Support to Civil Society Within Swedish Development Cooperation

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Preface

The Center for African Studies (CAS) at the School of Global Studies at Gothenburg University has in recent years added international development cooperation to its sphere of teaching as well as research. A masters programme (“bredd-magister”) on African Studies with special emphasis on international development cooperation was launched in 2005/2006 and 2006/2007. As part of the Bologna Process the programme has now been integrated in the joint two-year master programme of global studies from September 2007.

During the period up to date it has been established that teaching materials with special relevance to Swedish and European development policies are not readily available to the extent that is required. To fill the gap we at CAS have decided to produce a series of smaller publications called “Perspectives on….” We plan to publish most of the material in English but might also publish some material which we have readily accessible in Swedish. The idea is to publish these Perspectives on our Website and if necessary to up-date them from time to time. If there is a demand we might also publish a small number of hard copies.

This Perspective is an completely revised version of the Perspective Nr 7 “Swedish Development Cooperation through Swedish and Local NGOs” by Sara Onsander. Special thanks for invaluable assistance in developing this study to the staff working with these issues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Sida.

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1 Introduction

There has been a dramatic expansion in the size, scope, and capacity of civil society around the globe over the past decade, aided by the process of globalisation. The roles of civil society are highly diverse, complex and controversial and civil society is seen as one of the solutions to social, economic and political problems and the expansion of democratic governance and economic integration.

Civil society has many actors, or institutions. Most of these, but far from all, fall under the category of civil society organisations (CSOs). There is some confusion over the definition of CSOs and the term non-government organisation (NGO)\(^1\). CSOs in the North, up until recently mostly called NGOs, have become significant players in global development assistance and important actors for delivery of social services and implementation of other development programs. They are often seen as an important complement to government action, especially in regions where government presence is weak such as in post-conflict situations (WB, 2011). The Northern CSOs usually collaborate with sister CSOs in partner countries, and some Northern CSOs are part of international networks with presence in many donor countries.

Today, a lot of official government funding is channelled through CSOs in donor countries with the objective to strengthen civil society in developing countries. There has however been a shift in focus from donor CSOs to local CSOs in the partner countries, but the majority of funding is still controlled by CSOs in the North.

In practice, funding to strengthen civil society is implemented in different ways, through the multilateral system, as well as support to bilateral and regional programmes, and through CSOs in both donor and recipient countries.

2 What is Civil Society?

Civil society is a complex concept and mirrors to a great extent the interests and tensions/conflicts in society as a whole and looks different depending on the country’s culture, social and political context. At its most general level, civil society refers to all people, activities, relationships, and formal and informal groups that are not part of the process of government or the market. The concept of civil society also includes several "layers" of collective organisation, i.e. individuals often belong to several groups at the same time for example ethnic or religiously defined groups at the same time as belonging to other types of organisations like cooperatives, unions or other interest groups (Mattson, 2010).

One of the most cited sources in academic literature, Larry Diamond, defines civil society as follows:

\(^1\) To avoid confusion the term CSO is used throughout this report.
Civil society is the realm of organized social life that is open, voluntary, self-generating, at least partially self-supporting, and autonomous from the state, and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules. It is distinct from “society” in general in that it involves citizens acting collectively in a public sphere to express their interests, passions, preferences, and ideas, to exchange information, to achieve collective goals, to make demands on the state, to improve the structure and functioning of the state, and to hold state officials accountable. Civil society is an intermediary phenomenon, standing between the private sphere and the state. Thus, it excludes parochial society: individual and family life and inward-looking group activity…, and it excludes economic society: the profit-making enterprise individual business firms. Parochial society and economic society do not concern themselves with civic life and the public realm, and yet they may help generate cultural norms and patterns of engagement that spill over into the civic realm. Similarly, civil society is distinct from political society which encompasses all those organized actors …whose primary goal is to win control of the state or at least some position for themselves within it (Diamond, 1999:221).

Civil society actors organise and mobilise themselves in different ways depending on the context in which they work, with regard to factors such as geography, history, cultural tradition and political situation. CSOs refer to a wide array of organisations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations (WB, 2011).

There is some confusion regarding the terms CSOs and NGOs and there is no clear-cut definition of either term, or their exact difference. The term CSO is seen as broader and is more and more frequently being used internationally, encompassing and replacing the term NGO. Traditionally, the term NGO is used for registered organisations while CSO more often is used for non-formal organisations and networks of temporary or more permanent nature. The different terms are currently being used with different definitions and there will probably be some time before there will be an internationally agreed definition of the context and use. In the meantime the terminology will differ, especially when looking at development historically. In recent Swedish Government policy text the term CSO is being used throughout, with a separation of Swedish CSOs and CSOs in partner countries, while others many times have been using the term NGO for northern based organisations and the term local NGOs or CSOs for actors in the civil society in partner countries (Brundin, 2011). In this publication the practice from the Swedish policy will be followed and the term CSO used throughout, also when describing CSOs from a historical perspective.

### 2.1 Functions and roles of civil society

Civil society plays different roles and has different potential functions in a society connected to democracy, political accountability, social capital, collective action and citizenship.

#### 2.1.1 Potential functions of civil society

**Helps generate the social basis for democracy**

Civil participation extends democracy to the grassroots, protects and represents a multitude of (often minority) interests in relation to the majority political system. In doing so it creates systems, norms, behaviours, participatory organisations, networks and so on. The culture of democracy starts from the way a small village or sports association is run and spreads all the way through collective activity to national processes such as general elections. The experience of negotiating between positions, opinions, and interests at a local level is scaled up to the national, taking with it the particular culture
or ways of organising things. This happens as a normal part of civil society associational and civic life and is not an artificial process that can be externally created (Pratt & Myhrman, 2009).

**Promotes political accountability beyond party politics**
Local level monitoring of diverse causes by special interest groups has the effect of a counter balance on restricted, elite control of the polity. From the small scale acceptance that each citizen has the right to speak, through to the concept that political leaders are not elites without responsibility to their fellow citizens, political accountability is again learnt and built up through a myriad of relationships and experiences (Pratt & Myhrman, 2009).

**Produces social trust, reciprocity and networks**
Civic community in the form of horizontal organisations such as allotment associations, sports clubs, parent-teachers associations, and religious communities, build up what some call ’social capital’ – which creates the environment for transactions to take place without fear that they will not be honoured. This is also crucial to the working of the ’market’, so that a level of social trust is built up between buyers and sellers, employees and employers. Even where formal unions are not present, a profusion of associations, chambers, clubs, societies and churches bring these commercial partners together socially and in doing so reinforce trust between individuals (Pratt & Myhrman, 2009).

**Creates and promotes ‘alternatives’ through collective action**
New ideas, activities, institutions and socio-economic solutions often arise through civil society. This is as true of society at the communal level all the way through to international levels of civil society. It should be recognised that this freedom to evolve ideas could also present challenges to liberal democracy (what some call the uncivil society). It is after all the area where ideas compete with each other and some of these will indeed be incompatible and require negotiation across and within civil society as well as with the state and market (Pratt & Myhrman, 2009).

**Supports the rights of citizens and the concept of citizenship**
In recent years the contract between state and citizen has been re-packaged for development through rights based approaches, although the concept of the contract between the state and citizen is much older and assumes that the state has to earn its legitimacy from its citizens. In its function of representing multiple and overlapping citizen interests, civil society engages with the state both at a theoretical level (as of course there is no written contract) as well as at the practical level - in the form of civil society lobbies for specific interests, services, legal and other protections from the state. In return the citizen and civil society accept the legitimacy of the state. In minority based authoritarian regimes such as dictatorships, where the regime is held in power by violence, the contract breaks down and the state (or rather the regime that has seized it) is considered illegitimate. The inability of all citizens to access the state once it has been undermined can easily lead to a state losing legitimacy and rapidly becoming vulnerable or fragile (Pratt & Myhrman, 2009).

2.1.2 **Normative Roles**

The concept of civil society can be approached from three different, but complementary, perspectives emphasizing three general categories of normative roles for civil society and CSOs; **citizen participation, development programs** and **social empowerment** (CIDA, 2007).

**Civil society and citizen participation**
Civil Society is seen as a necessary component of a healthy society, of an accountable and effective governance system, and of a healthy democracy. From this perspective, the idea of civil society can be
viewed as the third leg of a three-legged stool, complementing the private sector and the state as pillars of any organized and well-functioning society in which citizens organize themselves on a voluntary basis to promote shared values and objectives. From this perspective, civil society is usually seen as essential to the proper functioning of a democratic society and to the growth of social capital. A related view is one that views civil society as one of five pillars of democracy, along with the executive, the legislature, the judiciary and the independent media. This view provides a good-governance perspective on the role of civil society (CIDA, 2007).

Civil society and development programs
From an operational perspective, civil society consists of a constellation of CSOs that are actively engaged in development programs and operations. The value of each CSO depends on the particular values that it brings to the task, and the effectiveness of its operations. From this perspective, civil society is not an abstract construct that is good or bad, but a collection of actors among which some discrimination is possible on the basis of their values and perceived effectiveness. The richness of civil society provides opportunities for donors, governments, citizens, and other CSOs to identify partners with whom to engage in the pursuit of development objectives and the public good. This view provides a more discriminating and operational perspective on the role of civil society (CIDA, 2007).

Civil society and social empowerment
Yet another approach focuses on civil society from a human rights perspective, seeing civil society as a mechanism for the social empowerment of particular classes of society, such as the poor and dispossessed, women, ethnic groups, or other groups. Civil society is from this perspective a mechanism for social empowerment of particular groups and the realization of human rights (CIDA, 2007).

3 Historical context

The funding of national CSOs by official agencies has evolved and changed significantly over the past 40 years, influenced by a variety of factors including, amongst others; changes in the international aid system and official aid trends (e.g. policy shifts on support for civil society to sector-wide approaches and budgetary support); changes in the role of donor governments in development; and trends in the funding sources of CSOs (Pratt, 2006).

The late 1980s and early 1990s saw CSOs focusing their attention on the problems arising from implementing structural adjustment policies, most notably their documenting the adverse effects on particular groups of poor people and poor communities. In the last half of the 1990s international and national CSOs became increasingly involved in campaigns aimed at forgiving the debts of the poorest countries. More recently, international aid and cross-national CSO advocacy and campaigning has focused on trade issues and on the governance of major international financial institutions and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Their activities have also focused on trying to ensure the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and a series of different (aid, debt and trade) initiatives aimed at the all-embracing and more distant goal to Make Poverty History (Onsander, 2007). A manifestation of an international civil society is the World Social Forum (WSF) which has been held annually since 2001 on different continents, and which has brought together tens of thousands CSO activists to discuss global development issues (WB, 2011).
During the 1990s civil society acquired an increasingly prominent role as the concept of civil society gained momentum especially within democratic theory\(^2\) (Onsander, 2007). Some believe that the increased debate on civil society is a reflection of globalization, having a positive potential to influence the framework of global governance by promoting debate and thus bridging existing societal divides. Critics of a global civil society and their actors have tended to focus on their lack of legitimacy and their claim of being representatives of the world’s peoples (Paffenholz & Spurk, 2006).

4 Civil Society and Development

The vast majority of CSOs which are actively involved in development work share a common view about development and their role in helping to promote it. In principle, this view is largely shared by the majority of governments who support and fund their development activities. The centre-ground view is that poverty and deprivation are intricately linked to a lack of power, voice and influence. Poverty is caused not merely by a shortage of assets, skills and basic structures but by structures, institutions, policies and processes which marginalize poor people, particularly women and girls, and which maintain or increase vulnerabilities and limit opportunities of both individuals, and communities, restricting the development and expansion of core capabilities (Riddell, 2007).

Both historically and today, the bulk of development work undertaken by CSOs has involved the support or implementation of specific projects and programmes for particular groups of (poor) people and (poor) communities encompassing service delivery activities (providing schooling, health, housing, water and sanitation) and activities aimed at raising the income and enhancing the livelihoods of these communities. However, the centre-ground view is that this work should not be seen in isolation. One of the core, though less tangible, purposes of the majority of the CSO projects and programmes involving poor people and communities is to seek to further the objective of empowering poor people and poor communities, assisting them to gain a louder voice and greater influence to enable them to take greater control of their lives, not least by helping alter policies and key decisions affecting the them. One way that CSOs have increasingly tried to pursue this objective has been by helping to strengthen and build the capacity of poor communities. This is why service delivery and income-enhancing projects increasingly have been undertaken in conjunction with efforts aimed at strengthening those community-based and grassroots organisations which represent their views and aspirations (Riddell, 2007).

To the extent that poverty is caused or perpetuated by political structures or processes and by the actions and activities of powerful political and economic interest groups, then the view is that these are also legitimate targets to influence and change. It is these perspectives which have led CSOs to utilize aid funds to support a range of activities beyond discrete projects and programmes for (poor) people and poor communities. The activities funded, supported and promoted have included advocacy, lobbying and campaigning activities, awareness-raising, and development education work (Riddell, 2007).

There has been a very rapid rise in the funds channelled to capacity building and institutional strengthening. Expanding support for strengthening the capacity and capabilities of CSOs has been

\(^2\) Theories on why some societies succeed in creating efficient and legitimate democracies and why others are trapped in negative spirals of weak and inefficient institutions and processes.
taking place at a time when growing emphasis has been given to the role of civil society in development. Especially the past two decades, the concept of civil society has emerged to take a central place in the discourse about development (Riddell, 2007).

4.1 Why official agencies fund CSOs

Donor governments see CSOs in North and South as key players in helping to advance democracy and the rule of law, and in enhancing the transparency and accountability of institutions as part of a more general strategy of ’strengthening civil society’. Official aid agencies from different countries have different perspectives based in part on their own culture, theories of society, historical experiences and debates that have informed the origin of their development programmes and perspectives, and in turn clearly impact how they fund their national CSOs (Riddell, 2007).

There are a number of reasons why official agencies fund national development CSOs. These vary from country to country, but common reasons include:

• to channel resources directly to poor people through civil society rather than through the State;
• to fund personnel sending organisations (volunteers);
• to provide support to publicly popular CSOs;
• to gain public support for the overall aid budget, through development education undertaken by CSOs in the donor country, aligning official agency and CSO interests and ensuring CSOs lobby for more aid (e.g. the campaigns for governments to achieve a target of 0.7% of national wealth [Gross National Product] for ODA);
• to support the development of vibrant civil societies in the South, which can represent the interests of poor groups towards the State and market;
• to promote the interests and a positive image of the donor country (Pratt et al., 2006).

These reasons are not mutually exclusive and it is often difficult to determine the specific rationale behind a country’s motivation to fund national development CSOs — to distinguish, for example, between political motivation (flying the flag, getting support from the electorate for aid budgets, etc.) and developmental criteria (in order to support civil society strengthening, the delivery of services to poor people etc.). In addition, although several official agencies are concerned about the roles of their national CSOs within the international development sector, many are still wedded to the concept of their own civil society supporting development in receiving countries, and argue that their CSOs play a crucial role in development education, linkages with civil society in other countries, and arguing for public support for the overall aid programme (Pratt et al., 2006).

4.2 Civil society organisations as part of the international aid architecture

Civil society organisations are a part of the international aid architecture in various capacities as donors, as channels or recipients of official donor assistance, and by virtue of their role as watchdogs of the public good. As donors, developed-country based civil society organisations mobilize billions of dollars in voluntary contributions in cash and in kind for development purposes. CSOs also act as channels or recipients of official donor assistance, receiving funds from official donors for use in their development programs or for redistribution to other CSOs. The share of donor funds to CSOs varies
considerably from donor to donor. Finally, CSOs play an important role as advocates and watchdogs of both governments and donors (CIDA, 2007).

Though some Northern CSOs derive part of their income from commercial activities, almost all CSO development and programmes are funded by government aid money, private foundations and private donations (Ridell, 2007). The last 25 years have witnessed a phenomenal growth in the contribution of CSOs to the overall aid effort. CSOs run many times more development projects and programmes than those funded by official aid agencies. There are however concerns that the bulk of official agency funding for CSOs still goes to organisations from the West (Pratt et al., 2006).

The number of players on the donor side has dramatically increased with new countries, new international organisations, new private foundations, new CSOs and new lobby groups. The new players form a heterogeneous group, working with different goals, strategies and tools and creating a very difficult situation for the public institutions at the receiving end, trying to monitor and coordinate the combined resources from all these different sources. The number of players on the recipient side has also increased substantially as societies have diversified, the private sector and civil society have increased their relative roles and institutions, infrastructure and technological level have gradually improved (Odén & Wohlgemuth, 2009).

CSOs in the South are steadily increasing, both in strength and numbers, but in the one-party states and undemocratic states, the CSOs are still few and weak. It is hard to generalize about the organisations in the South as they vary from small informal groups at village level to national development organisations and regional cooperative organisations in different areas (Onsander, 2007).

The proliferation of aid agencies and the lack of coordination between them, as well as the low level of ownership for the governments at the receiving end of the development cooperation, have for a long time been of concern to many of the aid agencies and partner countries. Several initiatives have been taken over the years (such as developing a code of conduct) but with few tangible results. Not until the second half of the 1990s some progress was made as the issue was again raised within the OECD/DAC. In the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness from 2005, both donors and receivers committed themselves to increased ownership, improved harmonisation and transparency and increased alignment of aid resources with a set of monitorable actions and indicators into the systems of the recipient countries (Odén & Wohlgemuth, 2010).

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3 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is an international forum of many of the largest funders of aid, including 24 members. The World Bank, IMF and UNDP participate as observers.

4 Ownership - Developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improve their institutions and tackle corruption.

Alignment - Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems.

Harmonisation - Donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication.

Results - Developing countries and donors shift focus to development results and results get measured.

Mutual Accountability - Donors and partners are accountable for development results.
A high level meeting on the implementation of the Paris Declaration was held in Accra, Ghana, in September 2008, which resulted in the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA). At the meeting, a commitment was made to put stronger efforts into the implementation of the commitments of the Paris Declaration and to strengthen the international accountability mechanisms (Odén & Wohlgemuth, 2009). The AAA also included an increased focus on democratic ownership and the importance of CSOs as development actors as well as agreeing to work together to address CSO effectiveness as a responsibility shared among CSOs, donors, and aid recipient governments. The AAA invited CSOs to reflect on application of the Paris principles from a CSO perspective, and welcomed CSOs’ initiative to develop their own principles of CSO development effectiveness. Donor and aid recipient governments also agreed to engage with CSOs to provide an enabling environment in developing countries and through donors’ CSO support models that maximise CSOs’ contributions to development. In recognising CSOs as agents of development in their own right, the AAA acknowledged that the Paris Declaration principles could not simply be transferred to CSOs, but needed to be enriched to account the nature of CSOs, their varied roles in development, and the difference between CSOs’ roles compared to those of other development actors.

The AAA also called for higher levels of engagement between aid recipient governments and CSOs in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of government’s national development policies and plans. It further committed donor and aid recipient governments to enhance transparency and accountability to each other and to their citizens.

5 Civil Society Organisations in Sweden

Swedish development cooperation has evolved and grown out of missionary and voluntary organisations’ work and their contacts with developing countries. These CSOs or so called “popular movements” such as political organisations, churches, trade unions, solidarity and interest groups have all had a part in shaping the Swedish society and the development cooperation policy of today. Sweden has, together with Norway and the Netherlands, belonged to the group of countries that has given a relatively large percentage of its total development funding to CSOs during the history of development cooperation. The funding to CSOs increased during the 1990s as a result of a more positive attitude towards channelling funding through CSOs. The comparative advantages were believed to be:

- It is easier for NGOs to reach out on a local level.
- They have better knowledge about development in a local context and they can therefore contribute with more accurate “grass root level” information.
- They are more flexible and faster in disaster situations.
- They can work in countries whose development policy is not coherent with Swedish policy and where the governments therefore cannot cooperate.

CSOs have also influenced the policy of Swedish development cooperation. One example is the campaign and argument for writing off debts. Another example is the strong criticism against the social and economic effects of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) where the CSOs saw the problem long before the state-owned development cooperation organisations, which were strongly influenced by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and WB perspective (Odén & Wohlgemuth, 2006).
5.1 The popular movements

The early popular movements in Sweden were protest movements and arose in opposition to the religious, economic, political and social conditions that existed in the country (Gyllensvärd and Sandberg, 1989, in Onsander, 2007). The classical movements worked as citizens’ schools, as protest movements and society changers, and as creators of social engagement. Although most activities were domestic some of these organisations were engaged in development activities abroad. One of the first organisations was the Church of Sweden; they began their mission work combining pure missionary work with social and economic development efforts in Africa in the 1850s (Lundqvist, 1977, in Onsander, 2007).

The spread of the Free Church movement in Sweden during the 19th century was a direct cause of industrialisation, the limited availability of arable land and overpopulation. The first phase in the Free Church movement has its beginning in the 1850s, with the growth of the Evangelic Fosterlandstiftelsen and the Baptists. The Swedish Temperance movement as a significant organised popular movement is dated to the year 1879, when the first lodge of the International Order of Good Temple (IOGT) was established. Several temperance movements were established during the 1880s; all together they had about 200,000 members, of which half belonged to the IOGT (Lundqvist, 1977, in Onsander, 2007).

The Labour movement had its breakthrough in the 1880s as a direct consequence of the industrialisation and urbanisation and the new growing labour force. In terms with the ongoing industrialisation the number of unions increased and at the turn of the century they were about 1,000 unions. At this time the number of active workers was around 70,000 which was about a fifth of the country’s entire working population. The modern Cooperative movement was established at the end of the 1890s, but the first cooperative organisation was already formed in the 1850s and was very active from the start. Both production cooperatives and consumption cooperatives developed in parallel and expanded their activities over time until they united as the Cooperative Wholesale Society (CWS) in 1899, and declared themselves politically independent (Lundqvist, 1977, in Onsander, 2007).

For a long time Sweden was an isolated poor country in the north of Europe. This isolation was broken after the World War I. Sweden joined the League of Nations and the International Labour Organisation, ILO, and played an active role within both of them. Sweden was also an active part in the establishment of the Red Cross and other humanitarian organisations. Up to World War II the Swedish popular movements were successfully engaged in the political and social development of the Swedish society and played an active role in creating education activities, including establishing libraries, culture activities, international efforts, and political education, all of which became the foundation for a political and social and cultural change in the Swedish society. The popular movements had a big stake in the creation of the Swedish welfare state and they acted as a training ground for the coming politicians and policy makers and as an advocacy force for social change. Once significant changes had occurred in Sweden, many of the organisations began to aspire to get involved in social change at an international level (Gyllensvärd & Sandberg, 1989, in Onsander, 2007).

5.2 From national to international development

At the end of World War II the ‘Swedish Committee’ was established, which can be seen as the precursor to the development cooperation organisations that came later. Although funded by the Swedish government, the initiative came from the popular movements and its Board consisting mainly
of representatives from trade unions, employers, religious and humanitarian organisations. After the war the Committee concentrated on the reconstruction of Europe. It organised the ‘Help Norway’ campaign and the similar campaign ‘Help Europe’. In 1952 the ‘Central Committee for Swedish Technical Assistance to Less Developed Areas’ was created, being the next small step towards coordinated Swedish government-funded development cooperation. The Central Committee’s task was to establish project proposals, apply for government funds and implement projects. The Committee was organised as a foundation and was made up of 44 CSOs, the government and the business sector. The initial task of the Committee was focused on providing developing countries with technical assistance knowledge and expertise (Gyllensvärd & Sandberg, 1989, in Onsander, 2007). The popular movements were an important mobilising force of development cooperation opinion in the Swedish population at this time. During the 1950s opinion polls showed negative attitudes towards development cooperation, but at the end of the decade, after campaigns, the opinion turned. In 1955 the Committee launched a campaign entitled ‘Sweden Helps’. The campaign was a way to visualise the extent of misery and poverty in these countries and enlighten Swedish people about such issues with the aim of winning their sympathy and solidarity. But the campaign also raised money for development aid (Sida at Work, 2005).

The interest for the ‘third world’ steadily increased over time and the popular movements became more and more involved. When the official Swedish development cooperation was established these movements and organisations were an important force and have continuously, since then, been part of the shaping of the Swedish development cooperation programme, both through the political process, participation in the Board of Sida, in working groups and in Sida programmes (Riddell et al, 1995).

The 1960s was the decade when solidarity became the overriding motive for Swedish development cooperation policy and has since then been the main motive behind Swedish development assistance policy (Albinson & Åhlström, in Onsander, 2007). Information through newspapers, TV and books increased the knowledge about the ‘third world’. A number of CSOs started demanding increased state funded development cooperation. The requirements on Sweden giving one percent of its GNP to development cooperation led to the establishment of the ‘one percent’ concept. The actions of CSOs were many and diverse and gave results. The insights about the third world’s poverty spread into the political parties (Gyllensvärd & Sandberg, 1989, in Onsander, 2007). In 1962 the Swedish parliament approved a development assistance bill, proposition 1962:100, the ‘development aid bible’, which became the guideline for many years to come (Onsander, 2007).

### 5.3 Swedish CSOs expand and are reorganised

From the mid-1970s the support to CSOs increased, and the different types of organisations were broadened, such as solidarity groups for the liberation of Southern Africa and organisations related to the war in Vietnam. The coup against president Allende in Chile 1973, led to thousands of refugees coming to Sweden, which in turn stimulated the development debate and the CSOs. Many of the established aid organisations were radicalised and several new organisations were created (Gyllensvärd & Sandberg, 1989, in Onsander, 2007).
The establishment of the new institution for development cooperation in 1965, the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA\(^5\)), fully funded by the government, made the state the dominating development cooperation actor in Sweden (Gyllensvärd & Sandberg, 1989, in Onsander, 2007). Sida now became an important supplier of funds to CSOs and their development activities. Even if the volume was modest compared to today’s standards, this led to an expansion of many CSOs’ assistance and development activities (Sida at Work, 2005).

The Swedish government with the support of all political parties saw the CSOs as an important complement to the government-to-government support. CSOs’ support to the civil society in recipient countries was seen to broaden the actors in development in the countries supported by Sweden. Originally this support was mainly directed to development projects in a very broad sense run by the CSOs. However with the growth of CSO support to developing countries and with the increased local knowledge they attained, they also became more and more involved as agents for government support. This involvement increased when Swedish CSOs became involved in the Swedish support to liberation movements in Africa and the fight for democratic development in Latin America in the 1970s and 80s. In some cases they became major actors for support that could not be implemented directly by the Swedish government (Onsander, 2007).

5.4 Swedish support to the liberation movements

Sweden started giving political and humanitarian support to liberation movements in southern Africa in 1964, when many African countries became politically independent. The policy was based on the UN Colonial Declaration of 1960. In 1969 the Swedish parliament launched a policy of direct official Swedish humanitarian assistance to the national liberation movements in southern Africa. This support was given to MPLA of Angola, FRELIMO of Mozambique, SWAPO of Namibia, ZANU and ZAPU of Rhodesia/Zimbabwe and ANC of South Africa. These organisations were, in the Cold War period, seen as communists and terrorists by many Western governments. Most support was channelled directly by Sida to the liberation movements but some was channelled into the countries at great risk through different channels, among them many Swedish and international CSOs. The CSOs then acted as middle men on behalf of Sida and the Swedish government. The Swedish support consisted of educational aid to refugees, legal aid and humanitarian support channelled through different UN organisations and voluntary organisations and CSOs (Sellström, 1999, in Onsander, 2007).

The political initiative for supporting southern African liberation movements came from students and from CSOs. Many Swedish CSOs started to give support to liberation struggles in different parts of the world during the 1960s. The dominating liberation movements of this time were related to southern Africa, the Israel-Palestine conflict, the Vietnam War, and to solidarity work with victims of the coup in Chile. Organisations such as different Church Groups, the Africa Groups, the Latin-America groups, and other Swedish CSOs gave support to movements/organisations in these regions (Wilkens, 1981, in Onsander, 2007).

The Swedish CSOs increasingly became agents for the government, with regard to their support to liberation movements in different parts of the world, but were with time also requested to act as intermediaries in other activities. The most important new role was in the field of humanitarian

\(^5\) SIDA became Sida, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, in 1995. To avoid confusion Sida will be used throughout.
assistance. Some of the CSOs were specifically created to deal with humanitarian issues and others became involved mainly as a consequence of being active in areas where conflicts or catastrophes emerged, thus being well acquainted with the specifics of the situation. Later CSOs also became actors in the areas of democratic governance, culture and media, and HIV/AIDS. After the end of the Cold War, CSOs started development activities with East and Central Europe (Onsander, 2007).

5.5 Swedish CSOs in general

The Swedish CSOs consist of a wide range of associations with different ideological views but with a shared interest for development issues and solidarity work. Smaller organisations are often based on a certain project or area. Other organisations are gathered around a global interest issue such as debt relief or the environment. Some organisations work with influence in normative issues, for example human rights issues. Other organisations work with direct support together with a cooperating organisation towards especially vulnerable target groups, in for example health care and education, and many organisations combine these two (Sida, 1998, in Onsander, 2007). The size and direction of the organisations vary a lot, there are small local to large global assistance organisations, project organisations, local associations at workplaces, collecting groups, sponsor associations, alternative trade and clothes collections. The organisations work from different ideological perspectives; they can be political organisations as in the case with Social Democratic Youth; or have a religious value basis such as the Christian Erikshjälpen, or the Catholic Church development cooperation organisation Caritas and the Islamic Relief organisation. In the smaller non-profit organisations where cooperation is around a concrete project, the engagement and solidarity work is locally bound. Another development among these organisations is that more and more immigrants are starting their own organisations for global development cooperation (Åhlström, 1991, in Onsander, 2007). Many organisations cooperate with governments or local authorities, and many CSOs also cooperate with the UN and its different agencies (Onsander, 2007).

Several organisations have a specific focus such as children, women, health, human rights, democracy, and environment. Other organisations might not be obvious in global development cooperation, such as for example Sweden’s Riksidrottsförbund. They work with knowledge exchange to build up sports organisations in East and Central Europe and in Africa (Onsander, 2007). Other types of local associations are those created at workplaces. These activities are mostly based on the members’ giving a part of their salary to the association, and sometimes the company contributes with the same amount as the employees collect (Åhlström, 1991, in Onsander, 2007). Examples of this are the SAS U-assist and Medsystrar Tetra Laval (Onsander, 2007).

Swedish CSOs and CSOs all over the world increasingly cooperate across geographical and institutional boundaries to strengthen and improve the impact of their work. They have come to be, or are perceived to be, a force in many societies for using information as a key tool to change the course of human development by promoting equal power relationships in national and international arenas. Equalising power relations is both the nature and goal of advocacy and CSO activities can be seen as having an advocacy aspect. However, every CSO also brings its own package of values and norms often also that are outside the scope of development cooperation (Onsander, 2007).

5.6 Frame organisations

Today there is a Sida funding model based on frame organisations. The first framework agreements were with Swedish trade unions (LO/TCO) and the Swedish Cooperative Centre in 1977. The reason
was to facilitate the administration of support to Swedish CSOs, both for Sida and the CSOs, in the light of the increase in appropriations. It was to a great extent Sida’s organisational needs that were the driving force behind the framework agreements. The framework agreement model gave the organisations greater freedom and a long-term perspective in the planning and implementation of their activities and provided an opportunity to facilitate a continuous dialogue with Sida on policy and methods work. Some framework organisations were umbrella organisations that organised smaller civil society organisations within a thematic area and channelled and administrated funds from Sida. Sida intended for the model to contribute to enhancing the quality of the organisations’ development cooperation activities, for example through the control mechanisms in the form of guidelines and directions etc that had been drawn up in consultations with the organisations, and through capacity studies and system-based audits (Onsander, 2007).

The emergence of the present group of frame organisations has been based on custom and tradition, in which long cooperation with Sida and a large volume of activities have been important factors. During recent years attention has been drawn to the potential problems related to quality and effectiveness and the difficulty for new emerging organisations to be included. Despite the fact that the long-term perspective in the relations between Sida and the organisations provides a form of stability in development cooperation activities, there is also a risk that it can lead to stagnation and that Sida risks losing valuable knowledge that can be provided by new emerging organisations.

The fifteen organisations that have framework agreements with Sida today have different ideological and thematic focus areas that can be divided into; churches /religious based organisations, labour movements, cooperative organisations, children’s’ rights, humanitarian aid, disability, solidarity movements, environmental movements and sexual rights. Swedish CSOs that do not belong to any of the framework organisations can apply for contributions through the umbrella organisation Forum Syd. Forum Syd was established in 1995 as a coalition between SVS (Svensk Volontärsamverkan) and BIFO (Bistånd och Information för Enskilda Organisationer). The objective was partly to gather all the organisations falling outside the other frame organisations, the idea being that Sida should only work through frame organisations and not directly with each and every CSO.

## 6 Sweden’s Support to Civil Society in Developing Countries

The overall aim with Swedish development cooperation is to create conditions to enable poor people to improve their living conditions. Poverty is defined as a condition where people are deprived of the opportunity to decide over their own lives and create their own future. A lack of power, security and opportunities are at the core of poverty. Poverty is dynamic, multidimensional and context-specific.

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6 CSOs’ humanitarian work is funded by a different appropriation.

7 Swedish Development Cooperation is also to contribute to the objective of reform cooperation in Eastern Europe; strengthened democracy, equitable and sustainable development, and closer ties with the EU and its fundamental values.

8 This chapter is, if not otherwise indicated, based on the official Swedish government’s policies and Sida’s strategies and instructions.
The starting point for all Swedish development cooperation policies is the Policy for Global Development which is characterised by the perspectives of poor people on development and a rights perspective. All Swedish development cooperation shall be based upon the needs of and interests of impoverished women, men, girls and boys and characterised by a human rights-based approach, which is based upon the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights.  

The Swedish government’s support to civil society in developing countries within Swedish development cooperation is described and defined in the policy Pluralism. The policy outlines the objectives and priorities for Sweden's support to civil society in developing countries and aims to establish a coherent approach within the framework of development cooperation and procedures for the implementation of the policy.

In the government’s civil society policy, a large emphasis is placed on aid effectiveness principles such as achieving more effective forms of support, for example through predictability, donor harmonisation, alignment with the co-operation partner’s system and procedures for planning, monitoring and reporting, and an increased share of core and programme support to the local partner. Overall, Sweden aims to promote vibrant and democratic CSOs, based on their roles as the voice of poor and marginalised groups, and provider of services such as health and education.

### 6.1 Sweden’s policy for support to civil society in developing countries

The Swedish government’s policy for support to civil society within Swedish development cooperation was adopted in April 2009. This policy applies to Sweden’s bilateral and multilateral development assistance and provides guidance for Sweden’s positions within the EU. The policy applies to all direct or indirect support to, and cooperation with, civil society in developing countries, including that governed by the relevant geographical and non-geographical cooperation strategies.

The overall objective for support to, and cooperation with, civil society is:

> ‘A vibrant and pluralistic civil society in developing countries that contributes effectively, using a rights-based approach, to reducing poverty in all its dimensions’

The policy is a normative framework for all Swedish support to and cooperation with civil society organisations. The starting point for the policy is that the concept of civil society is complex, that a vibrant civil society is a prerequisite for the realisation of the overall goal for Swedish development cooperation, and that CSOs have a specific potential to contribute to democratisation and increased respect for Human Rights.

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9 Sweden’s development aid budget for 2010 totaled about SEK 31,4 billion of which about SEK 16 billion was to be allocated to Sida and the remainder to the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The total budget for 2011 is about SEK 35,2 billion, or 1 percent of the total GNI.

10 The policy will apply until further notice, but no longer than the end of 2014, when the Government will adopt a position on its future.
The definition of civil society used in the policy is ‘an arena, distinct from the state, the market and the individual household, created by individuals, groups and organisations acting together to promote common interests’.

A civil society organisation (CSO)\(^{11}\) is defined as a ‘self-governing organisation characterised by voluntary efforts and which to some degree is independent of any state, municipality and market, as well as conducting its activities without a profit motive, often on the basis of common shared values’.

According to the policy, Sweden shall support representative, legitimate and independent civil society actors in developing countries that, through the roles as collective voices and organisers of services, contribute to poverty reduction. Many organisations act as both collective voices and organisers of services.

A collective voice is defined as a group that actively promotes its ideas in relation to the rest of society and/or internally, and thereby creates an opportunity for individuals to jointly promote their own interests. The ability to obtain or give others a ‘voice’ is closely linked to the group’s representativeness and legitimacy.

An organiser of services can be defined as a group formed for a specific purpose to organise and/or carry out a service linked to a mandate from, or vested interest among, their constituency and/or people concerned that are living in poverty.

6.1.1 Support to civil society in different sectors and situations

**Political participation**

In countries where Swedish development cooperation includes budget or programme support, Sweden will work in its dialogue with partner countries to ensure that civil society actors have the opportunity for participation, transparency and accountability with those in power at different political levels, and in overall national and local political processes and efforts to reduce poverty, such as the elaboration and monitoring of national poverty reduction strategies. One starting point is that civil society actors have particular qualities to influence national poverty reduction plans to be more equality-oriented in terms of gender and other aspects, and to highlight the role of women and other marginalised groups, in development.

**Growth**

By meeting in groups, organisations and networks, people in civil society can strengthen confidence within a group and trust between different groups. Support to civil society actors aiming to develop a democratic culture should therefore include promoting interfaces between different social, cultural, religious, political or ethnic groups, particularly in fragmented societies. Sweden can also support civil society’s contribution to creating the conditions for economic growth, for example by increasing trust and confidence in a society, including labour market and business sector interest organisations. Trust is a prerequisite for investments and functioning transactions, which benefits economic development and the development of the private sector, and stimulates entrepreneurship and business activities. Important factors for economic growth include safeguarding the rule of law and equality before the law, a functioning market economy and trade policy regulations (including protecting ownership rights

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\(^{11}\) The Swedish government has decided only to use the term CSO in its updated policies and strategies, not the term NGO.
and contractual freedom), a relatively even distribution of productive resources, as well as free media and the freedom of expression.

**Capacity development**
The conditions for individuals and groups in developing countries to organise and mobilise themselves and to have an impact vary widely. Sweden is to give particular attention to groups who are discriminated against on grounds of ethnic origin, religion or other belief, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, or transgender identity or expression. Young people’s capacity to organise and potential to contribute to processes of change are to be highlighted. Swedish civil society organisations will contribute to capacity development in civil society organisations in developing countries based on these organisations’ *own priorities*. Based on their values (for example with regard to gender equality) and their long-term cooperation relationships, Swedish civil society organisations often have particular potential to promote capacity development and mutual learning with their partners in developing countries.

**6.1.2 Implementation**

A substantial part of Swedish development cooperation is implemented in cooperation with civil society organisations. One important starting point is that civil society organisations receiving Swedish government development assistance funds should share the objectives and perspectives of Sweden’s policy for global development and international development cooperation. An actor analysis is necessary where the following requirements are insured:

**Representativeness and legitimacy**
Representativeness and legitimacy in every organisation are the fundamental starting points for Swedish support. Cooperation with civil society actors is also to include analysis and risk assessment of organisations’ legal and financial status and long-term sustainability. There is also to be assessment of the risk of corruption in their activities and what can be done to eliminate such risks.

**Financial independence**
It is important that civil society organisations receiving Swedish support gradually become independently financially viable. Some organisations are by definition temporary and dependent on development assistance, while other organisations, such as broad membership based organisations like village committees, interest groups, trade unions etc. can have a more economically independent basis.

**Aid effectiveness**
The principles of aid effectiveness are to be applied by all actors that receive and channel Swedish development assistance, including Swedish CSOs. As part of the implementation of commitments for increased effectiveness in development cooperation, there is a focus on a greater degree of harmonisation and consensus among donors (for example, agree on common guidelines which provides for predictability of aid and long-term agreements). It is important that donors do not take ownership away from the organisations by controlling their activities, or divide civil society by providing large sums of money to weak structures. Sweden also emphasises the need for civil society organisations to increase their effectiveness and to increase their accountability for example though self-initiated ethical codes.

Where possible, priority will be consistently given to programme-based funding and core budget support, rather than project support. Programme-based funding and core support based on CSOs’ own
priorities and planning and monitoring system, will contribute to local ownership and ‘downward’ accountability.

Financial support can be given either through contributions or through procurement for the implementation of an assignment. The procurement process often includes risks, in particular with regard to civil society organisations’ ability to maintain or develop their independent position. Support is therefore preferably to be given via well-designed and flexible contribution systems. International agreements for increased aid effectiveness using harmonisation, adaptation to local systems and local ownership are to guide this process. However, procurement is to be preferred where commercial interests are involved. In some specific situations, greater but considered risks can be justified, for example in difficult situations in authoritarian states and conflict situations.

6.2 Sida’s support to civil society

Sida’s role is to perform the assignments received by the Swedish government to achieve the targets of Sweden’s development assistance policies. Sida’s work is guided by different strategies that are based on the policies. A strategy for guiding Sida’s CSO support was developed in 2010.

Sida provides two kinds of support to Swedish civil society: support for work with civil society organisations in partner countries, and support for communication by CSOs within Sweden.

Over time Sida’s cooperation with CSOs has increased and taken new forms. Today different regional and sector departments at Sida Headquarters, and in the field, work with Swedish CSOs as well as with international, regional and local organisations. Sida’s support is provided through fifteen Swedish framework CSOs (CSO appropriation), direct CSO support through the global, regional and country strategies, and CSO-support through intermediaries. Additionally, Sweden gives support to CSOs via international organisations such as the United Nations.

Sida’s support to CSOs is provided through:

- **CSO appropriation:** Support to Swedish frame organisations’, and a few international CSOs’, own projects and programmes
- **Direct support** to local, regional, national and/or international CSOs (guided by bilateral, regional and thematical cooperation strategies)
- Support to CSOs as actors through the **humanitarian appropriation**, and thematic areas
- Democracy support through **Swedish politically affiliated organisations**
- **Information and communication** grants, through a specific appropriation

Approximately 30% of Sida’s funds go to or through CSOs.\(^{13}\)

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\(^{12}\) Sida is an authority under the jurisdiction of the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

\(^{13}\) In 2009 approximately SEK 5.5 Billion of which about SEK 1.3 Billion through the CSO appropriation per se. The estimation for 2011 is SEK 1.5 Billion.
6.3 Sida’s support to civil society through Swedish frame organisations

The CSO strategy that regulates the support to civil society in developing countries through Swedish frameworks organisations has the goal to achieve capacity development and enhanced democratisation and increased respect for human rights.

The CSO strategy’s objective for support for capacity development is ‘Enhanced capacity of civil society actors in developing countries to apply a rights-based approach in their roles as collective voices and organisers of services’. The objective implies that Sida, in its assessments and monitoring, focuses on how and to what extent the support contributes to capacity development in developing countries and more rights-based work. What is meant by capacity development is first and foremost an increased ability of civil society actors to identify and effectively solve problems, develop specific knowledge and organisation, as well as enabling co-ordination and joint initiatives between different actors. Furthermore, the objective involves Sida giving priority to grants to processes where actors within the civil society comprise a driving force in the growth or the further development of a society and a political culture marked by democratic principles and values, such as tolerance, diversity, conflict management and equality between women and men, girls and boys. A rights-based approach also means that each programme’s or other development interventions’ primary target group is clearly involved in the activities and has - or gradually obtains - the knowledge, awareness and capacity to claim their human rights individually or collectively.

The CSO strategy’s objective for support for democratisation and human rights is ‘Enhanced democratisation and increased respect for the human rights of poor and discriminated people. The objective is based on the international human rights conventions, including the principles concerning the obligations of states and the rights of individuals. The objective involves Sida, in its assessment of the development co-operation of the framework organisations, being focused on the extent to which the civil, political, social, economic and/or cultural human rights of poor and discriminated individuals and groups are being realised at the local, national or international level. The role as collective voices often involves some form of advocacy work, for example reviewing and/or proposing changes to those in power.

Based on these overriding principles and the basic documents guiding Swedish development cooperation in general Sida has formulated guidelines that apply to all Swedish CSOs applying for grants from Sida.

6.3.1 Support through the CSO appropriation

Swedish CSOs play an important role as ‘development agents’ supporting development through sister organisations and local networks in partner countries, and is the original type of CSO support. The essential role of Swedish CSOs is to facilitate and support the development activities performed by people and organisations in developing countries. The Swedish organisations that receive funding from the CSO appropriation grant have local contractual partners in developing countries, or with international CSO (Onsander, 2007). The idea with the framework agreements is not to implement Sida projects and programmes, but for the organisations, in cooperation with partner organisations in the South and East, to design their own projects and programmes using their experience and knowledge. The fifteen Swedish framework CSOs receive contributions from Sida to their own priorities, i.e. the support is not directed by Sida geographically or thematically and is not affected by
Swedish government country focus or thematic priorities. The prerequisite is that they work in line with the official Swedish development cooperation overriding goals and values.

The minimum level of self-financing is 10 percent, and Sida’s contribution is 90 percent, the so-called 10/90 rule. The self-financing is seen as an expression of the Swedish organisation’s priorities and ability to mobilise a commitment for its development co-operation. The self-financing consists of cash funds raised in Sweden; for example gifts from the public, companies, organisations, society and sponsors, membership fees, bequests, donations, charitable lottery profits as well as income from the sale of goods (goods that are not produced and/or purchased with funds from Sida). Framework organisations can pass along grants for implementation by organisations within its own constituency (member organisations), so called sub-granting. A number of framework organisations comprise an integrated part of an international organisational structure, where the Swedish framework organisation using funding from this appropriation item supports development co-operation that is being conducted within the context of the international co-operation.

Sida can also give grants for self-financing to a Swedish CSO that is receiving financing from the European Commission for development interventions, so that the organisation's self-financing does not need to exceed the level that applies for the appropriation item. The EC supports up to 75 percent and Sida up to 25 percent of grants.

**Criteria for the selection of frame organisations**

Sida has identified a number of selection criteria for the assessment of organisations such as the frame organisation’s democratic structure and values and the knowledge, experience and competence in the field of development policy and development cooperation, as well its capacity to communicate with its own members and the Swedish public. Sida also assesses the organisations’ own resources and ability to raise funds as well as its system for management and control and if the organisation has a specific field of expertise. Criteria for assessment of frame work organisations will be revised in 2011.

The fifteen framework organisations are:

Churches /Religious based organisations: (Pingstmissionens Utvecklingssamarbete) PMU Interlife, Church of Sweden, Diakonia, Swedish Mission Council (SMC)
Cooperative organisation: Swedish Cooperative Centre
Children’s’ rights: Save the Children Sweden, Plan Sweden
Disability: Swedish Organisations of Disabled Persons’ International Aids Association (SHIA)
Solidarity movements: The Africa Group Sweden (AGIS)
Sexual rights: RFSU
Umbrella organisation: Forum Syd

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The more recent frame organisations are WWF, RFSU, SNF and PLAN (See Appendix 1 for funding statistics).

These organisations are among themselves very different from an ideological aspect as well as from an organisational aspect. Some of the organisations are organised as umbrella organisations mainly preparing and passing on funding applications from their Swedish member organisations to organisations in the South (Forum Syd, LO-TCO, Olof Palme International Centre, PMU InterLife, SHIA and the Swedish Mission Council). Other frame organisations sign agreements directly with cooperation partners in the South (Africa Groups of Sweden, Diakonia, Swedish Cooperative Centre, the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, Save the Children Sweden, Church of Sweden, Red Cross and Plan (Sida, 2005 in Onsander, 2007).

**Procedures, monitoring and evaluation**

To enhance the predictability in funding, the frame organisations can apply for grants in cycles of three years, with an additional bridging year.

Sida has regulations and follow-up mechanisms that stipulate the framework of the ways in which Sida’s grants may be used and of reports on their use. Thereby Sida stipulates the reporting requirements the organisation should have in order to receive government grants while it is then up to the organisations to take full responsibility for the implementation and the effects of the activities. Sida follows up the activities of the frame organisations at the overall level, where effects and results are assessed against predetermined goals. The financial part of cooperation is regulated through strict requirements imposed on the organisations in respect of their financial reports including regular audits on all levels. In its guidelines Sida lays down the ways the organisation itself shall assume responsibility for detailed controls of its activities. This is combined with Sida making spot-checks and field visits and using various forms of evaluations. One prerequisite for quality assurance of cooperation is also a close and continuous dialogue between Sida and the organisations. The organisations operations are assessed in relation to relevance (related to Swedish policy, strategy and its instructions), effectiveness (goal achievement), cost efficiency, risk analysis and management, feasibility and sustainability.

Cooperation between Sida and the frame organisations is based on a long-term perspective and on trust. Framework agreements are therefore concluded that cover several years and after a thorough assessment has been made of the frame organisation’s capacity. Should the assessment of the frame organisation’s capacity and activities change in any way, Sida can decide not to renew the agreement. Likewise, other organisations that have developed the capacity that is in demand will come into question for framework agreement cooperation with Sida.

**6.3.2 Direct CSO support guided by bilateral, regional, global and thematic cooperation strategies**

Sweden also channels grants directly to Swedish, international and local CSOs (guided by bilateral, regional and thematical cooperation strategies and their appropriation) as part of the support within the cooperation strategies. This support has increased and obtained a higher priority in recent years and CSOs are seen as actors and implementers of the strategies. The CSOs’ operations are assessed against the specific cooperation strategy goals. Such objectives often emphasise democracy and Human Rights. The support may be channelled either through Sida in Stockholm, or through field offices or embassies. Assistance from field offices can pass directly to implementing organisations, or it may be channelled through intermediaries such as CSOs, UN agencies and other organisations (Gunnarsson,
Sida’s support to CSOs within the frame of Sida’s country and region strategies is growing and has taken an increasingly strategic direction in recent years (Nilsson, 2003).

It is difficult to quantify the support given directly to local CSOs. For example there might be civil society support to UN organs that is entered into the accounts as multilateral support. It is also difficult to say how much this support has increased over the years. At certain periods of time and in specific contexts local CSOs have been major recipients of funding, such as support of democratic movements during the years of military dictatorships in Latin America and the fight against apartheid in South Africa. Other more recent local CSOs are found in India and Bangladesh working for social development and poverty alleviation (Onsander, 2007).

Example: Sida support to environmental advocacy CSOs in Kenya

The main goal of the advocacy project was to educate rural communities about their rights and obligations in sustainable management of natural resources, and to identify gaps in current legislation and policy that are constraining rural communities from exploiting and maximizing benefits from natural resources on a sustainable basis. The environmental advocacy programme was executed by three CSOs: Resource Project Kenya, Forest Action Network, and East African Wildlife Society.

The main objective of the advocacy programmes were:
1. To identify legal and sustainable opportunities for commercial exploitation of natural resources
2. To create awareness on policies and legal issues governing the management of natural resources
3. To facilitate participatory management of natural resources by local communities

The programme was implemented in three phases starting in 1997. According to a Sida review (2009:20), the key strength of the programme was its creation of awareness among the local communities that enabled them to successfully lobby the Government to stop land grabbing in certain areas. A conclusion was that the programme has had tremendous impact on the conservation and management of natural resources within the areas where it was being implemented. A key challenge is how to sustain this programme and the recommendation was that programme should not only be supported to continue its work but also be expanded to cover more areas.

Example: Support to freedom of expression and the media in Tanzania

The Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) is a CSO supported through the Embassy of Sweden in Tanzania. Sweden was the sole development partner for a decade but was joined in 2007 by Norway, Denmark and Switzerland through a basket to support MCT’s Strategic Plan 2007-2011 (SEK 22,635,000) and Press Club’s Project 2007-2010 (SEK 10,574,000), of which about 32 percent is Swedish support. In addition, Sweden has been providing additional support through bilateral arrangements amounting to SEK 19 million.

MCT is an independent, voluntary, non-statutory self regulatory body established by media stakeholders in 1995. Members include newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television stations, journalism training institutions, regional press clubs and journalists’ associations. MCT’s mission is to create an environment that enables a strong and ethical media that contributes towards a more democratic and just society.

In order to reach the objective of promoting an enabling environment for freedom of expression and of the media, MCT engages with policy makers and the government to effect legislative and policy changes to broaden freedom of expression and right to information. The organization also engages with communities to stimulate and foster attitudinal changes in providing information, and it engages with media houses, managers and journalists to develop a culture of peer oversight, self regulation, promoting editorial independence and warding excellence, and engage schools of journalism and relevant authorities to improve on training content, curriculum and delivery.

MTC also works to promote ethical practice, pro-actively monitors media performance and carries out mediation and arbitration of media disputes. MTC also does research and conducts policy analysis, produces quality publications and documentation and disseminate critical media related issues.
6.3.3 CSOs as actors – humanitarian aid and thematic support

6.3.3.1 Humanitarian aid through Swedish CSOs

The Swedish government defines humanitarian aid as ‘efforts to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity for the benefit of people in need who are, or are at risk of becoming, affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters or other disaster situations, which are severe impediments to populations’ or entire communities’ supply and survival mechanisms’. Humanitarian aid is provided as material aid and protection, and in many cases individual humanitarian actions are comprised of both material aid and protection, since material aid protects the rights of vulnerable persons and protective measures improve the individual’s chances of receiving material aid.

The international system consists in particular of the UN, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and international CSOs. The UN has a central and unique role in directing and coordinating international humanitarian aid. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has a special status. This applies especially to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and its task assigned to the organisation by the Geneva Conventions with regard to humanitarian aid and protection and to the monitoring of compliance with international humanitarian law. From the recipient perspective, humanitarian aid is what is supplied by organisations on the ground. First among delivering agencies are often local organisations like churches, local CSOs and governments, and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, followed later by UN agencies and international CSOs – all of them the visible part of the global humanitarian assistance that has originated with contributions from governments and donations from the public. Many agencies may act as recipient, donor and implementer of aid, often at the same time and during the same crisis and there is not necessarily a clear path to follow from donor through delivery agency to beneficiary (GHA, 2010).

The humanitarian aid differs in two ways from long term development cooperation. First of all, its principles and approach to a large extent are enshrined in international law. Secondly its objectives are to alleviate acute suffering, and in principle it should be discontinued when the immediate needs have been met and conditions have been restored to similar conditions as before the event.

Within the area of humanitarian aid, Sida provides funding in three ways; (I) through a frame agreement with the Red Cross Sweden; (II) through frame agreements for ‘minor humanitarian efforts’ in disasters situations to some of the frame organisations; (III) and from the humanitarian appropriation to which organisations can apply for special efforts. The Red Cross frame agreement for

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15 The government’s definition is based on the ‘Objectives and definition on humanitarian action’ agreed on by representatives of government and multilateral donors, United Nations institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and other organisations involved in humanitarian action, at the International Meeting on Good Humanitarian Donorship, Stockholm, 2003. Swedish humanitarian assistance is based on the Policy for Sweden’s Humanitarian Aid from 2010, and is reinforced by the Policy on Security and Development in Swedish Development Cooperation from 2010. This section is based on these policies if not otherwise indicated.

16 This is one of the larger posts of development cooperation funding that is disposed by Sida. For 2011 it is estimated to amount to approx. SEK 2.7 Billion of which at most SEK 200 Million may be used for conflict related interventions.
humanitarian efforts was established in 1999. The organisations that originally signed frame agreements for minor humanitarian efforts in the early 1990s were Diakonia, Church of Sweden, PMU, SMR and Red Cross Sweden. Save the Children signed an agreement in 2003 and Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières and Swedish Cooperative Centre in 2005. All Swedish and international organisations that fulfil the basic criteria for CSO grants from the humanitarian aid post can apply for humanitarian grants (Onsander, 2007).

About 50 percent of Sida’s humanitarian appropriation is granted to UN agencies within the humanitarian area such as the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which is the arm of the UN Secretariat that is responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure coherent response to emergencies. Sweden also contributes to the UN humanitarian agencies through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. About 25 percent is channelled through the IRCC and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation via the Swedish Red Cross.

The Red Cross is the world’s largest humanitarian network with about 100 million members and 186 national organisations based on the idea of being complementary to the overall societal safety net through voluntary efforts and engagement. It is a non-political and non-religious organisation. The Red Cross Sweden channels support to its sister organisation in the International Red Cross Alliance. (www.redcross.se).

6.3.3.2 Thematic support

Swedish CSOs have a long history of cooperation with Sida in development programmes related to the areas of peace and conflict, and democracy and human rights, either as their primary goal or as an indirect effect of a long-term close cooperation with organisations in civil society. Over the years the Swedish government, mainly through Sida, has also requested the Swedish CSOs to assist in implementing specific projects in the partner countries. Early examples were in the field of supporting the liberation movements in their struggles, and later to an increasing extent involving CSOs as actors in humanitarian assistance and in Sida activities related to the Swedish government’s thematic focus areas of democracy and human rights, environment and climate, gender equality and women’s’ participation, economic growth, and HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases. Most recently the focus has been on democracy, and the CSOs as actors for democracy. A special emphasis has also been put and on health for children and young people.

An additional, innovative and temporary initiative for democratisation and freedom of expression was decided upon by the Swedish government in 2009.17 The objective is to strengthen actors for change and the initiative focuses partly on predictable support to strengthen democracy and freedom of expression and partly on prompt requests for contributions to assists private individual individuals, groups or CSOs working for democratisation and freedom of expression. Support can be given in the form of organisational support and project support and can be used for expenses regarding the dissemination of information, campaigns, education, legal activism, capacity building etc. Support to actors for change may be allocated via third parties such as CSOs and party-affiliated organisations. Exile organisations may also be supported, where the activities of these organisations aim at strengthening actors for change in the country of origin.

17 This initiative is additional funding, outside the other mentioned appropriations.
Example: Special support in the area of HIV/AIDS to CSOs through Forum Syd:

**The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA)**
SCA is an international CSO working in Afghanistan for more than 25 years. SCA is a large actor in the educational and health sectors, as well as in agriculture and community organisation. Forum Syd contributed SEK 1.17 million in 2004 to introduce a HIV/AIDS programme entailing information, awareness, and capacity building efforts with SCA personnel, about 1400 people, at different levels. The project trained 2700 people, established new networks and cooperation with local partners, government and other donors. Results were seen as positive, in particular the realisation that it was possible to introduce such a controversial issue in a very conservative environment. As a result HIV and AIDS is now mainstreamed into the SCA health programmes and taken into consideration in other programmes.

Example: Democratisation support

**East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP)**
EHAHRDP seeks to strengthen the work of human rights defenders (HRDs) by reducing their vulnerability to the risk of persecution and by enhancing their capacity to effectively defend human rights. EHAHRDP focuses its work on Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia (together with Somaliland), Sudan (together with South Sudan), Tanzania and Uganda, and as of 2008 also includes Rwanda and Burundi due to their recent adhesion to the East African Community. EHAHRDP has received SEK 10 000 000 in support from Sida. The expected result is that EHAHRDP develops into taking on a coordinating role in the pan-African network of human rights defenders which would also strengthen the organisation’s strategic function as Chair of a Steering Committee in a CSO forum connected to the African Commission for Human and People’s Rights, and as an actor in the UN’s Human Rights Council.

**Association for Progressive Communication (APC)**
APC’s mission is to empower and support organisations, social movements and individuals in and through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to build strategic communities and initiatives for the purpose of social justice, participatory political processes and environmental sustainability. APC helps grassroots groups use the technology to develop their communities and further their rights, and works so that government policies related to information and communication serve the best interests of the general population, especially people living in developing countries. APC is both a network and an organisation and had in December 2010, 50 members in 35 countries, the majority from developing countries. Sida’s support to APC, SEK 4 500 000, is specifically aimed at training women who are engaged in Human Rights to use the internet as a tool in their work and to support activists in how to protect themselves from security risks when working in a digital environment.

6.3.4 Democracy support through Swedish party affiliated organisations

Sida also funds a special democracy support through Swedish party affiliated organisations (PAO). This democracy support was introduced on trial in 1995 and from 2002 support through party affiliated organisations in developing countries and east and central Europe is a permanent activity.

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18 The Swedish party politically affiliated organisations are Centerpartiets Internationella Stiftelse, Green Forum, Jarl Hjalmars Stiftelse, Kristdemokratiskt Internationellt Centrum, Olof Palmes Internationella Centrum, Vänstern Internationella Forum, and Swedish International Liberal Centre.

19 The yearly budget for PAO cooperation is SEK 75 million. In 2007/2008 there were 157 projects with target groups in 39 partner countries; 76 countries if regional projects are included. Half of the project expenditures related to cooperation with Eastern and Central Europe and less than 10 percent to cooperation with countries.
The initiative for this kind of support was developed in the light of the strongly increased political freedom, the abolishment of one party systems and free elections in Eastern Europe, Africa and parts of Asia and Latin America around the year 1990. Well-functioning political parties were seen as a missing link in the struggle for democratic rule.

The Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation (SADEV) conducted in 2009 an overall evaluation of the PAO support, and in 2010 a new strategy for special democracy through party affiliated organisations was decided upon by the Swedish government from the year 2012. The Swedish support via PAOs had previously had a focus on support to individual parties and political organisations, frequently with close ideological ties to Swedish cooperation partners.

Based on the government decision from 2010, the overriding goal for this democracy support is democratic development and increased respect for human rights in developing countries. To reach the overriding goal Sida’s work is divided into two focus areas; support to sister organisations and closely related political movements and organisations, and support to multi-party systems. The aim with these focus areas are well-functioning democratic political parties and well-functioning democratic multi-party systems in developing countries.

A political party represented in the Swedish parliament can apply to Sida for grants through party affiliated organisations.

Similar support with focus on development of democratic parties is increasingly being implemented by donors internationally. Still, this type of support remains a small part of the overall international donor support to democracy and support for human rights.

6.3.5 Support for information and communication

The Swedish CSOs are considered to have an important role in educating the Swedish public about development and Sida gives support to information and communication work for this reason. The overall objective with the support for communication and information work is that the Swedish public has good knowledge of the situation in developing countries, Swedish aid and its results, and the driving forces of development. The communication and information strategy also covers all communication work at Sida. Historically this support has been a major part of Sweden’s information strategy on development in general and the combat of poverty in particular.

The support from Sida that is designated for information and communication activities must not be used to fund other types of activities, for example core activities, branding activities, or basic information regarding the CSOs annual reports or administration of websites. It is neither allowed to be used for fundraising or recruitment of new members. The funding for communication work also has a 10/90 requirement which means that the CSOs have to finance 10% of the activities for which they receive funding from Sida themselves.

with which Sweden has long-term development cooperation. Most of the partner countries had a medium or high Human Development Index.
In the past years this kind of support has decreased drastically due to change of government and shifted priorities. The information and communication grant was decreased with approximately 60% in 2010. The official reason for this is that even though there have been well implemented programmes there has been a lack of beneficial results reported. As a result, the Swedish government has requested improved monitoring and evaluation in the area related to the information and communication grants. Previously, this kind of support also covered advocacy support, but the focus has shifted away from advocacy to educating the Swedish public about development.

7 Challenges and discussion points

The underlying assumption is that a well-functioning civil society in the South is a prerequisite for developing democracy and increased respect for human rights, and that Northern CSOs can help strengthening civil society in developing countries through cooperation with Southern sister organisations.

7.1 Legitimacy

This underlying assumption raises questions regarding CSOs’ legitimacy and representativeness. Are local CSOs really a part of local civil society, and can these movements be classified as representative or not and to whom, if anyone, are they accountable.

Whilst many donors complain about the lack of constituency or legitimacy of CSOs, they often do not recognise that it is their own procedures and policies that have reinforced these trends. Furthermore, there is a risk that the exclusive funding of CSOs undermines the development of social movements, and as a result, the traditionally strong working relationship between CSOs and social movements that was once one of the comparative advantages of CSOs has been eroded (Pratt, 2006).

Few people challenge the view that CSOs ought to work with poor, grassroots communities, but the question is if they should do more than that. One strand of opinion is that CSOs should only be involved in a narrow group of ‘hands-on’ activities centred on service delivery, or on income-generating activities. Other activities such as advocacy and lobbying work are deemed illegitimate because they move CSOs into the political realm, an arena into which CSOs, the critics contend, ought not to venture. Others, instead, emphasize the importance of the advocacy role that CSOs have (Riddell, 2007).

Another important aspect is the legitimacy of the institutions and the issues to engage in. CSOs must decide whether or not they will engage with institutions that they do not consider legitimate, democratic or accountable. On the one hand CSOs must limit engagement and not validate the activities of for example an undemocratic institution, and on the other hand not engaging can do even more harm. Within the issue of the legitimacy of institutions lies the tension regarding the role of the state. Should CSOs advocate limiting the powers of the state institutions as a complementary alternative, or should CSOs defend state functions as protective and good? In the case of a legitimate state the emerging of a strong civil society is based on the stability of the state and at the same time contributes to further democratisation of the state. In the case of an illegitimate state the civil society will not be supported by the state and its role will be to contribute to the change of regime and to protect the citizens from the repression of the state (Onsander, 2007). Another challenge is that even
though the work of some CSOs have achieved good results, usually in health care and education, it is
taking away the responsibility from the state and undermine the state’s responsibility (Riddell, 2007).

7.2 The Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action

The AAA (§see above) calls upon developing country and donor governments to work with CSOs to provide an enabling environment that maximises CSOs’ contributions to development. Developing country and donor governments sometimes point to insufficient coordination among CSOs and between CSOs and governments. Governments are also interested in having a complete picture of aid investments in a given country for practical reasons such as avoiding duplication of effort. While these are valid issues, the means used to address them requires that a balance be struck so as to avoid hampering CSO effectiveness with overly-restrictive policies and regulatory frameworks (OECD-DAC, 2011).

Alignment and harmonisation in the Paris Declaration require that donor countries align their development cooperation programmes to recipient countries’ national development strategies. However, the deficit in democracy within some aid recipient nations means that aid money may have a lesser chance of reaching those at the margins of official policies. At the same time, CSO-led programs that may address needs identified by their primary stakeholders may be marginalised for not aligning with official policies and programs. Some countries are using CSO legislation to exert controls on CSO activities, including demanding full harmonisation with governments’ national development plans. This can curb CSOs’ ability to implement programming that is first and foremost responsive to their primary stakeholders, but can also prevent them from pursuing accountability and other democratic governance practice from their governments (OECD-DAC, 2011).

7.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

The increasing demands for short term quantifiable results by the aid community in general also affects the funding via Northern CSOs and its methods for quality control and reporting. A comprehensive set of rules and regulations have been developed by Sida. In spite of this, Sida has sometimes found it difficult to evaluate their support for CSO work, as there are many links in the chain with their system of umbrella organisations.

To measure results is difficult for most CSO development interventions, but even more so for the impact of advocacy, lobbying and campaigning work. Advocacy, lobbying and campaigning objectives might be achieved, but there are many agents and agencies that can and often have influenced the outcome. Another problem in judging effectiveness concerns the relative weight that should be given to short-term and long-term outcomes of advocacy, lobbying and campaigning (Riddell, 2007).

The subject of accountability is multi-faceted and complex. The need to demonstrate the results of CSO programming is essential for accountability purposes. Donors funding CSOs, governments in the countries in which they operate, CSOs themselves, and the people that CSOs seek to serve or represent all have legitimate interests in evidence that CSOs’ efforts are “making a difference” by achieving development results. CSOs face a complex web of accountability to donors, governments, members, boards, constituents, and peers, which goes beyond mere accounting for results. Unlike the Paris Declaration, no indicators of progress to be measured were developed for the AAA commitments.
CSOs have developed their own guidelines for effectiveness and efficiency such as the Open Forum’s Principles\textsuperscript{20}. What remains unclear is the degree to which key issues faced by developing and donor governments in their dealings with CSOs will be addressed in the implementation of the Principles (OECD-DAC, 2011)

### 7.4 Balance between channeling funds via Swedish CSOs and CSOs in partner countries

Today a big part of funding to civil society in developing countries is still channeled through Swedish CSOs in one way or another. Over the years efforts have been made to find complementary avenues into the civil societies in the partner countries and today the share going directly to local CSOs has increased. However, so has the share channeled via international CSOs and multilateral organisations which in turn work with local CSOs in the partner countries. Still the question remains why not an even greater share is channelled directly to the local CSOs. Major reasons are that channeling funds through Swedish CSOs are that they sometimes have comparative advantages, possess special skills and contacts, can be more effective as well as efficient, and often have a long term perspective and knowledge. Other reasons are that channeling most funding directly to CSOs in the partner country would be extremely demanding on Sida’s administrative resources, that the effectiveness sometimes is expected to be lower, but also the political support to Swedish CSOs is significant and that Swedish CSOs have a lot of influence.

### 7.5 Autonomy and dependence

By definition, CSOs are separate and independent from the state, implying autonomy. The question is whether this independence is being threatened by the large support received from the Swedish government through Sida. Swedish CSOs and Sida have had a close relationship and have been cooperating for more than 50 years. It might seem contradictory that organisations receiving funds from Sida are independent of Sida and that the projects funded are their own at the same time as they have to conform to Sida’s conditions to get financial support. However, the Swedish CSO support is supposed to support the efforts of the CSOs to strengthening civil society in the receiving countries. The Swedish state has created a framework for CSO activities by defining what may be supported and what may not. According to the rules and regulations introduced by Sida, activities that fall within this framework should not be subject to any influence other than the administrative reporting rules. The administrative requirements by Sida are constructed in a way so that the administrative tradition in each organisation should be respected. This has been proven to be more effective, efficient and is also in line with the Paris Agenda, especially regarding ownership and alignment. From this point of view there should not be any obvious contradiction. The recent years’ development with an increased share of grants together with the creation of frame agreements and changes in how aid is distributed means a changed role for the Swedish CSOs. The frame organisations have grown to become large institutional like organisations responsible for channelling funds to other Swedish CSOs. In addition, the CSOs

\textsuperscript{20} The Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness is an initiative conceived of and led by a diverse coalition of CSOs from around the world to identify the elements that are essential to the development effectiveness of CSOs. During the Open Forum Global Assembly in Istanbul, 2010, civil society representatives endorsed the Istanbul \textit{Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness}. 
have increasingly been contracted by Sida to fulfil activities on behalf of Sida and the Swedish Government (Onsander, 2007).

Another issue that Sida has to take into consideration is that CSOs are based on different ideologies and beliefs. CSOs related to churches have a goal to spread their faith, cooperative organisations to advocate cooperative practices etc. The variety of the CSOs’ different profiles is the starting point for the CSO appropriation and is considered to contribute to pluralistic civil societies. But even though it is clear from the rules and regulations that Swedish development cooperation funding should never support any activities which would imply pursuance of their own objectives, it must be recognized that for many of the CSOs spreading their ideology is important and often the raison d’être for the organisations to start with.

7.6 National and transnational CSOs

In Sweden, the structure with Sida financed frame organisations has more or less looked the same since the end of the 1970s. The world has gone through great changes in the last decades but the process of including new organisations is slow. Many of the organisations have changed or widened their activities over the years. One of the core issues in the CSO debate is if the organisations are still values based. One example is the solidarity movement’s support to the liberation movements, which changed and widened instead of being dissolved once liberation was achieved (Onsander, 2007).

Another issue is that it is difficult for more recently established CSOs to break into an architecture established many years ago in a different world (Pratt, 2006). The modern aid architecture with larger volumes and increased demands on CSOs makes it hard for smaller organisations to be involved in development cooperation, but it might also speed up and increase the professionalising of CSOs (Onsander, 2007).

There is a perceived, sometimes covert and sometimes overt, competition across Europe between home-grown CSOs and transnational CSOs (such Plan and Save the Children, Amnesty, Human Rights Watch etc.). The fear is that the transnational CSOs will, in business terms, destroy national CSO through ‘unfair’ competition, for example, through their ability and willingness to use the media more blatantly for marketing rather than just for advocacy or worthy messages. Furthermore, transnational CSOs are able to use their branding and size to ensure high levels of coverage for their local affiliate. For example, when in an emergency people see Save the Children or other transnationally recognisable logos on television coverage of an emergency, they do not distinguish whether this was due to the local Save the Children in Sweden or one of the other larger members of the Alliance. Some national CSOs have realised that survival will probably only come through them joining one of the transnational CSOs. The issue of the transnational CSOs is important as it will not only challenge local CSOs, but also official agencies who need to be aware of these CSOs wanting to access their funds and who will be looking for ways around some of the ‘restrictive practices’ intended to protect the existing list of local CSOs with privileged access to funding (Pratt, 2006).

For many Northern international CSOs, a balance has always to be struck between their visibility on the one hand, and how representative, credible, legitimate they are on the other hand. To engage members in their activities and to collect necessary funds the CSOs have to be very visible and constantly point at their objectives and work and show good results from activities, which are being or have been implemented. This often leads to what in the literature has been defined as humanitarian pornography i.e. terrible pictures of suffering and poverty. It also leads to all CSOs swarming to the
same crisis which has been the most discussed in the media at the particular time (the so called CNN-effect), while worse crises which are not so much discussed in the media get less attention. This also influences the ability to act long-term and not only when immediate needs arise (Onsander, 2007). This issue primarily relates to organisations working in the field of humanitarian assistance, rather than development.

7.7 Concluding remark

In light of the above raised questions and issues, the overriding question that always has to be kept in mind is: can local CSOs really change the course of development in a positive direction, and can Northern CSOs really assist them in doing so?
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<td>Africa Groups of Sweden</td>
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<td>Diakonia</td>
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