the project is being implemented in one of the underserved regions, the PFE/APDF project also has potential to make a very effective contribution to the CSF Programme objectives.

Among the projects on service delivery in the governance area, the projects implemented by HUNDEE, Zemasafe, GPSDO and SEPDA are likely to have produced results that contribute most effectively to the Programme objectives.

### **3.5.4. Mechanisms put in place to sustain changes in communication between actors and implementation of programmes**

The CSF Programme's communication strategy has been developed and implemented by the TAU. Communications between actors and implementation of programs have been made through the publication of a CSF newsletter, designing and updating the CSF website and other means of communications. One of the inherent limitations of the CfP based project grant support to NSA is that it does not support active engagement of grantees and their partners with the Programme after the completion of projects. This makes it difficult to sustain communications between actors. The allocation of more resources and mandate to the TAU to proactively engage in technical assistance outside the framework of the management of project grants would be instrumental to address this issue.

### **3.6. Coherence and Mutual Reinforcement**

The linkage and contributions of the activities of the CSF with other poverty reduction operations/interventions of the EC, the government and other donors were envisaged in the development of the CSF and are included in the FAs. The coherence of the CSF objectives with EC policies and CSPs as well as with Ethiopian government development policies has already been noted. The activities and impacts of the CSF are directly and mutually reinforcing with the activities and impacts of the EC's other governance related programmes such as the promotion of gender equality, or capacity building of democratic institutions. They also mutually reinforce the activities and priorities of government policies, in particular the decentralization effort and other governance related policies.

The activities and results of the CSF related to increased institutional capacity of NSA to engage in the development process also contributes to the achievements of poverty reduction and other development oriented objectives and interventions of the government, EC and other donors, since strong NSA can play important role in improving service delivery and policy decisions related to poverty reduction. However, few if any projects supported by the CSF were primarily focused on building the capacity of NSAs to engage in areas like food insecurity, environmental degradation or infrastructure building. This indicates the need for more targeted efforts in any successor programme to align CSF's support to the sectoral/thematic priorities of the country and EC cooperation with Ethiopia.

### **3.7. EC Added Value**

Most of the EU Member States with a presence in Ethiopia channel part of their development funds through civil society organizations. However, the civil society support initiatives of most member states are focused on funding the development projects of CSOs, with less emphasis on the governance sector, or on the institutional capacity development of the CSOs themselves. The CSF's support to institutional capacity building of NSA as a stand-alone objective is one of its unique feature that can also be considered as an added value of the EC. By focusing on capacity building, the EC programme strengthens organisations with which EU member states may wish to cooperate within their bilateral programmes. And by focusing on governance, on the basis of the EDF partnership between the GoE and EC, and a tripartite governance of the CSF Programme, the EC plays a role that EU member states, which do not have the same type of partnership, cannot. Thus, the CSF is highly complementary to the interventions of EU Member States in the area. The relative large size of the CSF fund and its tri-partite governance arrangement emanating from the Cotonou Agreement could also be considered as added value of the EC.

### **3.8. Visibility**

The CSF Programme has been publicised in local print and electronic media. The provision of information about the Programme has been facilitated and strengthened through the development and implementation of the CSF's Programme communication strategy. Guided by the strategy, the CSF website was designed and has been regularly updated. The CSF brochure and leaflets about the project have been developed and distributed to targeted audiences. The CSF has also been publishing its periodic newsletters. Information about the aims of the Fund and its implementation modalities has been shared with different organisations on meetings and workshops with them. The CfPs of the Fund have been publicized in the Delegation's website and the print media. The TAU routinely sends information to its list of CSO addresses on funding opportunities of the EC as well as other

donors. Moreover, grantees display the CSF logo on their assets (vehicles, PCs etc) and use the CSF banners for any workshops, trainings etc.

All the above activities and other communication efforts of the CSF or EC Delegation have significantly contributed to and boosted the visibility of the CSF and EC among various stakeholders as well as the public at large. The fact that all the regional states are covered in the projects supported by the CSF also ensures the wider geographic coverage of the Programme's visibility.

## 4. Key Observations and Recommendations

Phase I of the CSF Programme has been an overall success across all the assessment criteria. This evaluation has identified a number of strengths in the design and implementation of the CSF Programme that have contributed to its success. Given the overall success of the Programme, the recommendations below are mostly intended to strengthen various aspects of the Programme and address some challenges. Given that the last CfP under Phase II has already been launched, and there is little leeway for modifying the spending plan for the remaining TA resources, these recommendations are also offered as a contribution to the preparation of any successor Programme under the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF.

### Relevance

1. Given the clear success of the CSF, the increased capacity of Ethiopian NSA currently working on governance issues, the challenges of recent CSO legislation, the growth in Ethiopia's population since the previous project was approved and the rising cost level in Ethiopia in EUR terms:
  - The EC and GoE should consider raising the allocation for NSA support under EDF10 from the current €10m towards €15m.
2. Since the CSF was agreed between the EC and the GoE before the enactment of the new CSO law on the Programme, since the consequences of this law are not yet clear, and since the GoE has yet to make such regulations and clarifications as would permit the smooth operation of the CSF:
  - The PSC should increase its efforts to obtain from the GoE clear and written confirmation that activities supported through the CSF should be exempt from the provisions of the law under the exemption provision of the proclamation
  - The PSC should increase its efforts to obtain from the GoE clear and written confirmation that funds allocated through the CSF should be considered as Ethiopian funds, at least for the purposes of the new CSO law.
3. The application of Proclamation No 621/2009 is expected to bring about a significant change in the internal dynamics of the NSA sector, in particular in the role of the different categories within the sector. For instance, as far as NSA's engagement in the area of governance is concerned, community and mass-based organizations are expected to become the main and important actors, as opposed to the situation so far in which NGOs have been the dominant actors.
  - The PSC and the TAU should develop strategies and approaches for the provision of grant aid and TA, in particular in terms of targeting and delivery modalities, that enables the CSF Programme to continue its governance related objectives. For example, a greater provision of trainings and publications would enable Ethiopian Charities and Societies to benefit from the programme without receiving grant support that could take them over the 10% threshold. Personnel could also be seconded from Ethiopian resident to Ethiopian Charities and Societies to build up their governance-related capacities. A greater research and publications activity could enable the broader NSA communities to understand the implications of the new legislative environment and to fully use whatever space for "development advocacy" is open to Ethiopian resident organisations.
4. Considering the existence of divergence in governance arrangement and lack of full compatibility of objectives with other initiatives as well as the failure of some initiatives to takeoff, it is a sound decision to continue the CSF as a stand-alone Programme. However,

- The CSF should make efforts to deepen coordination with other similar initiatives, in particular with PBS (social accountability), the multi-donor NSA Adaptation Facility and the CSSP.

### **Efficiency**

1. The tripartite governance structure of the CSF is widely appreciated by all stakeholders and admired by some other donors:
  - Any successor initiative should maintain the tripartite character of governance at least at the same level
  - The representation of NSA should be strengthened by including representatives of those categories of NSA which the successor project intends to support.
  - Coaching must continue to encourage the CTF to create a better balance between its role in the governance of the CSF and its other, more fundamental activities.
  - The representation of the GoE should be strengthened by including representatives of other bodies that have a mandate to support NSA. Exploratory discussions could be held with the Charities and Societies Agency and the Ministry of Justice.
2. The CSF has played an important role in strengthening relationships, confidence and understanding between the various stakeholders. In order to continue in this line
3. It is recommended that, if the successor project is a similar stand-alone project, contracting authority should again be delegated to the ECD.
4. Given the very high importance most stakeholders attached to the non-grant forms of capacity building support, and the challenges that can be expected in increasing the proportion of the successor project's work with emerging areas, smaller NSA and those with little previous experience of Calls for Proposals and Contribution Agreements with donors, and considering the particular challenges of tailoring capacity-building support to the Ethiopian Charities and Societies category within the new legislation:
  - Irrespective of the overall budget for the successor programme, the proportion of the budget allocated to non-grant capacity building should increase from 23% to 27%
5. Global EC procedures are poorly adapted to the needs of a project of this type. Therefore,
  - All efforts should be made both to improve EC global procedures for dealing with NSA in a context like Ethiopia, and to offer greater flexibility and discretion to ECD managing projects of this type.

### **Effectiveness**

1. On strategies and approaches of Programme delivery, in light of the new operating environment, the capacity building component of the CSF should focus on assisting NSA engaged in governance issues to cope up with the requirements of the new law. This means supporting Ethiopian Charities and Societies and those Ethiopian Resident Charities that wish to re-register as Ethiopian Charities in increasing their capacity to generate national streams of income, and assisting Ethiopian Resident Charities to clarify and expand the 'development advocacy' space that is permitted or tolerated for them. The objectives of regional equity, encouragement of network and coalition activities, and promoting Ethiopian-led NSA action rather than action directed by international NGOs remain important. To achieve these objectives, while reducing any trade-off between support to 'emerging' regions and overall project quality:
  - Greater specific Technical Assistance should be provided to NSAs in emerging regions. It is noted that the programme considered the option of regional TA presence at the start of the programme, but decided against, due to the inadequacy



of the TA budget. In any future programme, options including a regional TAU presence or regional help-desks should be considered, and the TA budget adjusted accordingly.

- Specific Technical Assistance should be provided to NSA potential applicants and to selected grantees in challenges and opportunities of working in partnership. The drafting of a sample MoU between coalition partners should be considered.
- The potential contribution of INGOs as partners, though not lead applicants, should be recognized.
- The PSC should focus more closely than in the previous project on the result areas of the project. Monitoring procedures should ensure that progress towards all result areas is tracked consistently and specific remedial measures taken regarding any result areas where the project risks to fall short of its expected results.

## Annexes

### Annex 1: Literature and Documents Consulted

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## Annex 2: List of Persons and Organizations Consulted

Category/Name	Title/Position	Organization
<b>GoE, EC and CSF</b>		
Mesfin Tilahun	Senior Expert, NAO Unit, and PSC Voting Member	Ministry of Finance & Economic Development (MoFED)
Melaku Jemaneh	PSC voting member	Ministry of Capacity Building (MoCB)
Jorge Gemechu	Deputy head	Woliso Woreda Women Affairs Office
Tekalegne Fura	Legal Advisor	Woliso Woreda Women Affairs Office
Melese Mengesha	Deputy Head	Justice and Security Office, Gurage Zone in SNNPRS
Kebebush	Head	Yergalem Town Women Affairs Office in SNNPRS
Doerthe Wacker	Head of Section, Governance, PSC Non-voting member	Delegation of the European Commission to Ethiopia
Douwe Buzeman	Civil Society and Human Rights Project Manager	Delegation of the European Commission to Ethiopia
Thomas Tiedemann	Programme Manager	EC Civil Society Fund in Ethiopia, TAU
Akalewold Bantiyegu	Deputy Programme Manager	EC Civil Society Fund in Ethiopia, TAU
Clare Wood	Civil Society Fund in Ethiopia, Project Officer	EC Civil Society Fund in Ethiopia, TAU
Tamereab Elias	Financial and Grants Officer	EC Civil Society Fund in Ethiopia, TAU
Yemisrach Benalfew	Project Officer	EC Civil Society Fund in Ethiopia, TAU
<b>Non State Actors</b>		
Amanuelworque Abebe	Executive Director	Association for Forced Migrants (AFM)
Eshetu Bekele	Executive Director	Poverty Action Network of Civil Society Organizations in Ethiopia (PANE)
Saba G/Medhin	Executive Director,	Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations (NEWA)
Mohamed Gelma	Secretariat	Cotonou Task Force (CTF)
Maryu Markos	Head of Finance	South Ethiopia People Development Association (SEPDA)
Dr, Meshesha	Executive Director	Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA)
Wondowsen	Program Coordinator	Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia (PFE)
Mohomed Sur	Executive Director	Afar Pastoralist Development Forum (APDF)
Worku Afework	Program Coordinator	Gurage People Self-help Development Organization (GPSDO)
Yebrach Hagos	Senior Fund Raising Officer	Rest
Dr. Taye Assefa	Program Director	Forum for Social Studies (FSS)
Tadele Dersseh	Executive Director	Vision Ethiopian Congress for Democracy (VECOD)
Manyawkal Mekonnen	Executive Director	Organization for Social Justice Ethiopia (OSJE)
Yabowerk Haile	Area Program Manager	ACORD

Leslie F. Mitchell	Country Representative	Pact
<b>Donor organisations</b>		
Kunal Dhar	Governance Advisor (DAG-GTWG)	UNDP
Bizuwork Ketete	Senior Development Advisor	Embassy of Ireland
Shimeles Assefa	Governance and Civil Society Advisor	Ethiopia-Canada Cooperation Office (ECCO)
Abdulhady Mohammed	National Programme Officer for Civil Society Cooperation and HIV/AIDS Programmes	Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)
Pippa Bird	Governance Advisor	UK Department for International Development (DFID)
Steven A. Smith	Democracy and Governance Chief	USAID

## **Annex 3: TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **FINAL EVALUATION OF PHASE 1 OF THE EC CIVIL SOCIETY FUND IN ETHIOPIA AND INPUT TO IDENTIFICATION/FORMULATION OF SUCCESSOR PROGRAMME**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

Non-State Actors (NSA) are increasingly becoming key actors in development. Complementing efforts of the Government, NSAs contribute to dialogue on development issues, agenda-setting as well as delivery of services. Many stakeholders, donor as well as partner countries alike, are increasingly acknowledging the importance of NSAs for development. The Cotonou Partnership Agreement between ACP Countries and the EU, for example, underlines the importance of NSAs in implementing and monitoring & evaluating cooperation programmes as well as in policy dialogue. It pledges to provide more support to NSAs to enable them to fulfil these roles.<sup>17</sup> The cooperation between the EU and the Government of Ethiopia in the framework of the 9<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF) accordingly includes a “Civil Society Fund – Support to Non-State Actors” to increase their capacity to deliver services and engage in dialogue with the Government and amongst themselves.

The NSA sector in Ethiopia was comparably underdeveloped during the feudal times as well as the socialist regime until 1991. Organisations at that time, mostly international NGOs and Faith Based Organisations, focused on relief, welfare and other service provision projects. With the change of government in 1991, more diverse groups of NSA were established and numbers have rapidly been increasing again since 2000.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, compared to other countries, the sector is still emerging. Recently, discussions about the regulation of the sector have increased due to the Government’s issuing of a new legislation for Charities and Civil Society Organisations in 2009, which is to be fully enforced from 2010 onwards.

#### **Background about CSF**

The Civil Society Fund in Ethiopia is a joint initiative of the European Commission and the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) implemented through two separate Financing Agreements under the 9<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF). The overall objective of the EC Civil Society Fund is to promote a stable and democratic political environment through the integration of all sections of society into the mainstream of political, economic and social life. The purpose of the programme is to increase and improve NSAs dialogue with their constituency, with the Ethiopian government and amongst themselves, and also to increase NSAs' capacity to play their role in the national development process. The results of the programme are intended to be:

- Increased capacity of Ethiopian NSAs to engage in the development and democratisation processes
- Strengthened independence and self-sufficiency of NSAs
- Improved coordination and networking amongst NSAs
- More effective and efficient delivery of services in the governance area
- Greater capacity to dialogue with government and the European Commission on the implementation of Country Support Strategies as part of a more extensive and

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<sup>17</sup> Cotonou Agreement, Articles 1, 2 and 7 among others.

<sup>18</sup> See Mapping Study 2004 and Mapping Study Update 2008, commissioned by the EC Delegation in Ethiopia.



productive dialogue between NSAs and government authorities, between NSAs and their constituencies.

The CSF project was designed under the framework of the EC Country Strategy Paper (CSP) for the period of 2002-2007 that stipulates, as one area of non focal sector support, capacity building for governance and civil society. The National Indicative Programme (NIP) allotted €10 million in support of capacity building for Non State Actors. In the course of the implementation, the European Commission acts as Contracting Authority on behalf of the GoE. Strategic management of the programme is guided by the Civil Society Fund Steering Committee, which is comprised of NSAs, the GoE and the European Commission.

The programme operates through Technical Assistance provision and grant funding to Non-State Actors (NSA) in Ethiopia. The Financing Agreements further define which NSAs the programme targets. Beneficiaries have thus been civil society organisations (CSOs) in the broadest sense; the private sector is excluded.

The Programme was designed to have two phases of implementation: the first phase with a budget of €4.35M from 2006 to 2008, and the second phase with a budget of €5.65M from 2008 to 2010. Implementation began with the establishment of a Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) in January 2006.

The programme has so far launched 6 separate Calls for Proposals (CfP), following which 22 grant projects have been awarded. Signing of a further 14 projects from the CfP 2008 is imminent and a final CfP will be launched in September 2009. The implementation periods of grants awarded from the two Financing Agreements have overlapped due to lengthy procedures as well as the time frames for implementation. By the end of the programme, more than 100 CSOs will have directly benefited as many lead grantees apply in partnerships with many other CSOs.

The different grant projects are currently at all stages of the project cycle. Some have been finalised, received final payments and the corresponding individual commitments been closed. Others are now finalising reports and payment requests, while some are still being implemented. Finally, as stated above, some grants will start in the coming months.

The evaluation to be carried out is thus not an evaluation on the entire programme but will focus mainly on the activities under the first Financing Agreement. It will focus on the overall operation of the programme, including its management bodies and tri-partite arrangements, the work of the TAU, and a selection of grant projects. The evaluation will provide important lessons learnt to improve the programme during the remainder of its implementation period, as well as for further EU-Ethiopia cooperation in strengthening NSAs<sup>19</sup>.

Since the Country Strategy Paper for Ethiopia under EDF 10 includes a provisional commitment of €10 M for “Institutional Support to NSAs”, the evaluation will link results of the current CSF programme to that future objective. Options for a future programme will be explored and finally a successor programme identified and formulated.

## **2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

### **2.1. GLOBAL OBJECTIVE**

To assess the overall performance of CSF Phase 1 implementation, advise the Government of Ethiopia, the European Commission and other stakeholders on strengths and weaknesses and make subsequent recommendations for the ongoing CSF programme phase II.

Furthermore, based on the findings of this evaluation, identify and formulate, in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders, a successor programme for Institutional Support to

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<sup>19</sup> The evaluation is also expected to capitalize on previous assessments of the programme, such as the Mid Term Review of March 2007, the Results Oriented Monitoring of November 2008 as well as the EC AIDCO NSA Capitalisation Study of April 2009. These and other documents will be made available to the team as soon as the contract will have been signed.

NSAs in Ethiopia to be financed from EDF 10 and to be presented to EC Headquarters within the Annual Action Plan (AAP) 2010.

## **2.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE(S)**

The assignment is divided into three parts, each with a specific objective. These are:

**Specific Objective 1** – Conduct a final evaluation of the implementation of Phase I of the CSF programme, assess the context and verify the extent to which it achieved its objectives. Each aspect of the programme should be awarded a grade between A and D<sup>20</sup>. The evaluation will substantiate this grading, taking into account the programme’s environment, will document strengths and weaknesses of the programme and make recommendations to improve the CSF phase II which will be in operation until the end of 2011.

**Specific Objective II** – On the basis of the evaluation findings, undertake an exploration of different options for the design of a future NSA Capacity Building programme (from EDF 10) and identify, in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders, the best option.

**Specific Objective III** – Elaborate the best option chosen through the formulation of a whole NSA Capacity Building programme to be funded under EDF 10.

**NB: The work on this specific objective III is to be undertaken during a second, separate mission.**

Each of the above specific objectives is further detailed below:

**Specific Objective 1** – Final evaluation of Phase I implementation by addressing, inter alia, the listed key areas and suggestion of recommendations to improve CSF phase II:

### **1) Relevance and quality of design**

- Assess the relevance of the CSF in the context of Ethiopia’s development policies, including PASDEP (Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty).
- Assess the programme’s coherence with the EU’s 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Country Strategy Papers and the National Indicative Programmes.
- Assess the appropriateness of the programme design in relation to the problems to be solved, taking into account changes in the programme environment since the initial design.
- Assess how well the programme objectives and interventions are matched to the sociocultural, institutional, political and economic contexts of the country at large and that of NSA in specific.
- Assess the quality of the logical framework. Is there clarity and coherence between the stated objectives, purpose and results? Comment on suitability of indicators.
- Assess the complementarity and coherence of the CSF with other initiatives undertaken by the Government of Ethiopia and/or other donors towards similar objectives.
- Assess the level of stakeholder participation in programme design, implementation and monitoring.

### **2) Efficiency**

- Review the performance of the management of the programme in terms of the quality of day-to-day management, including (1) planning (2) management of the budget (3) management of delivery modalities (grants, other activities etc.) and (4) coordination with relevant stakeholders (EC, GoE, other stakeholders).
- Assess the quality of the services being rendered by the Technical Assistance service contract performed by GOPA.

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<sup>20</sup> This follows the structure used for the EC’s Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) system.

- Assess the efficiency of the programme's management structure and implementation modalities, taking into account the organisational structure and adequacy of personnel, expertise and resources.
- Review the quality of programme monitoring undertaken (M and E system).
- Assess to what extent the costs of the programme have been justified by the benefits that have been generated.
- Are programme/project inputs appropriate compared with outputs and outcomes?
- Comment on adequacy of allocations for grants, technical assistance, external audits, and evaluations.
- Have the governance arrangements facilitated and provided the desired support for efficient implementation of the programme and are accountability systems of the programme appropriate and effective?
- Given the objectives, were alternative approaches available that could have facilitated delivery of support to NSAs more efficiently?

### **3) Effectiveness**

- Examine the extent to which the programme's overall objective, purpose and expected results are being achieved.
- Assess the degree of stakeholders' satisfaction with the programme's delivery and quality of services.
- Assess to what extent the programme approaches and strategies contributed to supporting different categories of NSA.
- Comment on other external factors that may have influenced the success of the programme and how these might be mitigated in future.

### **4) Impact:**

- Undertake a quantitative and qualitative assessment on the impact to date against the targets.
- What are the key achievements of the interventions in terms of policy, practice and behaviour change? What are the intended/envisaged pathways from project results to broader development outcomes?
- What are the main challenges to achieving policy, practice & behaviour change? Has there been any change in objectives? What explains any non-achievement of objectives? Are there any unexpected outcomes?
- What countermeasures were taken by the stakeholders against the unexpected developments (if any) that affected programme quality?

### **5) Sustainability:**

- To what extent were sustainability considerations incorporated and promoted in the programme implementation?
- Has the GoE provided the anticipated support for smooth implementation of the programme? Has the GoE promoted actions that contribute to maximizing impact of the project? (Also refer to article 3.5. of the phase I Financing Agreement's TAP).
- Which of the projects supported is likely to have produced results that contribute most effectively to the programme's objectives?
- What actions/conditions have been put in place to sustain changes in communication between actors and implementation of programmes?

Based on the findings, make recommendations for improvements to all aspects of the programme (logical framework, implementation modalities, governance arrangements, set-up, budget and activities of the TAU etc) for the remainder of the CSF phase II, providing also an opinion on what improvements can be effected in what respective timeframe

Make recommendations how cross cutting issues, such as gender, HIV/AIDS and environment can more proactively be integrated during the remainder of CSF phase II.

**Specific Objective II** – On the basis of the evaluation findings, undertake an exploration of different options for the design of a future NSA Capacity Building programme (from EDF 10) and identify, in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders, the best option.

- Based on the evaluation findings, undertake an exploration of options for a future NSA Capacity Building Programme, listing advantages and disadvantages of the different options, taking into account, among other factors, possibility and appropriateness of joint funding arrangements with other donors, potential value added of a 'stand-alone' EC-GoE programme, alignment to principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, etc.
- Produce a Project Identification Fiche (PIF) for the perusal of EC and GoE on the basis of the most suitable option for future NSA support.

**Specific Objective III** – Elaborate the best option chosen through the formulation of a whole NSA Capacity Building programme.

**This part of the assignment will be handled during a separate, second mission.**

- Based on the evaluation findings, the recommendations and the identification of the best successor option produced during the first mission, formulate a new NSA Capacity Building programme to be financed under EDF 10, addressing:
  - Sector context and stakeholders
  - Lessons learnt and complementarity
  - Donor coordination
  - Objectives, results and activities of the programme (including thematic and sectoral focuses of the programme)
  - Risks and assumptions
  - Crosscutting issues (Gender, HIV/AIDS, Environment)
  - Implementation modalities, timetable and budget
  - Monitoring & Evaluation
  - Communication and visibility
- Produce an Action Fiche and Technical and Administrative Provisions (TAP), including annexes (budget, logical framework, calendar, etc.) to serve as a basis for documents to be included in the Annual Action Programme (AAP) 2010.

### **2.3. REQUESTED SERVICES, INCLUDING SUGGESTED METHODOLOGY**

The requested services are for a team of maximum three people. Two experts will work on objective one (final evaluation) and one person (which could possibly be one of the first two, qualification of the expert allowing) on objectives two and three (identification and formulation).

The assignment is split into two separate missions with an indicative phasing of activities as suggested in the Annex 1 to these ToRs. The exchange and the close collaboration between the experts working on the different objectives is of utmost importance to ensure maximum quality of the final outputs.

The indicative phasing of the input for the two missions is as follows:

- The two experts working on objective one arrive two weeks prior to the arrival of the expert working on objectives two and three. During these two weeks, they undertake the review of documentation, the conduct of interviews and the necessary field visits. One of the two experts takes the lead on the production of the final evaluation report.
- The expert responsible for the identification and formulation of the successor programme arrives at the end of these two weeks and joins the other(s) during the third week dedicated to the evaluation and an initial identification of best options for the successor programme.

- At the end of week 3 the draft report for the final evaluation will be presented to stakeholders in a debriefing session. Stakeholders will then get one week to gather their comments and to send them to the expert responsible for the production of the final report. Within 5 calendar days of receipt of the consolidated comments he/she will submit the final evaluation report to the EC Delegation and the NAO.
- The expert responsible for objective two will continue to work two more weeks on the identification of the best option for a successor programme and present a draft Project Identification Fiche at the end of these two weeks to relevant stakeholders. Stakeholders will get one week to gather comments and will send them to the responsible expert who will then produce the final PIF within 5 calendar days of receipt of the consolidated comments.
- Once the PIF has been approved by EC Headquarters, the same expert will come on a second mission to Addis Ababa to work for three weeks on the formulation of the successor programme as indicated under objective three. At the end of these three weeks the draft Action Fiche and Technical and Administrative Provisions (plus annexes to the TAPs) will be presented to stakeholders who will then have 1 week to gather their comments. Seven calendar days after the receipt of the consolidated comments the expert will send the final AF and TAPs (plus annexes) to the EC Delegation and the NAO.

This time schedule is indicative. It is up to the Framework Contractor to organise the work with either two or three experts in a way that the draft evaluation report informs the identification of the best option for the successor programme. The final evaluation report has to be with the EC Delegation **not later than the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2009**. The final Project Identification Fiche has to be received by the EC Delegation **not later than 28<sup>th</sup> November 2009**. The final Action Fiche and TAPs have to be received by the EC Delegation **not later than 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010**. In case of delays at EC Headquarters regarding the approval of the Project Identification Fiche, the time schedule for the second mission and the deadlines for submission of the AF and TAPs might have to be revised slightly.

**The Framework Contractor is herewith requested to present - together with the presentation of the CVs and the financial offer - a short methodology for the organisation of the assignment.**

It is expected that the methodology include the following basic activities:

- 1) Organisation of the team, division of labour and phasing of activities.
- 2) Review of programme documentation.
- 3) Field visits. The team should propose in the initial work plan, which of the grant projects they will visit. The sample should be large enough to be representative. The experts are expected to conduct in situ visits to carry out in depth interviews, inspection and analysis of the programme activities.
- 4) Interviews and discussions. The experts are expected to conduct interviews and discussions with GoE staff (MoFED, MoCB and potentially other Ministries), EC Delegation, TAU, CSF grantees and other non state actors (NSAs), members of the CSF Project Steering Committee and the Cotonou Task Force, other donors and stakeholders, as deemed necessary.

#### **2.4 REQUIRED OUTPUTS**

The outputs under the first objective of this assignment are expected to be:

- A **work plan**, including information on people to be interviewed, documents to be reviewed, projects to be visited etc., within 2 working days of the start of the assignment.
- **Briefing note/draft final report** for presentation of key findings, conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation to stakeholders.

- A **final evaluation report** of not more than 40 pages (excluding annexes), including an executive summary of not more than 5 pages.

The outputs for the second and third objectives of this assignment are expected to be:

- A **draft Action Fiche** and **draft Technical and Administrative Provisions** to be presented to stakeholders.
- **Final Action Fiche** and **Technical and Administrative Provisions** to be included in the Annual Action Programme 2010. These documents are to be complemented by a **narrative** which explains the rationale for the chosen approaches, weighing pros and cons of the different options assessed.

### **3. EXPERTS PROFILE**

#### **3.1. Number of requested experts per category and number of man-days per expert**

The requested services are for a team of maximum three people to be recruited from category II.

A close collaboration and constant exchange between the members of the team is absolutely necessary to ensure that the findings of the final evaluation inform the identification and formulation of the successor programme.

It has been estimated that a total of 70 working days - to be split between the team members - should be enough to fulfil the assignment.

All the experts must be from EU or ACP countries.

#### **3.2. Profile required (education, experience, references and category as appropriate)**

The assignment calls for a team which would preferably have the following attributes:

##### *Qualifications and skills*

- All experts must have a minimum of an advanced degree (MSc, M.A. or equivalent) in a relevant discipline (e.g. social science, development studies, sociology, economics, management, etc.)
- All team members must have excellent written and communication skills in English
- Knowledge of Amharic by at least one of the team members would be an advantage

##### *General and specific professional experience*

- Each expert should have at least 10 years of relevant professional experience
- Each expert should have previous experience in the field of civil society strengthening
- At least one team member should have a comparative country experience in civil society strengthening
- The expert working on objectives two and three should have solid understanding of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> EDF procedures (specifically on grant-making) and experience of different aid modalities (pool funding, project approach, etc).

#### **3.3. WORKING LANGUAGE(S)**

The working language for this assignment shall be English. Fluency in English is compulsory (writing, speaking and reading). All team members are expected to demonstrate impeccable report writing ability in English and are required to have a good working knowledge of standard computer software (word processing, spreadsheets etc).

### **4. LOCATION AND DURATION**

#### **4.1. STARTING PERIOD**

The first mission is to start indicatively on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

The start date for the second mission will be around early February 2010.

#### **4.2. LOCATION(S) OF ASSIGNMENT**

The consultants will be based in Addis Ababa; however, site visits to specific grant implementation areas will be necessary.

The incorporation of comments to the documents and the finalisation of the final documents will be done from the place of origin of the experts.

### **5. REPORTING**

The language of the reports shall be English and the experts will submit the following reports and documents:

- A **work plan**, including information on people to be interviewed, documents to be reviewed, projects to be visited etc. within 2 working days of the start of the assignment.
- **Briefing note/draft final evaluation report** for presentation of key findings, conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation to stakeholders.
- A **final evaluation report** of not more than 40 pages (excluding annexes), including an executive summary of not more than 5 pages. The format of this report has to be in line with the following outline: Executive Summary, Introduction, Findings according to points 1 to 5 listed under 'Specific Objective 1', Coherence & Mutual Reinforcement, EC Added value, Visibility, Overall Assessment, Conclusions & Recommendations<sup>21</sup>. This final report is to be submitted in 5 bound copies and 1 electronic version not later than 5 calendar days after receiving the comments on the draft report.
- **Draft Action Fiche** and **draft Technical and Administrative Provisions** to be presented to stakeholders.
- **Final Action Fiche** and **Technical and Administrative Provisions**, plus **narrative** as explained above not later than 7 calendar days after receiving the comments on the drafts.

## **6. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

### **6.1. Tax and VAT arrangements**

In general the contract will be free from taxes and duties in Ethiopia, except for goods and services purchased by the Consultant on the local market, on which taxes and duties have already been levied.

### **6.2. Fees, per diems and working hours**

The assignment is for a total of 70 working days.

Fees will be paid for the working days (on which a service is provided). Working days will normally be Monday to Friday, although, with prior approval of the EC Delegation, weekend days may be used for work, if deemed necessary, such as during field work.

Per diems for experts will be paid for the duration of the stay in Ethiopia, unless Ethiopia is his/her/their place of residence, and excluding any leave days, at a rate not exceeding the maximum rate applicable at the time of request (see EuropeAid website). Per diems notably cover accommodation, subsistence and all intra-city travels, regardless of the means of transport used by the expert. For experts who are resident in Ethiopia, the payment of the per diem will be accepted only for days spent out of Addis Ababa and accepted ex-ante by the Contracting Authority. In such cases, it will only be paid upon submission of hotel bills and evidence of payment.

Time sheets showing the days worked and the days in country will be submitted to the Delegation with the request for final payment.

National Travel: Intra-city travel is included in the per diems and they are not eligible once more under reimbursables.

Inter-city travel in Ethiopia will be reimbursed based on presentation of invoices for flights or car hire and fuel as well as proof of payment. A provision of €4,500 should be included under reimbursables for inter-city travel. Should the team hire (a) vehicle(s) for the entire period of

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<sup>21</sup> A model report template used by the European Commission for all Final Evaluations will be made available to the team at the beginning of the assignment.

the assignment, car hire costs will only be reimbursed for the inter-city part of the travels made during the period of the assignment.

International Travel: International travel, if applicable, in economic class to the place of mission and back is considered to start at the closest station/airport to the expert's residence and to end at the airport of destination.

Possible visa costs, if applicable, are to be included under reimbursables.

The team shall report to the EC Delegation Task Manager (as a representative of the contracting authority) and to the National Authorising Officer, but it will liaise on a day-to-day basis with the Technical Assistance Unit of the Civil Society Fund.

The experts are expected to be fully equipped with computers (1 each) and mobile phones (1 each).

Office supplies, communications, printing and copying of reports under this contract are covered in the fees and may not be recovered again as reimbursables.

These points are covered on the EuropeAid website dealing with framework contracts including instructions for completing the offer for services:

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/framework\\_contract/beneficiaries/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/framework_contract/beneficiaries/index_en.htm)



## Annex 6: Evaluation Issues/Questions by Thematic Area

No	Thematic Area	Evaluation Question
	<b>Relevance</b>	
		Assess the relevance of the CSF in the context of Ethiopia's development policies, including PASDEP (Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty).
		Assess the programme's coherence with the EU's 9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> Country Strategy Papers and the National Indicative Programmes
		Assess the appropriateness of the programme design in relation to the problems to be solved, taking into account changes in the programme environment since the initial design
		Assess how well the programme objectives and interventions are matched to the sociocultural, institutional, political and economic contexts of the country at large and that of NSA in specific
		Assess the quality of the logical framework. Is there clarity and coherence between the stated objectives, purpose and results? Comment on suitability of indicators
		Assess the complementarity and coherence of the CSF with other initiatives undertaken by the Government of Ethiopia and/or other donors towards similar objectives
		Assess the level of stakeholder participation in programme design, implementation and monitoring
	<b>Efficiency</b>	
		Review the performance of the management of the programme in terms of the quality of day-to-day management, including (1) planning (2) management of the budget (3) management of delivery modalities (grants, other activities etc.) and (4) coordination with relevant stakeholders (EC, GoE, other stakeholders)
		Assess the quality of the services being rendered by the Technical Assistance service contract performed by GOPA
		Assess the efficiency of the programme's management structure and implementation modalities, taking into account the organisational structure and adequacy of personnel, expertise and resources
		Review the quality of programme monitoring undertaken (M and E system)
		Assess to what extent the costs of the programme have been justified by the benefits that have been generated
		Are programme/project inputs appropriate compared with outputs and outcomes? Comment on adequacy of allocations for grants, technical assistance, external audits, and evaluations
		Have the governance arrangements facilitated and provided the desired support for efficient implementation of the programme and are accountability systems of the programme appropriate and effective?
		Given the objectives, were alternative approaches available that could have facilitated delivery of support to NSAs more efficiently?
	<b>Effectiveness</b>	
		Examine the extent to which the programme's overall objective,

		purpose and expected results are being achieved
		Assess the degree of stakeholders' satisfaction with the programme's delivery and quality of services
		Assess to what extent the programme approaches and strategies contributed to supporting different categories of NSA
		Comment on other external factors that may have influenced the success of the programme and how these might be mitigated in future
	<b>Impact</b>	
		Undertake a quantitative and qualitative assessment on the impact to date against the targets
		What are the key achievements of the interventions in terms of policy, practice and behaviour change? What are the intended/envisaged pathways from project results to broader development outcomes?
		What are the main challenges to achieving policy, practice & behaviour change? Has there been any change in objectives? What explains any non-achievement of objectives? Are there any unexpected outcomes?
		What countermeasures were taken by the stakeholders against the unexpected developments (if any) that affected programme quality?
	<b>Sustainability</b>	
		To what extent were sustainability considerations incorporated and promoted in the programme implementation?
		Has the GoE provided the anticipated support for smooth implementation of the programme? Has the GoE promoted actions that contribute to maximizing impact of the project? (Also refer to article 3.5. of the phase I Financing Agreement's TAP)
		Which of the projects supported is likely to have produced results that contribute most effectively to the programme's objectives?
		What actions/conditions have been put in place to sustain changes in communication between actors and implementation of programmes?