

Enhancing the Competence and Sustainability of High Quality CSOs in Kenya

**REPORT OF AN EXPLORATORY STUDY
COMMISSIONED BY
AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK (AKDN)**

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A K D N
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 **Poverty Eradication Network**
Strengthening Citizens Participation

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organization
CS	Civil Society
CBO	Community Based Organisation
MS-TCDC	MS- Training Center for Development Co-operation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPO	Not for Profit Organization
PCP	Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is based on interviews with Civil Society Organization (CSO) thinkers and practitioners within the East African region as well as representatives of organizations providing capacity building services. The survey aimed at establishing what were considered to be the standards and qualities of an exemplary CSO. Further, the study sought to identify organizations offering capacity building in the region, the areas in which capacity building was being offered and to determine the gaps in capacity building services.

While there appeared to be a general consensus on standards, qualities and even best practices, practitioners and thinkers who were interviewed tended to give emphasis to different aspects. There was consensus that a process of identifying and setting standards would have to be participatory and all inclusive to get as wide a perspective as possible.

A key challenge that needs to be addressed is related to the gaps that exist in the legislative and policy framework and which hinder the implementation of standards. The lack of a legitimate and credible institution to organize CSOs and monitor standards in Kenya is a further handicap. Further, many CSOs have no information on the standards required of them and of their role and responsibilities in upholding them. The lack of a culture that puts a premium on best practices, quality control and value driven leadership is a key hindrance as well as the fact that CSOs generally lack the capacity to implement practices that require technical skills, capital resources, financial resources and infrastructural as well as logistical skills.

Linked to the issue of standards is what some considered as the inadequate conceptual and ideological grounding of organizations in the ethos of the civil society movement. This raised the question of whether in fact, the presumption that led to the development of the Code of Conduct, i.e. that CSOs intrinsically behave ethically, is still sufficiently important to promote best practices in the sector. In addition, the almost overwhelming dependency by local CSOs and especially NGOs on donor funding from the North has created the dilemma of balancing donor interests with the aspirations, values and identities of CSOs. This in turn raises issues on the sustainability and legitimacy of these organizations.

From the study, it is clear that an effective and enabling regulatory and policy environment is critical for ensuring compliance with set standards. The regulatory mechanisms for the promotion of good practices will also have to be strengthened. There was a strong body of opinion amongst the respondents that felt that strong, informed and visionary leadership is central to ensuring standards and good practices in the CSO sector.

All in all there was agreement that there is need to establish clear standards and qualities for CSOs, promote best practices and provide holistic capacity building. This report gives a brief background of capacity building organizations surveyed and their areas of

coverage and further documents what are considered to be the qualities of exemplary CSOs and the standards they are expected to uphold.

With regard to capacity building needs, the study reveals that there are numerous opportunities for credible CBPs to operate in Kenya because the number of CSOs keeps growing by the day. Many of these CSOs lack requisite skills to manage their organizations and programmes. Yet, there are few competent capacity building providers offering quality and sustainable services. One of the challenges raised by the CBPs was that donors do not prioritize the provision of capacity building and that when they make provision for it, it is not done in the context of the holistic needs of the organization, but to address specific components, which are of interest to the donor. The inability to contextualize capacity building and be innovative in addressing the specific needs and realities of different organizations was also cited as a key challenge in this field. There is also lack of a conceptual framework for capacity building and the pressure to deliver quick results. In addition, the lack of an adequate framework for measuring the impact of capacity building is a key challenge.

The respondents recommended that capacity building would have to be founded on our local context, holistic and sustained over a period to ensure the best possible results. The challenges raised by the study, especially with regard to the conflict between CSO ideals and donor interests will need be addressed through critical engagement with donors and other partners on constructive policies and practices.

1.0 Methodology

1.1 The Study Objectives

The study is designed to meet four specific objectives: to identify the qualities of exemplary CSOs; to document the qualities; to identify organizations that offer capacity building services; and to identify the gaps where training materials and capacity building providers are required. It is hoped that the findings will lead to the provision of high quality CSO training opportunities in areas where they are lacking and stimulate a broader interest in strengthening the overall competence and sustainability of CSOs in Kenya.

1.2 The Data Collection Process

(i) Standards and Qualities

In the first phase the research team conducted a desk survey based on published reports. The internet was one of the primary sources of information. Through the survey, the research team collected information on standards and qualities, which point to the ethical conduct or efficiency of CSOs. This information suggested themes for developing the key indicators for observing an organization's competence and integrity.

Primary data was also obtained from face to face interviews. A purposive sample of respondents who were considered, by reason of their experience in the sector, to provide the best possible source of information on qualities and standards of CSOs was targeted. A number of thinkers were also chosen due to their knowledge and reflections on the sector. From a list of twenty practitioners and thinkers, twelve were selected for interviews. Thirteen were eventually contacted and interviewed (See Appendix B).

The second phase of the data collection process comprised a one day workshop, which brought together about 22 leading thinkers and practitioners from the CSO sector, to discuss and clarify the qualities and standards that they expect from exemplary CSOs (See Appendix D for the list of participants).

(ii) Capacity Building Providers

In a bid to identify organizations that offer capacity building in the qualities and standards identified, a list of twenty organizations was drawn up, based on considerations such as geographical coverage, experience and areas of focus. From the twenty capacity building providers identified, eight were chosen, contacted and their official representatives interviewed (See Appendix C). Desk studies, based on the published reports and mission statements of the Capacity Building Providers (CBPs), were also carried out. Data collection of this group of respondents was conducted in Nairobi, Nyanza and Rift-valley provinces of Kenya and in Arusha, Tanzania (See Annexure A for profile of CBPs).

From the information collected, it was possible to identify the areas of focus and establish the gaps, in local capacity building services.

1.3 Data Collection Tools

Open ended questionnaires were developed for the face-to-face interviews with the thinkers and with the CBPs (See appendix E).The interviews were mostly tape-recorded and later transcribed.

The data collected was aggregated and analysed to develop consistent strands of information on the qualities of exemplary CSOs; the range of organizations that offer capacity building; and the gaps where training materials and CBPs are required.

The research team then prepared a report of the findings and recommendations.

1.4 ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

1.4.1 Assumptions

This Study is premised on the assumption that there is a universal understanding and consensus on the definition of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and that sampling a few representative CSOs will suffice in building a generalized opinion on CSOs. However, the very definition of CSOs has been elusive, notwithstanding the numerous attempts by development practitioners and thinkers at this.

Development practitioners are yet to agree on what constitutes CSOs. So questions abound as to whether or not Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith Based Organizations (FBOs), Self Help Groups, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Networks, Trusts and Foundations, International Non Governmental Organizations (INGOs), Welfare Associations, Clan groupings and Political Parties constitute CSOs and that incredibly complex, vibrant and wide diversity of the sector defies any attempts at making general conclusions based on only a cross section of the CSOs. The ideal situation would entail a study that reaches the widest possible range of CSOs in the broadest geographical, cultural and economic diversity.

Despite the foregoing, the study looks to distill from leading practitioners and thinkers from selected CSOs common standards and practice and qualities that should be exhibited or aspired to by all CSOs.

1.4.2 Limitations

The study team encountered various limitations. The following is a summary of some of the most significant ones:

- The scope of the study was not extensive enough to capture the widest section of the country or even the broadest segment of the CSO sector. As such the study findings may not be fully representative.
- The very definitions of key terms such ‘Civil Society Organizations’, ‘Capacity Building’, ‘Capacity Building Providers’, ‘Qualities and Standards’ and

- 'Exemplary CSOs' were largely relative and we had to settle for working definitions for the purpose of this study;
- The time frame allocated for the study was too short considering the scope and dynamics of the assignment;
 - Some of the key informants were very busy people who could not afford enough time for exhaustive discussions;
 - Despite concerted effort, it was impossible to get appointments to interview some key informants due to their busy schedules.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 WHAT IS CIVIL SOCIETY?

The issue of defining what constitutes Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) is a problematic one. Indeed, the use of these terms in many instances depends on place and time, country and the existing legal framework for registering civil society organizations. Other factors include membership, mission, form of organization and levels of operation.

At one level, CSOs can be described as all *organized activity not associated with major institutional systems: government and administration, education and health delivery, business and industry, security and organized religion*. They include religious/faith based organizations, cooperatives, trade unions, academic institutions, community and youth groups.¹

Richard Halloway sees the term CSO as a positive descriptive term and defines it as “citizens, associating neither for power nor for profit, are the third sector of society, complementing government and business, and they are the people who constitute civil society organizations”.²

CSOs can encompass grass-roots organizations, citizen’s movements, trade unions, cooperatives, and NGOs, and other ways in which citizens associate for non-politically partisan and non-profit motives. They are not necessarily formal or registered

Halloway looks at the political economy of the modern society in three basic sectors-state, business and a third sector defined by citizen self organization. The state’s distinctive competence is legitimate use of coercion. The business sector’s competence is market exchange and the third sector’s competence is private choice for the public good. Citizens mobilize through values they share with other citizens and through shared commitment to action with other citizens

Halloway further states³ that it is taken as given that CSOs can do things which neither of the other national development actors-the government and the corporate sector-can do on their own. CSOs would have as their main objective the improvement in the lives of the poorest and disadvantaged. Civil society organizations are therefore created in the public interest, both in the North and in the South and are:

- Driven by values that reflect a desire to improve lives
- Contain elements of voluntarism(i.e. are formed by choice, not by compulsion, and involve voluntary contributions of time and money;

¹ Judge, Anthony, Interacting fruitfully with uncivil society: the Dilemma for Non Civil Society Organizations, (Transnational Associations, Washington DC, 1996)

² Towards Self Reliance : A Handbook for Resource Mobilisation for Civil Society Organizations in the South (Earthscan Publications Ltd London, 2001)

³ id

- Have private and independent governance;
- Are not for any one's profit(i.e. they do not distribute profit to staff or shareholders);
- Have clearly stated and definable public purposes to which they hold themselves accountable;
- Are formally constituted in law or have an accepted identity in the culture and tradition of the country

Oduor Ong'wen,⁴ looks at CSOs as organizations between the family and the state organized not for the purpose of profit. These operate autonomously outside the state. He observes that while NGOs form but a small segment of the CSOs they have become the face of CSOs. He sees CSOs in Kenya as basically falling into six (6) broad categories:

- Social movements at different levels, that is, people coming together to pursue political , economic empowerment purposes, local grassroots organizations ,trade unions, cooperatives;
- Relief type organizations;
- Development service providers;
- Organizations involved in Conservation;
- Advocacy/policy interventions at local and national level and on global policy issues;
- Private sector associations e.g. Federation of Kenya Employers, which represents the private sector interest but is not for profit.

Despite the variety of definitions and the wide range of CSO dynamics that make it difficult to come up with a uniform definition, there seems to be consensus regarding the following: Civil Society plays a critical role in any democratic society, it holds everyone accountable for their actions, it defines and pursues the common good, it is composed of and reflects the will of the people, it is value driven, it pursues equity and justice, human rights for all, preservation of our environment and natural resources, it reflects and upholds the dignity of all people. Civil Society is not defined by the few registered organisations but by people's and societies ability to express itself and work for its own future.⁵

⁴ One of the leading practitioners in the civil society in Kenya

⁵ John Batten in a study commissioned by the National Aids Control Council (NACC), 2007, Strengthening NACC's collaboration with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) for effective implementation of the Kenya National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan (KNASP), 2005/06 – 2009/10.

3.0 A COMPARATIVE STUDY

THE PAKISTAN CENTRE FOR PHILANTHROPY (PCP) AND THE KENYA SELF-REGULATION EXPERIENCE

3.1 Background

Prior to 2003, the adherence by NPOs in Pakistan to reporting and other requirements imposed by various registration and taxation laws was very low. In addition, the state did not have the necessary capacity to promote transparency and good governance in the sector. Further, voluntary adherence to codes of conduct was also ineffective. Therefore, the sector felt obliged to look inwards and to develop its own standards and mechanisms to enforce these standards.

This created the way for the NPO certification regime, which was developed by an NGO in Pakistan – the Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy (PCP), with the support of a wide range of stakeholders. One of the key objectives for the establishment of the program was the need to set up a system that would assist stakeholders (corporates, individuals, government) in the identification of credible social development partners who could be trusted with their social investments.

This system would provide the stakeholders with reliable and updated information about the capacity and organisational effectiveness of different credible organisations.⁶

In Kenya, the early 90's saw the introduction of the NGO Coordination Act, which was aimed to bring the fast growing and largely unstructured civil society under government's control. This move forced NGOs to organize themselves into a group that could engage with government.

The result was the promulgation of a law, the NGO Coordination Act, which provided a framework that was more conducive for NGOs. The law recognized the NGO Council, an umbrella organization for registered NGOs and the NGO Coordination Board, which facilitated engagement between the sector and the government. The NGO Council developed Rules and Regulations and a Code of Conduct to promote self-regulation in the sector.

3.2 The Role of Certification in Setting Standards

The PCP certification program in Pakistan promotes high standards in the critical areas of internal governance, financial management, and programme delivery⁷ in the NPOs in many ways. First, the standards help operationalise the principles enumerated in the

⁶ <http://www.pcp.org.pk/certification>

⁷ These benchmarks are derived from international best practice, modified for the Pakistani context. See Ahsan Rana 'NPO Self-Regulation: the Pakistan model' *Alliance* Vol 9 No.1 March 2004, p.28.

various codes of conduct. Being objectively verifiable and quantifiable in most cases, the standards serve as the goals each organisation would want to reach.⁸

Second, certification incentivises the adoption of best practices as it entails a detailed evaluation on standardised parameters. Third, a major focus of the evaluation parameters is the public disclosure of information. It is hoped that this will contribute to holding NPOs accountable to their donors, beneficiaries and public at large.

Fourth, certification raises critical questions about the efficiency and effectiveness of organizational programmes. Without passing any external value judgments in this regard, the process raises these questions and stimulates debate internally.

Fifth, PCP certification aims to promote indigenous philanthropy (though not to the exclusion of international and Diaspora giving). An increased linkage between local philanthropists and NPOs is a way of making the NPO more inclusive, transparent and accountable to the communities they serve. Ultimately, this improves their service delivery and efficiency.⁹

PCP's certification also forms the basis for NPOs to get a tax exemption from the Government. PCP presented the idea to the government of Pakistan to add a certification mechanism for government benefit the Centre has the status of an official agency that can certify NGOs/NPOs voluntarily applying for tax exemption or donee status.

In Kenya, the NGO sector set for itself a set of standards, over and above the requirements of the NGO Coordination Act and subsidiary legislation emanating from it.¹⁰

The purpose was to achieve three things: To set the sector apart from all other sectors as one with a high moral base; to set the sector as an example to be followed by the state and other sectors of civil society and be seen as an icon of democratic good governance; and to reflect the quality and aspirations of the sector and especially it's leadership at the time.

This setting informed the establishment of governance and regulatory procedures and determined the core values to drive these processes. The overarching driving force was "self-regulation". Any action from government was perceived a control to be kept away as far as possible. This was to have serious consequences later.¹¹

3.3 The Certification Process

PCP certification is based on an objective and transparent system of professional evaluation of NPOs, done on a voluntary basis. Given the voluntary nature of

⁸ Muhammad Ahsan Rana 'Setting Standards In The Nonprofit Sector: The Certification Experience In Pakistan' In Volume II Issue 4 October 2004, International Journal Of Civil Society Law, pp 83-87, p.85.

⁹ id

¹⁰ Tororei, S.K "Applying standards in the civil society sector: Pitfalls and Opportunities" A paper presented at a workshop for civil society Thinkers and Practitioners (Nairobi, March 7th, 2007)

¹¹ id

certification, the option to approach the government directly is also available. But certification offers a friendly and objective system of performance assessment, thus saving the NPOs from the arbitrary and time-consuming processes of engaging with the government, as the necessary legal framework is already in place.

If an NPO meets the required criteria, it is certified as a credible organisation and a Certificate is issued. However, if it does not, it is then linked with specialised capacity building organisations that provide professional support to help build organisational capacity so that certification standards may be met.

For the implementation of this regime, an effective mechanism, a Certification Unit, was established at PCP. Staffed with a team of well qualified and trained people, the unit been operational since November 2003. It is capable of evaluating 100-120 nonprofit organisations on an annual basis.¹²

In the Kenya scenario, almost half of the Code of Conduct is devoted to describing how the standards would be enforced by the sector largely on itself and by itself. The underlying ethos of these mechanisms is an overwhelming reliance on willful obedience and adherence and willing submission to quasi-judicial dispute resolution or standards enforcement structures¹³ i.e. the regulatory committee and the general assembly. However, this over-reliance on voluntary submission by the Council and its members on the regulatory committee has been tested to the limit over the last two or three years and has been shown to be largely ineffective as a result of the Council's leadership's blatant disregard for the Code. To compound issues, the existing Act, which was established in 1990 to increase democratic space within NGOs and minimize government interference, has also served to protect leaders who flout standards established by the sector.

As was the case in Pakistan prior to 2003, voluntary compliance by Kenya's NGO sector to the standards set by the Code of Conduct was found to be largely ineffective. The values are deemed to be insufficiently significant on their own, not to be flouted.

While stressing self-regulation, the NGO Council failed to provide a practical framework for enforcement of the standards. For example, part of the enforcement process consists of a tribunal of over 3000 members of the Council's general assembly, being charged with decision-making over errant members; a regulatory sector. committee, which is chaired by the council chairperson who may himself or herself be the subject of the committee's action and; the absence of a neutral third party to provide checks and balances in cases where the mechanism fails e.g. where there is a deadlock in the decision making apparatus or a flagrant violation of the Code of Conduct by the Council leadership itself.

In addition, since membership to the Council is not automatic, upon registration of an NGO, the Council finds it difficult to check on the extend of compliance with the rules and regulations or the code of conduct by members of the sector.

¹² <http://www.pcp.org.pk/certification>

¹³ Tororei, S.K "Applying standards in the civil society sector: Pitfalls and Opportunities" op. cit.

According to Dr. Tororei, the NGO sector demonstrates the folly of attempting to administer or enforce standards through weak administrative management structures and processes which are open to manipulation and distortion due to weak membership, over-reliance on donor support and uncertain support from the state. These factors make the structures vulnerable to the negative effects of any shifts and changes in the status quo.

3.4 Issues pointed out

The PCP case raises the following issues¹⁴:

- (a) Unless certification is widely accepted as an effective means of self-regulation, it would lack the moral authority/ sanction that is necessary for its sustainability. Certification can become a mechanism of credibility assurance only if the stakeholders have confidence in PCP's certification working in the first place; If people are confident in the objectivity and professionalism of PCP's evaluations.
- (b) Fears have been raised, that certification could become a mechanism of exclusion and of channeling donor assistance to a certain group of NPOs. The maximum weightage given to program delivery is 30%. This will exclude small and medium size organizations that have good program delivery, community contacts/links and clear mission/vision but could not develop financial systems or governance procedures.
- (c) As the operations scale up, maintaining standards becomes a big challenge for PCP. Here lies the dilemma. Certification cannot become an effective mechanism of promoting good governance and transparency unless a sizeable number of NPOs pass through the sieve; but scaling up of operations requires huge financial inputs and the risk of compromising on quality. Without a significant scaling up, certification will have limited outreach and, consequently, limited impact.¹⁵
- (d) As Kenyan NPOs begin to rethink self-regulation, the challenge of bringing the benefits of certification to small- and medium-sized NPOs will need to be addressed. In Pakistan, it is mostly the large NPOs that have approached PCP for certification. The virtues of self-regulation, effectiveness and transparency will only become the norm only if they facilitate delivery of services to the ultimate beneficiaries, i.e., the marginalized and poor segments of society.
- (e) Any certification agency will collect and analyse critical information about an NPO in the course of evaluation, but the question of how much can be disclosed and to whom has generated considerable debate. The certification agency has a responsibility to divulge the fact of an NPO having been refused certification to any genuine stakeholder. But who is a genuine stakeholder?
- (f) Ultimately, the value added to NPOs, donors and other stakeholders remains the litmus test for PCP's certification regime.

Other issues

- (g) Several practitioners contend that allowing an independent agency like PCP to exercise a purely government authority in judging some organization and awarding certain privileges is not justified. The practitioner's also claim that since most of the

¹⁴ Muhammad Ahsan Rana 'Setting Standards In The Nonprofit Sector: The Certification Experience In Pakistan' In Volume II Issue 4 October 2004, *International Journal Of Civil Society Law*, pp 83-87 , p.85. See also, Irfan Mufti "New Non-Profit Law And Certification Of Non-Profit Organizations In Pakistan: Voices And Views Of Civil Society" In Volume II Issue 4 October 2004, *International Journal Of Civil Society Law*, pp 88-91

¹⁵ Ahsan Rana 'NPO Self-Regulation: the Pakistan model' *Alliance* Vol 9 No.1 March 2004, p.28.

assessment is done through desk reviews, it may not give a clear picture of what really takes place within the organizations.

During the workshop for civil society thinkers and practitioners in Kenya, a number of participants raised pertinent issues that will require consideration, in any efforts aimed at developing and implementing standards of best practice:

- How do we balance the voluntary autonomous nature of CSOs and the need for self-regulation and enforcement of compliance? How can we avoid introducing standards and mechanisms that amount to control?
- Who shall support the cost of integrating and implementing standards in CSOs?
- The standards need to be specific and measurable. What is the range of variables that are to be considered in the standards and who determines what weight each is to be given? How can we avoid subjectivity in developing them? Do the values in the Code of Conduct need to be made more specific?
- Will CSOs deliberately avoid subjecting themselves to the self-regulatory regime if it is seen to comprise drastic legal implications?
- While standards can improve the impact and operations of CSOs, they can also serve to stifle the entry or growth of others. How do we guard against the misapplication of standards? How can we ensure that the standards do not end up being discriminatory?
- How do we ensure that standards are applicable across the whole spectrum of groups in civil society? If the NGO sub-sector sets up and implements its own set of standards, can goodwill help to spread them across the board of CSOs? Can the NGO sector serve as a practical example for other sub-sectors?
- Should the sector review the self regulation mechanism set up by the rules and regulations and determine whether resort to a third party umpire is necessary to avoid impasses like the current one?

There is definitely need to rethink the role of standards and redefine compliance and enforcement strategies in Kenya, taking due note of the PCP experience.

4.0 QUALITIES AND STANDARDS

Civil Society Organizations have over the last decade acquired an increasingly important role in world affairs. Indeed the changing global political landscape has engendered an increasingly powerful and influential civil society to the extent that currently, global public policy is informed through a negotiated process involving states, civil society and the private sector. Indeed, CSOs have in become a de facto partner in the establishment of global norms and standards and increasingly influence policy solutions to social and even economic problems. Further, CSOs are progressively replacing the state in the delivery of social services. This state of affairs has in turn put the spotlight squarely on CSOs and their internal practices and standards as well as their effectiveness and performance in delivering on their stated mission and objectives.

This study can be seen in the foregoing context and seeks to establish the qualities of an ideal CSO and identify opportunities for assisting CSOs to attain these standards. Nevertheless, it is critical that this exercise be linked to the ethos of the CSO movement worldwide as well as the specific history, evolution and circumstances of CSOs in the East African region

4.1 DEFINING STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES

4.1.1 Defining Standards

The English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (International Student Edition)¹⁶ defines standards as follows:

*‘A level of quality or achievement, especially one that people generally consider normal or acceptable’, or
‘A level of quality used for judging someone or something.’*

The Thesaurus Dictionary¹⁷ describes Standards as:
‘Something, such as a product or practice that is widely recognized or employed because of its excellence’, or ‘A degree or level of requirement, excellence or attainment’.

For purposes of this report, the following definition of Standards shall be adopted: “A level of quality in CSO practice that is widely recognized because of its excellence.”

4.1.2 What are Best Practices?

According to *Wikipedia -The Free Encyclopedia*,¹⁸ Best Practices are described as:

¹⁶ Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (International Student Edition) 2006

¹⁷ The English Thesaurus for Windows

¹⁸ www.wikipedia.org

‘.....an approach based around continuous learning and continual improvement’.

Wikipedia gives the following three key themes found in Best Practices:

- (i) Benchmarking systems derived from a personal and organizational willingness to learn. A vibrant sense of curiosity and a deep respect and a desire for learning are the keys to success.
- (ii) Learning and transfer is interactive, ongoing, and dynamic process that can not rest on a static body of knowledge. People are inventing, improvising, and learning something new every day.
- (iii) Transfer is a people-to-people process; meaningful relationships precede sharing and transfer.

‘Best Practices and Kaizen’¹⁹ offers the following definition of the Japanese concept *Kaizen*:

‘Best Practices is ideally, and at the core of the concept, the defining of methods used to get things done. Benefits often include the assurance of quality results and consistency when the process is followed.’

The term Best Practices in this report shall be applied to mean “the use of continuous reflection, innovation, learning and transfer of methods to ensure quality results and consistency when getting things done”.

4.2 RATIONALE FOR STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES

The study sought to establish from practitioners the rationale for ensuring standards and best practices in the CSO sector. The overriding feeling was that the need for standards and best practices is first and foremost idealistic and is intrinsically tied to the need to identify the CSO sector as a “value driven” sector. Those interviewed were emphatic that the CSO sector should be the conscience of the nation and should serve as an example by being beyond reproach, if it is to have the moral authority to question and raise issues of accountability with regard to other actors. This belief formed the spirit and basis of the Code of Conduct that was established by NGOs through the NGO Council in Kenya. The very fact that CSOs have taken up the role of watch-dog in society is all the more reason why they should set and uphold the very highest standards of practice. Their watchdog role can only be validated by a value system that is beyond reproach. The sector must exhibit supreme qualities of accountability compared to other sectors for them to effectively play their role of watchdogs.

According to Murtaza Jaffer, the first CEO of the NGO Council, the Code of Conduct was expected to set high standards. The assumption at the time the Code was developed was that the NGO sector was dominated by people of high integrity who would set and maintain high standards on their own volition and without undue supervision by either the state or indeed the NGO Council itself.

¹⁹ Id.

The development of the Code of Conduct must then be seen in its proper historical perspective as part of efforts by the NGO sector in Kenya to establish themselves as a moral counterfoil to an undemocratic and corrupt regime. Hence, the change in 2002 elections ushered a new era for the sector, where the reason for upholding the standards was not perceived as urgent any more.

The reasons provided for having standards and promoting best practices revolved not only around ideals but also around pragmatic considerations such as enhancing the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of NGOs as well as their eligibility for funding.

Both the government and the general public have raised concerns about the standards of practice within CSOs and especially with regard to standards of governance in the sector, which have been falling consistently. There have been numerous cases of CSOs that are run by individuals; failure to hold board meetings; absence of policies and systems of conducting business within CSOs; failure to file returns with authorities; blatant abuse of power among other concerns.

Indeed, many CSOs have shown limited understanding of good practices and standards, a situation that has been complicated by donor demands that compromise organizational values and principles.

Nevertheless, this study revealed that some CSOs have been stirred to uphold good standards of practice within their organizations owing to discussions amongst key stakeholders. These discussions have often emerged during informal discussions, meetings with the board of directors, monthly staff meetings and Annual General Meetings. As a result, it has become critical for these CSOs to assess their performance in a bid to determine whether they are meeting their mandate and to address points of organizational weakness with a view to growing.

Another reason given for upholding the standards and best practices was the need to avoid what is perceived as state control. CSOs are constantly aware that if they do not effectively regulate themselves, other institutions such as government might seize the opportunity to set and enforce standards, which might not always be in the best interest of the sector.

Other reasons offered by thinkers and practitioners included the following:

- By maintaining high standards CSOs would increase public confidence in themselves and thereby encourage people to give to causes they espouse
- For government the existence of standards would facilitate regulation of CSOs and establish clear guidelines and standards for monitoring their work
- For donors the existence of standards would reduce the risk of losing funds and assist them in deciding which CSOs qualified for funding
- To enhance the organizational image of CSOs as well as serve to set yardsticks for good practice in other sectors.

Hence, the sector can only enhance efficiency, ensure optimum results and impact if its members are constantly subjected to specific yardsticks, benchmarks and values for measurement.

4.3 STANDARDS AND QUALITIES OF EXEMPLARY CSOs

The study sought to determine what identified thinkers and practitioners in Kenya and Tanzania believed to be the standards and best practices for the CSO sector. This was done through face to face interviews and during a one day workshop held in Nairobi. There was overwhelming agreement that standards are necessary. However, questions were raised during the workshop on who has the mandate and responsibility to set standards, how the standards were to be applied and monitored and further, how these standards could be used to protect and foster the growth of Kenyan CSOs. There were also concerns that the development and application of standards would favour larger CSOs.

The one day workshop did not provide sufficient time to conclusively discuss these pertinent issues and it was generally felt that more time would need to be availed subsequently to address them.

Nonetheless, the survey gathered significant data on what standards and practices were expected of CSOs. The study team categorized this information in the following categories.²⁰

The following is a summary compilation of what, in the opinion of the respondent thinkers and practitioners, are key standards that should be upheld by exemplary CSOs. Note that the standards have been organized into the thematic headings below for purposes of reporting.

1. ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY

Organizational vision, clarity and ownership:

- 1.1 A clearly defined reason for existence: The CSO must be founded on widely shared and embraced vision, mission and goals. Exemplary CSOs must feel strongly about their reason for existence and persuade stakeholders to have a similar outlook and attitude. Strong CSOs will not be easily derailed by the whims of donors and other forces.
- 1.2 Model CSOs must be driven by a strong value and belief system founded on courage of conviction in what they stand for; a value system that endures time and leadership changes. The belief system should be shared within the organization as well as with the beneficiaries and the wider public.
- 1.3 These values must be reinforced with strong 'ethical principles' of ensuring commitment to the duty of serving humanity, and sticking to the purpose of the existence of the organization. CSOs should be driven by 'deeply entrenched principles rather than by donor demands or pressures exerted from other quarters'. They must all be responsive to the felt needs of the beneficiaries.

Mr. Abdullahi, one of the practitioners, gave the example of Northern Aid which declined support from a donor who wanted to

²⁰ To develop the category headings, the study team borrowed in part from the themes used in *Effective Capacity Building in Nonprofit Organizations : Venture Philanthropy Partners, 2001*

support an unsustainable project of water tankering as opposed to the borehole project that had been proposed jointly by the community and Northern Aid. A study later conducted by Northern Aid established that the donor spent Kshs. 45 million on the tankering project, a cost that was far much more expensive than the borehole project that would have cost Kshs. 20 million!

- 1.4 The CSO must observe high standards of integrity, operate above board, observe government regulations and cultivate a high image. This is easily discerned through the attitudes, behaviour and conduct of staff and associates.
- 1.5 It must also be diverse in its operations and its composition. Not just lawyers, not just men and not just people from one ethnic community. When you look at its people, you see that it's Kenyan. Its gender friendly and ethnic friendly.
- 1.6 Participation and equal representation of women is vital. The constitution must allow for gender equality.
- 1.7 A learning organization: It must be a growing organization. Standards need to be measured against the organization's respective size, age and capacity.

2. GOVERNANCE

- 2.1 It must have a governance system that provides for checks and balances.
 - 2.1.1 The board composition reflects diverse 'fields of expertise and experience';
 - 2.1.2 Meetings are scheduled, regularly held and well attended;
 - 2.1.3 There are appropriate board committees to deal with specific policy issues.
 - 2.1.4 The organization should be 'legally registered';
 - 2.1.5 The board and management work well together with clear definition of roles.
 - 2.1.6 Board rotation is reflected in policy and practice
 - 2.1.7 Democratic structures of governance exist. If it is a membership CSO, do the structures reflect membership? If non-membership, do the structures allow the CSO to maintain public responsibility?
 - 2.1.8 The Board regularly reflects on its performance
 - 2.1.9 The Board has been inducted to its role and gets opportunities for capacity building

3. PROGRAMME PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT

- 3.1. Participatory Process: The organization embraces participatory decision making processes that involve and empower beneficiaries and other stakeholders. The beneficiaries must be identified in a transparent process.
- 3.2. The CSO must be clear in its objectives and effective at implementing them. It should have specific time frames and concrete measures for realizing each set of priorities and goals. It should continuously focus on the goals, where it is headed and never lose sight of them. That goal therefore has to be clearly articulated within the CSO. Nonetheless, there is need to ensure that the strategy does not become the goal.
- 3.3. Culture of innovation: The CSO must be flexible and understand that there is not only one way for it to reach its goal. It should be creative internally and use

lessons from around the world; understanding that there are very few things that haven't been tried by someone else or some other people elsewhere.

- 3.4. Regular reflection: It should be at the cutting edge; a thinking institution; constantly interrogating itself and having self appraisals and reflections. It should have systems that embrace organizational learning and replication of good practice.
- 3.5. Successful CSOs should be able to use research data to support programme planning and advocacy: They should answer important development questions through accumulated research data and consultation with beneficiaries in influencing others to have similar thinking.
- 3.6. Evaluation: The CSO must demonstrate that its interventions have lasting impact on beneficiaries. A clear system of monitoring implementation of planned activities exists.
- 3.7. The organizations staff should have the ability to conceptualise and understand societal problems
- 3.8. The organizations staff have fundraising capacity

4. ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The CSO should have a visionary leadership style that leads by example. It should not be afraid to blaze the trail.
- 4.2 It should portray a conscious effort to develop leadership and provide opportunities for leadership.
 - 4.2.1 The organization should constantly enhance the capacities and career growth of staff.
 - 4.2.2 Mentoring and succession planning are reflected in the organization's practice
 - 4.2.3 Opportunities are available for middle managers to be visible
- 4.3 There must be clear systems, policies and procedures for transacting the daily business of the organization e.g. human resource development policy, procurement policy, finance policy, transport policy etc.
- 4.4 Caliber of leadership, especially the skills and experience of the Chief Executive Officer has a strong bearing on the integrity, image and standards of a CSO.

'CEOs that show evidence of innovative thinking and implement approaches based on deep understanding of their sector, as well as synthesize and articulate complex issues, motivate other people and forge successful, win-win relationships with others, often earn the respect of peers and influence the shaping of opinion in the sector'.
Abdullahi Abdi, CEO, Northern Aid

5. FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- 5.1. Prudent management of resources: The amount of resources spent on beneficiaries must be disclosed to all stakeholders and the proportion spent on overheads should be much smaller than that spent on programme work.
 - 5.1.1 The organization should 'file returns' with respective authorities;

- 5.1.2 A clearly defined system of tendering, requisitioning, vetting, approving, raising and signing cheques, which must be done at different levels by separate persons
- 5.1.3 There is proof that resources (human, financial, material) are well managed and used only for the intended purposes; any variations must be well explained and in good time;
- 5.1.4 The CSO's operations are cost effective. Not more than 10% of the budget should be spent on overheads.
- 5.2. There should be clear systems of financial accountability, not just to donors but also to the beneficiaries.
 - 5.2.1 The CSO should 'make audited accounts public';
 - 5.2.2 Budgets and planned activities are disclosed to beneficiaries and made available for public scrutiny';
 - 5.2.3 The sources, amount and use of funding is openly declared;

6. SUSTAINABILITY

- 6.1. The question of financial sustainability is critical to maintaining organizational uprightness and culture. Organizations founded on a strong financial base are not easily swayed by donor or other interests. It is critical for CSOs to diversify their sources of funding and adopt more sustainable resource mobilization techniques.
 - 6.1.1 They should be more creative about local fundraising ideas.
 - 6.1.2 Staff should have fundraising capacity.
- 6.2. The programmes should build the capacity and capabilities of the beneficiaries to carry on their own development processes; they should be sustainable and self-perpetuating, so that when donors leave, communities can continue on their own.

7. EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

- 7.1. It must embrace the culture of information sharing with all stakeholders
- 7.2. The CSO must be able to articulate the reasons why it supports certain political positions. And that doesn't mean that it cannot criticize politicians who hold similar positions.
 - 7.2.1. Regular progress reports are widely shared with the external public;
 - 7.2.2. There is a structure for information flow within the organization and to the public.
 - 7.2.3. A mechanism exists to receive feedback from constituents and forward it to the management for use.

4.3.1 RANKING OF STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES

There was no consensus on whether governance or organizational aspirations should come first in the order of importance. There were those who felt for instance that since the aspirations of an organization including its vision, mission and value system define its identity, direction and relationships (internal and external), it is absolutely paramount. On the other hand there was the counter argument that if the governance aspect was not right, for example in terms of having competent people on the Board who could help the organization to come up with a clear vision and define its strategic objectives, then organization could end up with a confused identity and weak value systems. There were also concerns that while Boards are critical in setting standards for CSOs, the governing

institution is greatly neglected in terms of capacity building and vulnerable to cronyism and nepotism during the selection of members.

On the other hand there were concerns about the tendency by donors to associate competence in CSOs with structures, systems and capacity for service delivery, while failing to relate competence to the all important issue of an organization's identity: vision, mission and value systems. There was consensus however, that a CSO with good standards was one in which all the elements, of identity and good practice, were given due attention and addressed holistically.

The following is a list of standards of High Quality CSOs, ranked in order of importance by the respondents:

- Strong value and belief system
- Good Governance system
- Transparency and accountability to the stakeholders, especially beneficiaries
- Clarity and adherence to organizational Vision, Mission and Goals
- Existence of clear policies, systems and procedures of conducting business
- Prudent management of resources
- Organizational learning and replication of good practice
- Information sharing with all stakeholders

4.4 CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES

The study sought to identify challenges in the development and implementation of standards and best practices in the CSO sector. There was consensus that a process of identifying and setting standards would have to be participatory and all inclusive to get as wide a perspective as possible. The research team was asked to consider the possibility of talking to as many CSO typologies as possible to see if there were common strands, fundamental principles and shared values that could form the basis around which generic standards could be developed and consensus could be built about standards for the whole sector.

A key challenge that needs to be addressed is related to the gaps that exist in the legislative and policy framework and which hinder the implementation of standards. This has resulted, for example, in the absence of an all encompassing and generally accepted definition and understanding on what constitutes Civil Society Organizations. It is therefore difficult to identify and prescribe universal standards for the entire sector. Furthermore, the diversity of the CSO sector in terms of structure, size and focus exacerbates the problem as the sector lacks cohesion and is characterized often by competing and conflicting interests.

Also challenging is the observation made that, "...in recent times, CSOs and in particular the NGO sector, has been invaded by "joy riders" who lack an understanding of the ethos of the CSO sector and who, in certain instances, bring with them negative cultures and practices from other sectors e.g. the much maligned public sector." As a result, working for NGOs is increasingly being viewed as an employment opportunity or a gateway to riches and concepts such as voluntarism or making a real difference in people's lives, which form the bedrock of CSO work, are no longer comprehended and

upheld. Indeed, the spirit of voluntarism has been watered down extensively or is missing altogether in many CSOs.

Another challenge is the fact that NGOs have become the face of CSOs in Kenya despite the fact that they are a relatively recent phenomenon and represent a very tiny proportion of the entire sector. There is fear that standards and best practices might end up being defined solely from the point of view of NGOs.

The lack of a legitimate and credible institution to organize CSOs and monitor standards in Kenya is a further handicap. The fact that the Regulatory committee of the NGO Council (as at the time of the study) has not met for close to a year means that the Council cannot administer self regulation and monitor the Code of Conduct on registered NGOs as mandated. The question then is whether the Code of Conduct or any other standards developed can be enforced. This challenge should however be considered in light of the history and culture of enforcement in Kenya; where small bursts of zealous enforcement of laws and rules have been punctuated by long spells of inaction.

The large number of unregistered CSOs makes it unwieldy to monitor compliance of standards, especially for organizations that lack even the basic governing documents. Nonetheless, it has been observed that there is much that can be learnt from groups that are effectively governed by informal or unwritten standards. A large number of unregistered CSOs do not have written or formalized standards and yet manage to operate and engage within recognized informal standards. On the other hand there has been a high rate of failure to comply with formal standards amongst registered CSOs and in particular, the NGOs.

The following is a list of additional challenges identified during the research:

CSOs generally lack the capacity to implement practices that require technical skills, capital resources, financial resources and infrastructural as well as logistical skills. Those reached through the study were concerned about the weak base of skills in the CSO sector and as a corollary, the inadequate capacity in most CSOs to conceptualize and implement sustainable interventions. Moreover, capacity building opportunities are few and limited or targeted toward managers, many of whom are fairly mobile and tend to be found in regional or global organizations. Indeed, the high turnover of CSO staff, especially in NGOs, was pointed out as a big challenge.²¹ As a result, CSOs find themselves continually faced with the lack and need for capacity building.

Unfriendly political climate: Most CSOs that are successful in upholding and promoting best practices are often viewed as threats to government regimes. This is especially the case with organizations that conduct governance, democracy and human rights trainings. Their leaders are perceived to harbor political ambitions and are alleged to be inciting people against the establishment.

The lack of a culture that puts a premium on best practices, quality control and value driven leadership: Standards by themselves do not guarantee improved quality services or products.

²¹ Erastus Omollo is an Auditor and NGO practitioner of long standing in Kenya. He estimates the average period of time NGO managers spend in an organization as four years. This erodes any impact of capacity building initiatives.

Leadership within many CSOs lacks the moral aptitude to put in place good practices. During the research, questions were raised with regard to the etiquette and standards practiced by the Sector's leadership as a whole and suggestions were made to have it replaced, if good standards are to be instilled among the members. There is also the lack of an institutionalised mentoring culture. Very few leaders make an effort to mentor and nurture leadership within the sector. In addition to this, there is a dearth of mechanisms for CSOs to peer review each other.

Fragile Sustainability and Vulnerability to Donor influence: A particularly strong position was held by respondents that the NGO sector in Kenya was “unsustainable”. Most CSOs and especially NGOs implement donor driven projects. Not many of them have enough courage of conviction to stand up to donor or other pressures because they are dependent on one or few sources of foreign funding; they lack loyalty for their constituents; and they are not creative in local resource mobilization. Most CSOs lack the ability to collaborate and network with the corporate sector thus further limiting their fund raising opportunities.

Limited Engagement at The Policy Level: Many CSOs lack the capacity to engage in policy level discourse, analysis or advocacy and therefore find themselves taken by surprise when policies that adversely affect them are passed. However, room should be created to promote cross-learning within the sector as particular groups e.g. neighbourhood associations, have developed the resonance and space required to help them articulate issues with the government.

4.5 AREAS IN GREAT NEED OF IMPROVEMENT WITHIN CSOS

The Respondents pointed to the following areas in CSOs, which they felt, are in desperate need of improvement:

- ***Governance structures:*** Many CSOs are literally controlled and exist for as long as the founder does; the founder is everything to that organization.
- ***Local resource mobilization strategies:*** Numerous CSOs precariously rely on one donor, with hardly any strategies for alternative sources of fundraising
- ***Transparency and accountability:*** Lots of CSOs run their business shielded from public scrutiny, raising doubts about what they stand for, where they get their funding from, how they spend the funds and so on.
- ***Lack of a learning culture:*** Few CSOs have integrated systems that embrace organizational learning. For example, there has been a lull in the governance and democracy NGOs, since the new government came in. They were not able to shift gears in light of a new government that articulated their rhetoric. They had become too accustomed to doing things a particular way.

4.6 RECOMMENDATIONS - TOWARD PROMOTING BEST PRACTICES

It is imperative that the process of identifying, agreeing on and prescribing standards and best practices be as wide ranging and inclusive as possible to get the widest possible

shade of opinions. The process must also be owned by the CSO sector for it to gain acceptance. In addition, the standards developed should be broad enough so that a wide range of organizations can adapt them and apply them within their contexts. They should not just be a reflection of the interests of middle class NGOs.

Many CSOs have no information on the standards required of them and of their role and responsibilities in upholding them. There is an obvious need for concerted efforts to enlighten CSOs on best practices. In addition public education is a prerequisite for the promotion of accountability. If the public and beneficiaries who consume CSO services are aware of standards expected, then they will play a critical role in ensuring and demanding CSO accountability by asking for instance, whether resources are used in the most optimal way.

It is clear that an effective and enabling regulatory and policy environment is critical for ensuring compliance with set standards. The major challenge is one of maintaining a delicate balance between recognizing and maintaining the autonomy of the CSO sector versus managing compliance.

It is vital to strengthen regulatory mechanisms for the promotion of good practices. There is need to re-evaluate whether the ideals that guided the development of the Code of Conduct and which were based on the presumption that NGOs intrinsically operate ethically, are still sufficiently important to ensure voluntary compliance. If not, does the sector need to consider the inclusion of workable and enforceable sanctions for non compliance?

The NGO sector should also determine whether it is necessary to link the code of conduct and NGO rules and regulations to the NGOs Coordination Act in order to give them a legal basis and enhance their implementation.

There is also need to harmonize the entire registration regime. The fact that different CSOs are registered under different authorities (Foreign Affairs, Culture and Social Services, Home Affairs etc.) causes confusion and results in duplication and wastage of resources. The idea was mooted that if CSOs in general were to receive support from the government, there is likely to be better cooperation and harmonization of efforts between the sub-sectors.

CSOs require a standardized reporting format that can meet international accounting standards. The still born attempt to introduce the Statements of Recommended Auditing and Accounting Practices (SORAAPs) means that currently there is no format that NGO's can follow for standardized financial auditing and reporting. It is proposed that the process of developing and popularizing SORAAPs be revived (paying due cognizance to the need to make it accessible and easy to use) and that the Institute of Chartered Public Accountants (ICPAK) be involved in the initiative.

It should be noted that capacity building and the attainment and maintenance of standards are intrinsically linked to the issue of southern NGOs sustainability. The dependency of southern NGOs on the North has tended to negatively influence their ability to establish and maintain their identity, develop an ideology and uphold values. This relationship needs to be reviewed and perhaps negotiated through CSO networks and representative organizations.

CSOs must also take a courageous position against funding that contradicts their organizational values and beliefs. More often than not, CSOs are driven by donor demands than by their vision and the needs of the beneficiaries. By developing a strong value system, CSOs will be able to shun support that is not congruent with the needs of the community and the aspirations of their organizations.

That notwithstanding, local CSOs should fearlessly challenge the donor fraternity about some of the decisions they make but which are contrary to the principles they espouse.

They must also challenge international NGOs to demonstrate their relevance. For example, what are they doing to make the communities less dependent? To be effective in this regard however, local CSOs will have to clean up their act as well. A strong value system will facilitate a lot more linkage between service delivery and the human rights organizations to ensure the sustainability and permanent transformation of communities.

The donor community can help by sharing comparative international best practices so that CSOs can begin to appreciate the need for the promotion and implementation of standards. They can also lead by example and support the efforts by CSOs, to establish self-regulatory mechanisms specifically, or to create an enabling environment for the sector generally.

There was a strong body of opinion amongst the respondents that felt that strong, informed and visionary leadership is central to ensuring standards and good practices in the CSO sector. Further, it is important that there be a deliberate process of mentoring and developing a new generation of Civil Society promoting leaders. It is therefore proposed that the sector aims at nurturing the kind of leadership that will build the next generation of leadership while transferring values.

CSOs should regularly reflect on their achievements and learn from peers and other organizations that uphold good practices. They should also subject themselves to external scrutiny and constructive criticism, and strive to build their capacities in the areas which they have identified to be weak.

PART TWO

5. CAPACITY BUILDING PROVIDERS

5.1 DEFINING CAPACITY BUILDING

While the term “capacity building” is used widely, getting a generally accepted definition has always proved elusive. In many instances capacity building has tended to mean different things to different people and organizations depending on their overall philosophy and strategic approach. In recent times however, there have been attempts to come up with an all encompassing and descriptive definition of what capacity building is all about. The study was able to get several definitions of capacity building from the perspective of the capacity building organizations interviewed.

Ms- Training Center for Development Co-operation (MS-TCDC) uses the term organizational capacity building and sees this as a continuous and long-term process of strengthening the capacity of an organization to be viable, autonomous, legitimate, efficient and effective. Capacity building is aimed at improving the performance of the individual organization. It can be perceived as an explicit intervention, which improves an organization’s performance in relation to its goals, mission, resources, context and sustainability. This takes place at organizational, project or micro-level. From the perspective of MS-TCDC, improved organizational performance should result in increased efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and visibility of development interventions. Ultimately, then the aspiration of capacity building is to enable self sustaining development efforts in poor communities.

According to Rahab, an official at the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction – Africa (IIRR-Africa), capacity building refers to building on human skills at personal and organizational level. IIRR believes that poverty can be reduced through capacity building. “If you organize people, help them learn and find out factors of access to opportunity, they usually can replicate this on their own”.

A similar view is held by Margaret Mwaura of the Christian Organization Research and Advisory Trust of Africa - CORAT AFRICA who notes that capacity building is the process of developing the individual to perform the specific tasks and taking an organization through a process of change in order to enable it to accomplish its mission.

While the other respondents had unique perspectives, their definitions generally encompassed the following similarities: They viewed capacity building as an improvement of individual, organizational or people’s capability to do things that improve the livelihoods of communities.

There was nearly unanimous agreement that capacity building is *a holistic process of liberating vulnerable communities from poverty and enabling them to lead quality life.*

5.2 MOTIVATION/RATIONALE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

It was observed that reasons for the involvement of organizations in capacity building seem to evolve over time even as they respond to external and internal dynamics. For example, the East African Support Unit for NGOs (EASUN), a regional development organization committed to strengthening Civil Society Organizations in East Africa, started as a project that was aimed at developing the capacity of HIVOs²² partners to comply with both HIVO's and its donors' requirements. Over the years EASUN became independent of HIVOs and reviewed its rationale to capacity building. EASUN's motivation for engaging in capacity building is evident from its mission which reads:

“A civil society that is growing as a purposeful and effective advocacy sector in East Africa, guided by organizational principles and practices that foster equality, participation and sustainable development of workplaces and communities.”

EASUN's work with civil society organizations is therefore based on a conviction that strong civil societies are vital for enhancing people's participation in the social and economic spheres of their communities and nations

MS-TCDC on the other hand started as a centre to prepare Danish Development Workers and Volunteers for their assignments in different Eastern and Southern African Countries. The Centre still hosts these Workers and Volunteers for four weeks at an African Orientation Course. Nonetheless, the organization has since reviewed its approach and core rationale and currently aims to increase the competence of civil society organisations and partners to effectively conduct their development programmes and influence their policy environments. In its Strategic Plan 2006-2010, MS-TCDC seeks to deliberately mainstream an advocacy perspective in its development training as a means to addressing what it considers to be its “democratisation process”.

PACT Kenya appears to put more emphasis on service delivery and expresses its strategic objective as follows:

To improve the well being of communities in the Eastern Africa region by transformative capacity building of Civil Society Organizations for better service delivery

It can be argued that PACT's emphasis on service delivery and not advocacy like the previous two CBPs is related to the fact that it is heavily funded by the US Government through the USAID which restricts support to advocacy initiatives of a socio political nature.

The idea of CORAT emerged in the mid-1970's, which was an era of great political change in Africa as most countries were gaining independence then. Missionaries from

²² The Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation (HIVOS) is a non-governmental organisation in Netherlands that provides financial support to CSOs in Africa, Asia, Latin America and South-Eastern Europe.

the West were leaving the continent and handing over the management and running of church and church related organizations to local people who were trained in bible theology but had no management skills. CORAT was established to improve the management capacity of the local people and to enable them to effectively take over the schools, hospitals and other institutions that the missionaries had established. The need for capacity building did not end with the passing of that era. However, CORAT discovered that once the trained generation had left, there was need to continuously build the capacity of the succeeding managers over the long-term.

CORAT's vision is to see the transformation of society. Their capacity building is not just about the individual and the church. They expect it to go beyond and permeate all areas of society where the trained individual operates. CORAT would like to impact individuals at the family and all levels so that they can change society.

IIRR's inspiration arose from the realization that community empowerment, which emanates from participation of people in the development process, must go hand in hand with economic empowerment and institutional building. Hence capacity building is intrinsically linked to poverty reduction.

However, capacity building cannot take place purely by conducting a chain of discussions. An appropriate strategy to demonstrate how capacity development can contribute to poverty reduction is vital. IIRR-Africa has chosen the following entry points or practice areas to create a link between the two:

- Education (focused on basic education for marginalized groups)
- Drought cycle management
- Gender and Leadership Development
- Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS Mainstreaming
- Micro Enterprise Development and Food Security

IIRR's role is to enhance the capacity of the CBO using these entry points. Based on the individual country needs, the above entry points may change as new ones, which are relevant, are adopted. For example, the institute is now focusing on another entry point in its capacity building i.e. market access.

Although many of the other CBPs indicated that they conduct capacity building in a wide range of thematic areas, a variety of reasons were given for their choice to focus on particular core themes. These ranged from competencies developed over years of training in similar fields, the founders' backgrounds, vision, mission and goals of the organization to the needs of the community and donor preferred focus.

5.3 IDENTIFICATION OF CLIENTELE

The strategies employed by CBPs to identify their clientele were generally similar and involved:

- Marketing through the use of brochures, websites and directly approaching CSOs. At MSTCDC they have a full fledged marketing department
- Encouraging donors to sponsor their development partners to attend trainings. EASUN indicated that they approached donors by providing them with information in an effort to get them to buy into their approach of promoting organizational and institutional learning. It was also categorical that even where they managed to convince donors to support CSOs to undergo their training. They also urged the donors to sign a contract with the CSOs to ensure that ownership of the capacity building process resided in the CSOs being worked with and not EASUN or the donor. Iceberg Consultants also encourage their donors to enroll their partners in their “Building Blocks” and “Transformative Leadership” programmes.
- Referrals by satisfied clients. Interestingly, a research carried out by MSTCDC revealed that despite their efforts at marketing, most of their clientele learn about them through referrals.

Generally the CBPs draw their clientele from the following sources: Government departments, Community Based Organizations, the Corporate community, Non Governmental Organizations, Community Health Institutions and Faith Based Organizations.

5.4 AREAS OF FOCUS AND APPROACH

The need to employ a holistic approach to capacity building appears to be popular amongst the organizations interviewed. There were, however, subtle differences in strategy. Iceberg Consultants, for example, focus on Organizational Capacity Building, Development, Management Training and Advocacy. They initially engage organizations in the “building block” approach which involves taking organizations through the basic elements (building blocks) that constitute an organization including governance, systems and processes. Subsequently, organizations are exposed to the transformative leadership programme, which as the name suggests, aims at building leadership that seeks to transform organizations.

EASUN is committed to building Organizational Development (OD) practice in the East African region. The organization is interested in assisting organizations to manage and sustain their identity rather than merely focusing on capacity building for compliance with donor requirements. EASUN is therefore concerned to address among others;

- Relationships and how these are managed
- Building leadership within the organization and in the wider context of the nation
- Values within the organization. Are these reflected in the manner in which the organization works?

- Identity: Are CSOs strategies and activities related with their vision and mission?

MS-TCDC has a deliberate intention in its current strategy to mainstream an advocacy perspective in all its development training. In addition, it is in the process of combining the short-term training offered at its training center with longer-term capacity building and impact monitoring of selected organizations.

IIRR offers Organization Development and strategic management services e.g. organizational assessments, formulating strategic and business plans, development of monitoring and evaluation systems, conference management and facilitation, study missions, program and project evaluation and facilitation services.

The Institute also provides documentation and publication services on demand. It has supported several development organizations to document, package and share their experiences with others through using an innovative and unique approach known as write shop. Through writeshop, IIRR brings experts (researchers, extension workers and community members) together with artists, editors and desktop publishing experts to produce books, posters, leaflets, policy briefs, reports, strategic plans, audiotapes and other development communication tools in a short span.

CORAT's main strategy is training and consultancy. The latter involves evaluation, feasibility studies, base line studies, needs assessment, leadership and organizational development. CORAT also facilitates meetings and board development workshops.

The CBPs all offer tailor-made or customized training and technical services, specific to individual organizations. However, they also undertake training and workshops, depending on identified needs and demands. Most of the CBPs had chosen an approach that ensured the incorporation of case-studies that reflect experiences and realities on the ground in their training.

Though the approaches or foci adopted by the CBPs may be varied, it is clear that they are all guided by their vision, values and beliefs. Most of the CBPs have embarked on imparting practical skills through practical case-studies. In addition, some have observed the need to conduct continuous performance monitoring or adopt long-term processes for the sustainability of their capacity building efforts. To some extent, market demand for services also plays a role in determining the capacity building theme the provider focuses on. For example, IIRR has developed a marketing plan for their outreach team. The Plan has helped to identify the areas that require capacity building services and how they can be met in the most cost effective way. It shows how best to offer demand led, quality courses.

5.5 DO CAPACITY BUILDING PROVIDERS HAVE CAPACITY TO BUILD CAPACITY?

The CBPs interviewed generally felt they have the capacity required to carry out their work. However, some felt that there is a dearth of sufficient quality capacity building

providers in the wider market. One CBP for example, stated that they often have problems when they need to recruit associate consultants in the area of Organizational Development, implying that capacity was sorely lacking in this area. There are concerns that many consultancy firms offering capacity building services tend to adopt a “one size fits all” approach, which in the end tends to compromise the quality of capacity building. Further, there are concerns about “who builds the capacity of the capacity builder” and the need for capacity builders themselves to be regularly trained.

In most cases, the organizations undertake work in line with their core competencies. They have a core team who ensure the running of the programs. Some capacity building of the members of staff in IIRR is evident. To enable the staff deliver on the organization’s mission, a lot of team-work and cross-learning takes place which enables them to participate in almost all programs. Nonetheless the organization out-sources work from time to time to its pool of consultants. CORAT, on the other hand, also has a pool of consultants who they contract on a part-time basis, if they have a job that requires particular expertise, which they lack. They have about 20 associate consultants. Sometimes, CBPs send out public advertisements in their search for specific support.

All in all the CBPs interviewed indicated that they do not have all the human resource capacity they need in house but that they have a pool of associate consultants that they can draw from when the need arises.

In addition to out-sourcing, the CBPs also collaborate with others in running courses of mutual interest or in the realization of mutual goals e.g. the compilation and publication of research material.

5.6 FUNDING OF CAPACITY BUILDING PROVIDERS

From the study, it was apparent that funding for capacity building activities is a perennial challenge. Related to this is the hurdle CBPs have to face in balancing their own aspirations and ideals with the demands of the market as well as the need for the CBP to survive. The latter two could at certain times be at variance with the CBPs ideals. Yet, unfortunately, but as is often the case, the CBPs have found that most of the organizations that tend to genuinely need capacity building are often also the ones that cannot afford the training.

Six of the CBPs interviewed receive a certain level of direct funding from donors to support their capacity building activities. Of these, MSTCDC appears to be the most fortunate as it has a definite allocation from its parent organization - MS Danish Association for International Cooperation. PACT Kenya raises funds mainly through donors although, in some instances, also charges beneficiaries on a cost recovery basis.

EASUN, at the time of the study, was targeting to increase its revenue from services, from 30% to 40%. Iceberg Consultants on the other hand is wholly dependant on funds raised through fees for their capacity building services. Similarly, at CORAT, fees paid for demand driven courses form a substantial source of revenue. They encompass 96% of

the organization's income. The other 4% is from the sale of books published by the organization.

A variety of other funding sources were also mentioned. They include surplus from project funding and fees for facilitation of conferences or meetings. Most of the organizations are now thinking long-term about ways in which they can ensure sustainability of their institutions and the work they support. Some of the CBPs have plans to build a sustainable reserve of funds. Others have ventured into property income e.g. CORAT has invested in residential houses and a training centre, which they rent out when they are not in use. The facility can accommodate about 60 people. IIRR also has the vision of saving costs substantially in the future through acquiring an IIRR-Africa office and training facility.

5.7 CAPACITY BUILDING GAPS

Most of the CBPs were of the view that the gaps that exist in capacity building needs around the country can best be identified by the beneficiaries of capacity building services. This study however focused principally on CBPs and was only able to point out those gaps that the CBPs themselves identified. CORAT embarked on an exercise to identify such gaps last year. They handed questionnaires to participants who had attended one of their training courses, asking them to identify gaps in the training. They found that there are alternative capacity building providers that offer the courses which CORAT did not offer. The providers range from individuals to institutions.

One recurring capacity building need that the organizations which CORAT works with have identified is that of fundraising-the ability of CSOs to access and raise funds. Still, there are capacity building providers in the arena of fund-raising and resource mobilization. CORAT is therefore of the view that it is possible to get a capacity building provider in almost any area.

It was however pointed out that a majority of CSOs lack proper governance and accountability systems and are weak in information sharing and documentation. From the data collected, it is clear that most CBPs have concentrated their training in an area that has been observed to be particularly weak i.e. Organizational Development.

Some of the respondents also noted that many CSOs use development approaches that are not sustainable and that do not lend themselves to long term changes. According to IIRR for example, the issue of structures that limit the participation of the poor and vulnerable groups of people in development initiatives should be addressed by CBPs. The Providers can build the capacity of NGOs in this arena so that they can improve their development approaches. They can also raise the awareness of NGOs and CBOs on the need to ensure that targeted communities participate and benefit from projects being undertaken on their behalf.

There are numerous opportunities for credible CBPs to operate in Kenya because the number of CSOs keeps growing by the day. Many of these CSOs lack requisite skills to manage their organizations and programmes. Yet, there are few competent capacity building providers.

Not only should capacity building providers remain alert to the gaps or needs of the CSOs, but they should also regularly improve their own skills and competence. This way, they will be able to ensure that the sector upholds standards of excellence and that they operate in a sustainable manner, effectively addressing the needs of society in a relevant and sustainable manner.

5.8 CHALLENGES FACED BY CAPACITY BUILDING PROVIDERS

One of the challenges raised by the CBPs was that donors do not prioritize the provision of capacity building and that when they make provision for it, it is not done in the context of the holistic needs of the organization, but to address specific components, which are of interest to the donor.

A significant issue arising from the study was what was described as the systems approach to capacity building. It focuses on strengthening the different components - structures, leadership, systems, and resources – but does not take cognizance of the holistic view of organizational capacity. The latter requires time and a lot of resources to be sufficiently addressed. There were concerns that the systems approach aimed at developing compliance with donor reporting requirements, but was not in the interest of the CSOs' long term sustainability. For example, Organizational Assessment tools which are currently used to determine the capacity building needs of CSOs were said to have been designed to assist donors conduct rapid assessment of an organization's service delivery capacity and its qualification for funding. They are not designed to promote the accountability of CSOs to their local constituents and/ or their long term sustainability.

It was also noted that the systems approach to capacity building focuses primarily on managerial design and efficiency at the expense of an approach that would enable CSOs clarify their identities, roles and values as well as their leadership and organizational practices. The latter approach would lead to increased legitimacy and institutional growth. The respondents cited the systems approach to capacity building as one of the reasons that had led to institutional stagnation as well as the stunted growth of CSOs and their leadership in Africa. They claimed that it was responsible for the change in the ideology of CSOs and as a corollary, their loss of identity.

Another challenge identified was the dependency by CBPs on the North for funding and capacity building support. This tends to undermine the promotion of local value systems and priorities. The inability to contextualize capacity building and be innovative in addressing the specific needs and realities of different organizations has led to a “one shoe fits all” approach. This is what Prudence Kaijage refers to as the “Roast pig syndrome”.²³ Current fads have tended to fuel dominant development cycles, which are mainly set by donors, consultants and academia. These actors drive capacity building approaches that do not involve CSOs in their development.

²³ Prudence Kaijage, a respondent from MS-CTDC

There is also lack of a conceptual framework for capacity building and the pressure to deliver quick results has tended to make agencies that financially support capacity building to reserve most of their resources for a few “blue chip”²⁴ NGOs. This has therefore tended to undermine rather than develop the capacity of growing CBPs. There was also concern that CSO leaders tend to “hoard” training opportunities and do not mentor younger practitioners to take up the mantle and develop their professionalism and leadership.

Those reached through the study were concerned about the weak base of skills in the CSO sector and as a corollary, the inadequate capacity in most CSOs to conceptualize and implement sustainable interventions. Small CSOs generally lack the capacity to implement practices that require technical skills, capital and financial resources, infrastructural as well as logistical capacity. Moreover, capacity building opportunities are few and limited or targeted toward managers, many of whom are fairly mobile and tend to be found in regional or global organizations. Capacity building makes individual officials marketable. Many times, these move on and the organization loses. As a result, CSOs find themselves continually faced with the lack and need for capacity building.

The constant search for funds has also taken priority in many smaller CSOs, relegating capacity building to the periphery. To compound issues, the tendency to show immediate results, has led to the following undesirable outcomes; First, a manifest unwillingness by most CSOs to engage in capacity building with long term accompaniment (sustained over a long period) as it is very difficult to attract long term funding.

Second, CSOs tend to focus their training on programme-related issues at the expense of other key, though less urgent issues. The challenge of balancing competing demands, i.e. ensuring compliance with donors’ requirements within a limited time versus capacity building is daunting for many CSOs. Third, the “Founder syndrome” has been noted to undermine capacity building since founders were generally observed to be impatient with systems and processes and more interested in immediate, tangible results.

The lack of an evaluation culture amongst many CSOs implies that there is little if any opportunity to identify capacity building needs. In addition, the tools for monitoring capacity building are inadequate, making it difficult to relate capacity building to impact.

There is very little networking and or sharing of best practices amongst the CBPs that were interviewed. While some talked of collaborating with other like minded organizations, they were often hard placed to explain how these collaborations strengthened their capacity building efforts.

5.9. KEY LESSONS

IIRR shared two key lessons it has acquired through it’s work. The first is about the immense potential that strong local, self-governing accountable institutions have to impact sustainable poverty reduction. Second, they have proved that as a development actor, you don’t have to be everything. You can play a facilitative role so that

²⁴ Id.

communities know where to get resources, how, and what to do with them. Linkage with actors from other sectors as well as with experts is vital to ensure that IIRR continues to focus on its core business, while assisting communities to access the knowledge they require for sustainable poverty reduction. As an example, in undertaking the Micro-enterprise projects, IIRR worked with 13 partners in two districts. Yet, only four officials were needed to train the partners in credit management, project monitoring and evaluation, financial management and training of trainers skills. The core management skills were imparted by the Ministries of Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock. IIRR also got assistance from technologists.

The need for a link between organizational capacity and individual capacity is a key lesson. The organizational climate must be conducive for the individual to use the skills they have acquired. The ability of leaders to accept the need to implement change is also vital. Hence, continuous learning is a must for leaders and they must be open to all channels of acquiring information e.g. using the internet, learning from their peers through coaching and mentoring, reading widely etc.

The following quote illustrates the point above:

“A person who was a banker is appointed a bishop but no body tells him that when you become a bishop, this is what you’re supposed to do. He becomes stressed and there is no where to turn to. Conflict management is one of the skills needed by such leaders but it is rarely given in regular training. Yet, there are many books that address it.” Margaret Mwaura , CORAT AFRICA

5.9.1 KEY ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

A key element of a successful capacity building program is that it should be conducted in a business like or efficient manner and should also help its beneficiaries take issues such as cost, efficiency and effectiveness into account when they undertake their projects. The program should undertake regular reviews to ensure that it remains relevant and useful. Finding out whether the program has achieved its objective is vital as is finding out if the organization was able to adjust itself to the changes required.

Observing the trained individual/organization’s performance after the intervention is also critical. Only then will it be clear whether the program was successful or not. One should observe whether the trainee is able to move ahead without the capacity builder as a result of having their capacity built.

Nevertheless, success is not 100% dependent on the capacity building program, but also on the leadership of organizations whose officials undergo training. The organization should have reached a point where it wants to change and develop its skills. If there is synergy between the organization leadership, the capacity builder and the individual official, then there is high likelihood for success.

6.0 THE FUTURE OF CAPACITY BUILDING IN KENYA

The provision of capacity building services is likely to become more competitive and only CBPs with resources (human, financial and infrastructural) as well as quality products and a credible image will remain relevant.

The potential of, and role that enhanced partnerships and networking can play in improving the capacity building field in the future has been emphasized strongly. This will help the CBPs maximize the use of resources and avoid duplication.

It is hoped that capacity building efforts will be intensified in the community (grass root level) and that more attention will be given to assessment and capacity building of training needs.

6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is proposed that strategies be formulated possibly through CSO networks and umbrella organizations to identify key capacity building requirements and provide sustained capacity building for CSOs. From the interviews particularly with the Capacity building providers, it was evident that such capacity building would have to be holistic and sustained over a period (accompaniment) to ensure the best possible results. The challenge however is how to fund such a programme. Information on the benefits of sustainable capacity building needs to be shared with more donors.

The future of CBPs lies in investing in research. Not enough has been done in this area. While a large number of institutions and consultants are involved in offering trainings targeting CSOs, there is no standardized curriculum on CSO work, and unfortunately not much research work is being carried out in the institutions of higher learning in this area. There is need to constantly ask whether CBPs themselves have the capacity to build the capacity of others. What level of capacity do they require? How can this be maintained? Should CBPs adopt a demand or supply driven approach? How about pricing and who should pay for it? How will the marginalized groups, whose effective demand is very low, be reached? Should demand always be judged by the ability to pay? Answers to these questions will lead to the emergence of a conceptual framework for capacity building, based on existing realities. Capacity building should be founded on our local context. We need home grown solutions to our problems.

The challenges raised by the study, especially with regard to the conflict between CSO ideals and donor interests could be addressed through critical engagement with donors and other partners on constructive policies and practices. CBPs will also need to be careful while outsourcing services to ensure that the associate consultants espouse similar vision and values. In addition, the need to enhance local resource mobilization strategies in this regard cannot be overemphasized.

Lastly, a learning culture needs to be cultivated. Leaders must keep learning and documenting experiences and good practices for improvement of their organizations.

APPENDICES

A PROFILE OF CAPACITY BUILDING PROVIDERS

1. EAST AFRICAN SUPPORT UNIT FOR NGOS (EASUN)

EASUN is a regional development organization committed to strengthening Civil Society Organizations in East Africa on the basis of a conviction that strong civil societies are vital for enhancing people's participation in the social and economic spheres of their communities and nations. EASUN was established in 1993 by HIVOS as a capacity building organization for its 40 partners. Capacity building was then construed in terms of NGOs' capacity to account to HIVOS and HIVOS in turn accounting to its donors. It was about managing compliance. From inception there was an intent that EASUN become independent and this happened in 1995. EASUN has subsequently over the years reviewed its strategic approach to capacity building and its articulation of what constitutes capacity building and organizational development.

Mission

EASUN envisions a civil society that is growing as a purposeful and effective advocacy sector in East Africa, guided by organizational principles and practices that foster equality, participation and sustainable development of workplaces and communities.

The organization strengthens advocacy capacities of CSOs through training of leaders in facilitation skills, organizing sector wide learning and networking opportunities, as well as practice reviews for increased clarity and alignment of values, methodology, systems and structure.

EASUN seeks to facilitate organizations to demonstrate systems that foster good governance, human development and leadership styles that enable team learning and more inclusive structures that support gender equality.

EASUNs OD approach normally recommends an organizational survey as a first step in an organizational change and development process. This is the beginning of a diagnosis process in organizations that helps both the consultant and the client to develop a picture of the current situation in the organization before beginning crucial change processes. Essentially, a survey is both a self-diagnosis and picture-building exercise that enables an organization to be more self-aware and prepared for change. EASUN would generally address the following:

- Evaluation of the alignment between espoused organizational values, methodologies, and activities.
- Restructuring organizations to work with a team ethos and culture
- Vision and mission review as well as the articulation of an organizations cause as a social development entity.
- Strategy making for institution building to ensure capacities and motivation to manage outreach effectively and continuously.

- Organization-wide and programme assessments not as judgment exercises but as opportunities to manage better, to learn and improve the next phase of action.

EASUNs OD programme has the following interventions:

- Organizational Surveys
- Practice Reviews
- Team Building
- Identify Development and Management
- Strategic Thinking and Planning
- Programme Evaluations

2. MS Training Centre for Development Cooperation (MS-TCDC)

The centre was opened in 1976 to prepare Danish Volunteers for their assignments in different Eastern and Southern African Countries. The centre still receives these Danish Development Workers sent out by MS, for the four weeks African Orientation Course. But today, the majority of its more than 500 annual participants come for their Swahili and Development courses from regional and other NGOs.

MS in Denmark has as its overarching goals poverty reduction and intercultural cooperation. As part of this family, MS-TCDC has as its main goal to increase the competence of civil society organisations and partners to effectively conduct their development programmes and influence policy environments. MS-TCDC is a non-profit making institution.

MS Training Centre for Development Cooperation (MS-TCDC) is part of the NGO MS-Danish Association for International Cooperation. It is a Training Centre for Development Cooperation in Eastern and Southern Africa. MS-TCDC is situated close to Arusha in Northern Tanzania. The organization's participants come from local and international NGOs and CBOs, working mainly in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, but also from Southern Africa, the Horn of Africa and beyond. MS-TCDC also provides training services to government and UN staff, as well as embassies.

The organization offers the following:

- Regular courses in current development topics and methods
- Regular Swahili and English courses
- Tailor made courses and consultancy services

The organization is committed to a participatory and experiential approach in its training methodology. Over the last 30 years MS-TCDC has gained rich experiences in training development workers, civil society organisations and their partners, donors and government agencies across the Eastern & Southern Africa region. The centre has 81 staff members.

Mission Statement: Strengthening the ability of Civil Society Organisations and other stakeholders to empower people to question their situation and act to realise their vision of a dignified life.

Mandate: MS-TCDC provides high quality training, consultancies and facilities for reflection and learning to civil society organisations and their partners.

Programmatic Strategy: The center is currently implementing a Programme Strategy 2006-2010. The main thrust of this new 2006-2010 Programme Strategy and changes from the 2001-2005 Policy Paper include:

- A well-defined geographical focus on three primary countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda) and six secondary countries (Ethiopia, Northwest Somalia, South Sudan, Rwanda, Zambia and Zimbabwe)
- Clarification that MS-TCDC's target group is mainly civil society actors but that they will also work in certain training areas with government entities and the private sector.
- The intention to mainstream an advocacy perspective in all their development training as a means to addressing the democratisation focus of MS
- A plan to engage in longer-term capacity building and impact monitoring of selected organisations in the primary focus countries, in addition to the short training courses offered
- An expanded role in development of training policies for MS including a revised Development Worker Preparation course which targets Development Workers for MS' African programmes as well as Nepal and Central America
- Clarification that language courses and hiring out of facilities for external conferences in MS-TCDC are means of income generation to support the core programme of Development training

3. PACT KENYA

Pact Kenya is a regional non-governmental organization working with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to improve the well being of communities through transformative capacity building, institutional strengthening and grant making initiatives.

Vision: Communities living in harmony and enjoying quality life in a healthy environment.

Mission: To improve the well being of communities in the eastern Africa region by transformative capacity building of Civil Society Organizations for better service delivery. Pact Kenya is achieving this through institutional strengthening, partnerships and grants management.

Pact Kenya works in Nairobi where it coordinates its activities in the eastern Africa region. In partnership with Pact International, it provides technical assistance to country programs in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Rwanda, southern Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Djibouti.

Through organized structures, Pact Kenya, in collaboration with CSOs, has developed a range of tools, trainings and mentoring techniques supporting efforts by grassroots groups in implementing quality programs through sound financial management and administration.

Pact Kenya's approach is grounded on imparting practical skills through action focused training workshops, on-the-job training, on-demand assistance, and continuous mentoring and performance monitoring.

Pact Kenya has also entered into an Associate Award Agreement with United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to implement the Kenya Civil Society Strengthening Program (KCSSP). KCSSP is designed to provide support to qualified civil society organizations with the greatest potential for advancing accountable governance in Kenya to cultivate a new cadre of leadership and build a constituency for improved biodiversity and natural resources management in Kenya.

Pact Kenya also provides technical support to Sudan Country Program (SCP) in organizational development, Natural Resource Management and Monitoring and Evaluation. It also supports SCP in website design as well as publication of publicity and fundraising materials.

PACT Kenya implements its strategies through the following platforms:

- The Sustainable Livelihoods platform seeks to improve the livelihoods of grassroots communities by enhancing their local assets to enable them better cope and become more resilient to the changing dynamics of social, economic and environmental conditions that influence their local production and reproduction systems. Pact Kenya's approach here emphasizes on building the natural, social and human capital at the community level as a catalyst for self awareness, self help and organizational models that are community owned.
- Natural Resource Management platform focuses on strengthening communities to plan, implement and manage their programs through people-centered, ecosystem based and activity led interventions processes. This approach reinforces stakeholders' efforts in sustainable improvement of the living conditions of the target population while contributing to long-term sustainable conservation of the environment.
- Conflict Prevention, Mitigation and Response platform focuses on enhancing the capacity of community institutions in peace building and conflict mitigation, prevention and management. It also seeks to strengthen the capacity of community organizations and institutions in advocacy, conflict analysis, mapping and resolution.
- The Social Justice and Inclusion platform focuses on advocacy for and empowerment of vulnerable and marginalized groups such as women, persons living with HIV/AIDS and persons with disability. Interventions include enterprise development, human rights advocacy, awareness creation, networks development and social reintegration activities. These interventions are expected to result in overall improved quality of life for and greater integration of the target groups.
- In the democracy and governance platform, Pact Kenya seeks to support and strengthen good democratic and governance systems. This program focuses on structures

and processes that encompass transparency, accountability, integrity, respect for human rights, and the rule of law in which governments are held accountable by its citizens. Besides, the platform will facilitate implementation of policies, laws and regulations that promote an enabling environment for decision making and responsible governance.

- The HIV/AIDS platform supports CBOs to strengthen their capacities to provide quality and sustainable care and support to persons infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. The program also provides training in proposal writing, performance based work planning, project development and financial management.

4. TRANSFORM AFRICA

Transform Africa is a UK registered charity. It is a member of the Transform Network, which currently comprises seven other training and advocacy organisations in Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Kenya and The Gambia. Members of the Transform Network are independent organisations who have their own work alongside the Transform Programme.

The Transform Network aims to improve the effectiveness of the NGO sector, in order to help men, women and communities fight poverty in Africa. They currently have 4 strategies to achieve this:

- Offering impact-focused programmes of organisational transformation to African NGOs.
- Working with Southern and Northern NGOs to improve North-South partnership.
- Promoting an African approach to gender equality.
- Developing a pan-African network of local training organisations.

Transform Africa works with the partner organisations in the seven countries in Africa to provide organisational transformation, training and consulting services to local NGOs to enhance their effectiveness and help them improve relationships with donors and their Northern NGO partners. It also carries out research and advocacy work on gender and North - South partnerships. In the UK they carry out research, raise awareness and bring in an African perspective to improve North - South partnerships and challenge some of the development paradigms on fighting poverty in Africa.

The organization has six values that underpin all its work:

- Gender equity
- Self-determination
- Focus on impact
- Social justice
- Partnership
- Understanding the politics of poverty

Transform has worked directly with 90 African NGOs in six countries and has extensive experience in all aspects of organisation development with a wide range of NGOs.

Their work has been supported through the following sources of funding:

- A consortium of NGOs, which comprised CAFOD, Christian Aid and Oxfam.
- Individual NGOs, which sponsor their partner NGOs to a two-year Transform programme, designed to enhance the effectiveness of local NGOs in Africa.
- Comic Relief, DFID, The Big Lottery and the European Union.
- Consulting services.
- Contributions from partner organisations
- Donations.

5. ICEBERG AFRICA CONSULTANCY

Iceberg Consultants Africa was established in 1996 by a group of OD consultants. It was formed to respond to a strong need for participative and systematic processes for improving the performance of not-for-profit making organizations in combating poverty and its causes.

Iceberg exists to help NGOs, Churches and CBOs release their potential in combating poverty and its causes. This is achieved through two broad interventions; organization development and management training.

Iceberg believes that organizations consist of people who have immense potential, which if released, can make significant difference in the performance of organizations. The organization also believes in long term processes for lasting organizational improvement, rather than “quick fix” approaches. Their processes are interactive, collaborative and empowering.

Iceberg has competencies in the following areas: -

Organization Development (OD):

- (a) Organizational Diagnosis (Assessment)
 - Collaborative Data Collection, Analysis and Feedback
 - Organizational Culture Analysis
 - Training Needs Assessment
 - Participatory Intervention Planning
- (b) OD Interventions
 - Improving Internal Governance and performance of Boards
 - Team Building
 - Process Consultation
 - Conflict Management

- Action Learning
- Future Search Conferencing
- Strengthening Structures, Systems and Policies: Monitoring, Human Resource, Financial
- Strategic Planning

Advocacy

- Identification of advocacy needs
- Advocacy strategy development
- Capacity building in lobbying skills towards effective advocacy activities

Management Training

- Managing Resources
- Winning Resources
- Basic Organizational Management
- Managing Change
- Leadership Development
- Project Management and Proposal Writing
- Community Organization
- Conducting effective meetings
- Participatory monitoring and evaluation

6. CORAT AFRICA – CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATION RESEARCH AND ADVISORY TRUST OF AFRICA

CORAT was registered in 1975 as a company limited by guarantee. It is a non-profit organization.

Vision: To see a well managed, sustainable and accountable church, transforming society.

Mission: CORAT exists to enable effective leadership and management of churches and church related organizations in Africa, through training, facilitation, consulting, research and development.

CORAT's main strategy is through training and consultancy. Consultancy is wide and involves evaluation, feasibility study, base line studies, needs assessment, leadership development and organizational development, where they accompany organizations through a process of change. They have tailor-made courses and can do any type of course depending on the need. They do not necessarily depend on the capacity they have in-house but also depend on part-time consultants. They facilitate meetings and board development i.e. leadership and governance workshops as well.

To develop the training material, the organization integrates what is good from African culture, from scripture (bible) and from management. Since they also do evaluations of institutions or projects, they incorporate some of the case studies from the work they have done. CORAT keeps reviewing the training materials on a regular basis.

The courses offered by CORAT include:

- Financial Management for Non-Finance Managers

- Equipping Women Leaders/managers with Skills in Professional Management
- Management Course for Development Coordinators/Project Officers
- Management Course for Hospital Management Teams
- Financial Management for Professional Senior Finance Executives
- Financial Management for Finance Officers without Professional Training
- Management Course for Senior Church Administrators/Executives
- Human Resource Management Course
- Strategic Planning and Learning Course

7. INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION – AFRICA (IIRR-AFRICA):

The International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) - Africa is a non-governmental, non-profit international development organization. IIRR Africa was established in 1995 with the Regional Centre in Nairobi, Kenya. It also opened offices in Ethiopia (1997) and in Uganda (2004). IIRR has its headquarters in Silang Cavite, Philippines.

The institute was founded in China during the mass education and rural reconstruction movements of 1923. Dr. Yen, the founder, was then working among illiterate Chinese, helping them to write and read letters. Soon he was overwhelmed by the demand for his services and begun to teach them to read and write for themselves. He believed that for people to be developed, they would have to have their potential released in four areas; the intellectual, physical or productive, social and organizational powers. The Rural Reconstruction Program aims to release these forces of the rural poor to overcome their multiple and interlocking problems.

Vision: A world where equity, justice and peace prevail.

The **mission** is to:

- Work with the poor and their communities as their partner, enabling them to improve their lives and achieve their full potential
- Learn and document from their work both practical and innovative solutions to the challenges facing the poor, their communities and the natural environment.
- Share their learning and field-based experience through education, training and communication.
- Join with partners in global development to promote and achieve equity, justice and peace for all

The Strategic Objective is to build the capacity of individuals, communities and their organizations to demonstrate and contribute towards a sustained impact on poverty reduction through various capacity-building and learning interventions.

IIRR offers Organization Development and strategic management services e.g. organizational assessments, formulating strategic and business plans, development of monitoring and evaluation systems, study missions, program and project evaluation and facilitation services.

The Institute provides courses on Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction; Participatory Planning Monitoring and Evaluation; Facilitating Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction; Organization Development and Strategic Management; Gender and Organization Development; and Public Awareness for Strategic Communication. The courses are based on sound theories that have been applied and tested in the field. The Institute draws practical case studies, systems, tools and lessons backed by 80 years experience in capacity building, documentation and action research in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

8. AFRICA MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION

African Medical Research Foundation (AMREF) is an international Health Organization with a huge base in Africa. It is the largest African based health organization. Started in 1957 by Flying Doctors Society, it has since evolved into a giant organization across the region.

AMREF operates in most African countries, with support offices- mainly for fundraising purposes- in Europe and America. It is the most widespread African NGO in the world. It has 60 projects in Kenya alone; a huge showing in Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, South Africa, Somalia and Southern Sudan.

AMREF is a key player in capacity building for health related programmes in the whole of Africa with a variety of programmes offered for students from all over Africa: Diploma in Community Health and 17 short courses that attract even people from America, Asia and Europe.

Capacity Building

According to Nzomo Mwita, AMREF's Regional Training Coordinator, capacity building goes beyond just training.

'When I take a team of community health workers from Kisumu on an educational trip to Mombasa, I am building their capacity. This exposure gives them an opportunity to have a new outlook in life, which could improve their livelihoods. When AMREF rescues an emergency victim it gives them a chance to recover and continue with their livelihoods'.

AMREF describes capacity building a holistic strategy of liberating vulnerable communities from poor health as a way of helping them escape from poverty and lead quality life.

AMREF focuses on developing the capacity of district health systems, local community health systems, Community Based Organizations and other development partners to facilitate improvement of the health of the people. AMREF looks at health holistically and appreciates that health issues are directly related to infrastructure, food security, water, education and human resources.

AMREF is a firm believer in human resource development because this can facilitate the growth of other sectors like infrastructure, water, food security and education. Furthermore it is not possible to reach everyone and AMREF believes that knowledge

has a trickle down (multiplier) effect. There is evidence that knowledge is the most sustainable of all resources that a person can acquire.

Clients and Core competences

AMREF's main clients include community health institutions, government health systems and other development partners and collaborators.

AMREF believes several attributes make it tick. Among the major ones are:

- Technical expertise- has highly skilled personnel from plastic surgeons to community facilitators
- Cherishes continued medical education
- Keeps partners well updated in medical issues
- Has strong partnership with support offices based in western world mainly for fundraising purposes
- Production of high quality health products
- Strong documentation – is at the cutting edge in development of health knowledge through research, experience sharing and documentation

However, while AMREF describes itself as one of the strongest capacity building providers in the region, it readily admits that in-house capacity is never enough to meet the ever increasing training needs.

Key capacity building gaps within CSOs

According to AMREF, most CSOs use inappropriate approaches and methodologies that do not lead to long term change and therefore not sustainable. A lot of CBPs have no organizational values and integrity and are driven by income generation and survival tactics. Besides, many of the CSOs lack resources (human, infrastructural, financial) and often give low quality products and have low image.

Lessons

From their long history AMREF has come to appreciate that for a CBP to achieve sustainable results, they must:

- Involve beneficiaries in all development processes, including training curricular
- Keep learning and documenting experiences and good practices for improvement
- Embrace core values as driving force for the organization
- Articulate clear vision and strive to reach with a passion
- Develop quality and sustainable products and keep good image among peers and collaborators
- Influence peers and partners to embrace similar vision

B LEADING THINKERS AND PRACTITIONERS SELECTED AND INTERVIEWED FOR THE STUDY

1. **Oduor Ongw'en.** Oduor currently is the Country Director of Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiation Institute (SEATINI) and a leading voice in the CS sector.
2. **Janet Mawiyoo.** Janet is the Chief Executive Officer of Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) and has a wealth of experience in the CS sector gained while working with leading organizations in the region.
3. **Maina Kiai.** Maina is a well known human rights lawyer and currently the chair of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights.
4. **Francis Angila.** A consultant with PACT- Kenya and the former CEO of NGO council
5. **Abdullahi Abdi.** Executive Director of Northern Aid and a board member of the NGO co-ordination bureau.
6. **Eric Makokha.** Executive Director of Shelter Forum, an NGO championing decent housing and settlement for the poor.
7. **Samwel Tororei.** A development consultant and a senior university lecturer. Tororei was among the founders of the NGO council and still remains a major vice in the sector.
8. **Odenda Lumumba.** National coordinator of Kenya Land Alliance and very active voice in land rights issue in Kenya.
9. **Mossi Kisare.** Executive Director of EASUN, a capacity building organization based in Arusha Tanzania. Mosi is a leading organizational development specialist in the region.
10. **Prudence Kaijage.** Principle of MS TCDC in Arusha Tanzania. MS TCDC is leading centre for capacity building for CSOs.
11. **Erastus Omolo.** Erastus is a leading accountant working mainly with CSOs. He is also the founding member of the NGO council.
12. **Mary Njenga.** An organizational development consultant with Iceberg- Africa
13. **Nzomo Mwita.** Nzomo currently works with AMREF as the International Training Coordinator.

C CAPACITY BUILDING PRACTITIONERS SELECTED AND INTERVIEWED FOR THE STUDY

1. AMREF – African Medical and Research Foundation
2. IIRR - International Institute Of Rural Reconstruction – Africa
3. CORAT - Christian Organization Research and Advisory Trust of Africa
4. MS-TCDC - Ms- Training Center for Development Co-operation
5. EASUN - EAST AFRICAN SUPPORT UNIT FOR NGOS
6. ICEBERG KENYA CONSULTANCY
7. PACT
8. TRANSFORM AFRICA

D LIST OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

NO	NAME	ORGANIZATION
1	Lokiru Matendo	PAMFORK
2	Dr. S. K. Tororei	Consultant – Empowerment Resource Development
3	Obure Phillipe	Coalition of Young Kenya Voters
4	Nzomo Mwita	AMREF
5	Thomas Kirongo	PEN
6	Mary Njenga	Consultant – ICEBERG
7	Geoffrey Atieli	Sense International
8	Eric Makokha	Shelter Forum
9	Janet Mawiyoo	KCDF
10	Martin Oloo	DFID
11	Willy Mutunga	Ford Foundation
12	Faith Kisinga Gitonga	Consultant
13	Judith A. Ochieng	PEN
14	Mutuku Nguli	PEACENET
15	John Batten	PEN
16	Peterson Githinji	CHAN
17	Steve Kirimi	Resource Alliance
18	Debbie Ajuang	The CRADLE
19	Arthur Wanyoike	Consultant
20	Ruth Charo	Health NGOs Network – AMREF
21	Annette Msabeni Ngoye	Kenya Red Cross Society
22	Kepta Ombati	Youth Agenda
23	Erastus K. Omolo	Erastus and Company
24	Chris Mbiti	PEN
25	George Karanja	PEN
26	Boniface Kaburu	Consultant
27	Henry Ochido	NGO Board
29	Innocent Misiko	Consultant
30	Grace Isharaza	Aga Khan Development Network

E QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING PROVIDERS

1. Name of Organization
2. Registration Status
3. Brief Historical Background and Profile of the Organization(year of inception /registration, vision and mission, objectives and strategies, achievements, programmes)
4. Geographical Areas of Operation
5. How does the organization define capacity building
6. Who are your main clientele and how do you indentify them?
7. What are the core areas of competency for the organization?
8. Does the organization have in house capacity to address all its training programmes?
9. If not from where does it source additional support
10. Which other CBPs does the organization know and what do they do? Who does the CBP currently collaborate with?
11. How does the organization fund its capacity building programmes?
12. Are the CBPs programmes demand/market driven or based on specific aspirations of the CBP?
13. Does the CBP offer a standardized capacity building package or does it tailor content to suit the specific NGO/CSOs needs?
14. What motivated the organization to engage in capacity building?
15. What motivated the organization to choose the specific core capacity building areas?
16. What are the key capacity building gaps that exist in the NGO/CSO sector?
17. Which gaps is the organization trying to address?
18. What challenges are you facing as a CBP?
19. How can these challenges be addressed?
20. What key lessons has the CBP learnt in its work?
21. What oppourtunities exist in CBP work in Kenya?
22. What is the content of the training currently offered by the CBP?
23. How were the materials developed?
24. What in the CBPs views are the characteristics of a Model / Exemplary CSO/NGO?
25. What role can CBPs play in contributing to a model /Exemplary CSO/NGO?
26. Does the CBP have examples of model CBPs that it has worked with?
27. What would you consider to be the key elements of a successful capacity building programme for NGOs/CSOs?
28. What factors could lead to the failure of capacity building programmes?
29. Which specific elements of capacity building contribute most to a NGO/CSOs social impact?

30. Which future directions does the CBP see capacity building of NGO/CSOs in Kenya taking?

E IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRACTITIONERS AND THINKERS

1. Have you ever discussed or considered what standards of practice are expected of your organization? Of CSOs in general?
 - A. If yes what are these standards?
 - B. What prompted the discussion or concern?
2. Does your organization apply these standards of practice?
3. If yes which ones and how?
4. How can CSOs promote best practices in their organizations?
5. How do you rank these standards in order of importance?
6. Which areas of CSO practice seem to be in need of great improvement and why?
7. In your opinion, what are the constraints and challenges faced by CSOs that are aspiring to meet quality standards of practice?
8. What needs to be done at the organizational, sectoral, legal, policy or other level to promote quality standards in the CSO sector
9. In your view how would you describe an exemplary CSO?
10. How do you compare the quality and standards maintained by CSOs in Kenya and other countries you have had experience.

E QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CSO REGULATORY BODIES

1. What standards of practice are expected of the organizations that you regulate?
2. How do you ensure adherence and compliance to these standards?
3. What measures are taken against CSOs that fail to adhere to standards
4. How many CSOs have you applied sanctions against
5. How do you describe the level of adherence to these standards?
6. Is the policy and regulatory framework adequate in ensuring quality standards in the CSOs you regulate
7. If no what needs to be done at the legal and policy to ensure quality standards in the CSO sector?
8. From your experience what are the main challenges facing the CSOs you regulate in adhering to quality standards
9. In your view how would you describe an exemplary CSO?