

Partos Joint Evaluation on Indigenous Peoples CFA Policy Response

From: ICCO, Hivos, Cordaid
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Introduction

In July 2010 ETC completed an external programme evaluation of Cordaid's, Hivos' and ICCO's support to Indigenous Peoples (IP) in the period 2003 – 2008. The aim of this evaluation was to find out to what extent these three Dutch Co-financing Agencies (CFAs - i.e. their policies, strategies, procedures and programmes) and their partner organisations contributed to a reduction of structural injustice towards indigenous peoples.

Indigenous Peoples

According to the most widely accepted definition, indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems (UN Special Rapporteur José Martínez Cobo (1986)).

Estimates of the total population of the world's indigenous peoples range from 300 million to 370 million (6–7% of the world's population). They inhabit every region of the globe, originating in some 70 countries and speaking three quarters of the world's 6000 languages. About half of the global indigenous population lives in Asia; the second-largest population lives in Latin America. There are also considerable indigenous populations living in Europe/Russia, Africa and Australia/Oceania (UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, 1996).

Indigenous peoples throughout the world are among the poorest, most excluded and most marginalised sections of the population. Against this background it is logical that the CFAs have considered and consider them among their target groups. In the six year period 2003-2008 the three CFAs together spent approximately € 100 million (incl. € 90 million in Co-financing funds) in 35+ countries on projects with an explicit focus on Indigenous Peoples. Their portfolios show a marked geographical focus: Hivos spent most of its IP funds in Latin America (73%, being 51% of the total CFA IP funds for Latin America), Icco in Asia (68%, being 66% of the total CFA IP funds for Asia) and Cordaid focuses mainly on Africa (45% of its IP funds, being 87% of the total CFA IP funds for Africa).

Programme Evaluation

The evaluation had three main components:

- An analysis of the CFAs' policies and their overall "indigenous peoples" portfolios,
- Five in-depth country studies analysing the changes in the lives of indigenous peoples and the results of CFA partner interventions and CFA involvement : Bolivia and Guatemala (Hivos), Ethiopia and Kenya (Cordaid) and India (Icco); this choice is in line with the each CFA's geographical focus.
- Synthesis and comparison of the findings.

The programme evaluation was ambitious in two ways:

- whereas most other CFA programme evaluations focus on one sector or theme (e.g. Microfinance), this PE's focus comprised the totality of CFA interventions towards particular target populations,
- it made an effort to assess CFA supported results within the framework of a broader analysis of changes in the situation of indigenous peoples in the countries studied.

The first ambition met with the complication that the CFAs' policies, staff and information systems— in spite of a long standing involvement with IP development – are not organised around indigenous peoples (the exception proving the case being Cordaid's explicitly formulated pastoralist programme for East Africa).

The second ambition was partly realised: a particular strength of this programme evaluation lies in the extensive context analysis of the five countries studied, which was however not fully connected to the result evaluation of the CFA interventions.

At another level this study was less ambitious than other programme evaluations: the choice to study one CFA-programme per country has limited the possibilities for inter-CFA comparisons.

Taking the above into account the CFAs are overall quite positive about the conclusions and recommendations generated by this programme evaluation.

Conclusions: positive outcomes

The CFAs have noted with satisfaction that the evaluation found quite a number of positive effects of CFA interventions on the lives and situation of Indigenous People in the countries studied.

Cordaid's support for pastoralists in Ethiopia and Kenya has addressed poverty alleviation and organisational development at local level while simultaneously influencing policy at national and international level. Such multi-level work is relevant and necessary to reduce structural injustice to pastoralists. Empowerment at the grassroots increased the self-confidence of pastoralists as citizens and led to greater acceptance by others at higher levels to listen to pastoralist men and women. Cordaid has made a geographically limited but largely effective contribution to strengthening pastoralists' capacity in community-level decision-making. Together with partner NGOs, it has developed some promising models, e.g. community-managed development funds and ways to increase the livestock assets of women, which deserve to be better documented and scaled up. Through increasing women's economic power and their involvement in managing community assets, Cordaid helped strengthen women's socio-political position in their communities. Cordaid's partners at national level in both countries played an important role in amplifying pastoralists' voices through mass and alternative media and through participation in major national and international meetings. Cordaid has made a substantial contribution to raising the profile of pastoralism through its support to the Ethiopian Pastoralist Day (EPD) and the

Kenya Pastoralists Week (KPW) which also provided opportunities to celebrate and reinforce pastoralist identity. Cordaid's support strengthened capacities of intermediate NGOs – and, in the case of Kenya, a few pastoralist membership organisations – to engage directly in lobbying, where they brought pastoralists' concerns into major policy documents, e.g. the PASDEP in Ethiopia and the National Land Policy in Kenya. In policy-influencing activities, Cordaid's partners and Cordaid itself as an organisation have combined forces with like-minded non-state actors, thus increasing the impact. The current pastoralist development policy of Cordaid is very relevant for eastern Africa. In view of the ambivalent attitude toward the concept of "indigenous peoples" in both Ethiopia and Kenya, it has been wise of Cordaid not to have put IPs' rights in the foreground in its policy influencing activities.

In Guatemala, Hivos-funded interventions have been effective in increasing the legal awareness and representation and participation of indigenous communities in local decision-making, and in improving the access of indigenous producer groups to markets and credit. On a national level, indigenous organisations together with other civil society organisations have been quite successful in formulating proposals for policy and law reform on a wide range of issues, such as land rights, food security and integrated rural development.

In the Bolivian lowlands, Hivos and its partners have been effective in securing indigenous land and resource rights and in helping communities formulate plans for the integrated management of their territories. Hivos' funding of partners that supported the participation of Indigenous Peoples in the elaboration of proposals for constitutional reform has been very effective. Many of these proposals, also regarding women's rights, have been inserted in the revised constitutional text adopted in 2009. This broadly participatory process resulted in the political empowerment and increased rights awareness of the participants; the recognition of indigenous autonomy has greatly enhanced IPs' prospects for achieving self-determination.

In both countries, Hivos' persistent pressure toward its partners to have them mainstream gender in their work as well as its direct support to (indigenous) women's organisations has contributed to the increased inclusion and participation of indigenous women, both in indigenous communities and membership organisations and on national level in official positions. Hivos' decidedly rights-based approach in its work with IPs has proven very relevant in both Guatemala and Bolivia.

The work of ICCO partners with Adivasi in India on improving food security and livelihoods had a positive outcome in the communities concerned. ICCO's work has focused mainly on the local level. The promotion of Self Help Groups (SHG) and Community Based Organisations (CBO) has proved to be an effective strategy that combines local civil-society building and direct poverty alleviation with an integrated rights approach. The SHGs and CBOs offer entry points for supporting and promoting sustainable livelihoods through improving agricultural productivity, diversification of income through local market development activities, savings mobilisation and access to credit. ICCO has supported several interesting approaches to local market development and holistic community-development approaches around water and sanitation. The CBOs composed of several SHGs provide a platform for articulating the demands of the *Adivasi* and raising their voice at local and district level. Through its support to partners that are strong in social mobilisation and improving rights awareness, ICCO has contributed to the political and social empowerment of *Adivasi*. Many of the women's groups seemed to be more confident in claiming their rights and in being involved in local-self governance processes, illustrated by examples of women in CBOs engaged in land and forest rights campaigns with other movements and women successfully contesting local elections. It shows that strengthening civil society is an effective way of influencing policy at local level and improving *Adivasi* awareness about their constitutional rights. These CBOs give them the

opportunity to take action and might avoid a further radicalisation in terms of growing support for extremist movements such as the Naxalites. These CBOs and other SHGs -might serve as an alternative, moderate counter-movement expressing the needs and priorities of the *Adivasi*.

Conclusions: limitations

The CFAs appreciate the limitations pointed out by the evaluation.

In Ethiopia and Kenya the legitimacy of pastoralist “representatives” in modern structures at local and higher levels is open to question. Cordaid and its partners may have given too little attention to indigenous power structures and how they relate to representation in the modern structures.

Rural pastoralist women have little genuine voice at higher decision-making levels.

One reason may be their continued low rate of literacy. Writing and assessing proposals for development handled by higher-level institutions depend more greatly on these capacities than at community level. Most Cordaid partners have given little attention to helping women gain functional literacy. In addition, although women’s (not specifically pastoralist women’s) rights are enshrined in the constitutions of Ethiopia and Kenya, violence against women remains a problem. Most Cordaid partners have not given enough attention to policy implementation and protecting pastoralists’ rights on the ground, especially with regard to access to land and water.

Hivos supported interventions in Guatemala have failed in substantially increasing IPs’ access to land or in mitigating the growing number of resource conflicts between indigenous communities and large-scale development projects in the form of State-promoted agro-industrial and extractive industries.

Unfortunately, opposition from powerful economic and political actors has prevented the adoption and implementation of proposals for policy and law reform on a wide range of issues, such as land rights, food security and integrated rural development. by the government.

In Bolivia Hivos partners have been less successful in assuring communities’ effective control over natural resources in their territories *vis-à-vis* external economic actors, or in helping them derive economic profit out of these resources through the sustainable exploitation of timber and non-timber forest resources.

In the new political and legal context of Bolivia, Hivos’ current policy toward IPs provides little orientation in finding answers to the many new challenges they face.

In India, access for *Adivasi* to social services such as health, education and social protection programmes such as the NREG scheme seems not to have improved during the period under study. *Adivasi* continue to be more marginalised than non-*Adivasi*, as they have not been able to benefit from Government’s efforts to improve access to these services in remote and deprived rural areas. Generally, the levels of poverty among *Adivasi* have increased and continue to be worse than on a national average. ICCO has given little support to policy-influencing activities at state and national level and has not strategically addressed this. Many *Adivasi* are very concerned about possible land alienation and displacement. This would have a major impact on their livelihoods and also undermine some of the outcomes ICCO’s partners have achieved. So far, there seems to be little strategic thinking and/or coherent effort by ICCO and most of its partners to address and deal with this challenge.

Conclusion: reduction of structural injustice ?

To what extent have the CFAs and their partners contributed to reducing structural injustice towards indigenous peoples ? The CFAs concur with the evaluators that a general answer to this overall question is difficult to give in view of the complex and differing realities faced by Indigenous Peoples in different countries. The CFAs appreciate the evaluators' general reflections on this point and they accept the sobering perspective provided in the report, which states that a host of other factors, not controlled by the CFAs and their partners, prevented widespread achievements in this regard. All the CFAs and their partners have helped to gain small victories here and there or have at least prevented the situation of IPs from worsening more than would otherwise have been the case. The interventions of some partners have shown how incremental steps can be taken towards strengthening the position of identity-based minorities, including IPs. However, much more concerted and strategic action, together with like-minded organisations will be needed to bring about widespread improvement.

Follow up

The recommendations from the evaluation –both general and CFA specific- are clearly connected to its conclusions. Content wise the general recommendations relate to the influence of IPs on activities of partners and CFAs; to effective policy influencing; to up-scaling successful experiences; to indigenous women; and to M&E.

Process wise the evaluators call on the CFAs to reflect and in turn stimulate reflection among their partners.

Although some recommendations contain critical challenges to do things differently/or do different things, most –both content and process wise – basically call for a continuation & intensification of our efforts.

Each CFA – with its partners- will give its own specific follow up to the lessons of this programme evaluation. Below each CFA has indicated some major points from the evaluation that will be given follow-up:

Cordaid:

Program staff already organized a partner consultation on the findings of the evaluation in Ethiopia. Also the report was shared with the partners in Kenya. Some aspects for further follow up and improvement for the coming years are:

-Partners indeed share the need for joint learning on best-practices and lessons learned. Cordaid therefore plans to organize more of these sessions and meetings during the coming Cordaid Strategic plan.

-Cordaid and its partners share the recommendation on focus on land and natural resources and that this is essential in improving the situation for pastoralists in the long term. Cordaid will therefore in its programme and policy for the coming years, continue to focus on this aspect (not only for the pastoralist part of the programme but as an important theme within the entire Cordaid Conflict Transformation programme). However, for each country and specific situation tailor made approaches will have to be developed and sharpened.

- Partners as well as Cordaid agree that multiple levels (local, national, regional and global) will have to be connected. Cordaid is working on the improvement on these connections. An example of this is for instance the informal lobby coalition CELEP (Coalition of European Lobbies on Eastern African Pastoralism) in which local and international agenda's come together.

- In relation to the finding that partner organisations should provide more space/opportunities for indigenous people/pastoralists themselves and their institutions to determine the agenda and to lobby and advocate for their rights themselves: Cordaid fully agrees with this. This

recommendation not only seems to be relevant for the pastoralist programme but in a broader Cordaid sense. In relation to the pastoralist partners, Cordaid is providing capacity building on participative approaches among others in relation to policy influencing.

- Finally, Cordaid will continue to focus on improving the position and participation of women pastoralists, within their "own societies" and within larger society. The Partos evaluation found this one of the strong points of Cordaid and Cordaid will continue to build on this among others through facilitating meetings for partners on sharing lessons learned on this subject.

Hivos:

- In the particular case of Bolivia, Hivos will follow-up the recommendation that its policy needs to be infused with further analysis on the implications of the far-reaching political and legal changes that have taken place in the country since 2006. Hivos needs to make this shift so as to be able to act in accordance with the new rights context that it has helped to produce in the past decade. For the IP of the lowlands, claiming territory is no longer the goal, but making a living in the acquired territories. Local governance, sustainable development and negotiating skills to deal with external threats like mining, oil drilling, logging and tourism, have become the major challenges IP need to confront.

-Hivos supported interventions in Guatemala have not been effective in ensuring that proposed policies have been adopted and implemented. This points at the need for stronger and more durable alliances among the fragmented indigenous organisations as well as between indigenous organisations and other CSOs or specialised mainstream Human Rights NGOs. Change in Guatemala can only be expected after / through a sustained process of empowerment from grassroots level and deepened political participation of IP in the civil and political society.

-Hivos finds support for continuing its search for a balance between collective and individual rights, working with modernising tendencies within the IP movement (as opposed to traditionalist or even fundamentalist currents) in striving for the emancipation of marginalised sectors within IPs (referring mainly to women's rights, youths, sexual minorities).

– In the report Hivos also finds support for its recently increased focus on learning processes for and with IP and IP-leaders across borders. Across the Latin American continent IP are struggling now with ways to implement the ILO 169 regulations on the right to informed prior consent regarding all external interventions in IP territories. IP movements need to rethink how to engage with the state in varying situations like Guatemala, Ecuador and Bolivia. Hivos will facilitate a process of joint reflection with representatives of IP organisations, on past struggles and new contexts in which they operate, in order to adapt and strengthen their strategies. This analysis and learning is expected to gain from recently started exchange meetings between the indigenous movements of the three countries.

ICCO:

The existing policy note on IP (Guidelines for Formulating National and Regional Policy on Indigenous Peoples, 2002) will be actualized taking into account most recent international debates, policies and statements, and will be formalized as policy paper. Furthermore in this document, links will be strengthened with other thematic areas ICCO is working on which are of vital importance for indigenous people like: rights and access to land and natural resources, policies related to climate change and education and health. The new decentralized set-up of ICCO makes it possible to combine its thematic policies on land, natural resources, climate change and gender with a target group approach on indigenous people, adapted to local contexts and concerns.

In the decentralized regions the values of prior consultation, development with culture, indigenous knowledge and intellectual property (collective rights of IP) will guide the regional strategy regarding working with IP.

Partners working with IP together with IP themselves translate the regional strategies in contextualized indicators, supported by our Regional Offices, in order to have a means to monitor results and to learn together from shared experiences.

Reflection and learning is also facilitated by the ICCO General Office by linking experiences of all programs with IP that are developed worldwide.

Linking local experiences and concerns with (national and international) policy monitoring and lobbying for the IP's rights will be improved.

The three CFAs have shared their initial thoughts with each other and with the evaluators in a Partos joint learning session on November 22nd