

Northern NGOs in South Africa: Programmes and Partnerships

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Negotiating NGO Management Practice: Implications for Development *

The research project entitled “Negotiating NGO Management Practice: Implications for Development” is an international collaboration between researchers in the United Kingdom, Uganda and South Africa. The aim of the project is to investigate the influence of Northern (mainly UK) NGOs and donors on the management tools and procedures used by their African NGO partners, and the impact these tools have on the work of African NGOs. The focus of the research is especially on new rational management tools currently in widespread use amongst northern NGOs and donors (such as logframes, monitoring and evaluation, indicators) strategic planning, and other donor conditionalities (e.g. gender, participation and the environment). The research aims to trace the ways in which management practices are imposed and negotiated at all levels of the aid chain i.e from bilateral and multilateral donors in the North, through to International NGOs, to NGOs and local communities in developing countries of the South.

An important focus of the project is to explore the potential contradictions between these management practices and NNGO and donor claims of striving to promote such objectives as local participation, ownership and empowerment in their relationships with local NGOs and communities in developing countries.

This is the first research report of the South African component of the project, based at the School of Development Studies at the University of Natal. The report presents the findings of interviews with a sample of northern NGOs that work in South Africa. The purpose of the interviews was to obtain an initial insight into the activities of NNGOs in South Africa, particularly after 1994, and to get a better understanding of the chain of influence (in terms of management practices) between 1) the NNGOs and their head offices and donors in the north, and 2) the NNGOs and the South African NGOs they fund/work with. Specific questions were asked about the kinds of management tools and approaches NNGOs in South Africa are using, how the use of these tools has been influenced by their head offices and donors in the north, and how these management tools might be filtered through to the South African NGOs with which the NNGOs work, in the form of particular funding requirements.

What is presented in this report is the perspective of the NNGOs. The next phase of the research will seek to obtain the views of South African NGOs on their relationships with NNGOs and donors.

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ACRONYMS

AMREF	African Medical and Research Foundation
ANC	African National Congress
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CAMEL	CAFOD Appraisal Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Framework
CBHC	Community-based health care
DFID	Department for International Development
EU	European Union
INTERFUND	International Fundraising Consortium
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MOV	Means of Verification
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NNGO	Northern Non-governmental Organisation
PHC	Primary health care
PACT	Private Agencies Collaborating Together
PTS	Programme Tracking System
SNGO	Southern Non-governmental Organisation
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign
NAPWA	National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
WVSA	World Vision South Africa

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1. INTRODUCTION

One aspect of analyses and debates about development aid to South Africa that is often overlooked is the role of Northern NGOs (NNGOs)¹, as both conduits of bilateral and multilateral aid, and as significant role-players in supporting and influencing South African civil society organisations. In a context in which there has been very little reliable documentation of total aid flows into South Africa, little is known about the quantitative contribution of NNGOs to development aid in the country². In comparison to large bilateral and multilateral donors, the proportion of aid to South Africa from NNGOs is likely to be relatively insignificant. However, the significance of NNGOs is likely to be more apparent in terms of the targeted financial and other technical support they have provided to disadvantaged communities in South Africa, particularly through the vehicle of local NGOs that work in and with these communities.

Historically, many NNGOs have been praised for their role in assisting the anti-apartheid struggle through supporting political movements fighting against the system, such as the African National Congress (ANC), as well as through their financial support to anti-apartheid NGOs which worked to empower and deliver services to communities oppressed by discriminatory apartheid policies. In the years since the formal end of apartheid in 1994, the role of NNGOs in South Africa has perhaps been less clear. With the goal of political liberation having been achieved, the focus of these organisations has shifted to other objectives. These objectives have been shaped by, and brought into line with, the programmatic priorities set by head offices in the north, as well as by locally specific development priorities identified by local offices.

This report examines what a selection of NNGOs have been doing in South Africa, particularly since 1994, what their priorities have been and how they have changed, and what they see as their future roles and contributions towards development in South Africa in coming years. The focus of the study is on the specific project and organisational management tools and procedures that NNGOs in South Africa are using and whether, and how, these management procedures might be imposed on them by donors and, in turn, on local South African NGOs as part of funding conditionalities. With the language of “partnerships” now ubiquitous in the aid discourse, an important objective of the study was also to begin to understand how NNGOs in South Africa understand the concept and how, from their perspective at least, they are promoting mutually beneficial partnerships between themselves and local South African NGOs.

The report is based primarily on interviews conducted with the directors or other senior staff members of eleven NNGOs operating in South Africa. Organisational literature and programme documents supplied by these organisations were also used as secondary sources of information. Specific quotes in the report have been kept deliberately anonymous to protect the confidentiality of the interviewees.

¹ The term “Northern NGO” or NNGO is used in this report to refer to NGOs based in developed countries which work to promote development in the poorer Southern countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. In the development discourse there is an ongoing debate about the appropriateness of the terms “Northern” and “Southern” to denote the origins of NGOs, with many people viewing these terms as entrenching neo-colonial power relations. “International NGO” or “INGO” is an alternative term that is often used synonymously with NNGO.

² The South African government’s Development Cooperation Report (2000) represents the first comprehensive attempt to systematically document flows of aid into the country since 1994. The report does not, however, include data about aid flows from NNGOs.

1.1 Structure of the report

- Section 2 provides a brief overview of the history and activities of NNGOs in South Africa.
- Section 3 then gives a profile of the eleven NNGOs that were surveyed. Subsections examine the programmes of the NNGOs, draw out common themes within these programmes, outline the main sources of funding to the NNGOs and document what management tools they are using.
- Section 4 explores the relationships between the NNGOs and their donors, including funding patterns and management requirements.
- Section 5 examines the relationships between the NNGOs and the South African NGOs they support. Subsections in this section examine how the concept of partnerships is understood by the NNGOs, how they select their local NGO partners, how they structure these partnerships, what they require from local NGOs in terms of management procedures and tools, and their views on the state of the South African NGO sector.
- The report concludes by summarising the main findings of the survey.

2. NNGOs IN SOUTH AFRICA: AN OVERVIEW

It is difficult to compile an accurate profile of NNGOs in South Africa due to the lack of a comprehensive database of these organisations and their activities. Based on the few sources that are available (PRODDER, 2000; lists from donors) we estimate that there are at least 75 internationally-based NGOs that either implement their own programmes in the country directly or fund local organisations to implement programmes. Many of these NNGOs have permanent offices within the country, usually in either Johannesburg or Pretoria. A number of the NNGOs, however, do not have a permanent base in South Africa, and fund local organisations and programmes from their headquarters in the north or from regional offices in neighbouring Southern African countries.

The NNGO community in South Africa is diverse. Examples of the types of organisations that are to be found are:

- Large private foundations, such as the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the Ford Foundation;
- The more traditional names in international NGO development, for example Oxfam, Save the Children, World Vision, Christian Aid, CAFOD, HelpAge International, Habitat for Humanity and CARE International;
- International relief agencies such as the International Committee of the Red Cross;
- Consortiums of organisations operating under a common name, such as Private Agencies Collaborating Together (PACT) and the International Fundraising Consortium (Interfund).

The nationalities of these organisations reflect to a large extent the historic relationships between South Africa and northern countries. For example, there are a significant number of British and European agencies in South Africa. This is also related to the importance of the British Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Union (EU) as major bilateral and multilateral donors to South Africa. There are also a number of Scandinavian NNGOs (e.g. Radda Barnen and Diakonia Sweden), which reflects the important historic linkages between these countries and the anti-apartheid liberation movement.

There is a dearth of detailed information about the history and activities of NNGOs in South Africa. Most of what is known about these organisations is derived largely from anecdotal evidence provided by people working in the South African voluntary sector. These sources have tended to provide a polarised view of NNGO involvement in the country: either unquestioning acceptance because of their support during apartheid for local anti-apartheid organisations; or highly critical views and even total rejection, with NNGOs being lumped together with other donors who have been perceived to have abandoned the local NGO sector after 1994.³ Particular criticism has been directed at a number of NNGOs that have set up operations in South Africa in the post-1994 period. Some local observers have been highly critical of the motives of these organisations and the value of their presence in the country, as the following quote illustrates:

³ For a range of critical views on the relationships between Northern donors and South African NGOs, see *Development Update*, Vol.2, No.1, 1998.

Their agendas are not always transparent. Often, they claim they have been invited here by some or other local group, when it is in fact a donor which has taken the initiative. Familiar with the Northern NGO's work elsewhere, a donor may believe (rightly or wrongly) that the organisation has something to offer South Africa. In other cases, an NGO's entry may be based on a purported partnership with a local organisation, but the respective roles of the partners and the nature of the partnership will be far from clear (even to the local "partner"). (Camay, 1998:41).

A balanced picture of the role of NNGOs in South Africa is likely to lie somewhere in between these two extreme positions. Many NGOs have indeed played a very constructive role in the country, particularly during apartheid. Many of these organisations have also remained committed to the local NGOs they funded even after 1994. Moreover, for a large number of South African NGOs, NNGOs have provided at least one source of reliable funding in the turbulent funding environment since 1994. At the same time, however, other NNGOs have simply abandoned their local "partners," while others have entered the country under dubious pretexts.

What is missing in the analysis is a clear and critical understanding of the ways in which NNGOs have influenced the local NGO sector (in both negative and positive ways), particularly after 1994, through their funding strategies and the various management requirements they attach to the disbursement of funds. The aim of the research reported on here was to attempt to provide greater clarity on these issues.

3. PROFILE OF SELECTED NNGOs

3.1 The sample

Table 1 below gives a summary of the NNGOs that were interviewed for the study. Two main criteria were used for selecting the NNGOs in the sample: a) location of their international headquarters (UK NGOs are the primary focus of the international research project), and b) organisations which responded to requests for interviews and documentation.

Of the eleven organisations interviewed, five – Save the Children UK, VSO, Catholic Agency for International Development (CAFOD), HelpAge International and Charities Aid Foundation – are UK-based NNGOs. CARE South Africa is a CARE USA country office, although the programme co-ordinator said she considers CARE South Africa to be more a South African NGO than a NNGO (all staff at the local office are South African). Habitat for Humanity and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation are both based in the USA. World Vision of South Africa (WVSA) is a national office of the international World Vision partnership. This office is quite unique in the international partnership in that it is both a field office and a support office, meaning that it implements local projects directly and has other World Vision offices as donors, but it also raises its own funds locally. Diakonia is based in Sweden. The African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF) is an international NGO with its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. While not a Northern-based NGO, AMREF was included in the sample because of its unusual status as an African international NGO. We were interested to investigate what difference this would make in terms of the questions we are asking.

Out of the eleven NNGOs interviewed, all except three – WVSA, Habitat for Humanity and AMREF - operate primarily through local NGO partners. WVSA, Habitat and AMREF work directly with communities, although they do sometimes work with South African NGOs on projects.

Table 1: Profile of the NNGOs interviewed			
	When established in SA	Sectoral priorities	Geographical focus
African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF)	1995	Strengthening health and development systems, with particular emphasis on CBHC and PHC	Mpumalanga; KwaZulu-Natal; Eastern Cape
Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD)	+/- 1960	Economic empowerment and justice; Land; HIV/AIDS; Gender	KwaZulu-Natal
CARE South Africa	1998	Institutional capacity building within the NGO sector	Northern Cape; Eastern Cape
Charities Aid Foundation	1997	Institutional capacity building within the NGO sector	Work through two partners based in Gauteng, with members around the country.

Charles Stewart Mott Foundation	1988	Strengthening the NGO sector; promoting citizen's rights and responsibilities; improving race relations	Gauteng, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal; Northern Province.
Diakonia Sweden	Around 1985	Conflict transformation; socio-economic justice; institutional capacity building	KwaZulu-Natal; Eastern Cape; and a few partners, mainly national, based in Gauteng.
Habitat for Humanity International	1987	Low cost housing	KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape, Gauteng and North West
HelpAge International	1995	Capacity building of organisations that work with older people	Gauteng; Northern Province; KwaZulu-Natal
Save the Children UK	1986	Children; HIV/AIDS	Gauteng; Free State
Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO)	1993	HIV/AIDS; Housing, water and sanitation; Gender	KwaZulu-Natal; Northern Province; Eastern Cape
World Vision of South Africa (WVSA)	1967	Integrated community development	Western Cape; Eastern Cape; KwaZulu-Natal; Northern Province; Gauteng

3.2 Programmes

This section provides a brief description of what each of the NNGOs interviewed are doing in South Africa, including the sectoral and geographical foci of their programmes and how these may have changed in recent years.

3.2.1 AMREF South Africa

The African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF) is unique within the sample in that it is an international NGO that is based in Africa, not the North as is the case with all the other organisations interviewed. The organisation's headquarters are in Nairobi, Kenya.

AMREF opened an office in South Africa in 1995. The focus of AMREF's work is the strengthening of health and development systems in the country, with particular emphasis on community based and primary health care. AMREF supports government in the development of the District Health System and mobilises communities to participate in activities that affect their health and well-being. The South Africa programme is divided into three main themes:

- 1) *Operations research*: developing and testing models of best practice for improved health;
- 2) *Capacity strengthening*: working to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery of health services by strengthening the resources and skills of NGO partners and district health services.
- 3) *Advocacy*: advocating for the implementation of policies and practices that improve peoples' health.

AMREF currently operates a number of projects in sites in three provinces, namely Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. The sites were selected on the basis of conforming to AMREF's vision and mission statement, the government's priorities, community needs, and commitment by other development agents within the sites.

3.2.2 CAFOD

CAFOD has been operating in South Africa for over 40 years. In common with its work in other countries, CAFOD's work in South Africa early on was focussed on supporting missionaries. However, in the South African context, support to anti-apartheid organisations was a particular priority.

In 1993/94 CAFOD conducted its first strategic planning exercise, which resulted in the organisation reprioritising its funding from projects all around the country to just the province of KwaZulu-Natal. This province was selected on the basis of key indicators, such as poverty, levels of violence and HIV/AIDS.

In 1999, CAFOD drew up a new country programme statement for South Africa. Its work is now divided into four key themes:

- 1) *Economic empowerment and justice*: includes micro-enterprise support, advancing economic literacy (e.g. through support to the local NGOs, Fair Share), macro-economic analysis and campaigning (e.g. on the issue of the EU-South Africa trade agreement);
- 2) *Land*: prioritised the redistribution of church land, also focus on tenure and sustainability issues;
- 3) *HIV/AIDS*: support to the Catholic Church's AIDS office in Pretoria, as well as other organisations working with people living with HIV/AIDS and AIDS orphans;
- 4) *Gender*: support to various church and secular organisations to promote women's rights.

3.2.3 CARE South Africa

Following its entry into South Africa in 1998, CARE spent a year consulting with local civil society organisations, the government, donors, and research institutions to devise an appropriate programme for the country. The response CARE received was that civil society organisations were struggling to make the transition from activism to more development focussed work, and needed support to increase their capacities to play a more active role in alleviating poverty.

On the basis of this finding, it was decided that the organisation should concentrate its work in South Africa on institutional capacity building for civil society organisations. The main focus so far has been a programme called SCAPE (Strengthening Capacities for Transforming Relationships and Exercising Rights). The programme has been designed in conjunction with, and is being implemented by, three local organisations – Tlhavhama Training Initiative in the Northern Province,

and the Eastern Cape NGO Coalition and the Training Initiative for Land and Livelihoods in the Eastern Cape province. The stated intention of the programme is to “strengthen the capacity of CSOs to implement development activities that assist people to exercise their new rights, and take greater control over and responsibility for their own livelihood improvement.”

The programme will be implemented through the provision of training to partner organisations. The training is “demand-driven” and tailored to the needs of the individual organisations. Training in two areas has so far been conducted: 1) the assessment of the local organisation itself, looking at leadership, management structures, human resources, networking etc, and 2) assessing programmes using a Household Livelihood Security (HLS) framework, which examines how partners identify, plan, implement and monitor projects. These two assessments have been piloted with about 20 organisations in the Northern Province and Eastern Cape, with about 100 – 130 people being trained.

The CARE South Africa programme co-ordinator was careful to explain that CARE locally is not a donor. Small amounts of money will be provided to the members of partner networks for them to pilot various initiatives and training projects, but CARE does not fund local NGOs *per se*.

3.2.4 Charities Aid Foundation

The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) is a British grant-making NGO. Its international mission is to “strengthen the substance of charities,” especially the financial position of charitable organisations. In South Africa, CAF’s mission is specifically to “strengthen the democratic transition through strengthening the financial sustainability of the local NGO sector.”

CAF’s work in South Africa has been focussed on the Non-Profit Partnership (NPP). The NPP was launched in 1998 and provides a range of financial services and advice to the NGO sector to assist it in becoming more financially sustainable.

In South Africa, CAF works through two “strategic partners”: the South African NGO Coalition (SANGOCO), representing NGOs; and the Southern African Grantmakers’ Association (SAGA), representing donors.

3.2.5 Charles Stewart Mott Foundation

The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation (hereafter referred to as the Mott Foundation) began working in South Africa in 1988 and opened an office in 1993. The South African office was its first international office outside of the USA.

The Mott Foundation’s work in South Africa falls under the organisation’s Civil Society Programme, one of four programmes it operates globally. Within the South Africa programme, there are three sub-programmes:

- 1) *Strengthening the non-profit sector*: this is the primary grant-making objective in South Africa. Objectives within this sub-programme include strengthening the financial and human resources capacity of NGOs, promoting information-sharing and networking and developing management skills within the sector, with a focus specifically on women;
- 2) *Promoting citizen’s rights and responsibilities*: this sub-programme includes funding to increase citizen and NGO engagement with government and the private sector around developmental objectives, increasing economic policy

- literacy and building awareness of political and economic rights;
- 3) *Improving race and ethnic relations*: This is a new sub-programme. The Mott Foundation is currently developing a strategy for grant-making in this area.

The Mott Foundation currently supports about 80 organisations working in these three programme areas. Most of these organisations are located Gauteng, the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Northern Province, but the Foundation is attempting to reach all provinces.

3.2.6 Diakonia Sweden

Diakonia is a Swedish ecumenical NGO. Diakonia Sweden's programme in South Africa has three priority themes:

- 1) *Conflict transformation*
- 2) *Socio-economic justice*
- 3) *Institutional capacity development*

Diakonia works through local partners (mostly church-based organisations) in the KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Gauteng provinces.

3.2.7 Habitat for Humanity International

Habitat for Humanity International is a US-based ecumenical NGO with a focus on the provision of housing to the poor. Habitat for Humanity began working in South Africa in 1987.

In South Africa, most of Habitat's work is urban-based. Habitat works directly with communities. There are four criteria for selecting which people the organisation will assist. These are that 1) there must be a real need for a house (i.e. the applicants don't have a house anywhere else), 2) the applicants must own the land on which the house will be built, 3) they must be able to repay the "bond," and 4) they must be prepared to participate in constructing their own house and those of four other people in the community. In the last two years Habitat has built approximately 550 houses.

Habitat for Humanity in South Africa is registered as a Section 21 company and has a local board.

3.2.8 HelpAge International

HelpAge International opened an office in South Africa in 1995. The organisation came to South Africa with the mission to strengthen existing local organisations working with older people. The period 1995 – 1997 was spent exploring how best HelpAge could achieve this objective.

HelpAge works with 13 partners each the Gauteng and Northern Provinces. It also has 1 member organisation in KwaZulu-Natal, the Muthande Society for the Care of the Aged.

HelpAge's work with these local organisations involves capacity building, including training programmes, educating older people about their rights, raising public awareness of issues affecting older people, and developing materials. Small grants are provided for some projects.

Training is provided through local organisations, such as the Development

Resources Centre in Gauteng and the Rural Development Trust in Northern Province.

HelpAge originally planned to leave South Africa in 1999. However, it has decided to continue the South Africa programme indefinitely and plans to expand to other provinces.

Since June 2000, the South African HelpAge office became a regional office serving other Southern African countries.

3.2.9 Save the Children UK

Save the Children UK started working in South Africa in 1986. Its initial objectives were to support local organisations involved in improving access to health and social welfare services for South Africa's black population denied adequate services by apartheid. The focus of its work has always been on children, and supporting the realisation of children's rights.

Save the Children recently reprioritised its funding strategy in South Africa. It has moved away from funding a variety of NGOs and themes and, since 2000, has concentrated heavily on the issue of HIV/AIDS and its impacts on children. It has also narrowed its geographical focus to the Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces.

Save the Children is currently funding a children's hospice in Bloemfontein, which it is using to develop best practices for home-based models of care for children with HIV and AIDS. It has also funded a research programme investigating the impact of the epidemic on children, which was intended to support the establishment of a National Strategy on Children and HIV/AIDS. Based on the findings of the research, Save the Children will shortly begin designing and implementing projects through local NGO partners.

3.2.10 Voluntary Service Overseas

Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) opened an office in South Africa in 1993. VSO operates by sending skilled volunteers to work in either the public or NGO sector where there is a shortage of local qualified personnel. As a volunteer placement agency, VSO does not fund local NGOs, but supports them through the placement of volunteers with particular skills in the areas where local capacity is inadequate.

In recent years VSO has shifted its geographical focus from seven provinces four years ago to three currently – KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Province and the Eastern Cape. These provinces were selected on the basis of research which identified these provinces as having the highest "multiple disadvantages." The organisation also has "strategic placements" in Gauteng and the Western Cape

VSO has set three sectoral priorities for the period April 2001 to March 2004. These are HIV/AIDS, housing, water and sanitation, and gender. In the area of HIV/AIDS, VSO provides technical and management support to AIDS organisations and to other organisations to integrate HIV/AIDS into their work. This work is being done as part of the Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa (RAISA).

VSO provides expertise in the area of housing, water and sanitation through strategic volunteer placements with South African NGOs, such as Mvula Trust, the Rural Development Services Network (RSDN) and the Built Environment Support Group (BESG).

Gender is a new priority for VSO. It has commissioned a programme of action research to establish the needs within local NGOs in terms of gender advocacy capacity. The research is expected to be completed towards the end of 2001, and based on the findings, VSO will implement a specific gender support programme.

In comparison to other countries, VSO's programme in South Africa is relatively small, consisting of approximately 45 volunteers in the country at any one time.

3.2.11 World Vision of South Africa

World Vision of South Africa (WVSA) is a national office of the international World Vision partnership. It was set up in South Africa in 1967. The focus of WVSA is large-scale integrated community development projects, called Area Development Programmes (ADPs). The organisation is currently funding two ADPs in the Western Cape, two in the Eastern Cape, two in KwaZulu-Natal, two in the Northern Province and one in Gauteng. WVSA is currently working on a national strategy to identify which provinces to focus on in coming years.

WVSA works directly with communities who wish to establish ADPs. It also works with local NGOs in the implementation of ADPs.

The basis of all World Vision's operations worldwide is its child sponsorship programme, which locally provides the bulk of funding to its ADPs in South Africa.

3.3 Common themes

All of the NGOs interviewed were asked questions relating to the themes of gender, participation and environmental sustainability. Two other themes – HIV/AIDS and advocacy – emerged as being other important common issues in the course of the interviews.

3.3.1 Gender

Gender was stated by all the NNGOs interviewed as being a major priority in their work. Two of the agencies – CAFOD and VSO – have, or intend to, set up programmes explicitly aimed at supporting gender equity. The other organisations appear to be taking a mainstreaming approach to gender in their activities. Save the Children, for example, held a workshop in 2000 to train programme directors and managers from across the Southern Africa region in how to incorporate gender into all programmes. CARE South Africa has been working with its sister office in Lesotho on developing a gender-based violence and rights programme which is intended to increase CARE's and their partners' staff awareness of gender issues. WVSA has attempted to ensure that there is a focus on women in their ADPs. The Mott Foundation said that they have a particular interest in women's participation in all of their programmes.

Some of the respondents mentioned the difficulties of attempting to promote gender-based approaches in a local context in which cultural and traditional male attitudes towards the role of women can be deeply entrenched. For example, one interviewee stated that:

Out in the projects is where we face challenges. Because of the traditions and history in communities women have always played a less important role. If we are committed

as an organisation to creating equity, we have to challenge the status quo in those communities and that can become quite difficult at times.

Similarly, another NNGO representative mentioned how it was sometimes hard to promote gender equity in local NGOs directed by men.

In some cases, however, ensuring women's participation has not been such a problem. In fact, getting men involved was mentioned as more of an issue by some of the NNGOs. For example, Habitat for Humanity's representative explained how most of the people involved in their housing projects were women and that they struggle to get men involved. HelpAge's director also discussed how they are trying to highlight the tendency for older men to be left out of many projects aimed at older people.

None of the NNGOs interviewed have people responsible specifically for gender issues in their South African offices, although some of their staff have had training in gender-based approaches. Some of the organisations, such as CARE and VSO, do have gender officers in their African regional offices who have given them some support in building local capacity in the area of gender. HelpAge International is looking to hire a gender officer in its Nairobi regional office.

3.3.2 Participation

Participation was also a theme stated by all of the NNGOs interviewed as being very important in their work. Some of the NNGOs have a focus on promoting the participation of particular groups. For example, Save the Children stress the participation of children and women in their work, while HelpAge focuses on the participation of older people.

The NNGOs tend to use the usual language associated with participation. For example, one of the interviewees said:

We believe very strongly that you do not do development to people, we cannot develop a community. Development is a process which they themselves steer.

It is, of course, not possible on the basis of interviews and documents to gauge the extent to which such language is translated by the NNGOs into reality in projects. It is expected that planned future research will provide a clearer understanding of the different ways in which the concept of participation is mediated by different agencies in the aid chain through to the communities on the ground.

3.3.3 Environmental sustainability

When asked about the theme of environmental sustainability, none of the NNGOs interviewed indicated that it was a priority in their work. None of the organisations had specific environmental programmes in South Africa. One interviewee said that his organisation was beginning to take the issue of the environment more seriously, but that there is still a long way to go before it is fully incorporated into their activities. One of the NNGOs stated that it made a deliberate attempt to avoid donors (particularly corporate donors) who had poor environmental track records. A number of the organisations that CARE is working with through its local partners have a specific focus on the environment.

3.3.4 HIV/AIDS

With South Africa reported to have one of the highest rates of HIV infection in the world, it is not surprising that HIV/AIDS has become a major focus of many NNGOs working in the country. Most of the NNGOs interviewed either have specific HIV/AIDS programmes or have made HIV/AIDS a key cross-cutting theme in their activities. Some specific activities of these organisations in terms of HIV/AIDS include:

- Save the Children has funded research on children living with HIV/AIDS in South Africa which is feeding into a national government strategy on children and HIV/AIDS;
- VSO has implemented a four-year programme – the Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa – which aims to strengthen the response by civil society organisations and governments to the pandemic;
- CAFOD has funded a number of local HIV/AIDS NGOs and has supported the Catholic Church’s AIDS office;
- WVSA has established a pilot programme for integrating HIV/AIDS into their ADPs, which they intend expanding into a national programme strategy on HIV/AIDS.

Habitat for Humanity’s representative spoke about how the epidemic was starting to affect their work in housing. The organisation is currently investigating new models of housing, and insurance options, to accommodate the impact of HIV/AIDS on housing for the poor. HelpAge has also had to increasingly consider the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic on older people. At a recent regional HelpAge conference, half the discussions focussed on the issue of HIV/AIDS.

A number of the NNGOs interviewed explained how they were attempting to assist local NGO partners in mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into their work through funding training courses and workshops.

3.3.5 Advocacy

Advocacy appears to be an increasing focus of the work of NNGOs in South Africa. This appears to be driven at least partly by a recognition that they are generally small players locally (in terms of staff and budgets) and that they can have a more significant impact through influencing broader policies rather than by only funding micro-development projects.

The interviewees mentioned various examples of how advocacy has become important in their programmes in South Africa. Much of the advocacy work is focussed on the issue of HIV/AIDS. CAFOD, for example has made campaigning for affordable treatment a major part of their HIV/AIDS programme. VSO has also emphasized advocacy in its HIV/AIDS programme. It has placed volunteers with a number of advocacy-based local NGOs, such as the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and the National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA). VSO is intending to do the same with its gender programme. Save the Children has a strong focus on advocacy in its HIV/AIDS work, particularly in relation to how children are affected by the epidemic. Advocating for the rights of older people was stated by HelpAge’s director as being the main focus to the organisation’s work.

3.4 Management tools

This section examines the kinds of management tools that the NNGOs are using to manage their programmes and organisations. Research by Wallace et. al. (1997) has documented the widespread use of a number of particular rational management tools (e.g. Logical framework analysis, monitoring and evaluation, strategic planning) amongst donors and NGOs in the North. In this piece of research, we were interested to see the extent to which the use of these three tools in particular (i.e. LFA, M&E and strategic planning) has filtered through to the local NNGO offices in South Africa.

3.4.1 Logical Framework Analysis (LFA)

Most of the NNGOs interviewed use logframes, or similar formats, for project planning and management. WVSA use logframes widely and have deliberately attempted in the last few years to use them more extensively. CARE, AMREF, Diakonia Sweden, Save the Children, CAFOD, the Mott Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, and Charities Aid Foundation use logframes or other related tools, although some agencies use them more extensively than others. VSO locally does not use logframes, but is familiar with them.

It is clear that the use of logframes is widespread amongst NNGOs in South Africa. One of the key aims of the research project is to understand *how* these NNGOs are using this tool and how its use is impacting on local partners and communities in projects. The initial interviews conducted with the NNGOs for this overview did not allow us to explore these issues in any detail. However, we did begin to get a sense of what NNGO staff think about logframes as a tool.

There seems to be a general view amongst the interviewees that LFA is valuable and useful tool, if used properly. This is illustrated by comments by some of the interviewees:

I find that it is quite useful because it really does make you tighten up what you are hoping to achieve...

It makes my life easier...

...they are useful at a conceptual level for workplans...

A number of the interviewees mentioned that there are often problems with logframes in implementation. For example, one interviewee commented that:

The weakness that I have picked up is communicating how the logframe works effectively to people who may never have used a tool like this. It takes a while for, especially rural people who think in slightly different parameters, for them to latch onto the logframe idea, to see the benefits of it.

Another NNGO representative said that logframes often fail to accommodate the “contingencies of management.” He argued that logframes tend to be too rigid, quite impractical and that the outcomes set in logframes are often far removed from reality.

3.4.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

All of the NNGOs interviewed have formal M&E systems, although a number of them are in the process of revising them. For example, WVSA is currently working on establishing a more comprehensive M&E system. To date the primary method for monitoring and evaluating its ADPs has been to measure progress against the planned targets and outcomes set out in the project logframe. The organisation is now looking towards ways of making M&E more integrated and holistic. Currently,

WVSA has a requirement that all ADPs are evaluated every three years. Some of the ADPS are evaluated annually. All programmes undergo an end of project evaluation, during the final year of the project cycle.

VSO uses a standard approach to M&E used by all VSO country offices. However, within the guidelines set by the international office, the South African office is free to use a range of specific M&E tools. In terms of monitoring the impact of the volunteers it places with local organisations, VSO conducts three formal reports – one 4-6 months into the volunteer's term, one 12 months into the term, and one in the last 3 months. They use specific indicators to measure volunteers' impacts. These indicators are devised in conjunction with the local organisations with which the volunteers are placed. The indicators tend to be more qualitative than quantitative. According to VSO's local programme director, an area in which VSO has lagged behind other NNGOs is in the development and use of participatory approaches to M&E. Such approaches have only been piloted locally by VSO since the beginning of 2001.

A number of the agencies use computer-based M&E systems that are used across all offices. CAFOD use a system called CAMEL – CAFOD Appraisal Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Framework – which provides the framework for M&E in all offices around the world. WVSA use a Programme Tracking System (PTS) which allows any programme of World Vision anywhere in the world to be tracked from start-up to completion. The system is based on the logframe, which means that most World Vision programmes have to be designed using logframes. AMREF internationally has recently introduced a Quarterly Planning and Reporting (QP&R) tool, which the South African office is beginning to use. VSO also uses an electronic system for reporting to head office.

3.4.3 Strategic planning

A number of the agencies reported that they had recently undergone, or were currently undergoing, extensive strategic planning processes within their organisations in South Africa. For example, VSO is currently completing a three-year strategic plan, which it has been working on for the last year and a half. It is the first time the local VSO office has planned for a period longer than one year. The reasons given for this are that in the past core funding has been provided to VSO's South African office on a year by year basis and conditions in South Africa have been changing so rapidly in recent years that it has been difficult to plan for any extended period of time.

The director of organisational development for WVSA described how WVSA, since June 2000, has been undergoing an extensive process of strategic planning and organisational restructuring. In January 2001 WVSA held a national workshop at which staff and community representatives came up with a new vision and mission statement for the organisation. According to the OD director, there is great enthusiasm and excitement amongst all staff about the changes occurring within WVSA.

In 2000, the AMREF South Africa office formulated its first strategic plan. According to the South Africa strategic plan document, the rationale for the strategic planning exercise was a need to review the organisation's activities after five years in South Africa, to prepare for "entry into the new millenium, to respond to "rapidly changing socio-economic conditions, and to respond to concerns raised by local partners

about the role of AMREF in South Africa."⁴ The South Africa strategic plan conforms broadly to the AMREF corporate plan.

In the second half of 2001, Diakonia Sweden, in collaboration with its partners, will carry out an evaluation of its Conflict Transformation Programme. The evaluation will be used to reassess Diakonia Sweden's programme in South Africa, establish what partners' needs are, and decide on strategic objectives for the future.

The South Africa country officer for CAFOD described how the CAFOD international office recently underwent a strategic planning process, the outcome of which was a restructuring of its Africa section. The countries CAFOD works in Africa have now been grouped together according to regions, with East African countries being handled from the Nairobi office and the Southern African countries of Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia being directed from Harare. Mozambique, Angola, South Africa and Swaziland have been grouped together and will be directed from London. CAFOD's current South Africa programme officer will now be directly responsible for South Africa and Swaziland, instead of these and various other East African countries as before.

HelpAge International also recently held a strategic planning workshop in Nairobi. According to HelpAge South Africa's director, she feels that her office was given the opportunity to play a meaningful role in devising HelpAge International's corporate strategic plan.

Most of the NNGOs have refocused their programmes in South Africa around strategic themes such as HIV/AIDS and gender in recent years. Some of them have also narrowed their geographical foci to a smaller number of provinces.

As in the case of logframes, our interest in the research project is not just whether or not NNGOs use strategic planning processes, but *how* they use them and what impact they have on South African NGOs and their development work. Some of the questions that need to be explored through case studies include: To what extent are NNGO offices in the South involved in strategic planning processes taking place in the North? How do the strategic plans of the local offices of NNGOs compare/conflict with those of headquarters? To what extent are South African (and other Southern) NGO partners of NNGOs involved in the formulation of their global or local strategic plans? To what extent do partners' strategic plans have to conform to those of the NNGOs in order to obtain funding? To what extent are the priorities, goals, targets etc of NNGOs appropriate to conditions in the South?

⁴ AMREF South Africa. 2000. *Better Health for the People of South Africa: AMREF South Africa Strategic Plan*.

4. RELATIONSHIPS WITH DONORS

The purpose of this section is to examine particular aspects of the relationship between the NNGOs' local offices and their head offices and other donors in the north.

4.1 Funding

Funding, and the conditionalities that are usually attached to funding, is central to the relationship between NGOs and their donors. Table 2 below gives a summary of the main sources of funding of the South African programmes of the NNGOs that were interviewed. The summary is not a comprehensive list of all funding sources but are those mentioned by the interviewees as being important sources of funds for their organisations locally.

Table 2: Sources of funds of the NNGOs interviewed	
African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF)	AMREF headquarters (Nairobi), AMREF Germany and UK, AECI (Spain), CIDA, SIDA, Deutsche Stiftung Donate (Germany), DFID, Generalitat Valenciana (Spain), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Spain), UNICEF SA, Anglo American and De Beers Chairman's Fund (SA) and various other local corporate funders,
CAFOD	Core funding for local office from CAFOD head office, other sources locally have been DFID, EU, Comic Relief, other private donors.
CARE	DFID key donor, also funding from EU, Irish Aid, Ford Foundation
Charities Aid Foundation	About a quarter of funding from CAF UK; other donors: Ford Foundation, Mott Foundation, USAID, ABSA Bank (local).
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation	All funding from Mott headquarters in USA
Diakonia Sweden	Main donor is SIDA
Habitat for Humanity International	Approximately 80% of funds from HfH in USA, other funds raised locally from private sector, USAID, volunteers.
HelpAge International	About 50% of funding from HelpAge secretariat in London; Other donors: DFID, EU, National Charities Lottery Board, British Council, Dutch government.
Save the Children UK	Save the Children head office, also DFID, Comic Relief, Ford Foundation
Voluntary Service Overseas	VSO head office (approx. 80% of core funding to VSO internationally from DFID), local office also expected to raise some of its own funds (DFID, EU, piloting funding from local corporations)
World Vision of South Africa	World Vision support offices in the north, local and international child sponsors, some bilateral agencies

Some of the interviewees spoke about various ways in which funders, directly or indirectly, influenced their work in South Africa. Some of the NNGOs described how they were sometimes forced to tailor their programmes to the strategic funding priorities of large donors. For example, one interviewee spoke about how her organisation had applied to DFID South Africa for funding for a programme with a specific focus on civil society organisations. DFID, however, currently has a strong

focus on government and wanted the NNGO to alter the proposal to integrate government into the programme. This was not something that the NNGO wanted to do or felt was best for the programme, but had to do in order to get the proposal approved. Another NNGO interviewed explained how some donors make funding available for specific sectoral areas, e.g. water and sanitation, and if the NNGO does not have programmes or expertise in that sector, that funding is inaccessible. This had led to situations in the past where the NNGO had felt pressured to establish certain kinds of programmes that they did not have the necessary capacity or skills to implement, or that were not really a priority in the areas in which they work, just in order to access funding from the donor.

The type of funding the NNGOs have access to also has an important impact on their work. For example, much of the funding to the NNGOs from donors is restricted or designated, which means that it can only be allocated to specific programmes and projects (i.e. these funds cannot be used for overheads, staff training, organisational development etc.). This was seen by a number of the NNGOs as something which constrains the flexibility and creativity they have in deciding what work to do and how to do it. This is especially a problem where donors' strategic priorities mean that the NNGOs can only apply for funding for projects that fall within these funding themes. Some of the NNGOs now attempt to keep their funding proposals as broad as possible so as to ensure they have some flexibility in what they do with the funds they get from donors.

A problem raised by many of the NNGOs was that some donors (e.g. the EU) are increasingly limiting the proportion of total project costs that they will fund. This trend towards co-financing requires that the NNGOs have to spend extra time and resources on securing funding from other donors.

Another trend in donor funding mentioned by the NNGOs is that of retrospective funding, where funds are only disbursed to the NNGOs once implementation of projects has started and particular targets have been met. This form of funding is particularly problematic for some of the smaller NNGOs, which do not have the financial reserves available to cover project expenses in the interim period before donor funds are disbursed.

One of the NNGOs mentioned that USAID requires the NNGO to have a separate bank account for its USAID funding.

4.2 Reporting requirements

Most of the NNGO representatives interviewed don't appear to think their Northern head offices impose too many, or particularly unreasonable, reporting requirements on them. Most of the organisations have to conform to basic financial and programme reporting requirements set by their head offices. These requirements usually consist of sixth monthly financial and narrative reports. Some head offices have more rigorous requirements. WVSA, for example, is required to submit financial and programme reports on its projects to other World Vision support offices on a quarterly and sometimes monthly basis, depending on the particular support office from which funding for particular ADPs was obtained. WVSA is also subject to an annual financial audit by the World Vision head office. The Charities Aid Foundation office in South Africa is required to submit monthly financial reports, and an annual audited financial statement to its UK head office. HelpAge International has to submit monthly narrative and financial reports to its head office in London.

Many of the NNGOs did, however, claim to have particular problems with the reporting requirements of some of the large bilateral and multilateral donors. The EU is notorious among NNGOs for its difficult requirements. One of the interviewees said that EU reporting requirements can be considerable, with long and convoluted application procedures. Another interviewee described the process of trying to get funding from the EU as a “monstrous experience.” Long delays in approving funding were identified as a major problem. One of the interviewees explained that it is very difficult to put together a programme proposal to the EU when one knows that the funding will only come through after at least eighteen months, after which time local priorities and conditions may have changed.

DFID was also identified by some of the NNGOs as having difficult requirements for accessing funds and reporting. One interviewee described how the application procedure for funding from the DFID South Africa office had been “extremely long and drawn out.” The interviewee blamed internal staff changes at DFID’s Pretoria office for long delays in processing their funding application. However, the same interviewee also said that:

In comparison to other donors, I don’t find them [DFID] difficult at all. You can get no cost extensions, you can negotiate with them, they are fairly in touch with the local context so they understand the challenges that you are facing, the staff are generally very high caliber.

USAID was also singled out as having difficult reporting requirements. One of the NNGOs complained about USAID’s financial management requirements:

If you are getting USAID funding you’ve got to basically employ a USAID accountant or somebody with those skills...

However, another NNGO representative had the following comment about USAID and its reporting requirements:

We certainly benefit quite a lot from USAID in particular, and it’s certainly true that their funding applications are tricky and dense and time-consuming...but we invariably get the funds which we ask for, and I have never in any way considered the process to have a negative impact...this is what we do for a living....we ask for money from "A" to give it to "C"... sure you sometimes get turned down but that as a problem area relates more to the fact that a lot of NGOs have single revenue streams. Frankly, if you lack the internal structure to complete the application forms (and the post-funding quarterly report) then you probably aren’t going to be effective.

4.3 Management tools

The NNGOs were asked if their donors required them to use any particular management tools as part of funding conditionalities. LFA was the only specific tool mentioned by some of the NNGOs as an explicit requirement of certain of their donors. DFID is well known for requiring logframes in project proposals. One of the NNGOs interviewed mentioned how DFID have annual output to purpose reviews in which they use a logframe to monitor the NNGO’s performance:

You can change the logframe, it’s not cast in stone, but you have to have clear indicators, MOVs and your output and purpose have to be clearly defined so that you can demonstrate progress against those.

According to the programme coordinator of this NNGO, these annual DFID reviews are “quite traumatic,” but she has generally found them to be useful and DFID staff helpful.

No other tools were stated as being explicit requirements of donors, apart from the basic financial and programme reporting requirements outlined in section 4.2 above.

5. RELATIONSHIPS WITH SOUTH AFRICAN NGOS

5.1 Partnerships

In accordance with current international trends, the language of “partnerships” was very evident amongst the NNGOs interviewed. All of the interviewees referred to the local NGOs they funded or provided technical support to as their “partners.” Some of the ways in which the interviewees explained their understandings of the concept of partnerships are given below:

...Our attempt to get as close to an equal relationship as we can...fundamental to that is about listening to what people are actually telling us as opposed to thinking that we understand what's going on here...

One of the things with partnership is identifying the contribution individual entities make towards the bigger goal. We need to understand what our vision is and what is the purpose for our existence as an organisation, and once you go through identifying that for the potential partners – are they aligned with what you are doing, do they share the same vision, similar purposes – you can begin developing partnerships.

The partnership only makes sense for us when we are confident enough to say this is what we have in terms of expertise and resources and this is what we bring to the table, what is it that you bring to the table? And we can compliment each other.

One of the NNGOs' strategic plan document contained the following statement about the organisation's understanding of partnership:

True partnership consists of shared roles, responsibilities and decision-making powers, from problem formulation to the design of solutions. Partnership therefore implies participation and involvement. There is no domination in a partnership. Rather, partners complement each other for the best possible results.

One interviewee stated that her idea of a true partnership would be a situation in which her organisation and its partners could have “frank and open” conversations about each other's objectives and their problems with each other. She said that her organisation had sometimes faced difficult decisions about whether to “impose” certain agendas, such as HIV/AIDS and gender, on local partners where it was felt local awareness of, or capacity in, these areas was lacking. While striving for as equal a relationship with partners as possible, however, the interviewee stated that she would not continue to support organisations which were not able to show that they are “making a difference” or do not meet their basic reporting requirements.

One of the NNGOs said that they were attempting increasingly to enter into partnerships with a clear exit strategy to avoid creating a situation of dependency. As the programme director put it:

...we're starting to see ourselves more as actors with a passing role to play in development. We're not the key stakeholders. We're not here forever and the organisations that we are working through or with, particularly at a community level, those are the people that are in it for the long haul...they will really have to take responsibility for what happens during, and particularly after, a project or intervention...we have a defined role for a defined period of time and then that role changes. I think you need true equal local partners in order to do that. If you are subcontracting somebody, that's not a viable long-term relationship.

While all the interviewees used the typical rhetoric associated with the concept of partnerships, a few did admit that partnerships between NNGOs and local NGOs can

never be truly equal when one party has funds and the other is reliant on those funds. As one interviewee put it:

I don't think there is equality in it. It is just, you have your contribution, I have mine and they cannot be equal.

It does appear, however, that many NNGOs are trying to move away from being seen by local NGOs simply as sources of funds. Save the Children's representative, for example, said that the organisation has changed its name from "Save the Children Fund" to just "Save the Children" in an attempt to change its image from being a donor to a partner to local organisations. Mott's representative explained that they were seeking an "interactive relationship" with partners, and tried as often as possible to visit partners and their projects.

Two of the faith-based NNGOs included in the sample – WVSA and CAFOD – were asked specifically if they thought the religious basis of their organisations made a difference to the way they understand and put into practice the concept of partnerships. CAFOD's representative felt that having a similar understanding of development issues and having a common identity made their relationships with their faith-based local partners stronger. She said that CAFOD also generally has good relationships with local secular NGOs. One problem that was identified, however, was that some other NNGOs do not understand how CAFOD works, which can make cooperation with these sister agencies difficult. WVSA's representative thought that his organisation's religious base meant that it takes a much more holistic approach to development and tries to focus on all aspects of people's development – material and spiritual. Having core religious values within the international World Vision partnership and amongst staff within each office was identified as being a major strength of the organisation. Both WVSA and CAFOD were very quick to stress that their religious bases does not mean that they impose their beliefs on partners or only work with organisations of similar faiths.

5.1.1 Choosing partners

Those NNGOs that fund South African NGOs directly receive large numbers of funding applications and proposals from local organisations. The NNGOs mentioned various criteria they use to select which local NGOs they will fund. The choice of partners is usually based on the particular strategic priority themes of the NNGOs (e.g. HIV/AIDS, gender) and on which local organisations have an established track record in these areas. One interviewee mentioned that they consult other NNGOs and donors to find out which are appropriate and competent local NGOs to work with.

The faith-based NNGOs tend to choose most of their local partners on the basis of religious orientation, although they insisted that this was not the only criterion for funding and that they do support secular NGOs and projects.

5.1.2 Structuring partnerships

There was some agreement among the NGOs that the ways in which they structure the partnerships between themselves and the local NGOs they support have become more formal in recent years. A number of the NNGOs stated that they use contracts, memorandums of understanding or framework agreements to structure the working relationship between themselves and their local partners. These documents are used to outline clearly the roles and responsibilities of the two parties and to hold them accountable to these agreements.

Some of the NNGOs said that the use of such contracts in partnerships is a recent development in South Africa but is well established in the other countries in which they operate. In the early 1990's and before, relationships with South African NGOs tended to be more informally structured and were based heavily on trust and solidarity with the cause of fighting apartheid.

5.2 Funding

As in the case of donor funding to NNGOs, much of the funding to local NGOs from NNGOs also appears to be restricted. Only two agencies, the Mott Foundation and Diakonia Sweden, said that they provide funds for non-project specific budget items, such as core expenses, training, research etc.

Most of the NNGOs claimed that they do not fund local NGOs on a retrospective basis. Requirements for co-financing also do not appear to be a significant issue in the funding relationship between NNGOs and South African NGOs.

A couple of the NNGOs said that they try to structure the grants to local NGOs around the financial years of the NGOs, in order to make it easier for them in terms of financial reporting.

5.3 Requirements of partners

In this sub-section we present the findings of questions asked about any particular management requirements the NNGOs place on their local NGO partners.

5.3.1 Project proposals

Most of the NNGOs which fund local NGOs directly claim not to have standard formats which local NGOs are required to use in funding applications. Some agencies, for example HelpAge, do, however, have standard forms that are used to obtain baseline information on partners as part of the application procedure.

Some of the NNGOs said that they are happy for partners to use logframes in their proposals, and some encourage partners to do so, but none of the NNGOs said it was a specific requirement.

One of the programme directors interviewed mentioned the problem of local NGOs' proposals frequently being filled with jargon, to the point that it is unclear what the NGO wants to do. In these cases, the NNGO has had to ask the NGOs to rewrite the proposal and state clearly what it is they want to do and how they intend doing it.

5.3.2 Reporting

There was agreement amongst the NNGOs that their reporting requirements for local NGOs have become stricter and more formal in recent years. This trend appears to be the result of donors in the north demanding more rigorous M&E procedures, and the NNGOs themselves tightening up their own requirements after many years of relatively lax reporting requirements for South African NGOs. Many of the NNGOs did, however, say that they still attempt to be flexible in their demands for reporting.

Most of the NNGOs said that they do not have any set reporting requirements or formats for their local NGO partners. However, some of the organisations, such as CAFOD, do have a set of guideline documents that outline the kinds of reporting

information they require from partners and why they require it. According to CAFOD's representative, local partners are then able to report back in any format they choose, provided that the report includes the information required by CAFOD. The introduction of these basic reporting guidelines has apparently been welcomed by local NGOs, as before there was a lot of confusion and frustration on the part of local as to what CAFOD expected from them and why.

For CAFOD, and many other NNGOs, the need for tighter reporting requirements has been difficult to explain to local partners. According to CAFOD's local programme officer, many local NGOs have not always understood why it has insisted on stricter reporting requirements and have questioned why CAFOD does not trust them to use funds properly. She has had to explain to local partners that CAFOD also has to be accountable to the people in the north who fund the organisation and has to be able to explain to them what their money has been used for.

WVSA is one NNGO that has fairly rigorous reporting requirements in terms of the management of their ADPs. The managers of each ADP are required to submit a monthly management report to the operations department in South Africa. They also have to submit a monthly financial report, in order to ensure that funding is continued to the project itself. Depending on which World Vision support office is primarily responsible for funding the ADP, the managers of some ADPs also have to submit a quarterly report to WVSA which is then passed on to the relevant support office in the North.

Table 3 below provides a summary of the reporting procedures the NNGOs require from their South African NGO partners.

African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF)	Six monthly narrative and financial reports
CAFOD	Provide guidelines, no set formats
CARE	N/A (CARE SA is not a donor).
Charities Aid Foundation	N/A
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation	Usually require annual financial reports (six monthly for two years with new partners) and annual narrative reports.
Diakonia Sweden	Six monthly narrative and financial reports, and an annual audit.
Habitat for Humanity International	N/A (Habitat for Humanity does not work through partners).
HelpAge International	N/A
Save the Children UK	Six monthly narrative and financial reports.
Voluntary Service Overseas	Three formal reports on volunteers placed with partners: one 4-6 months into volunteer's term, one at 12 months and one in last 3 three months. At end of term, partner has to do a "significant change report" describing the contribution of the volunteer to the organisation.
World Vision of South Africa	Project managers required to submit monthly management and financial reports. Managers of some projects required to submit quarterly reports

Some of the NNGOs spoke about how the reporting requirements of the large donors (such as DFID and the EU) have become much more rigid for South African NGOs since 1994. One of the interviewees stated that in the past, these donors tended to be focussed on the kinds of changes local organisations were achieving, but are now much more concerned with accountability and the capacity of local NGOs to manage finances and human resources effectively.

5.3.3 LFA

None of the NNGOs claimed that they include the use of logframes by partners as an explicit requirement for receiving funding. Most of the organisations stated that they try to be flexible in allowing partners to use whichever project management tools they prefer. One of the interviewees described his organisation's approach as the following:

...we say, if there is a planning tool which you feel comfortable with and it is not the logframe, as long as it is compatible with our requirements, then go ahead and use it.

Some of the NNGOs did say that they preferred it when partners used logframes, especially in proposals and reports, but that it wasn't an explicit requirement.

5.3.4 Gender, participation and environmental sustainability

None of the NNGOs interviewed stated that they have particular requirements (e.g. specific tools, methodologies, approaches etc) for their local NGO partners in terms of the themes of gender, participation and environmental sustainability.

Some of the agencies did, however, mention gender specifically as something which they tried to promote amongst their partners through funding training.

5.4 Views on the South African NGO sector

In discussions about the general state of the South African NGO sector, the representatives from the NNGOs expressed a number of concerns. A common concern amongst the respondents was that the increasing complexity of application and reporting procedures of many large donors was having a negative impact on South African NGOs, particularly smaller, grassroots orientated organisations. While the NNGOs faced similar requirements from the same donors, they felt that they had the capacity and experience to deal with them, whereas many local NGOs did not. One of the interviewees, for example, stated:

...for one of our partners to have to do the fund management and budget reporting etc would be very difficult. They would have to employ a whole new department. We have ex-pat staff that deal with this all the time...

Long delays in institutional donors approving funding, and the growing trend towards retrospective funding amongst donors, were also cited as major problems for local NGOs, which lack the financial resources to sustain themselves without sustained donor funding.

A number of the NNGOs said that, as a result of these trends, their work in South Africa has become increasingly focussed on building the general management capacity of South African NGOs to deal with these challenges.

One of the interviewees voiced a particular concern about the absence of a strong advocacy capacity within the South African NGO sector. His opinion was that the government has failed to recognise, and support, any significant role for South African NGOs, beyond that of service delivery. He believed that one of NNGOs' primary responsibilities in South Africa was to support local NGOs to take a stronger stance against the state where its policies were having a negative impact on the lives of the people these NGOs work with.

There appears to be the perception amongst some of the NNGOs that there is a high degree of unnecessary internal politics and territoriality within the South African NGO sector. One of the interviewees mentioned that many South African NGOs often display a hostile attitude towards NNGOs. The interviewee's perception was that local NGOs (and SANGOCO) sometimes take their anger and frustrations over north-south inequalities on organisations based in the north.

6. CONCLUSION

This report has provided an initial insight into the activities and management practices of selected NNGOs in South Africa, and their perceptions of their relationships with donors and their South African NGO partners. It is difficult, on the basis of the small sample used in this survey, to generalise about the activities of NNGOs in South Africa and the nature of their relationships with donors and local NGOs. Nevertheless, a number of key preliminary findings emerge from the study:

- There are a number of common strategic themes around which most NNGOs currently appear to be organising their work in South Africa. These themes include HIV/AIDS, gender and advocacy.
- Most of the NNGOs surveyed are using some form of logframe for project management, although some agencies use this tool far more extensively than others.
- All of the NNGOs have some system for monitoring and evaluation. A number of the NNGOs mentioned that they are currently revising and improving their M&E procedures.
- A number of the NNGOs have recently undergone, or are currently undergoing, extensive strategic planning exercises and many have refocused their work in South Africa around particular themes and/or geographical areas.
- There appears to be a trend towards funding from Northern donors to NNGOs in South Africa being increasingly restricted and retrospective. Donors are also increasingly demanding that projects and programmes be co-financed.
- Most of the NNGOs claim that their head offices in the North do not exert a significant negative influence on them in terms of management requirements. However, most of the NNGOs claimed that the large institutional donors (especially DFID, the EU and USAID) had extremely difficult reporting and other management requirements which impact negatively on their work.
- The NNGOs do not think that they in turn impose extensive or unreasonable management requirements on the local NGOs they work with (apart from basic reporting and accountability measures). They did, however, admit that their application and reporting requirements for local NGOs have generally become more formal and complex in recent years.
- The language of “partnerships” is pervasive amongst NNGOs in South Africa.
- Partnerships between NNGOs and South African NGOs have become more structured and formal in recent years.
- The NNGOs tend to be focussing increasingly on capacity building and technical support instead of direct funding to local NGOs, apparently in response to the pressures local NGOs are facing in terms of funding and more arduous donor requirements.

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