

leading the British government's fight against world poverty...

One in five people in the world today, over 1 billion people, live in poverty on less than one dollar a day. In an increasingly interdependent world, many problems – like conflict, crime, pollution and diseases such as HIV and AIDS – are caused or made worse by poverty.

DFID supports long-term programmes to help tackle the underlying causes of poverty. DFID also responds to emergencies, both natural and man-made.

DFID's work forms part of a global promise to

- halve the number of people living in extreme poverty and hunger
- ensure that all children receive primary education
- promote sexual equality and give women a stronger voice
- reduce child death rates
- improve the health of mothers
- combat HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- make sure the environment is protected
- build a global partnership for those working in development.

Together, these form the United Nations' eight 'Millennium Development Goals', with a 2015 deadline. Each of these Goals has its own, measurable, targets.

DFID works in partnership with governments, civil society, the private sector and others. It also works with multilateral institutions, including the World Bank, United Nations agencies and the European Commission.

DFID works directly in over 150 countries worldwide, with a budget of some £4.6 billion in 2005. Its headquarters are in London and East Kilbride, near Glasgow.

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Civil Society and Development



**How DFID works in partnership with civil society
to deliver the Millennium Development Goals**

Foreword

Last July, I was one of 200,000 people who marched around Edinburgh: the biggest demonstration the city has ever seen. We were brought together by a shared desire to end world poverty. We were asking for action: not charity, but justice. There has never been a better opportunity to take action than now. We can no longer claim that we cannot see what is happening and that we do not have the means to do something.

2005 will be remembered for the campaign to Make Poverty History. Make Poverty History has created a phenomenal constituency of interest in development. Millions of people around the world have joined together to call for an end to poverty and to hold their leaders to account.

Many of these people and organisations are new to development. Nearly 60% of the people on the march in Edinburgh were first time marchers. We need to continue our work with established NGOs to maintain this momentum, while also supporting all these new voices for development and helping to build their capacity to bring about change.

A great deal has been promised: increased aid; commitments to reach the UN target of 0.7%; debt cancellation; better ways of dealing with conflict; action on getting children into school; fighting the diseases that kill so many; and developing countries committing themselves to play their part through good policies and the rule of law.

We now need to turn all these promises into action. Civil society has a crucial role in helping us and making sure we do just that.

Hilary Benn

Secretary of State

Department for International Development

Summary

Introduction

- 1** This paper sets out DFID’s approach to working in partnership with civil society and aims to:
- look at the role of civil society in development and identify the key areas where DFID is working with and through civil society to reduce poverty; and
 - set out the range of mechanisms DFID has for working with and supporting civil society in these areas.
- 2** In the paper we use ‘civil society’ very broadly, meaning the groups and organisations which occupy a position between the household, the state and the private sector. This definition of civil society includes, among others, trade unions, business associations, cooperatives, employers’ associations, faith groups, trade associations, recreational groups and think tanks.
- 3** The purpose of the paper is not to set a new direction for this aspect of DFID’s work but to set out clearly DFID’s current approach to a set of relationships which are both important and complex and have developed rapidly over the last decade. It is intended to be of assistance to current and future partners, as well as the wide range of DFID staff who work with civil society, and to provide a basis for future policy development.

Why DFID works in partnership with civil society

- 4** Civil society plays an important role in reducing poverty, complementary to the roles played by governments and the private sector, including:
- **Building voice and accountability:** civil society helps build effective and accountable states and supports voices for change.
 - **Providing services and humanitarian assistance:** civil society can play an important role, particularly in fragile states, by delivering services to poor people and developing new innovative approaches to reducing poverty. It also has an important role to play in responding to humanitarian crises.
 - **Promoting awareness and understanding of development:** a strong UK development community is important for building public support for development, contributing to policy debates and holding the international community to account.

How DFID works in partnership with civil society

- 5** DFID has worked with and supported civil society for more than 40 years. Our commitment is illustrated by the 50% increase in funding for civil society organisations since DFID was created in 1997¹. Many DFID departments work with civil society through a combination of policy dialogue, consultation or funding.
- **Consultation and dialogue.** There is well-established dialogue between DFID and civil society on a broad range of development issues and we consult widely when developing policy. Ministers and senior officials meet representatives of civil society regularly.
 - **Country offices** are a major source of support for civil society organisations, providing at least £90m in 2004/5. Since 1997, DFID has provided more of our support directly to governments to implement their national Poverty Reduction Strategies. Alongside this, there has been an increase in our support to civil society to work on voice and accountability.
 - **DFID’s Conflict, Humanitarian Assistance and Security Department** provided £91 million in 2004/05 for conflict resolution, service delivery in difficult environments and humanitarian assistance.

- **DFID’s Information and Civil Society Department** provided £83 million in 2004/05 through a range of funding mechanisms. There has been a shift in the balance of the work from supporting the provision of services towards building voice and accountability and building the UK development sector.
- **Other departments.** Many other DFID departments work with civil society in a variety of ways. For example, the Central Research Department provided more than £90 million for research in 2004, which includes support for civil society.

Conclusion

- 6** This paper reaffirms DFID’s aim of working in partnership with civil society and sets out the range of ways in which we do so. Looking forward, DFID expects that civil society will continue to play an important role in reducing poverty and that it will continue to be an important partner for DFID. We will continue to have an open and inclusive exchange of ideas on how that partnership should develop.

¹ Statistics on International Development, 2005.

Introduction



1.1 Civil society is an important partner for DFID. This paper sets out DFID's objectives in working with and supporting civil society and shows how these are addressed by the range of relationships and mechanisms for providing support that exist across the Department.

1.2 DFID's relationships and work with civil society have developed rapidly since 1997. The 1997 White Paper, 'Eliminating World Poverty', set out the Government's wish to strengthen its partnership with voluntary, charitable and non-profit making organisations in order to win stronger public and international support for development, to work in complementary ways in countries where DFID was working and to support their efforts in countries where it was not.

1.3 A comprehensive programme of consultation with UK civil society followed and in 1999 DFID's policy on working with civil society was outlined in a speech by the then International Development Secretary, Clare Short. This set DFID's relationships with non-governmental organisations in the context of a global picture of the changing role of civil society in development. It strongly highlighted the key role of southern non-governmental organisations in helping poor people make their own voices heard and in demanding more from their state systems. It also outlined three strategic roles for international non-governmental organisations: building domestic and

international support for development; lobbying governments and international institutions; and supporting and strengthening the capacity of local civil society partners.

1.4 The 2000 White Paper, 'Making Globalisation Work for the Poor', further reflected this analysis, again emphasising the need to strengthen the voices of civil society in developing countries and reaffirming the Government's commitment to domestic and international development awareness. In 2002, the International Development Act specifically empowered DFID to promote awareness of global poverty and methods for reducing it.

1.5 Since then DFID's work with and through civil society, based on these objectives, has expanded rapidly. A range of new funding mechanisms have been developed and a wide variety of strong relationships established with different parts of DFID. This paper reaffirms our commitment to working with civil society and our approach and sets out how both are reflected through the mechanisms that are now in place.

² NGOs in a Global Future. Speech by the Secretary of State. Birmingham, 1999.

Why DFID works in partnership with civil society

2.1 Civil society plays an important and complementary role to government and the private sector in poverty reduction.

Building voice and accountability

2.2 Civil society provides people with the space for association, reflection and action. DFID has, since 1997, increased its focus on supporting developing country governments implementing their own strategies to reduce poverty. But at the same time we have also recognised the need for citizens to be empowered to participate and to hold their governments to account.

→ **Policy formulation:** civil society has a crucial role to play in empowering and representing the poor in policy formulation at a local and national level.

→ **Monitoring services and budgets:** civil society has a role to play in improving state services through monitoring, demanding transparency and accountability, and ensuring inclusive access to services.

→ **Conflict resolution:** civil society can provide a voice for communities and help ensure that they, as well as governments, are accountable. The positioning of civil society means that it can make a distinct contribution in resolving conflict.

Land for the Landless of Bangladesh

Milon Char is an island in the turbulent Gomani River in Bangladesh – an inhospitable area which until recently was uninhabited. But, for the neglected people at the margins of Bangladeshi society, it provides an opportunity to own land and build a future. With the help of a local DFID supported civil society organisation called Samata, thousands of poor families have moved to Milon Char.

Samata is helping the poor to organise themselves and is fighting to establish their land rights. Bilkis Khatun and her husband Abdul Razzaque are among those who have settled on Milon Char. They are busy establishing a home. But there is a threat. Until their small piece of land is formally registered in their names, they, and many thousands of other settlers, risk losing their property to illegal land grabbers who prey on poor communities. However, Bilkis, Abdul and their fellow settlers have strength in numbers, and with Samata’s help, they are well organised and determined to establish their legal right to the land.

Between 2001 and 2008, DFID’s contribution to Samata will amount to £6.6 million.

Access to Education in Bangladesh

DFID support to the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), a leading Bangladeshi civil society organisation, is aimed at targeting girls through a programme working with almost 1 million children who have either never enrolled or who have dropped out. The BRAC system offers flexible hours which are agreed in consultation with parents and convenient locations for those living in hard-to-reach areas.

At the BRAC school in Dergram, near Dhaka, although life is not perfect (it is hot and the roof leaks during monsoon season) parents are delighted and are enthusiastic about participating in parent/teacher meetings. They hope that their children will go to secondary school, along with 90% of other BRAC educated children.

Between 2004 and 2009, DFID will contribute £32 million to BRAC’s Education Programme.

→ **Global advocacy:** because many key decisions are now made at a global level, civil society has a role in global advocacy. The successful campaigns on landmines and the growing strength of the coalition around trade issues illustrate this.

2.3 Civil society organisations represent a varied and diverse set of interests. It is important to remember that civil society is not always representative or democratic and does not necessarily always work for the interests of the poor. DFID’s “Drivers of Change” studies (see 3.7) provide an insight into the positive and negative influences of civil society organisations and their relationships with government. In considering civil society’s role in supporting voice and accountability, it is also important to have a clear understanding of the roles of international and local civil society.

Providing humanitarian assistance and services

2.4 Civil society has historically played an important role in providing services and relief to poor people, particularly in fragile states.

→ **Provision of services:** civil society can play a valuable role in service delivery. To achieve universal provision of services and avoid duplication and uneven distribution however, civil society’s service provision should aim to fit within nationally or locally owned strategies. Civil society organisations can be particularly effective when working with local government.

→ **Humanitarian aid and service provision in difficult environments:** there are many examples where there are no nationally agreed strategies and where there are serious gaps in provision, especially in emergencies, conflicts

and fragile states. Civil society often steps in to fill the gaps and has a distinctive role here.

→ **Developing new approaches:** civil society can play an important role identifying, piloting and replicating innovative approaches to service delivery. Approaches in common use by civil society organisations can improve service delivery much more widely.

2.5 Service provision can also provide a basis and legitimacy for civil society to advocate for changes in the delivery of government services.

Promoting awareness and understanding of development

2.6 DFID wishes to support the maintenance of a dynamic and independent international development community in the UK and globally to build support for development and to contribute to policy debate and the knowledge base for development. This requires not only a critical mass of thinking, expertise and action but also champions and leaders. Promoting awareness of global poverty and the means of reducing it is specifically provided for within the 2002 International Development Act.

Building support for development: the 1997 White Paper emphasised the need to increase understanding of our mutual dependence and the need for international development. We continue to attach importance to raising awareness in the UK about the causes of poverty and inequality and what we can do about them.

Effective Global Advocacy – The Jubilee 2000 Campaign

Launched in the mid-1990s to press for wide-scale debt relief for developing countries, this civil society campaign played an important role in mobilising the public in the UK and worldwide in support of international development.

During the 1998 G7 summit in Birmingham, the city’s churches and cathedrals were filled by tens of thousands of campaign supporters who marched to the summit venue. Against the background of this unprecedented public pressure, the G7 leaders discussed debt relief at the summit and at the subsequent 1999 summit in Cologne. The pressure mounted by the campaign led to the cancellation of \$70 billion of debt, freeing up significant resources for development interventions.

Civil society organisations are very important in raising the profile of, and promoting development to a broad and diverse audience.

→ **Influencing British government policy:** the Government is committed to consulting effectively with the public and civil society in order to help strengthen accountability to taxpayers and public confidence in the use of public resources to reduce poverty.

→ **A knowledge base for international development:** through research and analysis, policy debate and operational experience, civil society contributes to the knowledge base which is essential for the functioning of the international development community.

→ **Skill development:** civil society organisations make an important contribution to the development skill-base in the UK and the opportunities provided by volunteering organisations in particular can help motivate individuals to want to work in this area.

→ **Global fellowship and solidarity:** there is also an elusive but important role for civil society in being the public face of development and being a conduit for the UK public expression of solidarity and personal commitment to communities worldwide.

Make Poverty History

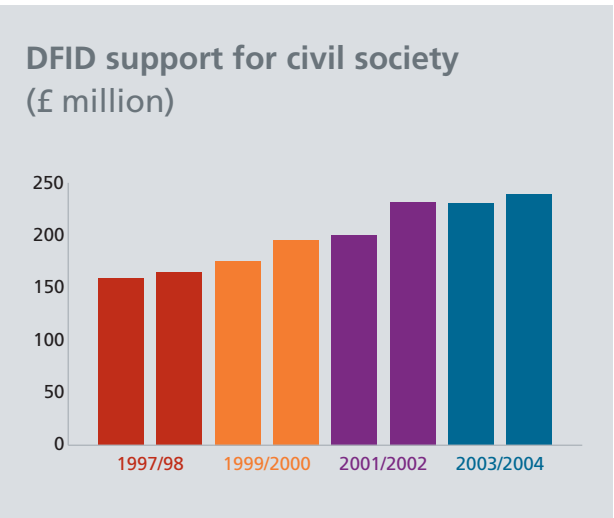
Organised by a coalition representing all aspects of civil society from schools and faith groups to trade unions, international development and aid organisations to grassroots campaigners, the Make Poverty History campaign united millions in the belief that radical change was needed and that through mobilising massive public support, it would be possible to bring about a fundamental rethink of the rules of the relationship between the poor and the rich world.

Encouraged by the UK, more than 80 countries are participating: the One campaign in the States and the Canadian and Japanese MPH have mobilised over six million campaigners to press their governments to reiterate their support for achieving 0.7% and debt cancellation.

2005 is a year for campaigners to remember. They were part of the biggest ever anti-poverty movement and that momentum will fuel future campaigning for years to come. Gleneagles delivered, in Kofi Annan's words, “the greatest summit for Africa ever”.

How DFID works in partnership with civil society

3.1 DFID has worked with and supported civil society for more than 40 years. Our commitment is demonstrated by the 50% increase in funding for civil society since 1997. Many DFID departments work with civil society through a combination of policy dialogue, consultation or funding.



Consultation and dialogue

3.2 There is a well-established exchange of ideas between DFID and civil society on development issues and we are committed to consulting widely on policy development. This has increased considerably over the last five years. In 2004, DFID undertook 13 formal public policy consultations and many more consultations on specific issues. Ministers and senior officials regularly meet civil society representatives to discuss policy issues and country offices prepare Country Strategy Plans and Country Action Plans in consultation with civil society.

3.3 To ensure this dialogue is maintained and is effective, DFID has developed guidance for staff on policy consultation with civil society which builds on the Code of Conduct published by the Cabinet Office and the Compact on relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector in England. DFID’s guidance aims to increase the involvement of civil society in public consultations, minimizing the burden it imposes on them, and giving them enough time to respond. DFID also provides funding to the British Overseas NGOs for Development network (BOND) which facilitates consultations and policy dialogue.

Country office support

3.4 DFID’s country offices and regional programmes are a major source of support for civil society organisations. They provided more than £90 million³ through at least 20 different schemes and arrangements in 2004/05. As well as this funding relationship, DFID country offices support civil society by directly working with governments to establish and improve the space for civil society to associate and engage with governmental decision making and through consultations on policies and practice.

3.5 In the past, financial support for civil society through country programmes was primarily to provide services. With DFID providing more support for the provision of services through national strategies in a number of countries, more of this funding now comes indirectly with civil society providing services through governmental programmes. For example, it is estimated that £5 million a year of the support DFID provides to the Government of India to address HIV and AIDS is spent by civil society organisations.

3.6 With this increase in direct support to developing country governments, however, there is also a real need for a strong civil society to help citizens to participate and to hold the state to account. Globally, DFID now spends £156 million a year on programmes with a direct focus on building voice and

accountability and a further £350 million on programmes which contribute to this aim⁴. Much of this is through work with governments on public accountability, although support for civil society to work in this area has increased, through such mechanisms as the “Manusher Jonno” in Bangladesh and the Civil Society Foundation in Tanzania.

3.7 DFID funded research indicates that interest groups can be important drivers of state development – if there is a supportive political environment and institutions that encourage the state and civil society to work together. This points to the need for donors to think much more politically and understand the dynamics between state and society.

3.8 To respond to this challenge, DFID has developed an approach to help identify key levers which may drive progress on reducing poverty. This ‘Drivers of Change’ approach helps DFID country offices to build an in-depth understanding of the historical and political context, and the nature of state-society engagement.

3.9 Twenty DFID country offices have carried out these studies and have concluded that civil society groups which represent the poor play an important role in stimulating change. However there is a need to be aware of the potential political interests and aspirations of these groups. This greater understanding of the drivers of and

³ Statistics on International Development (SID) does not record the figures for support for local civil society. The £90 million figure consists of an estimate of £30 million for local civil society support with the £60 million in SID.
⁴ Citizen Accountability and Public Expenditure, Joanne Bosworth 2005, EVD, DFID.

Supporting prisoner's rights in Ethiopia

DFID’s Ethiopia programme has established the Partnership Fund to provide funding to civil society and government organisations that work together to help establish good governance and combat poverty through the development and safeguarding of justice and human rights.

The fund has supported several successful projects - including an initiative from Prison Fellowship Ethiopia (PFE), the leading Ethiopian civil society organisation working on prison reform, to improve conditions for prisoners and to encourage them to demand their rights. More than 65,000 prisoners are crowded into Ethiopia's 120 prisons, which often lack even the most basic services or facilities. Conditions are even worse for women prisoners and the children who accompany them because they have nowhere else to go.

With support from the Partnership Fund, PFE has helped to improve prisoners' welfare. It lobbied successfully for an increase in prisoners' daily food allowance, from 1.5 Birr to 3.5 Birr (£0.09 to £0.21) and worked to improve basic services in the country's prisons. Prison officials have received human rights training, while PFE has raised prisoners' awareness of their rights and encouraged them to demand them. It continues to influence government policy and practice.

barriers to change is being used by DFID country offices to strengthen their work with civil society.

3.10 The number of civil society organisations supported directly or indirectly through country programmes has now increased to at least 30,000. With a greater understanding of the role of civil society in political change, the focus has widened out from traditional development non-government organisations to a much larger range of civil society organisations including the media, trade unions, faith groups and social movements.

3.11 Most of the country offices’ work supporting civil society is managed through intermediaries (such as the Poorer Areas Civil Society Programme in India or Democratising Ukraine). These intermediaries can be local institutions, civil society networks or local civil society organisations. Country offices also use international civil society organisations as intermediaries. Where this happens it is important for international civil society organisations not to undermine the legitimate role of local civil society in local and national policy formulation. It is also important to ensure

that support for international civil society organisations does not restrict the emergence of local civil society capacity.

3.12 Increasingly, country office support is harmonised with other bilateral donors. Good examples of this are the Civil Society Foundation in Tanzania and funding for Poverty Action Network Ethiopia. To assist country offices in their work with civil society, we have developed guidance on “How to work with civil society”.

Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department

3.13 Civil society is a major deliverer of humanitarian assistance, often working in partnership with multilateral or bilateral donors. Civil society organisations have good networks and are often well positioned to implement humanitarian assistance effectively and sensitively. They are flexible and able to respond quickly.

3.14 Civil society organisations have roots in the local community and there is a high level of recognition of, and appreciation for the essential humanitarian work they do. They are consulted by the humanitarian community and are

Stitching Together a Better Future in India

Hundreds of thousands of women in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh earn a living from the chikan and jardozi forms of hand-embroidery. Recently, some of the poorest of these women, living in Kaluapur and neighbouring villages, received training that boosted their income – and turned them into entrepreneurs. Jetunnissa is one of the trainers. She helps the women upgrade their skills, market their products and set up self-help groups, as well as picking up and distributing their work. She and the other trainers work for the local civil society organisation, Network of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development, that DFID India funds through the Poorest Areas Civil Society programme, which aims to help poor and socially excluded people claim their fair share of services and resources.

Jetunnissa has been impressed by the women’s progress. “Earlier I used to pick up and distribute about 100 items of clothing a month,” she says. “Now I distribute around 150 items a month.” With regular work of this sort, the women can, in their spare time, earn about 300 rupees a month (around £3.50), useful income for the many families in this region whose total monthly income is around 900 rupees (about £10).

represented on key UN boards and advisory groups. DFID has good consultation processes for engagement with civil society organisations on humanitarian assistance issues.

3.15 DFID’s Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department CHaSe) is a significant funder of civil society organisations. In 2004/05, it provided £91 million through a variety of mechanisms including the Conflict and Humanitarian Fund (CHF) and with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Global Conflict Prevention Pool. Many UK based and international civil society organisations are supported through these mechanisms including the British Red Cross, Medecins sans Frontieres and Oxfam.

3.16 These funds support civil society’s work in responding to emergencies, providing humanitarian assistance, delivering service delivery in difficult environments and resolving conflict. With the introduction of the CHF in 2005, there is now also an emphasis on building voice and accountability specifically in these areas. In addition to other activities, the fund supports efforts to build the capacity of southern civil society organisations to represent the views of the poor about conflict and humanitarian issues at the national and international levels.

3.17 The CHF provides programmatic funding to civil society organisations specialising in the field of conflict and/or humanitarian affairs and project funding for specific civil society initiatives in this area. At present when there is a

humanitarian crisis, DFID also provides substantial funding for civil society organisations working outside of the CHF process. The funds available through the CHF will increase over the next two years as DFID fulfils its existing commitments and releases money into the mechanism. DFID expects that all of CHASE’s funding to civil society will be through this fund by 2008/2009.

3.18 DFID’s Information and Civil Society Department (ICSD) provided £83 million to civil society organisations in 2004/05. A number of different mechanisms have been developed to work with and through a diverse range of stakeholders to support all three objectives of building voice and accountability, delivering services and building support for development. These mechanisms include long-term flexible strategic funding through Partnership Programme Agreements, competitive project funding through the Civil Society Challenge Fund and the Development Awareness Fund, and capacity building agreements through Strategic Grant Agreements. Overall funding through ICSD has increased by more than 20% since 1997 and will have increased by more than 60% by 2007/8.

3.19 Before 2000, support for civil society was focussed heavily on service delivery. Since then there has been a distinct shift. ICSD funding now supports a balance of work on voice and accountability, provision of services and building a UK development sector.

3.20 The majority of this funding is managed through Partnership Programme Agreements (PPAs). These are strategic funding agreements with major international civil society organisations. There are currently 18 PPAs, including those with Oxfam, Christian Aid and WWF, and funding through this mechanism totalled £65 million in 2004/5. Eight additional agreements will be made in early 2006 to organisations including Islamic Relief, the Ethical Trading Initiative and Plan International. This model of funding has been welcomed by the UK development community for its flexibility, light touch monitoring and the security that long-term funding offers. This

funding contributes significantly to promoting voice and accountability as well as to building and maintaining a UK development community. Work to build the capacity of southern civil society to provide services is also supported by this instrument.

3.21 The PPA funding levels were originally based on historic precedent or the level of funding the agency received through the Civil Society Challenge Fund. The funding levels were reassessed in 2004 and are now more closely related to the size of the organisation and their strategic engagement with DFID. In general the major British Overseas Aid Group⁵

Saving the children of Sudan

Eissa and Asha and their nine children have been victims of almost unimaginable violence. One night Arab militias attacked, looted and destroyed their village near Dumma, murdering 16 men. Though he was shot and left for dead, Eissa survived and struggled to a UN camp. There he found his wife Asha and their children, who had fled when the attack started.

Despite the camp’s security and shelter, the family still faces great hardship, and they risk being killed if they leave. The camp’s lack of education and health facilities mean that it is a poor place to bring up children, particularly ones scarred by the horrific brutality they witnessed.

Save the Children, with funding from DFID’s CHASE department, worked to improve the nutrition, health, education and child protection for those in the camps. Working with the Sudanese Ministry of Health, Save the Children established clinics that treated 3,000 people a week, tackling the worst cases of malnutrition, typically in children under the age of five.

⁵ British Overseas Aid Group consists of Action Aid, Christian Aid, Oxfam, Save the Children and CAFOD.

agencies receive about 7% of their income through these agreements, sectoral agencies with agreements around 25%, and volunteering agencies 70%.

3.22 The Civil Society Challenge Fund (CSCF) made grants of £10 million in 2004/5. This global fund is open to UK NGOs not benefiting from PPAs. Project proposals are assessed annually on a competitive basis. Decisions on which projects to fund are made on merit, based on how closely they fit with the poverty-focussed criteria of the fund. As a project fund, its impact is somewhat different from the Partnership Programme Agreement mechanism. Its project outputs are focussed on building voice and accountability and on service delivery

in difficult environments but inevitably, its direct development impact on the ground is limited by its size. The immediate outputs in country of some of the projects could be delivered in other ways such as through country office funding or through increased funding to larger civil society organisations.

3.23 The CSCF, however, also contributes significantly to our objective of building a strong and diverse UK development community by providing support for smaller and, increasingly, non-mainstream organisations. It is important for DFID to support and acknowledge contribution and value of UK civil society organisations and to demonstrate this through an effective funding relationship.

Community Mental Health in Sri Lanka

The international civil society organisation, Basic Needs, has received funding through the Civil Society Challenge Fund to facilitate the social integration of mentally ill people in Sri Lanka and allow them to claim their social and economic rights.

Basic Needs has utilised a '5 module' approach which encompasses community mental health services, promotion of sustainable livelihoods, capacity building, research policy and advocacy and programme management. This approach underpins Basic Needs' multidisciplinary model of treating mental health which promotes not only medical treatment, but increased interaction and economic development for mentally ill people and their carers.

Basic Needs has targeted both service providers and communities through awareness-raising and advocacy activities. Of particular note is work with local hospitals to encourage the development of mental health clinics and facilitate the provision of appropriate medicines and treatments.

Partnership with Oxfam

In 2001, Oxfam and DFID developed a partnership agreement which would build on 30 years of working together and a shared commitment to the eradication of poverty. DFID has contributed more than £26m to this partnership.

An example of Oxfam's successful work enabling people living in poverty to achieve food and income security is Teekamragh in India.

In Teekamragh there are more than 1,000 ponds. The ponds are the most important source of livelihood for the fisherfolk, who are on the lowest rung of the caste hierarchy. Through collective efforts, the fisherfolk have been able to take control of 28 ponds from upper caste people. They also demanded, and gained, farming rights from the district administration over the 132 hectares of land that emerges when water recedes in the summer. This has increased food security for more than 10,000 fisherfolk.

3.24 The CSCF also provides an important opportunity for innovative work. This work is relatively high-risk in terms of certainty of outcome but is mitigated by a rigorous assessment process. Development organisations formed in response to specific issues, and which may be relatively small, can often be particularly responsive and innovative in addressing specific needs. The CSCF also provides an opportunity for specific communities in the UK to link with appropriate organisations and communities in the developing world.

3.25 Both PPAs and the CSCF support work in areas where DFID's presence is limited, such as Francophone Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. For both schemes DFID's Civil Society Team seeks advice from country offices to ensure selection and monitoring of centrally managed agreements draws on real understanding of the local context. However, engagement of country offices with these schemes needs to be balanced against the need to focus our in-country resources firmly on the challenge of ensuring DFID's rapidly expanding country programmes contribute as effectively as possible to progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

3.26 Before 1997, there was no specific funding available for development awareness activities within DFID’s programmes. In 1997 the then International Development Secretary outlined the important role for civil society in building support for development and the International Development Act of 2002 specifically made provision for DFID to support these activities. A Development Awareness Fund was established to focus exclusively on building support for development and it works through a range of organisations including the formal education sector, development education centres, trade unions and the media. Funding for this work has increased to £5 million in 2004/5.

3.27 DFID has also made an effort to work with partners beyond the traditional supporters of international development. In 2003, DFID entered into a number of Strategic Grant Agreements, which were specifically designed to enable members of civil society whose core business was not related to international development to explore what contribution they could make ranging from raising awareness amongst their own constituencies about development issues to developing a programme with a southern focus. While the scheme had some encouraging results, we have decided, against competing priorities, not to enter into further Strategic Grant Agreements with new organisations. In future where non-development organisations have a significant contribution to make to an area of DFID business, the relationship will be managed by the business area concerned.

Focus on Development

The Commonwealth Broadcasting Fund encourages the media and especially television to raise awareness of development in the UK. A senior producer with GMTV spent her bursary to work in southern Africa. GMTV sent a full crew plus their presenter to southern Africa to complete the films that she had researched and part filmed. On her return, GMTV ran a week long series of special packages focusing on health care in the developing world. The producer has attributed her growing interest and experience to this travel bursary.

Other DFID departments

3.28 Many other departments work with civil society in a variety of ways. The Central Research Department provides more than £90 million for research on various areas through 16 research consortia and 4 research programmes. Much of these funds are channelled through research institutes but DFID is increasingly pressing research consortia to include partners from civil society and government. Research programmes on women’s empowerment, effective states and sustainable agriculture all aim to improve their effectiveness and relevance through working with civil society.

3.29 There are a few other small discrete sources of direct and indirect funding for specialist areas including the Information and Communication Seed Fund and the Commonwealth Broadcasting Fund.

Conclusion

4.1 The aim of this paper has been to reaffirm DFID’s objectives in working in partnership with civil society and to set out the range of ways in which that work takes place. Its intention has not been to set a new policy direction but to reaffirm our commitment and approach and to set the current diverse range of relationships and activities in that context.

4.2 Looking forward, DFID expects that civil society will continue to play an important role in reducing poverty and will continue to be an important partner for DFID. We are committed to discussing openly and inclusively whether and how that partnership should develop, as the whole development community faces the huge challenges of accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

Comments and queries

4.3 Any comments or queries on the material set out in this paper should be sent to **Mike Battcock, Civil Society Team, DFID, Abercrombie House, Eaglesham Road, East Kilbride G75 8EA m-battcock@dfid.gov.uk**

4.4 Contact points for comments or queries on the schemes or relationships described can be found on the DFID website at: **www.dfid.gov.uk**

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Civil Society Team**