
Centre for Sustainable Agriculture end line report

MFS II country evaluations, Civil Society component

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Wageningen, February 2015



Report CDI-15-021

Klaver, D.C., Desalos, C., Hofstede, M., Wadhwa S., Pandey R., Madaan A., Mohapatra B.P., February 2015, *Centre for Sustainable Agriculture end line report; MFS II country evaluations, Civil Society component*, Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen UR (University & Research centre) and International Development Foundation (IDF). Report CDI-15-021. Wageningen.

This report describes the findings of the end line assessment of the Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA) in India that is a partner of Hivos.

The evaluation was commissioned by NWO-WOTRO, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research in the Netherlands and is part of the programmatic evaluation of the Co-Financing System - MFS II financed by the Dutch Government, whose overall aim is to strengthen civil society in the South as a building block for structural poverty reduction. Apart from assessing impact on MDGs, the evaluation also assesses the contribution of the Dutch Co-Funding Agencies to strengthen the capacities of their Southern Partners, as well as the contribution of these partners towards building a vibrant civil society arena.

This report assesses CSA's efforts in strengthening Civil Society in India based upon the CIVICUS analytical framework. It is a follow-up of a baseline study conducted in 2012. Key questions that are being answered comprise changes in the five CIVICUS dimensions to which CSA contributed; the nature of its contribution; the relevance of the contribution made and an identification of factors that explain CSA's role in civil society strengthening.

Keywords: Civil Society, CIVICUS, theory based evaluation, process-tracing



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Acknowledgements

IDF and CDI are thanking the staff and the leaders of all Southern Partner Organisations that participated in collecting information for the evaluation of the contribution of these partner organisations to creating a vibrant civil society in India. They also thank the Co-Funding Agencies and the Dutch Consortia they are a member of for making background documents available. We hope that this evaluation can support you in better positioning yourself in the Civil Society Arena of India.

List of abbreviations and acronyms

AIKS	All India Kisan Sabha
AP	Andhra Pradesh (the State of Andhra Pradesh)
APARD	Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development
ASHA	Alliance for Sustainable & Holistic Agriculture
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDI	Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation
CFAs	Co-Financing Agencies
CFO	Co-Financing Organisation
CMSA	Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture
CPI (M)	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CRIDA	Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture
CROPS	Centre for Rural Operation Programme Society
CRP	Community Resource Person
CS	Civil Society
CSA	Centre for Sustainable Agriculture
CSSO	Civil Society Strategic Orientation
CWS	Centre for World Solidarity
DDC	Deccan Development Society
FERA	Foreign Exchange Regulation Act
FFS	Farmer Field Schools
GM(O)	Genetically Modified (Organism)
ICAR	Indian Council of Agricultural Research
IDF	India Development Foundation
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MFS	Dutch co-financing system
MRTTP Act	Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices
MoFa	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NABARD	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NPM	Non Pesticidal Management
PEACE	Peoples Action for Creative Education
REDS	Rural & Environment Development Society
RSV	Rythu Swarajya Vedhika
SAAPE	South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication
SERP	Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty
SHG	Self Help Groups
SPO	Southern Partner Organisation
SSI	Semi-structured Interview
ToC	Theory of Change
UPA	United Progressive Alliance
Wageningen UR	Wageningen University & Research centre
WFF	Women Farmers' Forum

1 Introduction

This report presents the civil society end line findings of CSA in India which is a partner of Hivos under the Dutch Consortium People Unlimited 4.1. It is a follow-up to the baseline assessment that was carried out in 2012. According to the information provided during the baseline study, CSA is working on the MDG 1, private sector and agriculture (the SPO also works on MDG 7a, b – sustainable living environment & forests and biodiversity).

These findings are part of the overall evaluation of the joint MFS II evaluations to account for results of MFS II-funded or –co-funded development interventions implemented by Dutch Co-Funding Agencies (CFA) and/or their Southern Partner Organisations (SPO) and to contribute to the improvement of future development interventions. The civil society evaluation uses the CIVICUS framework and seeks to answer the following questions:

- What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?
- To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?
- What is the relevance of these changes?
- What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

The CIVICUS framework that comprises five dimensions (civic engagement, level of organization, practice of values, perception of impact and contexts influencing agency by civil society in general) has been used to orient the evaluation methodology (see appendix 1).

1.1 Changes in the civil society arena of the SPO

In the 2012 – 2014 period the two most important changes that took place in the civil society arena of the SPO are related to 'civic engagement' and 'perception of impact'. Most important changes observed with regards to the first CIVICUS dimension consist of CSA having increased its outreach in terms of small and marginalised farmers through the creation of three additional cooperatives to the seven existing which increasingly become self-sustaining in both technical and financial terms. In absolute figures, more women became a member, also took positions in the cooperative board, and became community leaders. CSA helped with the establishment of a women-only cooperative and together with another NGO and an umbrella organisation of NGOs and intellectuals (RSV) established a Women Farmer's Forum for widows of farmers who committed suicide.

With regards to the 'perception of impact' dimension, CSA managed to increase the market opportunities for its producer cooperatives and female self-help groups at higher market prices and strengthened the organisational performance of the cooperatives. In the past two years CSA managed to engage with more NGOs and it influenced the practices of public sector agencies with regards to the concept of a Non Pesticide Model (NMP) of farming for small farmers, it increased its outreach through the media and to other states. Until to date it is still difficult to influence existing policies but a law for a separate budget for agriculture was passed in the State legislative assembly in May 2014.

These findings were obtained through an analysis of documents, a workshop and follow-up interviews with CSA, and interviews with external resources persons working in civil society organisations that receive support from CSA; other civil society organisations with whom the SPO is collaborating; public or private sector agents and; external resource persons capable of overlooking the MDG or theme on which the SPO is concentrating.

1.2 Contribution analysis

Based upon an analysis of the projects and programmes financed by the Dutch CFAs a selection was made of SPOs to be included in an in-depth process tracing trajectory and those to be included for a quick contribution assessment. CSA was amongst those SPOs selected for in-depth-process tracing.

The impact outcome chosen under the strategic orientation related to civic engagement is the improvement in the engagement of women in CSA's farmers' cooperatives. In the 2012-2013 period, female membership in the seven official cooperatives increased from 86 to 129 women, and in percentage of total membership female participation increased from 20% to 21% whereas CSA aims for 30 percent of female membership. In three out of the seven cooperatives women constitute 50 % of the board members whereas the target is 50% for all cooperatives. Favourable conditions (necessary to explain the outcome achieved but not sufficient) that might have helped CSA with this increased female participation are the high organisation grade of women in Self Help Groups; the presence of a public sector programme that also promotes CSA's NPM concept amongst female SHGs; CSA's producer and consumer cooperatives in place and performing, and; the feminisation of agriculture in the last decades. After these conditions were in place the NGO Rural & Environment Development Society (REDS) and CSA could start the promotion of women into the cooperatives, CSA based upon its track record in agriculture and the cooperative structure which provides an attractive market outlet and REDS with its track record in supporting women in CMSA. Both actors possibly explain the outcome (not necessary but sufficient).

The impact outcome chosen under the strategic orientation strengthening intermediate organisations is the enhancement in the capacities of CSA's cooperatives (the seven registered and three unregistered) between 2012 and 2014 towards ensuring livelihood security of farmers. Favourable conditions (necessary the outcome but not sufficient) that might have helped CSA with building the capacities of the cooperatives include the growing demand for organic produce in the state that helps farmers to fetch a better price for their produce and thereby motivated them to scale up their activities; the presence of the public sector programme that also promotes CSA's NPM concept amongst female SHGs and other farmers (even before CSA started its work around NPM); and the presence of public advisory centres that impart trainings to the farmers of CSA cooperatives on issues of crop production and management, and organic farming practices. This in turn facilitated CSA's efforts to promote sustainable agricultural practices amongst the members of the cooperatives which in turn secured their incomes: there are multiple pathways that explain the outcomes and CSA's support is just one of them.

1.3 Relevance

Interviews with staff of CSA, with external resource person, with the liaison officer of Hivos, as well as contextual information helped to assess the relevance of CSA's interventions in terms of; its Theory of Change (ToC) for Civil Society (SC) as designed during the baseline study; the context in which CSA is operating; the CS policies of Hivos.

With regards to the baseline ToC, the interventions and outcomes achieved are relevant because they align with CSA's overall goal to realise income security for female and male farmers who engage in NPM farming and organic farming at lower costs and higher incomes. Linking producer organisations with consumer organisations and other market outlets, as well as linking them with government schemes to access subsidies and engaging with other NGO networks to lobby for favourable policies also show that CSA has been capable of shifting its technology centric approach to a broader sustainable livelihoods approach.

With regards to the context in which CSA is operating, its interventions and outcomes achieved are highly relevant given the fact that 56 % of India's population is dependent upon agriculture for its livelihood, of which 95% are small and marginal farmers. CSA's NPM concept of farming considerably increases the income profits for small farmers, has been adopted by para agencies for wide-spread dissemination and is currently being discussed as a strategy to reduce India's carbon footprint. Linking professional farmer organisations to markets, as well as to government schemes for subsidies, also contributes to embedding these organisations into their political environment. Promoting the

participation of women in these professional structures will help to prepare these women to become leaders in the agricultural sector.

With regards to the CS policies of Hivos, CSA's interventions and outcomes are relevant because they perfectly fit into its Green Entrepreneurship programme, aiming to mobilise the capacities of small and marginalised (female) farmers to negotiate with government and market institutions.

1.4 Explaining factors

The information related to factors that explain the above findings was collected at the same time as the data were gathered for the previous questions. The evaluation team looked at internal factors within CSA, the external context in which it operates and its relations with Hivos.

Most important factors within CSA that explain the findings consist of the fact that CSA has a charismatic leader, who enjoys respect from both government and NGOs. This director is well connected with organisations within Andhra Pradesh, with those in other states and has become a renowned figure on television and in the written press. CSA's vision and its way of working seem largely to be informed by this director who managed to shift CSA's vision to focus on farmers' livelihoods rather than on organic agricultural production.

The information made available by both CSA and Hivos show that these relations were effective and not hampering any development intervention.

The most important external factors that possibly have hampered progress being made are the political turmoil in the past two years that ultimately led to Andhra Pradesh being split into two separate states in June 2014. The following bureaucratic division has caused procedural delays in the process of registration of the cooperatives and reduced government support, which is gradually improving due to CSA's awareness meetings. Other external factors that impact upon the success of CSA's intervention are related to scanty rainfall and perpetual cyclones that destroyed agricultural produce and claimed thousands of lives. A more general trend which will possibly affect CSA's intervention in the coming years is a general disinterest shown by youngsters to earn a living as a farmer.

1.5 How to read this report

The following chapter briefly describes the political context, the civil society context and the relevant background with regards to the issues CSA is working on. Chapter three provides background information on CSA, the relation of its MFS II interventions with the CIVICUS framework and specific information on the contract with Hivos. An evaluation methodology has been developed for the evaluation of the Civil Society component which can be found in appendix 2; however, deviations from this methodology, the choices made with regards to the selection of the outcomes for contribution analysis, as well as difficulties encountered during data collection are to be found in chapter 4. The answers to each of the evaluation questions are being presented in chapter 5, followed by a discussion on the general project design in relation to CS development; an assessment of what elements of the project design may possibly work in other contexts or be implemented by other organisations in chapter 6. Conclusions are presented in chapter 7.

2 Context

This paragraph briefly describes the context CSA is working in.

2.1 Political context

Andhra Pradesh was formed in 1953 with Hyderabad as its capital; it was the first state in independent India to be created on linguistic grounds. The state has a history of communist and peasant movements and till some years back, Maoist insurgents were active in the Adilabad region of the state. The democratic movement for separate statehood for Telangana started as a protest against backwardness and deprivation of the region, but years of neglect hardened it and the demand for a separate state picked up momentum. In December 2009, the government of India declared the decision to start the process of formation of separate Telangana, but it had to be put on hold due to violent protest at a number of places by anti-Telangana parties.

However, the movement continued for all these years and series of bandhs, road blockades, rallies etc., both for and against a separate Telangana rocked the state. Decision to bifurcate the state was taken in a Congress Working Committee meeting in July 2013, which is the highest decision making body of Congress party that ran the United Progressive Alliance (UPA II) government at the Centre, and the state government in Andhra Pradesh. The separate state came into existence on 2 June 2014, after the necessary legislative process for the same was completed. Currently, K. Chandrashekhara Rao of the Telangana Rashtra Samiti is the chief minister of Telangana while Chandrababu Naidu of Telugu Desam Party is the chief minister of Seemandhra (the remaining part of erstwhile Andhra Pradesh) with BJP support; Hyderabad is the joint capital of both the states.

The bifurcation of the state resources, departments and officials caused prolonged delays and indecision on a number of government functions and decisions. The political scenario was also highly charged because of upcoming assembly and parliamentary elections and the division of state. Due to these reasons, civil society organisations had to face a number of problems e.g. delays in government grants or sanctions, processing of application and registration of cooperatives/trusts etc.

2.2 Civil Society context

This section describes the civil society context in India which is not SPO specific. The socioeconomic, socio-political, and sociocultural context can have marked consequences for civil society, perhaps more significantly at the lower levels of social development. The information used is in line with the information used by CIVICUS.¹

2.2.1 Socioeconomic context (corruption, inequality and macro-economic health)

Social Watch assessed India's progress being made against the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and concludes that the country fails to meet goals set with regards to; poverty and hunger (MDG 1); gender equality (MDG 3); infant mortality (MDG 4); maternal mortality (MDG 5) and; environmental sustainability MDG 7). Three fundamental factors explain these appalling shortfalls, which are:

- Although social sector expenditures (rural development, education, health, family welfare, women and child development and water and sanitation increased in absolute terms between 1999 – 2000 and 2012-2013, in percentages of total public expenditures there was a general decline.

¹Mati J.M., Silva F., Anderson T., April 2010, *Assessing and Strengthening Civil Society Worldwide; An updated programme description of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index: Phase 2008 to 2010.*, CIVICUS

- The administration costs of centrally sponsored schemes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment (MANREGA) schemes have been increasing between 2006-2007 and 2011-2012 and only 66 % of the budget has been used for wage employment. Apart from this, misappropriation of funds explains the weak impact of such schemes.
- The government is promoting 'non-inclusive growth' and has sought to provide basic social services through subsidized institutions that all have problems of inefficiency, corruption, and so on. The formal, organized sector, which is the main source of quality employment, employs only 12% to 13% of the country's workforce and this is declining. The remaining 87% are relegated to the agriculture and informal sectors with low and uncertain earnings.

As a consequence, in the rural areas more than a quarter million farmers committed suicide in the last several years because they could not earn a living anymore in the agricultural sector².

An additional indicator for the social and economic context in India is the Social and Economic Rights Fulfilment Index (SERF Index)³. The SERF Index provides a means of determining the extent to which countries are meeting their obligations to fulfil five of the substantive human rights enumerated in The International Covenant of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR): the right to food, the right to adequate shelter, the right to healthcare, the right to education, and the right to decent work.

Table 1
Social and Economic Rights Fulfilment Index (SERF) for India

India	2011	2012	2013
Core Country Right to Food Index Value	32.70	32.74	33.05
Core Country Right to Health Index Value	74.74	74.16	74.75
Core Country Right to Education Index Value	82.64	84.23	85.57
Core Country Right to Housing Index Value	62.55	62.60	66.48
Core Country Right to Work Index Value	27.57	27.69	32.71
Core Country SERF Index Value	56.06	56.28	58.51

Source: Social Watch's SERF index for 2011-2013

In 2011 and 2012 India was achieving a little over 56% of protecting its social and economic rights, feasible given its resources. Whereas relatively no changes occurred between 2011 and 2012, a slight improvement occurred in 2013, except for the right to food index (33.05) and the right to housing (27.57).

The Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranks people's perception of corruption within the public sector of their respective countries.⁴ A low score indicates that a country is perceived as highly corrupt. India's score was 3.6 out of 10 in 2012, which is 0.1 point lower than the average for all countries (3.7) and it occupies the 76th place on the CPI rank list with a total of 174 countries. In India, 24.8% of citizens surveyed believe that the government is effective in the fight against corruption. On the Bribery Perception Index India scores 7.5 out of 10, which is 2.6% lower than the average. Of the people who participated in the survey, 54% reported having paid a bribe in 2011. Since 2002, India's perception index is slightly improving from just below a score of 3 (0 is very corrupt and 10 is not corrupt at all) in 2002 to 3.6 in 2012. Most corrupt institutions in 2012 are political parties, the police, legislature, public officials, public officials in the education sector, NGOs.

The Index of Economic Freedom measures economic freedom of 186 countries based on trade freedom, business freedom, investment freedom and property rights. The score is based on 10 freedoms in 4 pillars: rule of law, limited government, regulatory efficiency, and open markets. India's economic freedom score in 2012 is 55.7, making its economy the 120th freest in the 2014 index⁵. India is ranked 25th out of 41 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, and its overall score is below the regional and world averages (see figure 3). In the past 20 years, India has advanced its economic freedom score by nearly 11 points out of 100 points. It has achieved very large improvements in half of the ten economic freedoms, most notably in trade freedom. This has improved by over 65 points. As seen in figure 3, India's score continued to increase steadily over the past four years. However, it is

² Bhaskara Rao Gorantla, Research Director and Ajay Kumar Ranjan, Research Officer, National Social Watch, India

³ http://www.socialwatch.org/sites/default/files/SERF2012_eng.pdf

⁴ <http://country-corruption.findthebest.com/l/98/India>

⁵ <http://www.heritage.org/index/pdf/2014/countries/india.pdf>

still perceived as a 'mostly unfree' country. The main reason for this, as stated in the Index report, is the institutional shortcomings in the country. The state owned enterprises and wasteful subsidy programs result in chronically high budget deficits.

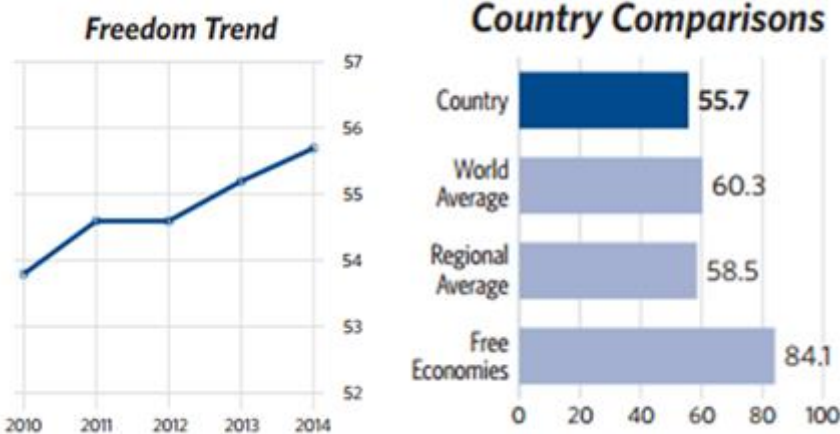


Figure 1: Freedom trend of India over time, and compared to other countries.

The Fragile States Index of FFP⁶ is an index which is derived from 12 different indicators. These are social indicators, economic indicators and political and military indicators. From these, we can see trends in the overall development of a country.

Table 2 shows India's five of the twelve most problematic indicators of the past five years, as well as the average score for the twelve indicators: Low scores indicate a good situation and high scores indicate a bad situation.

Table 2
India's Fragile States Index scores of the critical indicators on a scale of 1 (good situation) to 10 (bad situation)

Year	Demographic Pressure	Group Grievance	Uneven Economic Development	Security Apparatus	Public Services	Average score 12 indicators
2014	7.7	7.8	7.8	7.0	7.9	76.9
2013	7.5	8.2	8.1	6.7	7.8	77.5
2012	7.3	7.9	8.4	6.9	7.5	78.0
2011	8.0	8.2	8.5	7.2	7.8	79.3
2010	8.1	7.8	8.7	7.2	7.6	79.2

Source: FFP Fragile States Index for 2010-2014⁷

The FSI shows that India is improving its status over the past five years, but is doing so at a very slow pace. Demographic pressure, uneven economic development and the security apparatus have improved slightly since 2010, which can be seen by the decline of the scores. However, group grievance has not improved and public service has even declined (the index got higher). Out of the 178 countries in this index, India does not succeed to become more than mediocre. However, the figure 2 below shows that the development of India did have a steep improvement since 2006, but has been declining since 2011.

2.2.2 Socio-political context

Freedom House evaluates the state of freedom in 195 countries on an annual basis. Each country is assigned two numerical ratings – from 1 to 7 – for political rights and civil liberties. In this rating 1 represents the most freedom and 7 the least freedom. The two ratings are based on 25 more detailed indicators.⁸

⁶ <http://ffp.statesindex.org/2014-india>

⁷ Idem

⁸ <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2014/india-0#.VGcIRvIwtcQ>

Table 3

India's Freedom indexes over time

Year	Freedom status	Political rights score	Civil liberties score
2011	Free	2	3
2012	Free	2	3
2013	Free	2	3
2014	Free	2	3

Source: Freedom House Freedom indexes for 2011-2014⁹

Table 3 shows that scores have not changed over the past four years. India is considered a free country with an overall 'Freedom Status' of 2.5 (out of 7).

2.2.3 Socio – cultural context

The World Values Survey is a global network of social scientists who study changing values and their impact on social and political life¹⁰. They survey different values which can give an indication of the social status of a country. People in India indicate that they are generally quite happy. In the wave of 2010-2014 a total of 38.2% of the people questioned stated that they were very happy. In comparison, in the period of 2005-2009 this number was significantly lower with 28.9%. When asked about general satisfaction with their lives respondents give different answers. The respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction from 1 to 10, 1 being completely dissatisfied and 10 being completely satisfied. In 2010-2014 a total of 16.4% indicated that they were quite dissatisfied (rating 2) and 11.9% indicated they were completely dissatisfied (rating 1). Whereas 17.7% stated that they were satisfied (rating 8). This situation is very different from the 2005-2009 results where 41% indicated to be moderately satisfied and 15.8% was satisfied. This indicates that during the past five years people have shifted from being neutral about their life satisfaction, to being either dissatisfied or satisfied.

Another index to look at for social-cultural context is the Global Peace Index. This index attempts to measure the positions of nations' peacefulness, and is developed by the Institute for Economics and Peace. The position of a country is based on 22 indicators which can be divided into three main factors. The main factors on which this index is based are 1) militarisation, 2) society and security, and 3) domestic and international conflict. The maximum score is 5, which indicates that this factor is a problem for the peacefulness of the country. The higher the score, the lower country ranks in the total Index. The current position of India is 143 out of 162 countries¹¹. The table below shows the development of India as of 2010.

Table 4

India's Global Peace Index scores over time: scores from 1 (good) to 5 (bad)

Year	Militarisation	Society & Security	Domestic & International Conflict	Country Rank
2010	2.5	2.3	3.4	132 (of 148)
2011	2.4	2.4	3.4	142 (of 153)
2012	2.4	2.4	3.2	144 (of 158)
2013	2.4	2.4	3	141 (of 162)
2014	2.4	2.4	3	143 (of 162)

Source: Vision of Humanity Global Peace index from 2010-2014¹²

⁹ Idem

¹⁰ <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp>

¹¹ <http://www.visionofhumanity.org/#page/indexes/global-peace-index/2014/IND/OVER>

¹² <http://www.visionofhumanity.org/#page/indexes/global-peace-index/2014/IND/OVER>

2.2.4 The Foreign Contribution Regulation Act 2010¹³

NGOs are perceived as very important in India, as they contribute a lot in the development of the country¹⁴. NGOs often work with marginalized groups and try to raise their awareness on their rights vis-à-vis the state. Most local NGOs are funded by international organizations. In order to keep this funding under control, India's government installed the 'Foreign Contribution Regulation Act' in 1976.

In March 2011 an amendment of the original Foreign Contribution Regulation Act passed both Houses of Parliament. Compared to the 1976 Act, major changes comprise a list of persons and organisations that cannot receive foreign contributions anymore. These are; election candidates; correspondents, columnists, journalists; judge, government servant or employee of an entity controlled or owned by the government; members of any legislature; political party or its office bearers; organizations of a political nature as may be specified; associations engaged in the production or broadcast of audio news.

In the first place this Act seems to have no consequences for the Dutch NGOs and their Southern Partners, however a leaked report of India's International Bureau tells a different story, suggesting that protests against development projects had caused a loss of India's GDP with 2-3%. These protests were allegedly fuelled by foreign-funded NGOs, mentioning Greenpeace, Cordaid, Hivos, Oxfam, Amnesty and ActionAid¹⁵. The main allegation against these NGOs is that they are funding organizations which are working in politically sensitive sectors such as the mining sector and the agricultural sector with regards to Genetically Modified Food production. Foreign contributions to support SPOs that work on human rights issues, governance and sensitive sectors like mining, forestry and agriculture are increasingly being monitored.

2.3 Civil Society context issues with regards to the MDG

A major challenge documented in the 2012 baseline study is that the civil society in Andhra Pradesh (AP) faced was the issue of Naxal¹⁶ violence¹⁷ and with it the continuing agrarian crisis and farmers suicides. With regards to these, the situation has not changed remarkably in the current context. One significant change has been the culmination of the Telangana movement¹⁸. The movement was a long and often violent struggle over the bifurcation of AP, beginning in 1969 and ending with the creation of Telangana on 2nd June 2014. This change has created a new set of challenges for AP's civil society.

Naxal violence in the state has continued, albeit, at a much diminished level than what it was before 2010. In 2013, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) expressed concerns over the resurgence of Naxal activities in the state due to the turbulence caused over the Telangana issue. Telangana, an economically backward region compared to the rest of AP, is also an area with "zero-governance" making it susceptible to Naxal activities. In 2013, there were 10 Naxal-related civilian fatalities in the unified state of AP, this was up from six in 2012¹⁹.

The agrarian crisis which has been marring the lives of people in the state, has continued unabated. A serious lack of land reforms, continued drought, and increasing dependence on genetically modified (GM) seeds and pesticides, has created a life of debt for the farmer. The condition of the Indian farmer worsened following the liberalisation of the Indian economy in the 1990s. Due to this, there was a withdrawal of bank loans to the farming sector, increasing the farmers' dependence on money lenders

¹³ <http://www.fcraforngos.org/>

¹⁴ Status of grass root level NGOs in Rajasthan

¹⁵ <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/only-11-of-22-ngos-in-ib-report-are-fcra-compliant-none-filed-13-14-statement/>

¹⁶ The Naxalite movement traces its origins from the Naxalbari uprising in 1967, the Maoist struggle in India is an outcome of this uprising. Naxalism was borne out of the marginalisation of the forest dwellers in Naxalbari village in West Bengal. It picked up support in the surrounding areas with the common cause of fighting marginalisation, lack of development and poverty faced by rural India. With the eventual adoption of the Maoist ideology the movement has become violent.

¹⁷ There have been 6601 left-wing extremism related fatalities in India since 2004-9th November 2014. Since 1968 Andhra Pradesh has recorded 6430 fatalities. Refer, http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/andhra/data_sheets/annual_casualties.asp

¹⁸ Refer, <http://www.firstpost.com/politics/from-1948-to-2013-a-brief-history-of-the-telangana-movement-998093.html>

¹⁹ Refer, <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/maoist/Assessment/2014/andhra.htm>

and creating huge debts for them when the crops failed. The continued cycle of debt and crop failure has pushed a number of farmers towards suicide. The Telangana region and now state, has recorded the highest number of farmer suicides in the country after Vidarbha in Maharashtra, overall in India, a total number of 296,438 farmers have committed suicide since 1995²⁰. In 2013 in AP, there were 2014 farmer suicides²¹. In Telangana there have already been 350 farmer suicides since its creation²².

In 2014, Rythu Swarajya Vedika (RSV), an umbrella organisation of farmers groups and non-governmental organisations, released a Farmers' Agenda²³ in the lead up to the 2014 elections in the state. The government has tried to bring in "quick fix(s)" with loan waivers, the most recent of which is for Rs 43,000 crore, this is in spite of the growing financial crisis in the state²⁴. The agenda demanded that the government be more invested in the agriculture sector, bring in land reforms, improve the safety regulations over GM seeds and regulate seed prices. The use of GM crops adding to farmer distress and suicide remains controversial, with polarising opinions on the matter. The Technical Expert Committee (TEC) appointed by the Supreme Court in 2012 made recommendations where it sought a 10-year moratorium on field trials of GM crops²⁵. The GM seeds marketed by private seed companies are very expensive, which adds to the already high cost of inputs. In such a scenario, crop failure, due to drought, or other reasons pushes the farmer already deep in debt over such high costs towards suicide.

The bifurcation of the state has brought with it, its own set of challenges. The immense tensions and hostility between pro and anti-Telangana supporters in the lead up to the division has left its mark. It is visible in the lack of cooperation between the two governments. The states have already taken the issues of water & power sharing, management of institutions, funds demarcation to the central government for resolution²⁶. This deadlock has created water shortage in Hyderabad and the hinterlands. A farming sector which faces regular droughts is highly dependent on irrigation facilities, which have been hit due to the water shortage.

²⁰ Refer, <http://www.rediff.com/news/column/p-sainath-how-states-fudge-the-data-on-farmer-suicides/20140801.htm>

²¹ Refer, <http://www.deccanchronicle.com/140702/nation-current-affairs/article/farmer-suicides-decline-andhra-pradesh>

²² Refer, <http://www.ndtv.com/article/south/telangana-s-shocking-statistics-350-farmer-suicides-in-five-months-616371>

²³ Refer, <http://www.downtoearth.org.in/content/farmers-andhra-pradesh-release-their-agenda-2014-elections>

²⁴ Refer, http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/banks-to-handle-loanwaiver-of-telangana-govt-114081401043_1.html

²⁵ Refer, <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/centre-opposes-moratorium-on-gm-field-trials/article4081555.ece>

²⁶ Refer, http://www.newindianexpress.com/states/andhra_pradesh/Centre-Steps-In-to-Resolve-Key-Issues-Between-AP-Telangana/2014/11/16/article2525684.ece

3 CSA and its contribution to civil society/policy changes

3.1 Background of CSA

Before its registration as a trust fund in 2004, the Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA) functioned for 15 years as the Sustainable Agriculture desk of the Centre for World Solidarity (CWS). It has successfully demonstrated that regenerative and resource conserving technologies and practices of agriculture can bring both environmental and economic benefits to farmers and farming communities. Its models of Non Pesticide Management (NPM) agriculture have served the interests of many impoverished rural communities and have also been adopted by the government of Andhra Pradesh in its 2004-2009 Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) programme, followed by a federal state programme as of 2010. Apart from NPM, CSA also promoted organic agriculture.

CSA is a professional resource organization engaged in establishing models of sustainable agriculture working in partnership with NGOs and Community Based Organizations (CBO) by scaling up the successes and engaging with the establishment for a policy change.

CSA believes in promoting sustainable agricultural technologies that are based on farmers' knowledge and skills, their innovation based on local conditions and their use of nature's products and processes to gain better control over the pre-production and production processes involved in agriculture. CSA works with farmers to conserve their resources and their rights.

The main objectives of the organization are:

- To improve the quality of life of farming communities by promoting environmentally safe and sustainable methods that would enhance the quality and quantity of crop/plantations/livestock yields especially in tribal and dryland areas.
- To enhance the participation of farmers, both women and men, in all processes of problem analysis, technology development, evaluation, adoption and extension leading to food security and self-reliance among farmers and rural communities.
- To facilitate community access and control over natural resources and to build institutions and coalitions at different levels for strengthening People's Agriculture Movements, which focus on empowerment of marginalized sections like Women, Dalits, Adivasis and Minorities.
- To develop a Sustainable Agriculture Resource Network that promotes sharing of knowledge, material and human resources. To serve as a repository for documenting, collecting, storing, collating and disseminating information/success stories from different sources on sustainable agriculture.
- Understand the role of agriculture in contributing to climate change and developing sustainable agriculture practices which can help in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

CSA is also engaged in establishing and working with Community Based Organisations (CBO) to address their agriculture based livelihoods.

CSA works in rain-fed areas (for example Ananthpur, Mahaboobnagar district of Andhra Pradesh, Wardha in Maharashtra), areas with intensive cultivation of commercial crops and suffering severe ecological and economic crisis (Faridkot district of Punjab, Guntur, Warangal districts of AP) and Tribal areas (Araku and Nallamala in AP, Chattisgarh Tribal areas), covering at this moment 150 villages. CSA is working on the peri-urban vegetable value chain in and around Hyderabad, Vishakapatnam, Guntur, Warangal and other towns in AP. CSA provides technical support to organizations in Orissa and Karnataka. CSA is also engaged in policy advocacy work mainly on the impacts of chemical and GM technologies, their regulatory systems, public support systems to small and marginal farmers and

revitalizing rain-fed agriculture. CSA is actively engaged with the government and people on the agriculture and climate change debate²⁷.

CSA works mainly in the following six domains:

- Policy advocacy: CSA focuses on policy changes that support which promote sustainable agriculture and bring in effective regulations on unsustainable and exploitative practices.
- Sustainable Production: The focus is to develop and promote locally adapted integrated farming systems and other on-farm and off-farm livelihoods.
- Human Resource Development: Building resource pool of farmers, scientists, academicians, and nutritionists etc. who would help in supporting sustainable farming models, building farmers institutions and promoting agriculture based small and medium business enterprises
- Farmers Institutions: Building farmers institutions improve their bargaining power and realizing their rights.
- Marketing: Building small and medium enterprises which can increase the farmers share in the consumer price and can improve village economy are needed to sustain the farming based livelihoods.
- Pro-farmer media: CSA would have a special focus on using media both for grass root work and policy advocacy.

In 2012, CSA had 12 staff members of whom two are women. As described in their 2014 brochure, CSA's board of management is composed of seven members of which 2 are women and one is a farmer.

3.2 MFS II interventions related to Civil Society

Out of the five on-going programs of CSA (Building Farmers Institutions, Supporting small holder Agriculture, Establishing Farmers Seed Network, Adapting to Climate Change, Scaling up Sustainable Agriculture), the program Building Farmers Institutions is supported by Hivos.

Hivos has been supporting CSA as an independent organisation since 2006. The current contract runs between April 2011 – March 2015 and is entitled "Building Farmers' Institutions for Sustaining Farming Livelihoods" for which the main objective is "Organising farmers into institutions for production and accessing markets for sustaining farming livelihoods." The programme is articulated around four results areas:

1. Establishing integrated farming system models which are ecologically and economically sustainable;
2. Building farmers' cooperatives which improve farmers' access to markets;
3. Building capacities of farmers, agricultural workers and civil society workers for the promotion of sustainable agriculture;
4. Lobbying and campaigning for a better and supportive policy environment for sustainable agriculture.

The second result area corresponds to the CIVICUS dimensions of "civic engagement" and "level of organisation". It aims at increasing farmers' income and improving their food self-reliability through the strengthening of farmer's cooperatives and through the creation of a consumer cooperative This result area was chosen for further evaluation of CSA's contribution to building a strong civil society.

The fourth result area 4 on Lobby and Advocacy aims at pressurizing the government to revisit certain policies like Minimum Support Price, Seed Bill, Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India (BRAI), crop insurance, GMOs. Because CSA does most of this work through Rythu Swarajya Vedika (a

²⁷ <http://csa-india.org/who-we-are/> 12-11-2014

farmer’s federation working towards basic rights of the farmers), we can link this to the CIVICUS dimensions “level of organisation” and/or “perception of impact”.

The contract with Hivos contains a special clause to support female farmers to take up leadership roles, as resource persons, as decision-makers and as role models. This should ultimately lead to the improvement of their status, their recognition, knowledge and participation etc. This gender related issue is directly linked to the CIVICUS dimension on “civic engagement” and it was chosen for process tracing to assess the specific contribution of CSA with support of People Unlimited 4.1.

3.3 Basic information

Table 5
Basic information

Criterion	Basic information
Name of SPO	Centre for Sustainable Agriculture
Consortium	People Unlimited 4.1
CFA	Hivos
Start date of cooperation	1996 (as part of CWS), 2006 as CSA
MDG/theme	MDG 1
MFS II project name	Building Farmers’ Institutions for Sustaining Farming Living hoods
Contract period	April 1, 2011 - March 31, 2015
Total budget Hivos	€ 232, 050.
Other donors if applicable	N/A
Estimation of ²⁸ % of budget for Civil Society	26 % per year

Source: Contract Intake Form, Project Documents

²⁸ Costs that relate to civil society development or policy influence are those costs that possibly contribute to the development of the CIVICUS dimensions, excluding coordination and office costs; staff costs and financial reserves.

4 Data collection and analytical approach

4.1 Adjustments made in the methodology of the evaluation

Whereas the latest progress report and documents were not available when the input-output-outcome analysis was done (in April 2014), they had been made available before the fieldwork which helped the evaluation teams to prepare a list of possible outcomes as well as provided support to draw the list of external persons to interview.

During the plenary part of the workshop on process tracing, CSA staff listed nine outcomes under the two pre-selected civil society strategic orientations, namely Civic Engagement and Strengthening Intermediate Organisations (IOs). These outcomes were discussed at length the following day by all workshop participants *across the CSA hierarchy*. Inputs by everyone added up to make for the responses CSA forwarded as final. As a consequence, no separate forms were filled in by the each category of staff present²⁹.

4.2 Difficulties encountered during data collection

The primary hurdle through the data collection was language. None among the evaluators was conversant in Telugu, which was the only language spoken by most of the field staff, cooperative members and community resource persons. The dependence on translators slowed proceedings, and some of the original nuances might have been lost in translation.

The second challenge was with regard to evidence. Almost all the figures provided by CSA and the cooperatives associated with it had to be taken at face value—these were variously regarding membership strength, numbers of female members in the cooperatives, easy loans given for small business ventures etc. Few documents like meeting registers, minutes etc. exist to confirm or reject the figures. There were no records of such figures maintained by the government or some objective third party. In fact, evidence for some of the claimed outcomes, like say influencing policies on women farmers, was so flimsy that it could neither be confirmed nor rejected with any certainty and it therefore had to be dropped from the analysis at a later stage.

Though a large number of external resource persons were interviewed for CSA (representatives of farmers' organisation, ASHA, CMSA, REDS, a development practitioner and one academic along with cooperative members, women CRPs etc.), some of them had lost touch with the organisation over the past two years and could not give exact information regarding the claimed outcomes³⁰. While some of them were rivals of CSA, and were extremely critical of it without having detailed information on CSA's present activities. The evaluators had to be extra cautious that the analysis was corrected for interviewee prejudices.

Between the baseline and the end line, Hivos closed its office in Bangalore and all staff pertaining to HIVOS in Bangalore departed at the latest in the end of 2013. This influenced the data collection

²⁹ Out of the 14 participants of the workshop, were present: two members of the executive leadership, three programme managers and two personnel from the Human Resources and Administration departments. A member of CSA's board was present only for a brief period and provided a generalised opinion on the organisation's work.

³⁰ CSA changed its strategy from a production oriented approach into a livelihoods approach. This might possibly explain that its network has decreased in the past years

process to the point that the evaluation team was only able to interview a former Hivos staff involved with CSA until 2010. Getting information from the CFA has been a challenge.

4.3 Identification of two outcomes for in-depth process tracing

The project documents helped to preselect two outcomes. These are:

- For the civil society strategic orientation (CSSO) linked to civic engagement: “Enhancing the membership and quality of women’s engagement in farmer’s cooperatives”;
- For the civil society strategic orientation around strengthening intermediate organisation “Capacitating Farmer’s cooperative towards ensuring livelihood security”.

Nevertheless the analysis of the project documents showed a large amount of work done on lobby and advocacy on different topics with Rythu Swarajya Vedika and other actors. Instead of focusing on strengthening intermediate organisations it could have been possible to assess the contribution of CSA on a different civil society strategic orientation namely ‘influencing policies and practices’.

CSA agreed with the two outcomes chosen. They said the past two years had seen the organisation consciously strategizing to increase the participation of women in the cooperatives, and to increase livelihood security of farmers.

5 Results

5.1 Results obtained in relation to project logframe

With regards to the first result area, no progress seems to have been documented and it seems like this result area has been merged with the third result area, "building capacities of farmers, agricultural workers and civil society workers for the promotion of sustainable agriculture", a major outcome achieved is that the Madhya Pradesh state government has taken an initiative to include food and agriculture as part of all the courses for 2nd to 10th classes as of 2012. Instead of having a separate subject on agriculture, farming is integrated into all the courses including maths and history. CSA is developing syllabus on agriculture³¹. Also a considerable number of farmers were trained in different agricultural topics – number of participants unknown; an unknown number of farmers have adopted organic agriculture –number unknown, 2000 planned, and; articles were published in different magazines accessible for farmers.

With regards to the second result area "building farmer's cooperatives which improve their access to markets", 8 producer and one consumer cooperatives were officially established in 2012, covering 47 villages. Six of the producer cooperatives received further training in 2013. The annual report shows that membership of the producer cooperatives has grown (from 320 members in 2012 to 505 members in 2013), that household income of members increased in 2013 as a result of the adoption of new agricultural practices (from 50000 to 69900 Rupees). Apart from this relations were built between the consumer and the producer cooperatives. Members of cooperatives start to plan collective actions.

With regards to the fourth result area, "lobbying and campaigning for a better and supportive policy environment for sustainable agriculture, CSA works with Rythu Swarajya Vedika (a farmer's federation working towards basic rights of the farmers). With this federation and with the support of the cooperatives established by CSA, different meetings have been taken place with government officials on the controversial BRAI bill and cotton farming, CSA's proposal for a Bio safety Protection Act, the agricultural budget, a draft AP Seed Bill, employment possibilities in the agricultural sector (NREGA scheme) etc. To the knowledge of the evaluation team no policy changed occurred so far, except that a task force on sustainable agriculture and farmers' income commission—was included in the 2014 election manifestoes of mainstream political parties and that a separate budget for agriculture was passed in the AP legislative assembly in May 2014.

5.2 Changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?

5.2.1 Civic Engagement

Civic engagement describes the formal and informal activities and participation undertaken by individuals to advance shared interests at different levels. Participation within civil society is multi-faceted and encompasses socially-based and politically-based forms of engagement.

Since the baseline assessment in 2012, CSA has made slight improvements in advancing the interests of marginalised groups in AP. It has expanded its outreach from 3,326 to 4,841 small and marginalised farmers through the creation of three more cooperatives in the process of being

³¹ Progress report 2012

registered. CSA has also taken clear actions to enhance the participation of women in agriculture. It created for example an exclusive women’s cooperative, the Sri Gayatri Women’s Mutually Aided Cooperative, in Kadapa district which awaits its registration. Unfortunately changes have not evenly spread in the cooperatives: the number of women Community Resource Persons³² has grown to 47 % of the total number of CRPs but the increase of female members varied greatly between cooperatives and only three out of the seven cooperatives respect the mandate requesting 50 per cent of their board members to be women. CSA, together with NGO REDS, took up the issue of farmer suicides and succeeded to get the widows avail compensation and mobilised resources for their children’s education and livelihood. CSA also started a pilot project, the Women Farmers’ Forum (WFF)³³ in Anantapur district in 2013 to address the specific needs of this group.

The cooperatives became more self-sustaining and more independent of CSA since 2012. For example, farmer members are extensively involved in identifying their needs and exploring possible solutions and ask consequently support from CSA. Farmers are also able to plan both crop production and marketing activities, with some cooperatives even saving and then using such savings to fund business ventures. CSA’s own interventions—like at the time of the baseline—continue to be informed by its target groups’ needs but at the district level CSA has come to rely more on Rythu Swarajya Vedika (RSV)³⁴. Like in the baseline, and despite being apolitical, CSA continues to engage regularly with local self-government and periodically with elected representatives. CSA has gained credibility so as the use of information provided by CSA to farmers’ organisations or political parties can be witnessed.

Score baseline 2012 on an absolute scale from 0-3: 2
Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of -2 → +2 +2

5.2.2 Level of Organisation

This dimension assesses the organisational development, complexity and sophistication of civil society, by looking at the relationships among the actors within the civil society arena.

The intensity of collaboration between CSA and other actors in the civil society arena has slightly improved since the baseline. In the 2012-2014 period CSA has been intensifying its collaboration with the associations intrinsic to its core interventions: the seven farmers’ cooperatives and the local NGOs that support CSA in identifying and addressing the target groups’ needs - REDS, CROPS, PEACE and Vennala Cooperatives. CSA has also been intensifying its dialogue with the national RSV and ASHA³⁵ networks because all three organisations shared, among others, the desire to influence political manifestoes favourably for farmers given the imminent elections in 2014 and were eager to bring forward farmers’ concerns in the newly formed Telangana State. As a consequence and as mentioned earlier, farmers’ cooperatives are more capable of defending the interests of the small and marginal farmers who comprise its constituencies, including those families affected by suicides. CSA has continued working with a large number of CSOs in India – not necessarily comprising farmers, and

³² Community Resource Persons (CRPs) are individuals or leaders from within the community whom organisations choose and provide with the necessary exposure, technical training and expertise. These individuals are then capable of continuing the organization’s work and taking it forward long after the intervention stops. Refer, http://www.greenfoundation.in/mksp/?page_id=898

³³ The Women Farmers’ Forum (WFF) serves as a platform for these women to meet and discuss their personal issues, agricultural issues, seed problems etc. every month. CSA and REDS also linked WFF to the Rythu Swarajya Vedika in 2013 (WFF members are now RSV members also), though there are other women’s organisations also, which are members of RSV

³⁴ Rythu Swarajya Vedika (RSV) is an umbrella organisation of NGOs and intellectuals working to ensure sustainable livelihoods for agricultural communities in Andhra Pradesh. It is part of the nationwide Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA). Refer, <http://www.downtoearth.org.in/content/farmers-andhra-pradesh-release-their-agenda-2014-elections>

³⁵ Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture or ASHA is an alliance of about 400 diverse organisations drawn from more than 20 states across India that came together through the Kisan Swaraj Yatra (Oct-Dec 2010), a nation-wide mobilisation around Food-Farmers-Freedom. Refer, https://www.facebook.com/AshaKisanSwaraj/info?ref=page_internal

through its involvement in the international network SAAPE³⁶ with lobby and advocacy activities, CSA has reached CSOs in Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Maldives. Like at the time of the baseline, CSA continues to have multiple funding sources and according to CSA staff the financial situation improved in the last two years; in 2014, CSA even won two awards that contributed to its funds. Nevertheless and in terms of sustainability, concerns remain: funds from Hivos contribute towards the bulk of CSA staff salaries and in 2012-2013, it accounted for 21% of the budget but Hivos' funding ends in March 2015.

Score baseline 2012 on an absolute scale from 0-3: 2
Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of -2 → +2 +1

5.2.3 Practice of Values

Practice of Values refers to the internal practice of values within the civil society arena. Important values that CIVICUS looks at such as transparency, democratic decision making, taking into account diversity that are deemed crucial to gauge not only progressiveness but also the extent to which civil society's practices are coherent with their ideals.

In terms of practice of values little has changed since the baseline, certainly when it comes to CSA. Downward accountability remains well in use, at CSA level but also in the cooperatives. During the baseline it was announced that the project fund related information would be shared with CSA's partners but at the time of the end-line this type of transparency has not taken place yet. CSA has requested its farmers' cooperative to have a gender-balanced board. As mentioned earlier this has only be reached in 3 out of the 7 cooperatives, although improvements were noticed; CSA itself has only 2 women in its board and 1 farmer, same composition as during the baseline. With regards to external financial auditing, CSA provided information of the audits for Hivos project, like during the baseline. The farmers' cooperatives also have started to commission external audits, which is a major change compared to the baseline.

Score baseline 2012 on an absolute scale from 0-3: 3
Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of -2 → +2 0

5.2.4 Perception of Impact

Perception of Impact assesses the perceived impact of civil society actors on politics and society as a whole as the consequences of collective action. In this, the perception of both civil society actors (internal) as actors outside civil society (outsiders) is taken into account. Specific sub dimensions for this evaluation are the extent to which the SPO has contributed to engage more people in social or political activities, has contributed to strengthening CSOs and their networks, has influenced public and private sector policies.

In general, the dimension on "perception of impact" shows slight to good improvements.

CSA has strengthened its engagement in the wider civil society arena of AP and beyond. In the first place, in order to alleviate farmer concerns, they supported the cooperatives through the provision of loans, training, diversifying income generating activities such as poultry by the Enabavi cooperative in 2013 aiming at making farmers more resilient against climate changes, and working towards increasing the farmers and their cooperative's access to government schemes. In consequence, the consumer cooperative Sahaja Aharam³⁷ procured produce worth about Rs. 3.5 million from its producer cooperatives, women self-help groups and other organic farmers for which they were given a 10-25 percent better price than those who sold in the regular market in the April 2013 – March 2014 period.

³⁶ Constituted in circa 2000 SAAPE, or the South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication, works on poverty eradication in a holistic way, with a special focus on food sovereignty, gender justice, demilitarisation, democratisation and social justice issues in South Asia. It brings together existing like-minded networks to strengthen and build on their work; to make explicit the links between different issues that impact on poverty; and to link and bring a regional understanding to national level campaigns. Refer, <http://www.saape.org/>

³⁷ CSA's consumer cooperative

Meanwhile the farmers’ cooperatives have increased their accountability to their constituencies as well as shown commitment in incorporating women as board members for at least 3 out of 7 of them. CSA managed to engage more agencies in NPM/organic farming and to take into consideration small farmers issues as a result of meetings and organic fairs in which local officials participated. CSA enlarged its outreach through its partnership with media. The past two years, CSA expanded its work into other states, Bihar and Maharashtra, through partnerships with their governments on scaling up programmes. Besides linking farmers’ cooperatives to private food marketing agencies and entrepreneurs and bringing farmers to organic certification, CSA has started working with the Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives of Reliance Foundation towards promoting sustainable agriculture and is in discussions to collaborate with others. As stated in the baseline it is difficult to influence agricultural public policies that prioritise an industrial model of farming. Some positive outcomes to take into consideration are that a task force on sustainable agriculture and farmers’ income included small farmers concerns in the 2014 election manifestoes of mainstream political parties and that a separate budget for agriculture was passed in the AP legislative assembly in May 2014. CSA has therefore been more successful in influencing *practices* of the public sector than influencing its policies.

Score baseline 2012 on an absolute scale from 0-3: 2
Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of -2 → +2 +2

5.2.5 Civil Society Context

The social, political and economic environment in which civil society operates affects its room for manoeuvre. The civil society context has been described in chapter 3. In this section we describe how CSA is coping with that context.

CSA slightly improved its ability to cope with the changing environment since the 2012 baseline study.

Much of its work, like the registration of three new farmer cooperatives, suffered from the near standstill of the state government and administration due to the State bifurcation process which lead to the creation of Telangana on June 2nd 2014. In that context, CSA conducted several awareness meetings and produced a report on how the agriculture and agriculture-based livelihoods in the newly formed states could be sustained. CSA is also considering creating another office in Seemandhra, as the current office is in Telangana.

CSA collaborated intensively with networks like RSV and ASHA—at the state and national levels during the general election period in 2014, aiming to include small farmers’ concerns in the political parties’ manifestoes.

Realising that climate change is heavily impacting upon small farmers’ livelihoods, CSA has started to support farmers and cooperatives in the diversification on income generating activities beyond agricultural production.






Score baseline 2012 on an absolute scale from 0-3: 3
Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of -2 → +2 +1

5.3 To what degree are the changes attributable to the Southern partners?

This paragraph assesses the extent to which some outcomes achieved can be “attributed” to CSA. Starting with an outcome, the evaluation team developed a model of change that identifies different pathways that possibly explain the outcome achieved. Data collection was done to obtain evidence that confirms or rejects each of these pathways. Based upon this assessment, the evaluation team concludes about the most plausible explanation of the outcome and the most plausible relation between (parts of) pathways and the outcome. The relations between the pathways and the outcomes can differ in nature as is being explained in table 6.

Table 6

Nature of the relation between parts in the Model of Change

Nature of the relation between parts and other parts or outcome	
The part is the only causal explanation for the outcome. No other interventions or factors explain it. (necessary and sufficient)	
The part does not explain the outcome at all: other subcomponents explain the outcomes.	
The part explains the outcome but other parts explain the outcome as well: there are multiple pathways (sufficient but not necessary)	
The part is a condition for the outcome but won't make it happen without other factors (necessary but not sufficient)	
The part is a contributory cause it is part of a 'package' of causal actors and factors that together are sufficient to produce the intended effect.	

Sources: Mayne, 2012; Stern et al, 2012

The following paragraph assesses CSA's contribution to two outcomes. Each paragraph first describes the outcome achieved and the evidence obtained to confirm that the outcome has been achieved. It then presents the pathways identified that possibly explain the outcomes, as well as present information that confirms or refutes these pathways. The last section concludes in the first place about the most plausible explanation of the outcome, followed by a conclusion regarding the role of the SPO in explaining the outcome.

5.3.1 Strategic Orientation Civic Engagement

The outcome chosen is the improvement in the engagement of women in CSA's farmers' cooperatives, CBOs it supports. CSA aims for 30 per cent of female membership in all 10 cooperatives (of which seven have been officially registered) and a representation of 50 per cent of women in the cooperative boards, and to have more exclusively women cooperatives.

In the 2012-2013 period, female membership in the seven official cooperatives increased from 86 to 129 women, and in percentage of total membership female participation increased from 20% to 21% - the cooperatives grew from 430 to 616 members in the same period³⁸. In three out of the seven cooperatives women now constitute 50 % of the board members; a fourth cooperative shows an increase in female representation in the board, two show a decline and in the last cooperative the membership stayed the same at 25% of the board members. At the same time the number of female Community Resource Persons (CRPs) associated with the seven cooperatives has gone up from 19 to 35 women. CRP successfully adopted sustainable agricultural practices and can disseminate these practices amongst other members. 47 % of all CRPs are now female and in three cooperatives 50 % of all CRP or more are female. Within the cooperatives, members start to register under a female name rather than the male head of household and there is some indication that women's bargaining position in their respective households is increasing, because they get involved in marketing of their produce which was predominantly a male activity before. Although women do not have access to land, they are involved in 70% of all agricultural activities.

The first pathway that potentially explains the outcome consists of a variety of activities carried out by CSA to increase female participation in the cooperatives. CSA assumes that women play an important role in agriculture but are neglected when it comes to planning/investments/policies etc. in the sector, and hence this needs to be overcome through awareness building, campaigns, increased policy emphasis and investment in issues of women farmers.

The following information provides evidence *in favour of this pathway* by highlighting the fact that CSA started to engage women in the cooperative structure:

- CSA started to realise that women are responsible for 70 % agricultural activities, although they do not own land, nor an income related to these activities. They also realised that agriculture is needed to ensure a sustainable livelihood. They started awareness raising activities for both men and women to engage women in cooperatives³⁹.

³⁸ Calculation based upon CSA annual report 2013-2014 and figures given later by CSA

³⁹ CSA and interview with a CRP

- CSA has been undertaking awareness building exercises, capacity building trainings and imparting knowledge to the women on the issues of adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, cost reduction, marketing, livelihood diversification and thereby income security. This has been an ongoing practice in the seven registered and three unregistered cooperatives associated with it and has been taking place prior to 2012 as well.
- Some other initiatives were also taken by CSA in promoting the engagement of women with cooperatives. CSA organised meetings with male members of cooperatives in 2012 and 2013 to encourage them to bring their wives to meetings.
- CSA and CRPs are teaching women of the cooperatives how to obtain access to financial support from government schemes (no information on results)⁴⁰.
- While engaging with CSA's interventions, women in CSA's cooperatives found that participation in livelihood enhancement activities is important. Realising this and benefitting from CSA's interventions, more and more women farmers started engaging in cooperative activities, thereby enhancing the membership of women in such cooperatives.
- CSA instituted a norm that 50 % of cooperative board members need to be of female sex.
- In the February – May 2013 period the average participation of women to training sessions was 48 percent.
- Generally speaking CSA is widely known for its Non Pesticide Management (NPM) concept in agriculture that considerably decreases the input costs for farmers at similar or higher yields. This concept combined with CSA's efforts to organise farmers into cooperatives and to search a market outlet for their agricultural produce by, amongst others, the creation of a consumer cooperative, might explain the farmers' adherence to the cooperative structure in the general sense and that of women in particular.

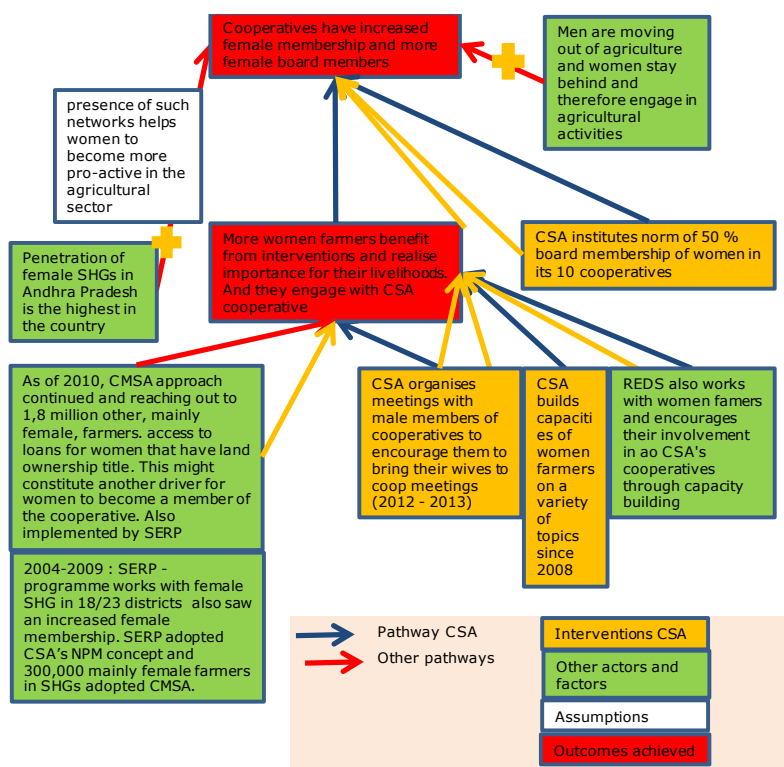


Figure 2 Pathways that possibly explain outcomes and conclusions about the nature of the relations between pathways and the outcome, civic engagement

⁴⁰ CSA and interview with a CRP

Information that *rejects CSA's contribution* to increased participation of women in the ten cooperatives and agriculture is the following:

- Not all ten cooperatives saw an increase in membership and equal representation of women in the board. This either illustrates that CSA did not work with all cooperatives to ensure more female participation, or that other actors and factors are in place that explain an increase in female membership and board representation⁴¹. A Community Resource Person states some cooperatives working with the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) programme (a para-statal programme that works with female SHG in 18 of the 23 districts of the state, covering 38,646 villages), that also saw an increased female membership. The SERP programme adopted CSA's NPM concept in the 2004-2009 period under the name of Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture (CMSA). In that period some 300,000 mainly female farmers, organised in Self Help Groups adopted CMSA which currently presents a bold alternative to conventional input-intensive agriculture in Andhra Pradesh that has the highest consumption of pesticides and fertilizers in the country⁴². CSA initially worked with the SHGs under the SERP programme⁴³.
- As of 2010, another programme is continuing the extension of CMSA, reaching out to 1,8 million other, mainly female, farmers⁴⁴. SERP provides access to loans for women that have the legal documents that show that family land is also being registered under their names⁴⁵, which might constitute another driver for women to become a member of the cooperative. SERP claims to reach 80 % attendance of female farmers when working in the villages.
- According to All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS)⁴⁷, NGOs have not succeeded in the past to increase the participation of women in agriculture nor in their peasant union. The unions, however, started showing an increasing interest in engaging women in agriculture since a general trend is that men are moving out of agriculture and women stay behind as a consequence of the 'feminisation of agriculture' and start to join cooperatives⁴⁸.
- REDS is also working with CSA's cooperatives and in the same mandals and districts to support widows to continue farming and helping them avail of government compensations that are their due. Apart from their support to CSA's cooperatives they support many more SHGs in 172 villages 45 Gram Panchayaths of 10 mandals.
- Andhra Pradesh counts some 12 million women organised in SHGs that represent 21 % of all SHGs in India, the highest percentage in the country. These SHGs function as saving and credit groups inspired by the Grameen banking system. Whereas they used to include agricultural income generating activities in the past, they now increasingly produce goods for semi-industrial enterprises and other means and not through farm based agriculture practices. However their performance and impact in society is contested. One article concludes that the organisational performance of these SHGs is usually below standards, and that loans provided do not help members to get out of poverty. Very poor people easily drop out of these SHGs⁴⁹. Geethanjali R. and Prabhakar K. (2013) conclude that women participating in SHG experience an impact at individual, family and community as a whole because they get access to credit. Being a member of an SHG also empowers women to stand up for their rights in wages, education, health etc.⁵⁰. This research was conducted in Kadapa district, where CSA helped to establish a women-only cooperative.

⁴¹ Observation by evaluation team

⁴² <http://forbesindia.com/article/on-assignment/back-to-the-roots-for-andhra-pradesh-farmers/17822/1?utm=slidebox#ixzz3Gm1yc04R>

⁴³ Major outputs of the SERP: 11.29 million poor were mobilized into self-help groups, exceeding both the initial target of 2 million and the target of 11 million that accompanied approval of the Additional Financing; Over 1 million self-help groups were set up, exceeding the Additional Financing target of 930,000; 38,646 village organizations were formed, exceeding the target of 37,000; 1,098 sub-district organizations were formed, meeting the target; 22 district organizations were formed, meeting the target.

⁴⁴ <http://cigrasp.pik-potsdam.de/adaptations/community-managed-sustainable-agriculture-cmsa>

⁴⁵ Mahila Kisan Shashaktikaran Pariyojna (MKSP)

⁴⁶ Cooperative board member

⁴⁷ All India Kisan Sabha is the peasant or farmers' wing of the Communist Party of India.

⁴⁸ see http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in:8080/jspui/bitstream/10603/8123/1/11_chapter%204.pdf, especially table 4.6 and http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---sro-new_delhi/documents/publication/wcms_146115.pdf

⁴⁹ http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/8124/1/11_chapter%204.pdf

⁵⁰ Geethanjali R. and Prabhakar K. (2013), *Economic Development of Women through Self Help Groups in*

Conclusion

Based upon the analysis of the information available we conclude that the most valid explanation for improved engagement of women with farmers' cooperatives is the role played by CSA in increasing women participation in cooperative activities. However, CSA's interventions are sufficient to explain the outcome on their own but not necessary: Other actors that possibly also explain the enhanced female participation in the cooperatives supported by CSA are:

- REDS that supports CSA's cooperatives also, in particular helping widows of farmers who committed suicide to obtain the compensation from government schemes.
- The SERP programme that has organized millions of women in SHG who now know how to its Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture approach which is based upon CSA's NPM.

Conditions in place for this to happen are that Andhra Pradesh has the highest concentration of women SHGs that enables women to be more pro-active in other affairs of rural life, be it agriculture or cooperatives and a general trend that men are leaving agriculture and that women stay behind and take over agricultural responsibilities beyond the traditional task divisions in agriculture and at household level.

CSA's role has been that of raising the awareness of both men and women regarding their role in agriculture and related activities; then that of organising the women, imparting training to them, and encouraging them to take up leadership positions in the cooperatives and active roles in agricultural activities. CSA's move from agricultural production to sustainable livelihoods that also includes the establishment of the producer and the consumer cooperatives has been important to start working with women, as well as its NPM that has been scaled up in the past 10 years through para-statal agencies.

5.3.2 Strategic Orientation Intermediate Organisations

The impact outcome chosen is enhancement in the capacities of CSA's farmers' cooperatives (including the seven registered and three unregistered cooperatives) between 2012 and 2014 towards ensuring livelihood security of farmers. Realising the need for securing incomes of the farmers of its cooperatives, CSA shifted focus from NPM to increased production and yields in sustainable agriculture.

As a result of CSA's efforts, the cooperative members have diversified their sources of income by taking up non-farm based livelihood activities such as backyard poultry, compost making, seed processing, diary, sericulture etc. for their own use as well as selling it to other farmers⁵¹. The average increase in income for the farmers of the seven registered cooperatives who adopted multiple activities ranges from Rs. 10,000 to Rs.35,000⁵². The Haritha cooperative in Vizayanagaram district has incorporated dairy as one of commercial activities in 2013 to support the incomes of its members. Similarly, poultry was introduced in Warangal district's Enabavi cooperative in 2013 for which the farmers reported to have received financial support from CSA, while Kadiri cooperative in Anantapur now produces and sells seeds⁵³. CSA extended its support to the farmers of the Enabavi cooperative for selling seeds by extending support to them in acquiring mini mobile seed processing units and packaging material. Farmers from Punnami cooperative reported to have received CSA support in establishing bank linkages for their dairy related initiatives. They also started producing their own compost which brought them a savings of Rs. 4000 when compared to the market price⁵⁴. Farmers of Tungabhadra cooperative made average savings of Rs. 7000 per season on fertilisers and pesticides through reliance on own production and adoption of organic practices. Fifteen farmers who received training in raising kitchen gardens at Mutlyala Chervu village reported an increase in their household income by Rs. 2,000 along with considerable savings on vegetable purchase—Rs. 30,000 collectively

YSR District, Andhra Pradesh, India, Department of Women Studies, S.P.M.V.V (Women's University), Tirupathi 517502, Andhra Pradesh, India 2Department of Anthropology, S.V. University, Tirupathi 517502, Andhra Pradesh, India, in Stud Home Com Sci, 7(1): 25-34 (2013), © Kamla-Raj 2013.

⁵¹ source: CSA and CSA annual report 2013-2014

⁵² source: CSA (strong pieces of evidence)

⁵³ source: CSA

⁵⁴ source: CRP and interview with Punnami CRP

for all the 15 families. The technical trainings imparted by CSA helped farmers of the Kadapa cooperative to apply organic manure "Sanjeevani" to 87 acres of land owned by 17 farmers, particularly in agricultural and horticultural crops. This increased their incomes from Rs. 18,000 to Rs. 25,000 per farmer due to yield improvement and cost reduction⁵⁵.

Farmers of these cooperatives have been able to plan crop production and marketing activities, are involved in self-evaluation of their needs, actively participate in convergence meetings and organic fairs to avail benefits of government schemes and market their produce. For instance, the Enabavi and Mulugu cooperatives acquired mobile mini seed processing units in 2013-14 with 90 per cent of the costs financed through DoA subsidies⁵⁶. Further, the Kadiri cooperative, a part of CMSS (Community Managed Seed System), is now receiving subsidies from the state's Department of Agriculture (DoA)⁵⁷.

Also, farmers and farmers' organisations are increasingly engaging with Rythu Swarajya Vedika (RSV) to participate in activities aimed at favourable policy changes for farmers⁵⁸. Apart from this, farmers prepare their business models to avail of easy credit under CSA's value chain fund and maintain records of their produce for third party certification and marketing of their produce. All these activities have led to an increase in incomes of the farmers associated with CSA.

The first pathway that potentially explains the outcome consists of a variety of activities carried out by CSA towards capacitating farmers to adopt sustainable agricultural practices, diversify livelihoods, access government schemes, improve marketing of their produce, and increase reliance on own production of inputs for cost reduction. CSA organised farmers into producer cooperatives to promote adoption of NPM practices and established their linkage with consumer cooperative, Sahaja Aharam for the marketing of organic produce of the cooperatives. Over the years of its engagement with the farmers, CSA focused its activities on building the capacities of the farmers to help them secure their livelihood while following sustainable agricultural practices. Towards that end, farmers have found themselves preparing business plans, production and thrift activities, use easy loans provided by CSA to make profits, avail benefits of government schemes through convergence meetings organised by CSA, and improve marketability of their produce through participation in CSA annual organic fairs and obtaining third party certification of their produce.

The following information provides evidence *in favour of this pathway* by highlighting the activities undertaken by CSA to capacitate farmers' cooperatives in the state:

- CSA formed seven cooperatives and has been providing assistance to another three cooperatives for registration. CSA has imparted business development skills to the farmers of the cooperatives and provided assistance to farmers in enhancing their access to institutional credit⁵⁹.
- CSA has started work on community managed seed bank system. Kadiri Cooperative of Ananthapur district is a part of CMSS (Community Managed Seed System), as a part of which farmers are getting subsidy from Department of Agriculture (DoA), Andhra government⁶⁰.
- CSA has imparted technical trainings to farmers on preparation of bio-fertilisers, green manures and local inputs such as vermi-compost, which has helped them reduce their cost of production⁶¹.
- CSA has helped cooperatives diversify their sources of livelihood by helping them take up non-farm based livelihood activities such as poultry, seed processing, compost making, sericulture etc.⁶².
- CSA provides financial assistance to the cooperatives through the provision of easy loans under the value chain fund established by it to help them scale up their commercial activities⁶³.
- CSA assists the farmers in obtaining benefits of government schemes such as subsidies for seed processing units and on farm equipment by organising convergence meetings with line departments⁶⁴.

⁵⁵ source: CSA Annual Report 2013-14

⁵⁶ source: CSA interview (moderately strong piece of evidence) and CSA Annual Report 2013-14

⁵⁷ source: CSA

⁵⁸ source: CSA (moderately strong piece of evidence)

⁵⁹ CSA and interview with cooperative board members

⁶⁰ CSA (weak piece of evidence)

⁶¹ CSA, and interview with cooperative board members, CRPs, REDS and Refer Adjunct 9a

⁶² CSA and interview with CRPs, key academic resource person, REDS

⁶³ CSA and interview with cooperative board members, REDS, CRPs and local NGO PEACE and Refer Adjuncts 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d and 7e

⁶⁴ CSA, CSA Annual Report 2013-14, and interviews with REDS, cooperative board members, CRPs, and local NGO PEACE and Refer Adjuncts 5a, 5b, 5c and 5g

- With the help of Sahaja Aharam cooperative federation, other CSOs, government departments and public sector organisations, CSA has been organising annual organic fairs to develop an interface between farmers, buyers and government institutions, to enable farmers to share their learning and experiences and to help farmers market their produce ⁶⁵.
- CSA facilitates the process of obtaining third party certification for the organic produce of the farmers of its cooperatives to promote marketing of such produce ⁶⁶.

Information that *rejects CSA's contribution* to strengthening the capacities of the farmers' cooperatives in AP towards ensuring livelihood security of farmers is the following:

- SERP, through its CMSA programme that started in 2004, has been working with poor farmers in AP towards adoption of sustainable non-pesticide agriculture practices to reduce the costs of cultivation and increase net incomes ⁶⁷. SERP has initiated Farmer Field Schools (FFS) to support technology transfer through community-based local best practicing farmers. About 20-25 families are organised into a group which is assisted by a paid village activist (practicing farmer) and paid cluster activist (for a group of five villages). Technology transfer is promoted through sharing knowledge, observations and experiences by community best practitioners called CRPs (Community Resource Persons) who have successfully adopted CMSA practices. Capacity building is done through provision of financial support and technical inputs in the form of technology transfer for promoting adoption of sustainable agricultural practices and supporting incomes of poor farmers. SERP has made the farmers aware of the low cost agriculture for the last eight years on this issue. The programme began with 400 acres but now it spreads over 14000 villages and 56 lakh acres gross (roughly 40 per cent of total AP agricultural land). SERP's interventions include providing bank linkages, gender empowerment, and capacity building etc. to enable the SHGs function effectively. It has also worked on social security schemes like pensions, insurance, health and nutrition indicators, land access, dairy and help to poorest of the poor, disabled persons etc.⁶⁸.
- Increase in demand for organic produce has led helped farmers getting better prices for their produce ⁶⁹. Organic products, which until now were mainly being exported, are now finding consumers in the domestic market ⁷⁰. This is because higher demand vis. a vis. supply leads to increased bargaining power for the farmers who can then sell their organic products at higher prices and earn greater incomes. As a result, farmers' incomes have increased and they are being incentivised to increase the supply of organic produce.
- All India Kisan Sabha named another organisation, Deccan Development Society (DDS) that has been promoting organic agriculture in the state, although on a small scale ^{71,72}.
- All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) said that many farmers themselves are not interested in diversification since huge capital investment and scale is needed to make profits out of activities such as poultry

⁶⁵ CSA and interviews with CRPs and Refer Adjuncts 5d, 5e and 5f

⁶⁶ CSA, CSA Annual Report 2013-14, REDS, cooperative board members, CRPs and local NGO PEACE and Refer Adjuncts 6a and 6b

⁶⁷ <http://forbesindia.com/article/real-issue/andhras-pesticidefree-farming-an-inconclusive-experiment/38018/1#ixzz3Gm0xSMox> and <http://forbesindia.com/article/on-assignment/back-to-the-roots-for-andhra-pradesh-farmers/17822/1?utm=slidebox#ixzz3Gm2TEDLz>

⁶⁸ Interview with SERP (moderately strong piece of evidence)

⁶⁹ Interview with CRPs

⁷⁰ "source: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/newdelhi/a-burgeoning-organic-market-beckons-to-india-s-rural-farmers/article1-1051468.aspx> (strong piece of evidence)

⁷¹ The Deccan Development society is projecting a working model for the people oriented participative development in the areas of food security, ecological agriculture, and alternate education. It is also trying to reverse the historical process of degradation of the environment and people's livelihood system in this region through a string of land related activities such as Perma-culture, Community Grain Bank, Community Gene Fund, Community Green Fund and Collective Cultivation through land Lease etc. These activities, alongside taking on the role of Earth care is also resulting in Human Care, by giving the Women a new found dignity and profile in their village communities. The Society is trying to relocate the people's knowledge in the area of Health and Agriculture. <http://ddsindia.com/www/default.asp> (moderately strong piece of evidence)

⁷² DDS is the National Steering Committee Member and the AP State Secretariat for the Organic Farming Association of India [OFAI] India's only organization of grassroots organic farmers. OFAI is committed to promote organic farming in India through mobilization of farmers, training in organic techniques, workshops and policy advocacy. OFAI's labeling scheme through Participatory Guarantee System [PGS] provides an assurance of guarantee of organically grown produce exclusively for domestic consumers. OFAI rejects organic farming for export purposes. <http://ddsindia.com/www/aboutus.htm> (moderately strong piece of evidence)

and dairy, which is difficult for farmers. For activities like convergence meetings with line departments, AIKS attributed peasant organisations, political groups and government will.

- A CRP mentioned DAATTC (District Agriculture Advisory and Transfer of Technology Centre), attached to state agriculture university called ANGRAU (Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University) that imparts trainings to the farmers on crops, seed production and organic farming practices⁷³⁷⁴.

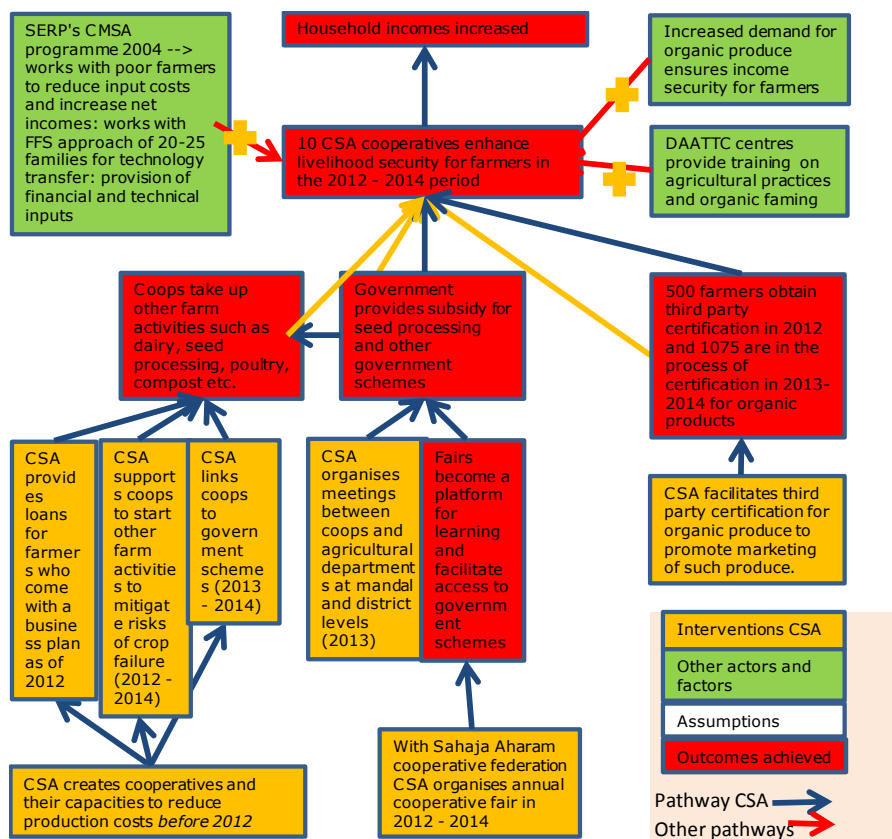


Figure 3 Pathways that possibly explain outcomes and conclusions about the nature of the relations between pathways and the outcome, intermediate organisations

Conclusion

Apart from CSA’s direct interventions that helped build capacities of farmers associated with its cooperatives towards ensuring livelihood security for the farmers, the following other actors and factors might have helped achieve its outcome.

Favourable conditions (*necessary but not sufficient*) that might have helped CSA with building cooperative capacities include the growing demand for organic produce in the state that helped farmers fetch a better price for their produce and thereby incentivised and motivated them to scale up their activities; the presence of the SERP programme that also promotes CSA’s NPM concept amongst female SHGs and other farmers (even before CSA started its work around NPM); and presence of DAATTC centres that impart trainings to the farmers of CSA cooperatives on issues of crop production and management, and organic farming practices. This in turn facilitated CSA’s efforts towards

⁷³ To give technological backup and lend support to the extension agencies of the line departments, Acharya N.G.Ranga Agricultural University has reorganized the University extension services and established 'District Agricultural Advisory and Transfer of Technology Centre(DAATTC) at each district headquarters of the state with a team of scientists. One such centre at Anantapur falling under scare Rainfall zone of Andhra Pradesh started functioning since 5th December, 1998 with three scientists <http://www.anantapur.gov.in/html/agri-dep-profile.htm> (strong piece of evidence)

⁷⁴ To create awareness and to develop capacity building on the Pre & Post harvest operations, the Government in 1999 introduced farmers training programmes four per year in each AMC with the Co-ordination of Agriculture / Horticulture 42 depts and Agricultural University / District Agricultural Advisory and Transfer of Technology Centre (DATTC). <http://ap.meeseva.gov.in/DeptPortal/Download-lat/White%20Paper%20on%20Agriculture%20Department.pdf> (strong piece of evidence)

promotion of sustainable agricultural practices among farmer cooperatives through strengthening their capacities to secure their incomes from the adoption of farm and non-farm based livelihood activities. (*not necessary but sufficient*).

According to the evaluators, CSA assumes an important role in capacitating farmers through their engagement with its cooperatives. CSA has strengthened these cooperatives to secure farmers' livelihood through adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, diversify their incomes through taking up non-farm based livelihood activities, enabled them to access government schemes, imparted technical trainings to the farmers to promote cost-reduction, and enabled them to market organic produce through third party certification and organic fairs.

In its initial years, CSA was entirely focused on alternative technology transfer towards NPM, through awareness building and training. Over the years, CSA felt the need for shifting the emphasis of its programme from NPM to increased production and yields in sustainable agriculture to securing incomes for the farmers of its cooperatives. This was done through capacity building trainings as well as financial support in terms of easy loans and repayment options to integrate markets. Alongside, CSA also realised that work would have to begin on expanding the income basket of farmers. Awry weather patterns, unexpected droughts are making producing food alone a risky proposition for the farmers and income sources need multiplying in this scenario. It was felt that cattle, poultry, sericulture, seed and manure production could be developed as additional sources of income, and efforts in this direction were made.

Along with the above mentioned activities, CSA is now making interventions towards collective bargaining and action, involving the farmers through cooperatives to get access to government schemes which are run by Ministry of Agriculture, horticulture and NABARD. Also, the need to market the organic product of farmers was felt and Joint Organic Food Melas (Fairs) are organised so that cooperatives can have an interface with the buyers. Such melas were organised at the state level in 2012, 2013 and 2014. To further increase the marketability of the organic product produced by farmers associated with the cooperatives, CSA entered into third-party certification agreement with Aditi Organics identified by Government of India, in 2012, so as to ensure better price and better income. All these steps, it thought would help in capacitating farmers in becoming self-reliant in farm as well as non-farm livelihood activities and ensuring livelihood security for farmers.

The MFS II funding contributes to the salaries, office expenses of CSA staff. And since the same staff is employed for various interventions, separating MFS II and non MFS II components of CSA's work is difficult. Hivos' support has been crucial for strengthening CSA staff capacities which has, in turn, facilitated other activities undertaken by CSA towards capacitation of cooperatives to secure livelihood. However, the activities specifically funded using Hivos support are—promoting seed cooperatives and marketing of seeds, workshops with stakeholders, building market linkages, campaign for promotion of organic food, organising annual organic fairs, convergence with line departments, capacity building trainings for cooperatives for production and marketing of organic produce, rural appraisal programmes for needs assessment, campaigning for a separate budget and organising support to obtain third party certification.

5.4 What is the relevance of these changes?

5.4.1 Relevance of the changes in relation to the Theory of Change of 2012

As described in the 2012 theory of change, CSA's overall goal is to achieve income security for farmers, which implies that farmers, including organic farmers, are prepared to be linked to markets. CSA had mentioned three major conditions to reach the goals: 1. Favourable policies in terms of providing a better income of farmers and a better share of the margins in the supply chain; 2. Favourable markets; 3. Ecologic and economic sustainable agricultural technology. Two fundamental strategies had been identified: the organisation of farmers to improve their bargaining capacity and their education through effective extension services. Special emphasis had been made on creating a women friendly farming environment.

The two outcomes selected during process tracing are clearly in line with the 2012 ToC. The various changes noted in the 5 CIVUCUS dimensions (increased number of (self-sustaining) farmers'

cooperatives, clear “internal” policies favouring women, improvement in the practice of public policies in favour of small or marginal farmers, successes of convergence meetings with government agencies and of cooperatives organic fairs to mention a few) show to some extent the successes made to achieve the 3 important conditions. Nevertheless, one can note a slight shift towards institutions and livelihood. Initially the overall strategy sounded like a technology centric approach (like NPM) but later it moved more to building institutions to help farmers in achieving livelihood security, favourable policy environment etc. Socio-economic research has also started now, while the focus of research earlier was only on technologies. Better practices have also evolved for institutions other than just technologies as a result of beginning of research on that too. For example, earlier CSA did not focus much on marketing and thought that the farmers’ better organic products would be sold “automatically” at better prices. At present, CSA is putting more emphasis upon marketing.

5.4.2 Relevance of the changes in relation to the context in which the SPO is operating

CSA believes that unless agriculture in India is in a better shape and farmers are prosperous, no development is viable. To do so, they are trying to bring larger policy level changes, income security policies for farmers in the long run, while also working for short term achievements like immediate help to farmers via diversification and cost reduction, with the help of cooperatives. A large section of India’s population is engaged in agriculture (56% of India’s population is dependent on agriculture for its livelihood—of which 95% are small and marginal farmers) and would directly benefit from CSA’s successes. This would help solve the agrarian crisis, getting farmers out of the poverty trap and therefore stopping the consequent farmer suicides.

CSA’s NPM concept, later adopted by the state-agency SERP under the name of CMSA, is decreasing the costs for inputs with 22% and increasing the total profit per acre with a factor of 2.8⁷⁵. Mainstream agricultural research and extension institutions and other programs providing subsidies to farmers for usage of chemical fertilizers and pesticides are still sceptic on the CMSA concept and more dialogue is needed between the farmers and scientific community practicing sustainable agriculture. The current dialogue on role of agriculture in adaptation to climate change and reduction of carbon footprint through reduction in usage of chemical fertilizers has also started. This augurs for a possible second ‘green’ revolution, particularly for rain fed areas⁷⁶. CMSA presents a bold alternative to conventional input-intensive agriculture in a state that has the highest consumption of pesticides and fertilizers in the country.

Strengthening the capacities of the cooperatives increasingly helps to ensure livelihood security for farmers. As a cooperative board members mentioned, earlier the local moneylenders used to exploit farmers who were forced into distress sales. Now, with the help of cooperatives, farmers are better informed. They are getting facilities like loans in an easy way and they are also making profits on agriculture. This has improved the situation of farmer households in economic terms and as a consequence benefitting the society as a whole. Besides economic benefits, the CRPs mentioned that producing in an organic way also leads to improvement in health. Several respondents (cooperative board members, retired Professor also vice-president of farmers’ union also president of cooperative) mentioned that working through cooperatives is relevant since horizontal transfer of technologies (from farmers to farmers; imitating the neighbouring village) is successful in India. An ex staff of Hivos mentioned that building coalitions has a huge impact on policy making in India and that the sharing of learning benefits not only the community or the village but also the entire nation.

The relevance of CSA’s activities towards the engagement of women in farmers’ organisations and cooperatives, its support to the Women Farmers’ Forum (WFF) and the women only cooperatives is also quite high. Women, 50% of the population, have an important role in agriculture. Beyond directly supporting women, these changes would benefit the entire society. As several respondents mentioned, women do most of the agricultural work, even the most difficult one. Nevertheless, technologies are not in line with their needs and culture makes it that women don’t go to markets. To get women

⁷⁵ <http://forbesindia.com/article/on-assignment/back-to-the-roots-for-andhra-pradesh-farmers/17822/1?utm=slidebox#ixzz3Gm1yc04R>

⁷⁶ <http://cigrasp.pik-potsdam.de/adaptations/community-managed-sustainable-agriculture-cmsa>

mobilised in leadership positions, one has to cut through patriarchy and other obstacles. Quoting one respondent "I believe unless you work with women, no positive change is possible. Women should be mandatorily involved. It will take time, but that is needed." A woman CRP mentioned that more and more women are able to come up and discuss their issues and that because of their association with the cooperatives, women's bargaining power within the households has also increased.

5.4.3 Relevance of the changes in relation to the policies of the MFS II alliance and the CFA

People Unlimited 4.1 (also called the Hivos Alliance) is an alliance of four organisations: Hivos, IUCN NL, Mama Cash and Press Now. As detailed in the MFS II subsidy application for the 2011-2015 period, the Hivos Alliance should deploy four interrelated programmes to contribute – in a result-oriented and sustainable manner – to building and strengthening civil society in the South as the cornerstone of structural poverty alleviation. These programmes are: Green Entrepreneurship, Rights & Citizenship, Expression & Engagement and Action for Change.

According to an ex Hivos staff, CSA's programme aligned with Hivos Civil Society strategy. CSA's programme is a part of Hivos Green Entrepreneurship programme. It was designed around how to mobilise and build the capacities of small and marginal farmers including women to negotiate with the government and the market. Its aim is to tackle the asymmetry of power that leads to an asymmetry in access to information and consequently to a limited access and control over resources. If farmers are to get a bigger share of the economic margin, one needs to strengthen cooperatives, producer companies, and build their skills so that they climb higher in the value chain (from local to national to even international markets). Training farmers in the process of analysing what is good for their agriculture will possibly influence how they get represented in public policy. The special emphasis CSA has put in the last 2 years on strengthening the position of women in agriculture via an exclusive women cooperative and setting a mandate for a gender balanced board is certainly in line with Hivos gender mainstream policy. The fact that CSA interacts more (intensively) with (more) CSOs, networks like ASHA and RSS and the public agencies fit into Hivos way of working. As an ex Hivos staff said: "Many changes cannot happen alone or within projects: Building like-minded coalition of CS actors including target groups like farmers and women is essential."

5.5 Explaining factors

5.5.1 Internal factors – organisational capacity CSA

CSA director Dr. G.V. Ramanjaneyulu, popularly known as Dr Ramoo, is a renowned figure; articles about CSA appear routinely in national and local magazines and newspapers, with Dr. Ramoo being the interviewee or the source of information in most of them. He also appears as an expert and advocate of sustainable non pesticide agriculture on many television news shows. His participation in June 2012 in the popular television show Satyamev Jayate which is hosted by an Indian celebrity and addresses social issues throughout the country and additionally includes the mobilisation of financial resources saw tremendous viewer response from across the country, with Rs 30 lakhs being sent in as donations, an amount that added up to make Rs 40 lakh over the past two years. The programme showcased CSA's work. Further, Dr Ramoo's television appearances on channels such as MAHA TV, Sakshi TV, HMTV, AIR, TV5, TV9 etc., have influenced discussions and debate on issues related to agriculture such as farmer suicides, the need to promote sustainable agriculture, to have a separate budget for agriculture and maintenance of bio-diversity. CSA has also launched an online TV channel called Krishi (meaning 'Farming' in Hindi) and has a website called www.indiaforsafefood.in. Dr Ramoo is very active on Facebook⁷⁷ and updates his posts to inform his over 3300 followers about issues pertaining to sustainable agriculture.

⁷⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/gv.ramanjaneyulu?fref=ts>

Dr Ramoo enjoys respect and influence within the activist community as well. This finds manifestation in the fact that CSA is well networked—locally and nationally, with for example Rythu Swarajya Vedika⁷⁸ and ASHA⁷⁹ respectively—with other organisations that work on its issues. His expertise is recognised, and often drawn upon, by the government. In 2012, he chaired the state government committee on school education on the introduction of sustainable agriculture as a topic in the regular school syllabus for school children from class 2 to class 10. CSA won two awards for ‘best innovations impacting rural livelihoods and for its invaluable contribution in improving lives of rural poor’ from state governments other than Andhra’s, the Bihar Innovation Forum⁸⁰ award in January 2014 and the Maharashtra Rural Livelihood Mission (MSRLM)⁸¹ award 2013-14 which had a cash component of Rs. 5 lakh.

Within the organisation too, CSA’s vision and its articulation seem largely to be informed by Dr Ramoo. During the end line, he spoke of CSA, over the past two years, having evolved its mandate from being a technical assistant in matters of organic farming to strategising and working on increasing the livelihood of farmers—because farmers wouldn’t take to organic farming till it made economic sense to them. Dr Zakir Husain, the joint director, who had been on a sabbatical during the 2012 baseline workshop, was present for the end line. He seemed to be the link between the CSA’s field areas and organisations’ Hyderabad office.

5.5.2 Relations Hivos - CSA

Hivos has been supporting Centre for World Solidarity (CWS) since 1996 in its initiative to promote sustainable agriculture that was spearheaded by Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA), the sustainable agriculture desk of CWS. CSA received a first support from Hivos in 2006, when it established itself as an independent organisation. The current contract lasts until March 2015.

Since the baseline study Hivos closed its office in Bangalore in December 2013 and expected to open its new office in the first semester of 2014 in Mumbai. Based upon the interview with former Hivos staff in liaison with CSA, as well as the communications between Hivos and CSA, relations were effective and not hampering any development intervention.

5.5.3 External factors

The past two years saw political turmoil in the state of AP as the demand for a separate Telangana⁸² state gained strength and ruled the political discourses, debates and discussions. The long, violent struggle ended up translating into the state’s bifurcation into two separate states—Telangana and Seemandhra on June 2nd, 2014⁸³. More protests, demonstrations, and suicides followed up⁸⁴ slowing down the functioning of the state government departments and administration. For CSA cooperatives,

⁷⁸ Rythu Swarajya Vedika (RSV) is an umbrella organisation of NGOs and intellectuals working to ensure sustainable livelihoods for agricultural communities in Andhra Pradesh. It is part of the nationwide Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA).

⁷⁹ Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture or ASHA is an alliance of about 400 diverse organisations drawn from more than 20 states across India that came together through the Kisan Swaraj Yatra (Oct-Dec 2010), a nation-wide mobilisation around Food-Farmers-Freedom. Refer, https://www.facebook.com/AshaKisanSwaraj/info?ref=page_internal

⁸⁰ The Bihar Innovation Forum (BIF) is a platform which offers opportunity to various stakeholders to present innovative solutions and ideas which can help create a more sustainable impact in rural Bihar. It is developed and supported by the Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (BRLPS). Refer, <http://www.biharinnovationforum.in/pages.php?pid=8>

⁸¹ The Maharashtra Rural Livelihood Mission (MSRLM) is an institution that both enables and empowers the poor to access better livelihoods. It is responsible for integration of livelihoods innovation across various sub-sectors. Refer, <http://msrlm.org/mrlif/>

⁸² The Telangana movement, a struggle in Andhra Pradesh for a separate state of Telangana came to a conclusion with its creation on 2nd June 2014, making it India’s 29th state. The ‘Jai Telanagan’ movement began in 1969, over cultural and economic differences with the larger state of Andhra Pradesh. Refer, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/15-facts-you-need-to-know-about-Telangana/articleshow/35955351.cms>

⁸³ The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 for the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh into two states was given the go ahead by the President on 1st March 2014. This was following decades long struggle for Telangana. Refer, <http://reorganisation.ap.gov.in/index.jsp>

⁸⁴ The announcement to divide Andhra Pradesh met with celebration on the Telangana side and protests and suicides on the Andhra and Rayalseema side. 13 districts were shut down in Seemandhra as protests took place. A home guard is said to have committed suicide after hearing the news about the division. Refer, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/telangana-triggers-protests-suicides-clamour-for-more-states-grows-across-india/article1-1101346.aspx>

bureaucratic division following state bifurcation meant procedural delays in the process of registrations of cooperatives as well as reduced government support for their activities. In response to this, CSA conducted several awareness meetings on the issue of bifurcation of state and its implications for agriculture and allied activities and also came out with a report to that effect. CSA has also planned to come up with a new office in Seemandhra to continue its activities in the region while its current office is in Telangana.

The state's agrarian crisis continued in 2012 and 2013 with the state registering deficit or scanty rainfall in many of its districts coupled with perpetual cyclones such as Nilam, Meher and Phailin destroying yields of standing crops such as paddy, pulses etc. and affecting agricultural productivity, apart from claiming thousands of lives. This was accompanied by shortage of food grains, scarcity of fodder for livestock and deteriorating economic situation of the farmers of the state. Farmers' suicides continued in many parts of cotton and chilly growing areas of Andhra even after 2012. The period between 2012 and 2014 saw CSA working in collaboration with local partner, REDS⁸⁵, networks like RSV and ASHA, and Caring Citizen's Collective⁸⁶ to provide support to the families affected by farmer suicides, especially in availing compensation from the concerned government departments. Towards this, meetings with women from such families were held at the district level in Kadiri and the state level in Hyderabad in September of 2013 as a result of which all the pending cases of ex-gratia for farmers' suicide families were settled by the District Collector in Medak district.

The period between 2012 and 2014 saw CSA witness a growing disinclination amongst youngsters for farming and farm-based livelihoods contributed by low productivity and yields, low profits, high input costs and growing risk of crop failure. Towards this, CSA organised trainings focused on reviving youth interest in farm based livelihood activities, particularly, sustainable agricultural practices. Realising the concerns of the farmers in adoption of such activities, CSA consciously shifted focus from enhancing productivity to enhancing household incomes and promoted other non-farm based livelihood activities amongst farmers of its cooperatives. It also facilitated marketing of the organic produce of its farmers by organising annual organic cooperative fairs and obtaining third party certification for the produce of the farmers. It has also planned to launch a professional marketing agency, which would ensure sale of such products at good prices.

⁸⁵ REDS or Rural & Environment Development Society, was registered as a not-for-profit organisation in 1996 to further the well-being of rural communities. REDS activities are mainly focused on rural development, sustainable agriculture, child rights, anti-trafficking and empowering CBO's to gain control over natural resources. See <http://redskadiri.wordpress.com/about/>

⁸⁶ Caring Citizens' Collective (CCC) comprises social activists, academicians, intellectuals and journalists who formed it in 2007 in Andhra Pradesh. The CCC volunteers work in the Telangana region of AP where the farmer suicides are high specifically in Medak, Mahabubnagar and Warangal districts. A beginning has been made to support the education of the children belonging to farmer's families affected by suicides. In addition to supporting the children's education, CCC is also working hard to assist the suicide and starvation deaths affected families to obtain financial and other required assistance from the government. Refer, <http://www.lamakaan.com/events/548>; <http://www.actionaid.org/india/what-we-do/andhra-pradesh/our-response-acute-agrarian-crisis-and-spate-farmer-suicides-medak>

6 Discussion

6.1 Design of the intervention

This section discusses whether the project, through the two interventions selected for in-depth study namely 'Improved engagement of women in farmers' organisations—Women Farmers' Forum (WFF) and cooperatives—in Andhra Pradesh' for civic engagement and 'Farmers' Cooperatives in Andhra Pradesh capacitated towards ensuring livelihood security for farmers' for strengthening intermediate organisations, is well designed and suitable for the environment in which it was implemented.

As noted by all interviewees and by a further literature study, there is no denial that putting emphasis on strengthening the role of women in agriculture is essential. "Women empowerment is the pre-requisite to boost agricultural production"(Dr.Narayan G. Hegde, date unknown⁸⁷). One should note and praise CSA for truly mainstreaming gender in its interventions. Although it was generally mentioned in their 2012 ToC, CSA has looked for specific solution to empowering women in rural areas (and not only mentioning need for education without doing justice to the capabilities women are already showing).

When it comes to investing in small farmers' cooperatives, CSA's work is in line with IFAD, FAO and WFP who state that "Smallholder farmers gain big benefits from agricultural cooperatives including bargaining power and resource sharing that lead to food security and poverty reduction"⁸⁸. 2012 was even named International Year of the Cooperatives (IYC). It can be interesting to look back at the theory on farmers' collectives from Oakeshott (2011) where he stated that cooperatives were difficult to create and sustain. Most importantly, he "suggested that strong emphasis must be put on conditions necessary for cooperative success and that the single most important condition is that of good leadership" (1-2)⁸⁹. The evaluation synthesis report commissioned by IFAD for the 2012 IYC⁹⁰ also stated more challenges such as "establishing cooperatives and building up their networks and vertical support organizations, are demanding tasks, their management is even more demanding, particularly owing to their democratic nature and large, often poorly educated membership". We can credit CSA for being able to create these cooperatives and showing to some extent the results these have been able to achieve for example in terms of increased income for the members. With regards to the functioning of the cooperatives, the above mentioned evaluation synthesis report mentioned some common issues:

- Inadequate organization by rural populations;
- Poor reputation of cooperatives; Effects of economic liberalization;
- Lack of experience and relative financial weakness of cooperatives;
- Lack of competencies and systems; Poor infrastructure;
- Lack of vertical integration and linkages; and inadequate finance.

The report also mentions the interventions IFAD did to overcome these issues and for which the success was relatively satisfactory:

- Building up capacity (usually in the form of technical assistance, training, workshops and study visits) at all levels;
- Strengthening institutions (helping to establish cooperatives and providing technical assistance or funds for basic infrastructure, equipment, and technical or managerial backstopping);
- Provision and strengthening of financial services;

⁸⁷ Dr. Narayan G. Hegde, (Date unknown) New technologies to enhance agricultural production and sustainable rural livelihood, BAIF

⁸⁸ in 'Agricultural cooperatives are key to reduce hunger and poverty', <http://www.ifad.org/media/press/2011/76.htm>

⁸⁹ in IFAD Brief 122: The Renewed Case for Farmers' Cooperatives: Diagnostics and Implications from Ghana. <http://www.ifad.org/drd/agriculture/122.htm>

⁹⁰ IFAD's Engagement with Cooperatives, A Study in Relation to the United Nations International Year of Cooperatives by IFAD Independent Office of Evaluation, March 2013

- Technical assistance for special tasks and studies;
- Supporting vertical structures for advocacy and policy dialogue with government and traders.

The interventions of CSA (like capacity building, providing loans for diversification of activities, creating platforms for exchange of information with the public agencies (the convergence meetings) and others for marketing (like the organic cooperatives fairs) are to some extent similar to the ones mentioned by the evaluation synthesis report. In that sense we can say that these interventions are well designed. Nevertheless it is essential to continue efforts in linking the cooperatives with public agencies and to reinforce the links between cooperatives (horizontal and vertical links).

6.2 Replication of the intervention

CSA's interventions at organising farmers, and inclusion of women in these organisations (cooperatives), certainly benefited from the fact that Andhra Pradesh already had a culture of SHGs. The women farmers in AP, therefore, have already been exposed to the advantages of such thrift and entrepreneurial activities. So, a predisposition to joining cooperatives might have existed. This might not be the same in other states. And similar work that CSA is doing in AP might therefore have to focus much more on awareness building in other states.

CSA has been able to identify concerns that are indigenous to the state, and emotive for the local farmers—working with the widows from farmers' suicide families, and not focus on technical issues that farmers mostly unlettered have difficulty to grasp⁹¹. Replication, therefore, must keep in mind that farmers' organisations must be grounded in local concerns, so that farmers feel they have a personal stake.

Besides formal registration and as stated in the evaluation synthesis report commissioned by IFAD for the 2012 IYC, "sustainability also calls for sector integration and links to local community structures (development councils, municipalities, networks of organizations, and so on), as well as for empowering cooperatives and involving them in value chains. However, because local community structures or value chain participants are often weak, project support needs to be long-term." Further, "capacity-building among cooperative leaders, staff, ordinary members and government cooperative staff is relatively easy to organize when external resources are available. However, operating cooperatives calls for entrepreneurship, which is not easily taught, as well as economic and commercial skills that require not just classroom teaching but also follow-up instruction and coaching, years after the original training." For that matter, "development of cooperatives calls for long-term projects (up to 9-10 years) because preparation, planning, recruitment and capacity-building all involve a considerable period of time." Since some of the cooperatives have just started during the MFS II period, like the women exclusive cooperative in Vempalli, so as other innovations like the Women Farmer's Forum and for continuity and sustainability reason we advise to continue funding the intervention. It might be that forming an exclusive women cooperative for agricultural/livelihood aspects is quite original but other women exclusive cooperatives exist⁹² and it would be interesting to link up the women initiatives to these already existing groups.

What would be interesting is for CSA to truly follow the evolution of the cooperatives, not only in terms of figures (of memberships or income for example) but also in terms of internal performance. For that matter we think the 5 capabilities model can be a good support.

⁹¹ Comparatively, Gene Campaign, another partner of Hivos working on almost similar issues, seems to have made lesser impact than CSA, both quantitative and qualitative. One of the reasons for this could be the fact that, unlike CSA which has connected with the farmers on many emotive local issues like suicides, Gene Campaign has more or less remained a technical resource organisation for its target groups—the provider of indigenous seeds and teacher of the SRI farming technique. Biodiversity, seed conservation, climate change which are Gene's concerns and issues have yet to percolate down to and be owned by the mostly unlettered rural men and women who are its target, and who are disadvantaged by the fact that they had no access to the larger context and issues involved in Gene Campaign's work.

⁹² in Dr. Muzamil Jan, Successful Women Cooperatives in India

7 Conclusions

7.1 Changes in the civil society arena of the SPO

In the 2012 – 2014 period the two most important changes that took place in the civil society arena of the SPO are related to 'civic engagement' and 'perception of impact'. Most important changes observed with regards to the first CIVICUS dimension consist of CSA having increased its outreach in terms of small and marginalised farmers through the creation of three additional cooperatives to the seven existing which increasingly become self-sustaining in both technical and financial terms. In absolute figures, more women became a member, also took positions in the cooperative board, and became community leaders. CSA helped with the establishment of a women-only cooperative and together with another NGO and an umbrella organisation of NGOs and intellectuals (RSV) established a Women Farmer's Forum for widows of farmers who committed suicide.

With regards to the 'perception of impact' dimension, CSA managed to increase the market opportunities for its producer cooperatives and female self-help groups at higher market prices and strengthened the organisational performance of the cooperatives. In the past two years CSA managed to engage with more NGOs and it influenced the practices of public sector agencies with regards to the concept of Non Pesticide Model of farming for small farmers, it increased its outreach through the media and to other states. Until to date it is still difficult to influence existing policies but a law for a separate budget for agriculture was passed in the State legislative assembly in May 2014.

7.2 Contribution analysis

The impact outcome chosen under the strategic orientation related to civic engagement is the improvement in the engagement of women in CSA's farmers' cooperatives (of which seven have been officially registered to date). CSA aims for 30 per cent of female membership in all 10 cooperatives with a representation of 50 per cent of women in the cooperative boards, and to have more exclusively women cooperatives. Apart from this, CSA has established a Women Farmers' Forum (WFF), where widows of farmers who committed suicide find a platform to share their concerns. Favourable conditions (necessary but not sufficient) that might have helped CSA with this increased participation in female farmers in cooperatives in absolute number as well as in comparison with men are the high organisation grade of women in SHGs; the presence of the SERP programme that also promotes CSA's NPM concept amongst female SHGs; CSA's producer and consumer cooperatives in place and performing, and; the feminisation of agriculture in the last decades. After these conditions were in place REDS and CSA could start the promotion of women into the cooperatives, CSA based upon its track record in agriculture and the cooperative structure which provides an attractive market outlet and REDS with its track record in supporting women in CMSA. Both actors possibly explain the outcome (not necessary but sufficient).

The impact outcome chosen under the strategic orientation strengthening intermediate organisations is the enhancement in the capacities of CSA's farmers' cooperatives (including the seven registered and three unregistered cooperatives) between 2012 and 2014 towards ensuring livelihood security of farmers. Favourable conditions (necessary but not sufficient) that might have helped CSA with building cooperative capacities include the growing demand for organic produce in the state that helped farmers fetch a better price for their produce and thereby incentivised and motivated them to scale up their activities; the presence of the SERP programme that also promotes CSA's NPM concept amongst female SHGs and other farmers (even before CSA started its work around NPM); and presence of DAATTC centres that impart trainings to the farmers of CSA cooperatives on issues of crop production and management, and organic farming practices. This in turn facilitated CSA's efforts towards promotion of sustainable agricultural practices among farmer cooperatives through strengthening their

capacities to secure their incomes from the adoption of farm and non-farm based livelihood activities. (not necessary but sufficient)

7.3 Relevance

With regards to the baseline ToC, the interventions and outcomes achieved are relevant because they align with CSA's overall goal which is to achieve income security for female and male farmers who engage in NPM farming and organic farming at lower costs and higher incomes. Linking producer organisations with consumer organisations and other market outlets, as well as linking them with government schemes to access subsidies and engaging with other NGO networks to lobby for favourable policies also show that CSA has been capable of shifting its technology centric approach to a broader sustainable livelihoods approach.

With regards to the context in which CSA is operating, its interventions and outcomes achieved are highly relevant given the fact that 56 % of India's population is dependent upon agriculture for its livelihood, of which 95% are small and marginal farmers. CSA's NPM concept of farming considerably increases the income profits for small farmers, has been adopted by para agencies for wide-spread dissemination and is currently being discussed as a strategy to reduce India's carbon footprint. Linking professional farmer organisations to markets, as well as to government schemes for subsidies, also contributes to embedding these organisations into their political environment. Promoting the participation of women in these professional structures will help to prepare these women to become leaders in the agricultural sector.

With regards to the CS policies of Hivos, CSA's interventions and outcomes are relevant because they perfectly fit into its Green Entrepreneurship programme, aiming to mobilise the capacities of small and marginalised (female) farmers to negotiate with government and market institutions.

7.4 Explaining factors

Most important factors within CSA that explain the findings consist of the fact that CSA has a charismatic leader, who enjoys respect from both government and NGOs. This director is well connected with organisations within Andhra Pradesh, with those in other states and has become a renowned figure on television and in the written press. CSA's vision and its way of working seem largely to be informed by this director who managed to shift CSA's vision to focus on farmers' livelihoods rather than on organic agricultural production.

The information made available by both CSA and Hivos show that these relations were effective and not hampering any development intervention.

The most important external factors that possibly have hampered progress being made are the political turmoil in the past two years that ultimately led to Andhra Pradesh being split into two separate states in June 2014. The following bureaucratic division has caused procedural delays in the process of registration of the cooperatives and reduced government support, which is gradually improving due to CSA's awareness meetings. Other external factors that impact upon the success of CSA's intervention are related to scanty rainfall and perpetual cyclones that destroyed agricultural produce and claimed thousands of lives. A more general trend which will possibly affect CSA's intervention in the coming years is a general disinterest shown by youngsters to earn a living as a farmer.

7.5 Design of the intervention

Concluding on the general design of the intervention, it can be noted that both the areas that CSA's work focuses on that were assessed during this evaluation- women in agriculture and cooperatives - are relevant to the context and in line with work of other agricultural agencies like IFAD or FAO. Because of all pre-conditions at play in Andhra Pradesh (high presence of SHGs, work of SERP programme), it would be more challenging to implement exactly the same programme in another state and more awareness raising activities might be necessary beforehand. CSA has benefited from a long standing experience in the (geographical) area and has been able to connect to the needs of its target groups leading to successes that other SPOs working in the same sector have not reached. The SPO could benefit from linking its work with women to other initiatives in this field and to a more thorough follow-up of the improvement of the capacity of its cooperatives to make them autonomous.

Table 7

Summary of findings.

When looking at the MFS II interventions of this SPO to strengthen civil society and/or policy influencing, how much do you agree with the following statements?	Score
The CS interventions were well designed	8
The CS interventions were implemented as designed	9
The CS interventions reached their objectives	7
The observed outcomes are attributable to the CS interventions	5
The observed CS outcomes are relevant to the beneficiaries of the SPO	10

Score between 1 to 10, with 1 being "not at all" and 10 being "completely".

References and resource persons

Documents by SPO

<i>Title</i>	<i>Year</i>
Building Farmer Institutions for Sustaining Farming Livelihoods (Annual Report)	2013-14
Building Farmer Institutions for Sustaining Farming Livelihoods (Work Plan)	2014-15
Annual Review Report for the Year	2012
Nagpur Women's Farmers Meeting	April 2014
Minutes of the meetings of exclusive women's cooperative in Kadapa district, Vempalli Mandal	2012, 2013, 2014
Women farmers meeting – Kadiri	September 2013
State Level Meeting on Women and Agriculture	Undated (2012-14)
Nalgonda Women's Farmers Meeting	February 2014
Warangal Meeting on Women's Farmers Issues	February 2014
Photographic evidence on diversification (2)	Undated (2012-2014)
Report on Increase in Income and Income sources for farmers associated with the cooperatives	Undated (2012-2014)
Enhancing food security and farm livelihoods through community based vegetable cultivation (Project Proposal)	2014-2017
Photographic evidence for cooperative commission visit – Enabavi convergence	Undated (2012-2014)
Data on cooperative wise schemes availed through various government programmes	2013-14
Organic Food Festival Flyer	2012
Cooperative Mela Note	2013-14
Anand Cooperative Mela Flyer	2014
Sahaja Aharam Certification by Aditi Organic Certification Pvt. Ltd.	2013
Certificate for Organic Farming	Undated (2012-2014)
Loan Details	2013
Graph on Cooperative Wise Financial Status	Undated (2012-2014)
Document on Cooperative Wise Share Capital	Undated (2012-2014)
Document on Value Chain Loan Agreement	Undated (2012-2014)
Terms of Agreement on Value Chain Fund Loan Agreement	Undated (2012-2014)
Andhra Pradesh State Budget for Agriculture	Undated (2012-2014)
Andhra Pradesh State Budget for Agriculture	2013-14
Article on Special Budget for Agriculture	Undated (2012-2014)
Trainings at the Cooperative Level	2013-14
Addressing Agriculture Crisis and Policy Advocacy	Undated (2012-2014)
Climate Variation and Adaptation (PPT)	Undated (2012-2014)
CSA Cooperative Member Details	2012-13, 2013-14
CSA Cooperative Board Member Details	2012-13, 2013-14
CSA Field CRP's Details	2012-13, 2013-14
Videos on debates over Separate State Agriculture Budget	Undated (2012-2014)
Visits to Enabavi Cooperative	Undated (2012-2014)
Visits to Haritha Cooperative	Undated (2012-2014)
Visits to Kadiri Cooperative	Undated (2012-2014)
Visits to Palabavi Cooperative	Undated (2012-2014)
Visits to Thungabhadra Cooperative	Undated (2012-2014)

Documents by CFA

Title	Year
Hivos assessment CSA FS 2011-12	2012?
Hivos assessment CSA FS 2012-13	2013?
Hivo annual report 2013	2013
Hivos_Business_Plan_2011_2015_English_translation	

Documents by Alliance

Title	Year
FINAL HIVOS ALLIANCE MFS Report 2011_27-04-2012x	2012
Hivos Alliance MFS Report 2012	2012
Hivos Alliance MFS Report 2012	2013
Brief 110719 Hivos Alliance baseline strengthening civil society	2011

Other documents

- Dr. Narayan G. Hegde, (Date unknown) New technologies to enhance agricultural production and sustainable rural livelihood, BAIIF
- 'Agricultural cooperatives are key to reduce hunger and poverty', <http://www.ifad.org/media/press/2011/76.htm>
- IFAD Brief 122: The Renewed Case for Farmers' Cooperatives: Diagnostics and Implications from Ghana.
<http://www.ifad.org/drd/agriculture/122.htm>
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<i>Social Watch</i>	http://www.socialwatch.org/sites/default/files/SERF2012_eng.pdf	Nov 2014
<i>Find The Best</i>	http://country-corruption.findthebest.com/l/98/India	Nov 2014
<i>Heritage</i>	http://www.heritage.org/index/pdf/2014/countries/india.pdf	August 2014
<i>Global Fund For Peace</i>	http://ffp.statesindex.org/2014-india	August 2014
<i>Freedom House</i>	https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2014/india-0#.VGCiRvIwtcQ	August 2014
<i>World Value Survey</i>	http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSCContents.jsp	August 2014
<i>Vision of Humanity</i>	http://www.visionofhumanity.org/#page/indexes/global-peace-index/2014/IND/OVER	August 2014
<i>Times of India</i>	http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Lens-on-foreign-funds-to-NGOs-featuring-on-IB-report/articleshow/37801293.cm	August 2014
<i>Financial Management Service Foundation</i>	http://www.fcraforngos.org/	August 2014
<i>Vision of Humanity</i>	http://www.visionofhumanity.org/#page/indexes/global-peace-index/2014/IND/OVER	August 2014
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	http://www.deccanchronicle.com/140702/nation-current-affairs/article/farmer-suicides-decline-andhra-pradesh	November 2014
	http://csa-india.org/who-we-are	12-11-2014
	http://www.saape.org/	November 2014
	https://www.facebook.com/AshaKisanSwaraj/info?ref=page_internal	November 2014
	http://www.downtoearth.org.in/content/farmers-andhra-pradesh-release-their-agenda-2014-elections	November 2014
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http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in:8080/jspui/bitstream/10603/8123/1/11_11_chapter%204.pdf", especially table 4.6 and http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---sro-new_delhi/documents/publication/wcms_146115.pdf
http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/8124/1/11_11_chapter%204.pdf
<http://redskadiri.wordpress.com/achievements/>
<http://forbesindia.com/article/real-issue/andhras-pesticidefree-farming-an-inconclusive-experiment/38018/1#ixzz3Gm0xSMox>] and <http://forbesindia.com/article/on-assignment/back-to-the-roots-for-andhra-pradesh-farmers/17822/1?utm=slidebox#ixzz3Gm2TEDLz>]

November 2014

November 2014

Resource persons consulted

For confidentiality reasons, we have removed the names of the people interviewed as well as their contact details.

Organisation

CMSA and SERP

Board Members of Farmers Cooperative
 Board Members of Farmers Cooperative
 Board Members of Farmers Cooperative
 Board Members of Farmers Cooperative
 Punnami and Tungabhadra cooperatives
 Punnami and Tungabhadra cooperatives
 Punnami and Tungabhadra cooperatives
 Scientist, expert in soil science
 CSA, PEACE and SERP
 All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS)
 REDS (Rural and Environment Development Society)
 Hivos

Relation with SPO

Para-statal body working with SHGs and women on sustainable agriculture and had collaborated with the SPO earlier
 Receives support to work with beneficiaries/households
 Receives support to work with beneficiaries/households
 Receives support to work with beneficiaries/households
 Receives support to work with beneficiaries/households
 Receives support to work with beneficiaries/households
 Receives support to work with beneficiaries/households
 Receives support to work with beneficiaries/households
 Others (Is a subject expert and an occasional resource person for CSA)
 Is collaborating with SPO
 Others, Farmers' Organisation of a political party
 Receives support to work with beneficiaries/households

 CSA's contact person between 2006-2010. Between 2011-2013, coordinated Hivos' global knowledge programme for India.

CSA Executive Director

CSA Joint Director CSA

CSA Programme Manager (seed)

CSA Associate Editor- Krishi media

CSA Operation Head (marketing)

CSA Program Coordinators (2 people)

CSA Program Officer

CSA Field Coordinator (3 people)

CSA Accounts Officer

CSA Administrative cum Data management Officer

CSA Board member

Appendix 1 CIVICUS and Civil Society Index Framework

CIVICUS, the World Alliance for Citizen Participation is an international alliance of members and partners which constitutes an influential network of organisations at the local, national, regional and international levels, and spans the spectrum of civil society. It has worked for nearly two decades to strengthen citizen action and civil society throughout the world. CIVICUS has a vision of a global community of active, engaged citizens committed to the creation of a more just and equitable world. This is based on the belief that the health of societies exists in direct proportion to the degree of balance between the state, the private sector and civil society.

One of the areas that CIVICUS works in is the Civil Society Index (CSI). Since 2000, CIVICUS has measured the state of civil society in 76 countries. In 2008, it considerably changed its CSI.

1.1 Guiding principles for measuring civil society

Action orientation: the principal aim of the CSI is to generate information that is of practical use to civil society practitioners and other primary stakeholders. Therefore, its framework had to identify aspects of civil society that can be changed, as well as generate knowledge relevant to action-oriented goals.

CSI implementation must be participatory by design: The CSI does not stop at the generation of knowledge alone. Rather, it also actively seeks to link knowledge-generation on civil society, with reflection and action by civil society stakeholders. The CSI has therefore continued to involve its beneficiaries, as well as various other actors, in this particular case, civil society stakeholders, in all stages of the process, from the design and implementation, through to the deliberation and dissemination stages.

This participatory cycle is relevant in that such a mechanism can foster the self-awareness of civil society actors as being part of something larger, namely, civil society itself. As a purely educational gain, it broadens the horizon of CSO representatives through a process of reflecting upon, and engaging with, civil society issues which may go beyond the more narrow foci of their respective organisations. A strong collective self-awareness among civil society actors can also function as an important catalyst for joint advocacy activities to defend civic space when under threat or to advance the common interests of civil society vis-à-vis external forces. These basic civil society issues, on which there is often more commonality than difference among such actors, are at the core of the CSI assessment.

CSI is change oriented: The participatory nature that lies at the core of the CSI methodology is an important step in the attempt to link research with action, creating a diffused sense of awareness and ownerships. However, the theory of change that the CSI is based on goes one step further, coupling this participatory principle with the creation of evidence in the form of a comparable and contextually valid assessment of the state of civil society. It is this evidence, once shared and disseminated, that ultimately constitutes a resource for action.

CSI is putting local partners in the driver's seat: CSI is to continue being a collaborative effort between a broad range of stakeholders, with most importance placed on the relationship between CIVICUS and its national partners.

1.2 Defining Civil Society

The 2008 CIVICUS redesign team modified the civil society definition as follows:

The arena, outside of the family, the state, and the market – which is created by individual and collective actions, organisations and institutions to advance shared interests.

Arena: In this definition the arena refers to the importance of civil society's role in creating public spaces where diverse societal values and interests interact (Fowler 1996). CSI uses the term 'arena' to describe the particular realm or space in a society where people come together to debate, discuss, associate and seek to influence broader society. CIVICUS strongly believes that this arena is distinct from other arenas in society, such as the market, state or family.

Civil society is hence defined as a political term, rather than in economic terms that resemble more the 'non-profit sector'.

Besides the spaces created by civil society, CIVICUS defines particular spaces for the family, the state and the market.

Individual and collective action, organisations and institutions: Implicit in a political understanding of civil society is the notion of agency; that civil society actors have the ability to influence decisions that affect the lives of ordinary people. The CSI embraces a broad range of actions taken by both individuals and groups. Many of these actions take place within the context of non-coercive organisations or institutions ranging from small informal groups to large professionally run associations.

Advance shared interests: The term 'interests' should be interpreted very broadly, encompassing the promotion of values, needs, identities, norms and other aspirations.

They encompass the personal and public, and can be pursued by small informal groups, large membership organisations or formal associations. The emphasis rests however on the element of 'sharing' that interest within the public sphere.

1.3 Civil Society Index- Analytical Framework

The 2008 Civil Society Index distinguishes 5 dimensions of which 4 (civic engagement, level of organisation, practice of values and perception of impact), can be represented in the form of a diamond and the fifth one (external environment) as a circle that influences upon the shape of the diamond.

Civic Engagement, or 'active citizenship', is a crucial defining factor of civil society. It is the hub of civil society and therefore is one of the core components of the CSI's definition. Civic engagement describes the formal and informal activities and participation undertaken by individuals to advance shared interests at different levels. Participation within civil society is multi-faceted and encompasses socially-based and politically-based forms of engagement.

Level of Organisation. This dimension assesses the organisational development, complexity and sophistication of civil society, by looking at the relationships among the actors within the civil society arena. Key sub dimensions are:

- Internal governance of Civil Society Organisations;
- Support infrastructure, that is about the existence of supporting federations or umbrella bodies;
- Self-regulation, which is about for instance the existence of shared codes of conducts amongst Civil Society Organisations and other existing self-regulatory mechanisms;
- Peer-to-peer communication and cooperation: networking, information sharing and alliance building to assess the extent of linkages and productive relations among civil society actors;
- Human resources, that is about the sustainability and adequacy of human resources available for CSOs in order to achieve their objectives:
 - Financial and technological resources available at CSOs to achieve their objectives;

- International linkages, such as CSO's membership in international networks and participation in global events.

Practice of Values. This dimension assesses the internal practice of values within the civil society arena. CIVICUS identified some key values that are deemed crucial to gauge not only progressiveness but also the extent to which civil society's practices are coherent with their ideals. These are:

- Democratic decision-making governance: how decisions are made within CSOs and by whom;
- Labour regulations: includes the existence of policies regarding equal opportunities, staff membership in labour unions, training in labour rights for new staff and a publicly available statement on labour standards;
- Code of conduct and transparency: measures whether a code of conduct exists and is available publicly. It also measures whether the CSO's financial information is available to the public.
- Environmental standards: examines the extent to which CSOs adopt policies upholding environmental standards of operation;
- Perception of values within civil society: looks at how CSOs perceive the practice of values, such as non-violence. This includes the existence or absence of forces within civil society that use violence, aggression, hostility, brutality and/or fighting, tolerance, democracy, transparency, trustworthiness and tolerance in the civil society within which they operate.

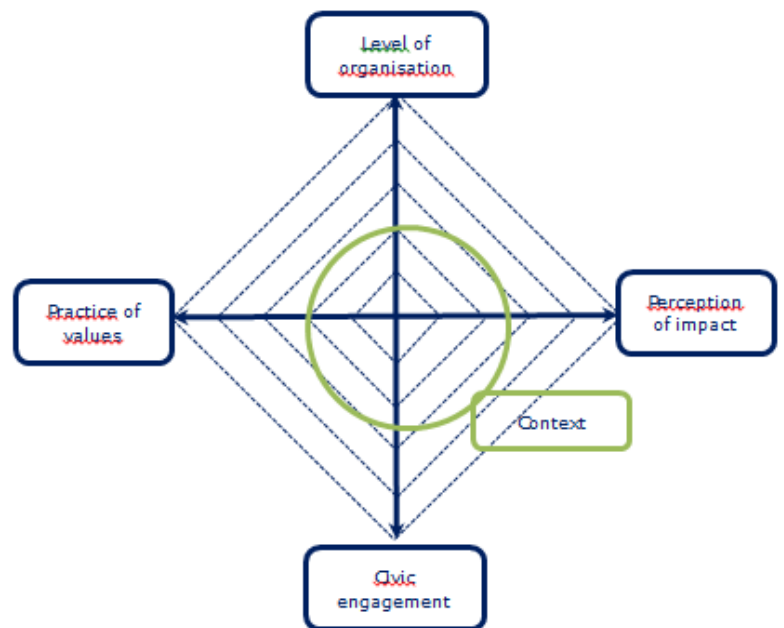
Perception of Impact. This is about the perceived impact of civil society actors on politics and society as a whole as the consequences of collective action. In this, the perception of both civil society actors (internal) as actors outside civil society (outsiders) is taken into account. Specific sub dimensions are

- Responsiveness in terms of civil society's impact on the most important social concerns within the country. "Responsive" types of civil society are effectively taking up and voicing societal concerns.
- Social impact measures civil society's impact on society in general. An essential role of civil society is its contribution to meet pressing societal needs;
- Policy impact: covers civil society's impact on policy in general. It also looks at the impact of CSO activism on selected policy issues;
- Impact on attitudes: includes trust, public spiritedness and tolerance. The sub dimensions reflect a set of universally accepted social and political norms. These are drawn, for example, from sources such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as CIVICUS' own core values. This dimension measures the extent to which these values are practised within civil society, compared to the extent to which they are practised in society at large.

Context Dimension: External

Environment. It is crucial to give consideration to the social, political and economic environments in which it exists, as the environment both directly and indirectly affects civil society. Some features of the environment may enable the growth of civil society. Conversely, other features of the environment hamper the development of civil society. Three elements of the external environment are captured by the CSI:

- Socio-economic context: The Social Watch's basic capabilities index and measures of corruption, inequality and macro-economic health are used portray the socioeconomic context that can have marked consequences for civil society, and perhaps most significantly at the lower levels of social development;
- Socio-political context: This is assessed using five indicators. Three of these are adapted from the Freedom House indices of political and civil rights and freedoms, including political rights and



freedoms, personal rights and freedoms within the law and associational and organisational rights and freedoms. Information about CSO experience with the country's legal framework and state effectiveness round out the picture of the socio-political context;

- Socio-cultural context: utilises interpersonal trust, which examines the level of trust that ordinary people feel for other ordinary people, as a broad measure of the social psychological climate for association and cooperation. Even though everyone experiences relationships of varying trust and distrust with different people, this measure provides a simple indication of the prevalence of a world view that can support and strengthen civil society. Similarly, the extent of tolerance and public spiritedness also offers indication of the context in which civil society unfolds.

Appendix 2 Methodology Civil Society

This appendix describes the evaluation methodology that was developed to evaluate the efforts of Dutch NGOs and their Southern Partner Organisations (SPO) to strengthen Civil Society in India, Ethiopia and Indonesia. The first paragraph introduces the terms of reference for the evaluation and the second discusses design issues, including sampling procedures and changes in the terms of reference that occurred between the 2012 and 2014 assessment. The third paragraph presents the methodologies developed to answer each of the evaluation questions.

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Terms of reference for the evaluation

The Netherlands has a long tradition of public support for civil bi-lateral development cooperation, going back to the 1960s. The Co-Financing System ('MFS) is its most recent expression. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant programme which meant to achieve sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch Co Financing Agencies have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

One component of the MFS II programme addresses the extent to which the Southern Partners of the Dutch Consortia are contributing towards strengthening civil society and this evaluation assesses this contribution for Southern Partner countries in Indonesia, India and Ethiopia. The evaluation comprised a baseline study, carried out in 2012, followed by an end line study in 2014.

The entire MFS II evaluation comprises assessments in eight countries where apart from a civil society component, also assessments towards achieving MDGs and strengthening the capacity of the southern partner organisations by the CFAs. A synthesis team is in place to aggregate findings of all eight countries. This team convened three synthesis team meetings, one in 2012, one in 2013 and one in 2014. All three meetings aimed at harmonising evaluation methodologies for each component across countries. CDI has been playing a leading role in harmonising its Civil Society and Organisational Capacity assessment with the other organisations in charge for those components in the other countries.

This appendix describes the methodology that has been developed for the evaluation of the efforts to strengthen civil society priority result area. We will first explain the purpose and scope of this evaluation and then present the overall evaluation design. We will conclude with describing methodological adaptations, limitations and implications.

2.1.2 Civil Society assessment – purpose and scope

The overall purpose of the joint MFS II evaluations is to account for results of MFS II-funded or –co-funded development interventions implemented by Dutch CFAs and/or their Southern partners and to contribute to the improvement of future development interventions.

The civil society evaluation is organised around 5 key questions:

- What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?
- To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?
- What is the relevance of these changes?
- Were the development interventions of the MFS II consortia efficient?

-
- What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

Furthermore, the evaluation methodology for efforts to strengthen civil society should:

- Describe how a representative sample of Southern partner organisations of the Dutch CFAs in the country will be taken
- Focus on five priority result areas that correspond with dimensions of the Civil Society Index (CSI) developed by CIVICUS (see paragraph 6.4 - Call for proposal). For each of those dimensions the call for proposal formulated key evaluation questions.
- Should compare results with available reference data (i.e. a CSI report or other relevant data from the country in question).

The results of this evaluation are to be used by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Dutch Consortia and their partner organisations. The evaluation methodology has to be participatory in the sense that Dutch Consortia and their partner organisation would be asked to give their own perception on a range of indicators of the adjusted CIVICUS analytical framework in 2012 and in 2014.

2.2 Designing the methodology

2.2.1 Evaluation principles and standards

The overall approach selected is a participatory, theory-based evaluation through a before and after comparison. This paragraph briefly describes these principles and how these have been translated into data collection principles. It also describes how a 'representative sample' of Southern Partner Organisations was selected and how the initial terms of references were adjusted with the consent of the commissioner of the evaluation, given the nature of the evaluation component and the resources available for the evaluation.

Recognition of complexity

The issues at stake and the interventions in civil society and policy influence are complex in nature, meaning that cause and effect relations can sometimes only be understood in retrospect and cannot be repeated. The evaluation methods should therefore focus on recurring patterns of practice, using different perspectives to understand changes and to acknowledge that the evaluation means to draw conclusions about complex adaptive systems (Kurtz and Snowden, 2003)⁹³.

Changes in the values of the Civil Society Indicators in the 2012-2014 period are then the result of conflict management processes, interactive learning events, new incentives (carrots and sticks) that mobilise or demobilise civil society, rather than the result of a change process that can be predicted from A to Z (a linear or logical framework approach)⁹⁴.

A theory-based evaluation

Theory-based evaluation has the advantage of situating the evaluation findings in an analysis that includes both what happened over the life of the project as well as the how and why of what happened (Rogers 2004). It demonstrates its capacity to help understand why a program works or fails to work, going further than knowing only outcomes by trying to systematically enter the black box (Weiss 2004).

Theory-based evaluations can provide a framework to judge effectiveness in context of high levels of complexity, uncertainty, and changeability when traditional (impact) evaluation methods are not suitable: the use of control groups for the civil society evaluation is problematic since comparable organizations with comparable networks and operating in a similar external environment would be quite difficult to identify and statistical techniques of matching cannot be used because of a small n.

⁹³ C. F. Kurtz, D. J. Snowden, The new dynamics of strategy: Sense-making in a complex and complicated world, in IBM Systems Journal vol 42, no 3, 2003)

⁹⁴ Caluwe de, L & Vermaak H. (2003) "Learning to Change. A Guide for Organization Change Agents" Sage Publications.

Because SPO's theories of change regarding their efforts to build civil society or to influence policies may alter during the 2012-2014 period, it requires us to develop a deep understanding of the change process and the dynamics that affect civil society and policies. It is important to understand what has led to specific (non-) changes and (un)-expected changes. These external factors and actors, as well as the SPO's agency need to be taken into account for the attribution question. Linear input-activities-outputs-outcomes-impact chains do not suffice for complex issues where change is both the result of SPOs' interventions as those by other actors and/or factors.

Therefore, the most reasonable counterfactual that can be used for this evaluation is that of considering alternative causal explanations of change (White and Philips, 2012). Therefore the SPOs' Theory of Change constructed in 2012 is also related to a Model of Change constructed in 2014 that tries to find the ultimate explanations of what happened in reality, including other actors and factors that might possibly explain the outcomes achieved.

Triangulation of methods and sources of information

For purposes of triangulation to improve the robustness, validity or credibility of the findings of the evaluation we used different types of data collection and analysis methods as well as different sources of information. The CIVICUS analytical framework was adjusted for this evaluation in terms of providing standard impact outcome indicators to be taken into account. Data collection methods used consisted of workshops with the SPO, interviews with key resource persons, focus group discussions, social network analysis (during the baseline), consultation of project documents; MFS II consortia documents and other documents relevant to assess general trends in civil society

Participatory evaluation

The evaluation is participatory in that both baseline and end line started with a workshop with SPO staff, decision makers and where possible board members. The baseline workshop helped SPOs to construct their own theory of change with regards to civil society. Detailed guidelines and tools have been developed by CDI for both baseline and follow-up, and these have been piloted in each of the countries CDI is involved in. Country based evaluators have had a critical input in reviewing and adapting these detailed guidelines and tools. This enhanced a rigorous data collection process. Additionally, the process of data analysis has been participatory where both CDI and in-country teams took part in the process and cross-check each other's inputs for improved quality. Rigorous analysis of the qualitative data was done with the assistance of the NVivo software program.

Using the evaluation standards as a starting point

As much as possible within the boundaries of this accountability driven evaluation, the evaluation teams tried to respect the following internationally agreed upon standards for program evaluation (Yarbrough et al, 2011). These are, in order of priority: Utility; Feasibility; Propriety; Accuracy; Accountability. However, given the entire set-up of the evaluation, the evaluation team cannot fully ensure the extent to which the evaluation is utile for the SPO and their CFAs; and cannot ensure that the evaluation findings are used in a proper way and not for political reasons

2.2.2 Sample selection

The terms of reference for this evaluation stipulate that the evaluators draw a sample of southern partner organisations to include in the assessment. Given the fact that the first evaluation questions intends to draw conclusions for the MDGs or the themes (governance or fragile states) for each countries a sample was drawn for the two or three most frequent MDGs or themes that the SPOs are working in.

The Dutch MFS II consortia were asked to provide information for each SPO regarding the MDG/theme it is working on, if it has an explicit agenda in the area of civil society strengthening and/or policy influence. The database then give an insight into the most important MDG/themes covered by the partner organisations, how many of these have an explicit agenda regarding civil society strengthening and/or policy influence. For Indonesia, 5 partner organisations were randomly selected for respectively MDG 7 (natural resources) and 5 for the governance theme. For India 5 SPOs were selected for MDG 1 (economic or agricultural development) and 5 others for the theme governance. The sample in Ethiopia

consists of 3 SPOs working on MDG 4,5 and 6 (Health); 3 SPOs for MDG 2 (education) and 3 SPOs for MDG 1 (economic or agricultural development).

2.2.3 Changes in the original terms of reference

Two major changes have been introduced during this evaluation and accepted by the commissioner of the MFS II evaluation. These changes were agreed upon during the 2013 and the 2014 synthesis team meetings.

The efficiency evaluation question:

During the June 2013 synthesis meeting the following decision was made with regards to measuring how efficient MFS II interventions for organisational capacity and civil society are:

[...] it was stressed that it is difficult to disentangle budgets for capacity development and civil society strengthening. SPOs usually don't keep track of these activities separately; they are included in general project budgets. Therefore, teams agreed to assess efficiency of CD [capacity development] and CS activities in terms of the outcomes and/or outputs of the MDG projects. This implies no efficiency assessment will be held for those SPOs without a sampled MDG project. Moreover, the efficiency assessment of MDG projects needs to take into account CD and CS budgets (in case these are specified separately). Teams will evaluate efficiency in terms of outcomes if possible. If project outcomes are unlikely to be observed already in 2014, efficiency will be judged in terms of outputs or intermediate results (e-mail quotation from Gerton Rongen at February 6, 2014).

Attribution/contribution evaluation question

During the June 2013 NWO-WOTRO workshop strategies were discussed to fit the amount of evaluation work to be done with the available resources. Therefore,

1. The number of SPOs that will undergo a full-fledged analysis to answer the attribution question, were to be reduced to 50 percent of all SPOs. Therefore the evaluation team used the following selection criteria:
 - An estimation of the annual amount of MFS II funding allocated to interventions that have a more or less direct relation with the civil society component. This implies the following steps to be followed for the inventory:
 - Covering all MDGs/themes in the original sample
 - Covering a variety of Dutch alliances and CFAs
2. The focus of the attribution question will be on two impact outcome areas, those most commonly present in the SPO sample for each country. The evaluation team distinguishes four different impact outcome areas:
 - The extent to which the SPO, with MFS II funding, engages more and diverse categories of society in the 2011-2014 period (Civicus dimensions "Civic engagement" and "perception of impact")
 - The extent to which the SPOs supports its intermediate organisations to make a valuable contribution to civil society in the 2011 -2014 period (Civicus dimension "Level of organisation" and "perception of impact")
 - The extent to which the SPO itself engages with other civil society organisations to make a valuable contribution to civil society in the 2011-2014 period (Civicus dimension "level of organisation")
 - The extent to which the SPO contributes to changing public and private sector policies and practices in the 2011-2014 period (Civicus dimension "perception of impact")
3. The CS dimension 'Practice of Values' has been excluded, because this dimension is similar to issues dealt with for the organisational capacity assessment.

The aforementioned analysis drew the following conclusions:

Table 8

SPOs to be included for full-fledged process tracing analysis.

Country	SPO in the in-depth analysis	Strategic CS orientation to include
Indonesia	Elsam, WARSI, CRI, NTFP-EP, LPPSLH	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening intermediate organisations AND influencing policies and practices 2. If only one of the two above mentioned is applicable, then select another appropriate impact outcome area to look at.
India	NNET, CWM, CECEOEDCON, Reds Tumkur, CSA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhancing civic engagement AND strengthening intermediate organisations 2. If only one of the two above mentioned is applicable then select another appropriate impact outcome area to look at.
Ethiopia	OSSA, EKHC, CCGG&SO, JeCCDO and ADAA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening the capacities of intermediate organisations AND SPO's engagement in the wider CS arena 2. If only one of the two above mentioned is applicable then select another appropriate impact outcome area to look at.

Source: Consultation of project documents

2.3 Answering the evaluation questions

2.3.1 Evaluation question 1 - Changes in civil society for the relevant MDGs/topics

Evaluation question 1: *What are the changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period, with particular focus on the relevant MDGs & themes in the selected country?*

Indicators and tools used

In line with the CIVICUS Civil Society Index, a scoring tool was developed in 2012 which comprises 17 indicators. The selection was inspired by those suggested in the terms of reference of the commissioner. Each indicator was, also in line with the CIVICUS index accompanied by an open evaluation question to be used for data collection in 2012 and 2014. In 2012 the scoring tool contained four statements describing the level of achievements of the indicator and scores ranged from 0 to 3 (low score - high score).

A comparison of the scores obtained in 2012 informed the evaluation team that there was a positive bias towards high scores, mostly between 2 and 3. Therefore during the 2014 assessment, it was decided to measure relative changes for each indicator in the 2012 – 2014 period, as well as the reasons for changes or no changes and assigning a score reflecting the change between -2 (considerable deterioration of the indicator value since 2012) and +2 (considerable improvement).

In 2012 and based upon the Theory of Change constructed with the SPO, a set of *standard indicators* were identified that would ensure a relation between the standard CIVICUS indicators and the interventions of the SPO. However, these indicators were not anymore included in the 2014 assessment because of the resources available and because the methodology fine-tuned for the attribution question in 2013, made measurement of these indicators redundant.

Also in 2012, as a means to measure the 'level of organisation' dimension a *social network analysis tool* was introduced. However this tool received very little response and was discontinued during the end line study.

Key questions to be answered for this evaluation question

In 2012, SPO staff and leaders, as well as outside resource persons were asked to provide answers to 17 questions, one per standard indicator of the scoring tool developed by CDI.

In 2012, the SPO staff and leaders were given the description of each indicator as it was in 2012 and had to answer the following questions:

1. How has the situation of this indicator changed compared to its description of the 2012 situation? Did it deteriorate considerably or did it improve considerably (-2 → +2)

2. What exactly has changed since 2012 for the civil society indicator that you are looking at? Be as specific as possible in your description.
3. What interventions, actors and other factors explain this change compared to the situation in 2012? Please tick and describe what happened and to what change this led. It is possible to tick and describe more than one choice.
 - Intervention by SPO, NOT financed by any of your Dutch partners
 - Intervention SPO, financed by your Dutch partner organisation(In case you receive funding from two Dutch partners, please specify which partner is meant here)
 - Other actor NOT the SPO, please specify.....
 - Other factor, NOT actor related, please specify.....
 - A combination of actors and factors, INCLUDING the SPO, but NOT with Dutch funding, please specify...
 - A combination of actors and factors, INCLUDING the SPO, but WITH Dutch funding, please specify...
 - Don't know
4. Generally speaking, which two of the five CIVICUS dimensions (civic engagement, level of organisation, practice of values, perception of impact, environment) changed considerably between 2012 – 2014? For each of these changes, please describe:
 - Nature of the change
 - Key interventions, actors and factors (MFS II or non-MFS II related) that explain each change (entirely or partially).

Sources for data collection

During the baseline and the end line and for purposes of triangulation, several methods were used to collect data on each (standard) indicator:

- Self-assessment per category of staff within the SPO: where possible, three subgroups were made to assess the scores: field staff/programme staff, executive leadership and representatives of the board,, general assembly, and internal auditing groups if applicable completed with separate interviews;
- Interviews with external resource persons. These consisted of three categories: key actors that are knowledgeable about the MDG/theme the SPO is working on and who know the civil society arena around these topics; civil society organisations that are being affected by the programme through support or CSOs with which the SPO is collaborating on equal footing, and; representatives of public or private sector organisations with which the SPO is interacting
- Consultation and analysis of reports that relate to each of the five CIVICUS dimensions.
- Project documents, financial and narrative progress reports, as well as correspondence between the SPO and the CFA.
- Social network analysis (SNA), which was discontinued in the end line study.

During the follow-up, emphasis was put on interviewing the same staff and external persons who were involved during the baseline for purpose of continuity.

2.3.2 Evaluation question 2 – “Attribution” of changes in civil society to interventions of SPOs.

Evaluation question 2: To what degree are the changes identified attributable to the development interventions of the Southern partners of the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?

Adapting the evaluation question and introduction to the methodology chosen

In line with the observation of Stern et al. (2012) that the evaluation question, the programme attributes, and the evaluation approaches all provide important elements to conclude on the evaluation design to select, the teams in charge of evaluating the civil society component concluded that given the attributes of the programmes it was impossible to answer the *attribution* question as formulated in the Terms of References of the evaluation and mentioned above. Therefore, the evaluation teams worked towards answering the extent *to which the programme contributed towards realising the outcomes*.

For this endeavour explaining outcome process-tracing⁹⁵ was used. The objective of the process tracing methodology for MFS II, in particular for the civil society component is to:

- Identify what interventions, actors and factors explain selected impact outcomes for process tracing.
- Assess how the SPO with MFS II funding contributed to the changes in the selected impact outcomes and how important this contribution is given other actors and factors that possibly influence the attainment of the outcome. Ruling out rival explanations, which are other interventions, actors or factors that are not related to MFS II funding.

Methodology – getting prepared

As described before a limited number of SPOs were selected for process tracing and for each country strategic orientations were identified as a means to prevent a bias occurring towards only positive impact outcomes and as a means to support the in-country evaluation teams with the selection of outcomes to focus on as much as was possible, based upon the project documents available at CDI. These documents were used to track realised outputs and outcomes against planned outputs and outcomes. During the workshop (see evaluation question on changes in civil society) and follow-up interviews with the SPO, two impact outcomes were selected for process tracing.

Steps in process tracing

1. Construct the theoretical model of change – by in-country evaluation team

After the two impact outcomes have been selected and information has been obtained about what has actually been achieved, the in-country evaluation team constructs a visual that shows all pathways that might possibly explain the outcomes. The inventory of those possible pathways is done with the SPO, but also with external resource persons and documents consulted. This culminated in a Model of Change. A MoC of good quality includes: The causal pathways that relate interventions/parts by any actor, including the SPO to the realised impact outcome; assumptions that clarify relations between different parts in the pathway, and; case specific and/or context specific factors or risks that might influence the causal pathway, such as for instance specific attributes of the actor or socio-cultural-economic context. The Models of Change were discussed with the SPO and validated.

2. Identify information needs to confirm or reject causal pathways as well as information sources needed.

This step aims to critically reflect upon what information is needed that helps to confirm one of causal pathways and at that at same time helps to reject the other possible explanations. Reality warns that this type of evidence will hardly be available for complex development efforts. The evaluators were asked to behave as detectives of Crime Scene Investigation, ensuring that the focus of the evaluation was not only on checking if parts/interventions had taken place accordingly, but more specifically on identifying information needs that confirm or reject the relations between the parts/interventions. The key question to be answered was: "What information do we need in order to confirm or reject that one part leads to another part or, that X causes Y?". Four types of evidence were used, where appropriate:⁹⁶

- *Pattern evidence* relates to predictions of statistical patterns in the evidence. This may consist of trends analysis and correlations.
- *Sequence evidence* deals with the temporal and spatial chronology of events predicted by a hypothesised causal mechanism. For example, a test of the hypothesis could involve expectations of the timing of events where we might predict that if the hypothesis is valid, we should see that the event B took place after event A. However, if we found that event B took place before event A, the test would suggest that our confidence in the validity of this part of the mechanism should be reduced (disconfirmation/ falsification).

⁹⁵ Explaining outcome process tracing attempts to craft a minimally sufficient explanation of a puzzling outcome in a specific historical case. Here the aim is not to build or test more general theories but to craft a (minimally) sufficient explanation of the outcome of the case where the ambitions are more case centric than theory oriented. The aim of process tracing is not to verify if an intended process of interventions took place as planned in a particular situation, but that it aims at increasing our understanding about what works under what conditions and why (Beach & Pedersen, 2013).

⁹⁶ Beach and Pederson, 2013

- *Trace evidence* is evidence whose mere existence provides proof that a part of a hypothesised mechanism exists. For example, the existence of meeting minutes, if authentic, provides strong proof that the meeting took place.
- *Account evidence* deals with the content of empirical material, such as meeting minutes that detail what was discussed or an oral account of what took place in the meeting.

3. Collect information necessary to confirm or reject causal pathways

Based upon the inventory of information needs the evaluation teams make their data collection plan after which data collection takes place.

4. Analyse the data collected and assessment of their quality.

This step consists of compiling all information collected in favour or against a causal pathway in a table or in a list per pathway. For all information used, the sources of information are mentioned and an assessment of the strength of the evidence takes place, making a distinction between strong, weak and moderate evidence. For this we use the traffic light system: **green letters mean strong evidence**, **red letters mean weak evidence** and **orange letter mean moderate evidence**: The following table provides the format used to assess these issues.

Table 9

Organisation of information collected per causal pathway and assessing their quality

Causal pathway	Information that confirms (parts of) this pathway		Information that rejects (parts of) this pathway	
Pathway 1 Part 1.1 Part 1.2 Etc	Information 1 Information 2 Information 3 etc	Source of information Source of information Source of information etc	Information 1 Information 2 Information 3 etc	Source of information Source of information Source of information etc
Pathway 2 Part 2.1 Part 2.2 Etc.	Information 1 Information 2 Information 3 etc	Source of information Source of information Source of information etc	Information 1 Information 2 Information 3 etc	Source of information Source of information Source of information etc
Pathway 3				






Sources: Dieuwke Klaver

5. Assessing the nature of the relations between parts in the model of change

The classification of all information collected is being followed by the identification of the pathways that most likely explain the impact outcome achieved. For this the evaluators assess the nature of the relations between different parts in the MoC. Based upon Mayne (2012) and Stern et al (2012) the following relations between parts in the MoC are mapped and the symbols inserted into the original MoC.

Table 10

Nature of the relation between parts in the Model of Change

Nature of the relation between parts and other parts or outcome	
The part is the only causal explanation for the outcome. No other interventions or factors explain it. (necessary and sufficient)	
The part does not explain the outcome at all: other subcomponents explain the outcomes.	
The part explains the outcome but other parts explain the outcome as well: there are multiple pathways (sufficient but not necessary)	
The part is a condition for the outcome but won't make it happen without other factors (necessary but not sufficient)	
The part explains the outcome, but requires the help of other parts to explain the outcome in a sufficient and necessary way (not a sufficient cause, but necessary) → it is part of a causal package	

Sources: Mayne, 2012; Stern et al, 2012

6. Write down the contribution and assess the role of the SPO and MFS II funding

This final step consists of answering the following questions, as a final assessment of the contribution question:

- The first question to be answered is: What explains the impact outcome?
- The second question is: What is the role of the SPO in this explanation?
- The third question, if applicable is: what is the role of MFS II funding in this explanation?

Sources for data collection

Information necessary to answer this evaluation question is to be collected from:

- Interviews with resource persons inside and outside the SPO
- Project documents and documentation made available by other informants
- Websites that possibly confirm that an outcome is achieved and that the SPO is associated with this outcome
- Meeting minutes of meetings between officials
- Time lines to trace the historical relations between events
- Policy documents
- etc

2.3.3 Evaluation question 3 – Relevance of the changes

Evaluation question 3: *What is the relevance of these changes?*

The following questions are to be answered in order to assess the relevance of the changes in Civil Society.

- How do the MFS II interventions and civil society outcomes align with the Theory of Change developed during the baseline in 2012? What were reasons for changing or not changing interventions and strategies?
- What is the civil society policy of the Dutch alliance that collaborates with the SPO? And how do the MFS II interventions and civil society outcomes align with the civil society policy of the Dutch alliance that collaborates with the SPO?
- How relevant are the changes achieved in relation to the context in which the SPO is operating?
- What is the further significance of these changes for building a vibrant civil society for the particular MDG/ theme in the particular context?

Sources for data collection

For this question the following sources are to be consulted:

- Review of the information collected during interviews with the SPO and outside resource persons
- The 2012 Theory of Change
- Interview with the CFA liaison officer of the SPO;
- Review of reports, i.e: the civil society policy document of the Dutch Alliance that was submitted for MFS II funding, relevant documents describing civil society for the MDG/ theme the SPO is working on in a given context.

2.3.4 Evaluation question 4, previously 5 - Factors explaining the findings

Evaluation question 4: *What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?*

To answer this question we look into information available that:

- Highlight changes in the organisational capacity of the SPO
- Highlight changes in the relations between the SPO and the CFA
- Highlight changes in the context in which the SPO is operating and how this might affect positively or negatively its organisational capacity.

Sources for data collection

Sources of information to be consulted are:

- Project documents

-
- Communications between the CFA and the SPO
 - Information already collected during the previous evaluation questions.

2.4 Analysis of findings

A qualitative software programme NVivo 10 (2010) was used to assist in organizing and making sense of all data collected. Although the software cannot take over the task of qualitative data analysis, it does 1) improve transparency by creating a record of all steps taken, 2) organize the data and allow the evaluator to conduct a systematic analysis, 3) assist in identifying important themes that might otherwise be missed, and 4) reduce the danger of bias due to human cognitive limitations, compared to "intuitive data processing" (Sadler 1981). The qualitative data in the evaluation consisted of transcripts from semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions workshops, field notes from observation, and a range of documents available at the SPO or secondary information used to collect reference data and to obtain a better understanding of the context in which the CS component evolves.

To analyse this diverse collection of data, several analytical strategies are envisioned, specifically content analysis, discourse analysis, and thematic analysis. Although each of these strategies can be understood as a different lens through which to view the data, all will require a carefully developed and executed coding plan.

Data have been coded according to: standard civil society indicator; outcome included for in-depth contribution analysis; relevance, and; explaining factors.

This qualitative analysis will be supported by a limited amount of quantitative data largely arising from the score assigned by the evaluation team to each performance indicator described in the civil society scoring tool. Other quantitative data in this study are drawn information provided in background literature and organisational documents as well as the Social Network Analysis method.

2.5 Limitations to the methodology

2.5.1 General limitations with regards to the MFS II evaluation

The MFS II programme and CIVICUS

Although the MFS II programme stated that all proposals need to contribute to civil society strengthening in the South⁹⁷, mention was made of the use of the CIVICUS framework for monitoring purposes. The fact that civil society was to be integrated as one of the priority result areas next to that of organisational capacity and MDGs became only clear when the MoFA communicated its mandatory monitoring protocol. In consequence, civil society strengthening in the MFS II programmes submitted to the ministry is mainstreamed into different sub programmes, but not addressed as a separate entity.

This late introduction of the Civil Society component also implies that project documents and progress reports do not make a distinction in MDG or theme components vs those of civil society strengthening, leaving the interpretation of what is a civil society intervention our outcome and what not to the interpretation of the evaluation team.

At the same time the evaluation team observes that SPOs and CFAs have started to incorporate the organisational capacity tool that is being used in the monitoring protocol in their own organisational assessment procedures. None of the SPOs is familiar with the CIVICUS framework and how it fits into their interventions.

⁹⁷ Policy Framework Dutch Cofinancing System II 2011 - 2015

Differences between CIVICUS and MFS II evaluation

CIVICUS developed a Civil Society Index that distinguishes 5 dimensions and for each of these a set of indicators has been developed. Based upon a variety of data collection methods, a validation team composed of civil society leaders provides the scores for the civil society index.

Major differences between the way the Civil Society Index is been used by CIVICUS and for this MFS II evaluation is the following:

1. CIVICUS defines its unit of analysis in terms of the civil society arena at national and/or subnational level and does not start from individual NGOs. The MFS II evaluation put the SPO in the middle of the civil society arena and then looked at organisations that receive support; organisations with which the SPO is collaborating. The civil society arena boundaries for the MFS II evaluation are the public or private sector organisations that the SPO relates to or whose policies and practices it aims to influence
2. The CIVICUS assessments are conducted by civil society members itself whereas the MFS II evaluation is by nature an external evaluation conducted by external researchers. CIVICUS assumes that its assessments, by organising them as a joint learning exercise, will introduce change that is however not planned. With the MFS II evaluation the focus was on the extent to which the interventions of the SPO impacted upon the civil society indicators.
3. CIVICUS has never used its civil society index as a tool to measure change over a number of years. Each assessment is a stand-alone exercise and no efforts are being made to compare indicators over time or to attribute changes in indicators to a number of organisations or external trends.

Dimensions and indicator choice

The CIVICUS dimensions in themselves are partially overlapping; the dimension 'perception of impact' for instance contains elements that relate to 'civic engagement' and to 'level of organisation'. Similar overlap is occurring in the civil society scoring tool developed for this evaluation and which was highly oriented by a list of evaluation questions set by the commissioner of the evaluation.

Apart from the overlap, we observe that some of the standard indicators used for the civil society evaluation were not meaningful for the SPOs under evaluation. This applies for instance for the political engagement indicator "How intense is your (individual staff or organisational) participation in locally-nationally elected bodies and/or sectoral user groups?"

Measuring change over a two-year period

The MFS II programme started its implementation in 2011 and it will finish in 2015, whereas its evaluation started mid-2012 and will end in the beginning of 2014. The period between the baseline and the end line measurement hardly covers 2 years in some cases. Civil society building and policy influence are considered the type of interventions that requires up to 10 years to reap significant results, especially when taking into account attitudes and behaviour. Apart from the fact that the baseline was done when MFS II was already operational in the field for some 1,5 years, some SPO interventions were a continuation of programmes designed under the MFS I programme, hence illustrating that the MFS II period is not a clear boundary. Contracts with other SPOs ended already in 2012, and practically coincided with the baseline assessment being conducted at the moment the relationship with the CFA had practically ended.

Aggregation of findings

Although working with standard indicators and assigning them scores creates expectations of findings being compared and aggregated at national and international level, this may lend itself to a quick but inaccurate assessment of change. Crude comparison between programs on the basis of findings is problematic, and risks being politically abused. The evaluation team has to guard against these abuses by ensuring the necessary modesty in extrapolating findings and drawing conclusions.

Linking the civil society component to the other components of the MFS II evaluation

The Theory of Change in the terms of reference assumes that CFAs are strengthening the organisational capacity of their partners, which is evaluated in the organisational capacity components, which then leads to impact upon MDGs or upon civil society. Because the evaluation methodology designed for both the organisational capacity and the civil society evaluation require considerable time investments of the SPOs, a deliberate choice was made not to include SPOs under the organisational capacity component in

that of Civil Society. This may possibly hamper conclusions regarding the assumption of capacitated SPOs being able to impact upon civil society. However, where information is available and where it is relevant, the civil society component will address organisational capacity issues.

No such limitations were made with regards to SPOs in the MDG sample, however, apart from Indonesia; none of the SPOs in the civil society sample is also in that of MDG.

2.5.2 Limitations during baseline with regards to the methodology

A very important principle upon which this evaluation methodology is based is that of triangulation, which implies that different stakeholders and documents are consulted to obtain information about the same indicator from different perspectives. Based upon these multiple perspectives, a final score can be given on the same indicator which is more valid and credible.

For India this has not always been possible:

- For each SPO a Survey Monkey questionnaire was developed to assess the intensity of the interaction between stakeholders in the network. Out of 233 actors that were invited to fill in this 5 minute questionnaire, only 79 actors effectively filled in the questionnaire = 34 %. The online Social Network Analysis aims at having both the opinion of the SPO on the intensity of the interaction with another actor, as well as the opinion of the other for triangulation. Important reasons for not filling in this form are that actors in the network are not technology savvy, or that they have difficulties in accessing internet.
- With regards to filling in offline interview forms or answering questions during interviews a number of civil society actors did not want to score themselves because they do not benefit from the interventions of the MFS II projects. Having the scores of their own organisations will help to assess the wider environment in which the SPO operates and possibly an impact of the SPO on other civil society organisations in 2014.
- With regards to public officials the evaluation team faced difficulties to have their opinions on a certain number of indicators such as perception of impact on policy influencing and relations between public organisations and civil society. Public officials fear that they will be quoted in the assessment, which may have repercussions for their position.

India has many different ethnic groups which speak many different languages. Although the evaluation team speaks the most important languages, sometimes it was really difficult to have a deep insight into all the processes in civil society and in policy influencing. Due to these language barriers it has been difficult to map the processes – the ripple effects of efforts to build civil society and to influence policies.

2.5.3 Limitations during end line with regards to the methodology

Project documentation

The methodology assumed that project documents and progress reports would be helpful in linking project interventions to the CIVICUS framework and obtaining an overview of outputs-outcomes achieved versus planned. These overviews would then be used to orient the in-country evaluation teams for the quick or in-depth contribution analysis.

In practice the most recent progress reports were hardly available with the CFAs or were made available later in the process. These reports often were not helpful in accumulating outputs towards to the planned outputs and even outcomes. Hardly any information is available at outcome or impact level and no monitoring systems are available to do so. Key information missing and relevant for civil society impact (but also to track progress being made on effects of project interventions) is for instance a comprehensive overview of the organisational performance of organisations supported by the SPO. For a number of SPOs the reality was different than the progress reports reflected which meant that constant fine-tuning with the in-country evaluation team was necessary and that CDI could not always provide them with the guidance needed for the selection of impact outcomes for contribution analysis.

Country specific limitations – India

The India team observes that triangulation of data was not always possible, given the resources available for the evaluation team. This was in particular valid for the first evaluation question regarding *changes*. Like during the baseline, government officials were not willing to take part in the evaluation because of the strict protocol they have to follow.

With regards to the first evaluation question on changes:

- During the end line scores (-2 until +2) were assigned to indicate relative changes. The in-country evaluation team observes that SPOs were inclined to interpret a score 0 as the organization not being performant on the issue, whereas in terms of the evaluation methodology it only states that no change took place which can be positive or negative in itself. This could lead to a bias towards having more positive changes.
- As already mentioned, there is overlap in answers being given for different indicators. They are not discriminatory enough, which is partly due to the CIVICUS framework and the indications given in the call for proposals.

With regards to the second evaluation question regarding attribution

- A critical step was the selection of the impact outcomes to look at for contribution analysis. Although strategic orientations for selection were given for each country as a measure to prevent bias taking place at SPO level, the ultimate selection of outcomes after the workshop and with the SPO focussed in most cases on impact outcomes to which the SPO claims to have positively contributed.
- The design of the model of change that visualizes all pathways that possibly explain the outcome achieved has also proven to be a difficult step. In this phase it is critical that the evaluation team works together to brainstorm on alternative pathways. A major challenge is that in-country teams at that moment of the evaluation have obtained a lot of information from the SPO, and not from other NGOs or resource persons, which possibly might strengthen their bias in favour of attributing change to the SPO.
- The focus of the assessment has been on the contribution of the SPO, rather than that of MFS II funding. Not in all cases MFS II contribution has been clearly earmarked for specific interventions or results and some CFAs have preferred to give institutional support to their partners, making it even more difficult to assess contribution/attribution.
- The process tracing methodology was not a simple step to step straight forward methodology and has needed a lot of back and forth between CDI and IDF and even within the CDI team. Points that were challenging: defining the ultimate outcome (SMART enough) to be explained through process tracing, identifying relevant pathways and describing them properly, defining indicators to assess whether the impact outcome has been achieved or not (look for the adequate information when it exists), dare to conclude that some pathways are less relevant than others, not wanting to include all the SPO's interventions to one outcome.
- Defining the strength of evidence came out to be quite subjective, especially when it came to assessing interviewee's inputs. How to carefully assess interview findings of the SPO with those of other actors.
- Process –Tracing requires sufficient documentation/ pieces of evidence and these were often not available at the level of the SPOs and when they were available they were often contradicting each other (different reports including different figures on the same results).
- More time was needed to get the methodology about process tracing well under control. Because of time and budget constraints, learning was made on the job. Moreover because of delayed feed-back from CDI side, errors were repeated since time did not allow for a spreading of SPO workshops.
- Because of resource constraints, coding of data collected was done once and for most but in practice it was not relevant: you first need to have an idea about the changes before you can do a good process tracing and before you can answer evaluation questions regarding relevance and explaining factors.

With regards to the general evaluation procedure

- The workshop methodology was structured for literate English speaking people, which was not always the case. As a consequence, delays and possible misunderstanding happened due to translation and more time was needed to process the data.

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- Many forms were filled in after the workshop/interviews and not between the workshop and the interviews as a means to inform the interview questions and the process tracing. The methodology and overall evaluation process would have benefited from allowing more time between the different parts, for example having more time between workshop and implementing process tracing to get properly prepared
 - The report format provided by the synthesis team includes lots of repetitions (for example, elements of the context are found back into standard indicators 5.1) and would have gained in being better structured.
 - The ToC developed during the baseline took SPO's staff time and dedication. The participants who had been involved during that process regretted that the end line workshop did not utilize the ToC more. In fact the ToC was used as a starting point to assess relevance issues, which was discussed during interviews rather than during the workshop.

With regards to collaboration between CDI and IDF

- The CDI team would have gained in being more consolidated (for example sending one type of feed-back to IDF) and having more dedicated time for the evaluation (feed-back did not arrive on time)

Civil Society Scoring tool - baseline

Civil Society Assessment tool – Standard Indicators

Dimension	Outcome domains		Question	Statements					What are factors (strengths, weaknesses) that explain the current situation?
				0	1	2	3	x	
Civic engagement	1	Needs of marginalised groups	How does your organisation take the needs of your beneficiaries/target groups, in particular marginalised groups into account in your planning, actions, activities, and/or strategies?	Are NOT taken into account	Are POORLY taken into account	Are PARTLY taken into account	Are FULLY taken into account	Question not relevant, because	
	2	Involvement of target groups	What is the level of participation of your beneficiaries/target groups, in particular marginalised groups in the analysis, planning and evaluation of your activities?	They are INFORMED about on-going and/or new activities that you will implement	They are CONSULTED by your organisation. You define the problems and provide the solutions.	They CARRY OUT activities and/or form groups upon your request. They provide resources (time, land, labour) in return for your assistance (material and/or immaterial)	They ANALYSE PROBLEMS AND FORMULATE IDEAS together with your organisation and/or take action independently from you.	Question not relevant, because	
	3	Political engagement	How intense is your (individual staff or organisational) participation in locally-nationally elected bodies and/or sectoral user groups?	No participation	You are occasionally CONSULTED by these bodies	You are a member of these bodies. You attend meetings as a participant	You are a member of these bodies. You are chairing these bodies or sub groups	Question not relevant, because	

level of organisation	5	Relations with other organisations	In the past 12 months what has been the most intensive interaction you had with other CSOs?	No interaction at all	Networking - Cooperation: Inform each other; roles somewhat defined; all decisions made independently	Coordination - Coalition: ideas and resources shared; roles defined and divided; all have a vote in decision making	Collaboration: organisations belong to one system; mutual trust; consensus on all decisions.	Question not relevant, because	
	5	Frequency of dialogue with closest CSO	In the past 12 months how many meetings did you have with the CSO that you have most intensive interaction with?	No interaction at all	Less than 2 times a year	Between 2 and 3 times a year	More than 4 times a year	Question not relevant, because	
	6	Defending the interests of marginalised groups:	Which CSO are most effective in defending the interests of your target groups? In the past 12 months, how did you relate to those CSOs?	No interaction at all	Networking - Cooperation: Inform each other; roles somewhat defined; all decisions made independently	Coordination - Coalition: ideas and resources shared; roles defined and divided; all have a vote in decision making	Collaboration: organisations belong to one system; mutual trust; consensus on all decisions.	Question not relevant, because	
	7	Composition current financial resource base	How does your organisation finance institutional costs such as workshops of the General Assembly (if applicable); attendans to workshops of other CSOs; costs for organisational growth and/or networking?	Depends on 1 international donor	Depends on few financial sources: one fund cover(s) more than 75% of all costs.	Depends on a variety of financial sources; one fund cover(s) more than 50% of all costs.	Depends on a variety of sources of equal importance. Wide network of domestic funds	Question not relevant, because	
Practice of Values	8	Downward accountability	To what extent can mandatory social organs (steering committee, general assembly, internal auditing group) ask your executive leaders to be accountable to them?	(financial) information is made available and decisions are taken openly	They fulfil their formal obligation to explain strategic decisions and actions	They react to requests of social organs to justify/explain actions and decisions made	Social organs use their power to sanction management in case of misconduct or abuse	Question not relevant, because	
	9	Composition of social organs	What % of members of your mandatory social organs belong to the marginalised target groups you are working	Between 0-10 % of all members of the social organs	Between 11-30 % of all members of the social organs	Between 31-65 % of all members of the social organs	More than 65% of all members of the social organs	Question not relevant, because	

		with/for?							
	10	External financial auditing	How regularly is your organisation audited externally?	Never	Occasionally, upon request of funders	Periodically and regularly, because our external funder asks for it	Periodically and regularly, because it is part of our code of conduct	Question not relevant, because	
Perception of impact	11	Client satisfaction	What are the most important concerns of your target groups? How do your services take into account those important concerns?	Majority of target groups are NOT satisfied	Majority of target groups are POORLY satisfied	Majority of target groups are PARTLY satisfied	Majority of target groups are MOSTLY satisfied	Question not relevant, because	
	12	Civil society impact.	In the past 12 months, what impact did you have on building a strong civil society?	You have not undertaken any activities of this kind	You have undertaken activities of this kind but there is no discernible impact	You have undertaken activities of this kind but impact is limited	You have undertaken activities and examples of significant success can be detected.	Question not relevant, because	
	13	Relation with public sector organisations.	In the past 12 months, what interaction did you have with public sector organisations to realise your programme and organisations' objectives?	No direct interaction	You have been invited by public sector organisations for sharing of information	You have been invited by public sector organisations for regular consultations (but public sector decides)	Formal and regular meetings as a multi-stakeholder task force.	Question not relevant, because	
	14	Relation with private sector organisations	In the past 12 months, what interaction did you have with private sector organisations to realise your programme and organisations' perspective?	No direct interaction	You have been invited by private sector organisations for sharing of information	You have been invited by private sector organisations for regular consultations (but public sector decides)	Formal and regular meetings as a multi-stakeholder task force.	Question not relevant, because	
	15	Influence upon public policies, rules, regulations	How successful have you been in influencing public policies and practices in the past 2 years?	No activities developed in this area	Some activities developed but without discernible impact	Many activities developed in this area, but impact until so far has been limited	Many activities developed in this area and examples of success can be detected	Question not relevant, because	

		Influence upon private sector agencies' policies, rules, regulations.	How successful have you been in influencing private sector policies and practices in the past 2 years?	No activities developed in this area	Some activities developed but without discernible impact	Many activities developed in this area, but impact until so far has been limited	Many activities developed in this area and examples of success can be detected	Question not relevant, because	
	16								
Context Environmental			In the past 2 years, how did your organisation cope with these changes in the context that may have been positive or negative consequences for civil society.	No analysis of the space and role of civil society has been done.	You are collecting information of the space and role of civil society but not regularly analysing it.	You are monitoring the space and role of civil society and analysing the consequences of changes in the context for your own activities. Examples are available.	You are involved in joint action to make context more favourable. Examples are available.	Question not relevant, because	
	17	Coping strategies							

Appendix 3 Civil Society Scores

This table presents the appreciation of the evaluation team regarding changes occurred for each indicator between 2012 and 2014 on a scale of -2 to + 2

- 2 = Considerable deterioration

- 1 = A slight deterioration

0 = no change occurred, the situation is the same as in 2012

+1 = slight improvement

+2 = considerable improvement

Dimension		Indicators	Question	Change
Civic engagement	1	Needs of marginalised groups	How does your organisation take the needs of your beneficiaries/target groups, in particular marginalised groups into account in your planning, actions, activities, and/or strategies?	+2
	2	Involvement of target groups	What is the level of participation of your beneficiaries/target groups, in particular marginalised groups in the analysis, planning and evaluation of your activities?	+2
	3	Political engagement	How intense is your (individual staff or organisational) participation in locally-nationally elected bodies and/or sectoral user groups?	+1
Level of organisation	5	Relations with other organisations	In the past 12 months what has been the most intensive interaction you had with other CSOs?	+1
	5	Frequency of dialogue with closest CSO	In the past 12 months how many meetings did you have with the CSO that you have most intensive interaction with?	+1
	6	Defending the interests of marginalised groups	Which CSO are most effective in defending the interests of your target groups? In the past 12 months, how did you relate to those CSOs?	+1
	7	Composition current financial resource base	How does your organisation finance institutional costs such as workshops of the General Assembly (if applicable); attendance to workshops of other CSOs; costs for organisational growth and/or networking?	+1
Practice of Values	8	Downward accountability	To what extent can mandatory social organs (steering committee, general assembly, internal auditing group) ask your executive leaders to be accountable to them?	0
	9	Composition of social organs	What % of members of your mandatory social organs belong to the marginalised target groups you are working with/for?	0
	10	External financial auditing	How regularly is your organisation audited externally?	+1
Perception of impact	11	Client satisfaction	What are the most important concerns of your target groups? How do your services take into account those important concerns?	+2
	12	Civil society impact.	In the past 12 months, what impact did you have on building a strong civil society?	+2
	13	Relation with public sector organisations.	In the past 12 months, what interaction did you have with public sector organisations to realise your programme and organisations' objectives?	+1
	14	Relation with private sector organisations	In the past 12 months, what interaction did you have with private sector organisations to realise your programme and organisations' perspective?	+1
	15	Influence upon public policies, rules, regulations	How successful have you been in influencing public policies and practices in the past 2 years?	+2
	16	Influence upon private sector agencies' policies, rules, regulations.	How successful have you been in influencing private sector policies and practices in the past 2 years?	Not applicable

CS cont ext	17	Coping strategies	In the past 2 years, how did your organisation cope with these changes in the context that may have been positive or negative consequences for civil society.	+1
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Appendix 4 Changes in civil society indicators between 2012 and 2014

4.1 Civic Engagement

4.1.1 Needs of marginalised groups SPO

CSA aims to promote non-pesticidal farming techniques towards the adaptation of ecological practices among farmers—including small, marginal and women farmers, sharecroppers, tenants and Dalits—in six districts of Andhra Pradesh (AP). To further its cause CSA has helped constitute seven registered farmers' cooperatives over the past seven years⁹⁸—three more formed between 2012 and 2014 are in the process of getting registered—and a consumer cooperative called Sahaja Aharam⁹⁹. The cooperatives are initiated to promote collective action and participation in all the agricultural practices starting from seed to market. CSA expanded its outreach from 3326 farmers in 2012¹⁰⁰, to 4841 farmers in 2014¹⁰¹.

The Hivos Annual Report 2013-14 credits CSA for an evident "emphasis to enhance the participation of women through focusing on interventions related to women." This has led to an increase in women members in five cooperatives, with the cumulative women membership in all seven rising from 86 in 2012 to 129 in 2014. Moreover, in 2012-13 only 20 women-headed households were members of these cooperatives, in 2013-14 this number increased to 54. The number of women Community Resource Persons (CRPs)¹⁰² has also grown in six cooperatives; in 2012, 19 out of 52 CRPs were women, in 2014, 35 out of 74 are women (a rise from 36 per cent to 47 per cent). Further, the period between 2012 and 2014 saw the constitution of an exclusive women's cooperative, the Sri Gayatri Women's Mutually Aided Cooperative in Kadapa district. CSA has already formatted the by-laws for registration of this cooperative, but its registration stands delayed due to bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh (AP). Significantly, in 2012, a mandate introduced 50 per cent women representation cooperatives' boards. Currently, the boards of three of the seven cooperatives are complying.

These upswings related to women's participation in the cooperatives, however, must note the fact that in five out of the seven cooperatives, women comprise only five to 21 per cent of the membership, also women's representation in boards declined in two cooperatives.

Further, in 2013, CSA extended support families affected by farmer suicides¹⁰³. A meeting of widows from such families and women-headed households was facilitated by CSA, with assistance from local NGO REDS (Rural & Environment Development Society)¹⁰⁴, in September 2013 at Kadiri in REDS

⁹⁸ The first cooperative, named Enabavi, was constituted in 2008.

⁹⁹ Sahaja Aharam was established in the year 2008, it is the marketing wing of Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA).

¹⁰⁰ Contract number 1002883 and "Sustaining Farming based Livelihoods" Objectives and Achievements in the last phase of HIVOS-supported work: 2006-2011

¹⁰¹ CSA's Annual Report 2013-14: Building Farmers Institutions for Sustaining Farming Livelihoods

¹⁰² Community Resource Persons (CRPs) are individuals or leaders from within the community whom organisations choose and provide with the necessary exposure, technical training and expertise. These individuals are then capable of continuing the organization's work and taking it forward long after the intervention stops. Refer, http://www.greenfoundation.in/mksp/?page_id=898

¹⁰³ The number of farmers who have committed suicide since 1995 is more than 290, 000 according to the National Crime Records Bureau. The rate of farmer suicide in Andhra Pradesh is nearly three times the national average. A family that loses a family member to suicide due to debt is guaranteed a one-time payment of Rs 150, 000 from the government. Refer, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/23/world/asia/after-farmers-commit-suicide-debts-fall-on-families-in-india.html>

¹⁰⁴ REDS or Rural & Environment Development Society, was registered as a not-for-profit organisation in 1996 to further the well-being of rural communities. REDS activities are mainly focused on rural development, sustainable agriculture, child rights, anti-trafficking and empowering CBO's to gain control over natural resources. See <http://redskadiri.wordpress.com/about/>

office. Twenty five women farmers participated. CSA also helped such widows avail compensation and mobilised resources for their children's education and livelihood. While doing so it felt the need for a separate women farmers' forum, it therefore conducted consultative and preparatory meetings for it in collaboration with REDS and finally started a pilot project for the Women Farmers' Forum (WFF)¹⁰⁵ in Anantapur district in 2013.

Score: +2

4.1.2 Involvement of target groups SPO

There was a divergence of views in the hierarchy with regard to this indicator. The field and managerial staff reported no changes over 2012-14; this even as they acknowledged the involvement of the farmers, cooperative members and farmers' representatives in formulating production and business plans and participation in policy discussions as well as drafting charter of demands. The CSA executive leadership, meanwhile, reported a significant improvement in the level of member participation and decision making in the cooperatives over the past two years. Compared to earlier, the cooperatives are now: a) extensively involved in identifying their needs and exploring possible solutions; b) able to plan both crop production and marketing activities, with some cooperatives even saving and then using such savings to fund business ventures; c) active negotiators in accessing various government schemes which they were earlier unaware of and unable to negotiate individually.

Importantly, farmers and farmers' cooperatives associated with CSA are increasingly engaging with Rythu Swarajya Vedika (RSV)¹⁰⁶ in understanding and engaging with policy change. For instance, the Women's Farmers' Forum constituted by CSA is linked to RSV.

The HIVOS Annual Report 2013-14 also observes a considerable enhancement in member participation and the approach for collective bargaining in the cooperatives. It states that the farmer members have taken a step ahead in performing various activities collectively, like generating share capital, taking collective responsibility for membership drives and transacting business. This has sufficiently increased the understanding on cooperative principles among farmers, along with collective action, beginning from drafting production plans to collective marketing.

Six of its associate cooperatives have availed loans from CSA in 2013; the total amount lent is Rs. 726,000 of which Rs.10,000 has been repaid by one cooperative. Two cooperatives have taken loan from Sahaja Aharam (Enabavi¹⁰⁷ and Punnami¹⁰⁸ - Rs. 150,0000 each). Enabavi has repaid Rs. 80,000 while Punnami has repaid the entire amount and has applied for fresh loan this year. The Enabavi cooperative has, in fact, already made substantial progress in the last Rabi¹⁰⁹ season through initiating aggregation and collective marketing of its members' produce. Also, their growing ownership of Enabavi has the cooperative's current members keen on enhancing its membership base, as also extending its work to other villages.

It may be noted that even as the cooperatives become more self-sustaining, and indeed more independent of CSA, CSA's own interventions—like at the time of the baseline—continue to be informed by its target groups' needs. Such needs assessments are done through participatory approaches like surveys, focus group discussions and research studies, as also by the occasional requests for assistance that come from the target groups. Review and planning meetings are held with field staff before the onset of the sowing seasons, who, in turn, conduct regular village level meetings with farmers groups and communities for crucial inputs.

¹⁰⁵ The Women Farmers' Forum (WFF) serves as a platform for these women to meet and discuss their personal issues, agricultural issues, seed problems etc. every month. CSA and REDS also linked WFF to the Rythu Swarajya Vedika in 2013 (WFF members are now RSV members also), though there are other women's organisations also, which are members of RSV.

¹⁰⁶ Rythu Swarajya Vedika (RSV) is an umbrella organisation of NGOs and intellectuals working to ensure sustainable livelihoods for agricultural communities in Andhra Pradesh. It is part of the nationwide Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA).

¹⁰⁷ Enabavi Organic Farmers Cooperative was formed to support the various activities of the farmers of Enabavi village and to also improve their collective bargaining power in the markets.

¹⁰⁸ Punnami is an organic farmer's cooperative supported by Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA).

¹⁰⁹ Rabi is the second cropping season in India, it means spring in Arabic. The Rabi cropping season is from October-March

The CSA personnel shared that the past two years have seen some additions to CSA's feedback mechanisms. At the district level CSA has come to rely on identifying target group needs and response through the RSV. Phone calls, interaction with farmers through media and large scale interaction with farmers have also been intensified to remain in constant communication with the ground. Information exchange also happens through the farmers help line set up by CSA.

Some instances of such community driven interventions are: a) in 2013, farmers in the Vizianagaram area shared their desire to raise livestock for income enhancement and domestic use with the CSA field staff. CSA, in turn, located a temple in Vishakhapatnam that was donating cows and bullocks, it paid the transportation cost, and had about 200 animals delivered and distributed amongst the Vizianagaram farmers; b) the Punnami, in 2013, requested CSA to help facilitate its need for cow urine to prepare organic manure. CSA has since organised a mobile unit that collects cow urine from various households and then distributes it to those who need it in 21 surrounding villages.

Score: +2

4.1.3 Intensity of political engagement SPO

Despite being apolitical, as already mentioned in the baseline report, CSA continues to engage regularly with local self-government and periodically with elected representatives. CSA runs a monthly bulletin for policy makers called the *Rythu Mitra*, and a monthly magazine *Tolakari* on technology and policy issues. It publishes an analysis of the annual national budget from the farmers' perspective, *Agriwatch*. It works with farmers' organisations to put forth a 'Farmers' Manifesto' before elections. CSA organises meetings and seminars with elected representatives at the village, block and the district levels, as well as the MLAs (Members of Legislative Assemblies) on policy related issues to sensitise them. In many instances farmers and farmers' groups themselves ask CSA to highlight their concerns in local elected bodies and in meetings with government officials.

Score: +1

4.2 Level of Organisation

4.2.1 Relations with other organisations SPO

As during the baseline, so also now, associations intrinsic to CSA's core interventions involve the seven cooperatives it mentors and supports, and the local NGOs that CSA engages to help it identify and address target group needs. At the time of the baseline CSA had three local NGOs as partners, it now has four: REDS, CROPS (Centre for Rural Operation Programme Society)¹¹⁰, PEACE (Peoples Action for Creative Education)¹¹¹ and Vennala Cooperative in the Anantapur, Warangal, Nalgonda and Kadapa districts respectively.

Further, the period between 2012 and 2014 saw CSA consolidating its engagement with the RSV and ASHA networks at the state and national levels respectively. CSA authored reports on budget analysis, farmers income security, road map for sustainable agriculture and these were used to develop the lobbying agendas of these networks which in turn were mentioned in the election manifestoes of political parties. CSA along with RSV and ASHA organised a national workshop in Delhi in September of 2013 focusing on "Rethinking economic policies to ensure income security in agriculture". It also, with ASHA playing an active organiser's role, participated in the Peoples' Biodiversity Festival in Hyderabad in October of 2012. In 2014, CSA along with RSV and ASHA, held a meeting on agricultural

¹¹⁰ CROPS or the Centre for Rural Operation Programme Society is based in Andhra Pradesh's Warangal district. It has along with CSA been responsible for making Enabavi, a tiny village in Andhra Pradesh the first completely organic, free of pesticides, fertilisers and Genetically modified crops village. Refer, <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-andhrapradesh/enabavi-farmers-create-history/article3060052.ece>

¹¹¹ PEACE or Peoples Action for Creative Education is a grassroots voluntary organisation established in 1986 in Andhra Pradesh. It works for rural development especially of women, children and poor & marginal farmers. Refer, http://www.peaceap.org/about_us.html

issues, priorities and challenges in newly formed state of Telangana. NGOs, CBOs, cooperatives, political party leaders, farmers, participated in this event.

The past two years also saw CSA tying up with various organisations, and not necessarily comprising only farmers, to combat the challenges thrown up by the state's agrarian crisis. The executive leadership shared that CSA and RSV are planning to promote a special women farmers' cooperative with the families affected by suicides. A meeting of women farmers from such bereaved families and women-headed households was, in fact, organised in Kadiri in September 2013 by CSA with the support of REDS. CSA later facilitated the proceeding of a state level meeting of such families organised by Caring Citizens' Collective (CCC)¹¹² in October of 2013 in Hyderabad. CSA also engaged regularly with Jana Vignana Vedika (JVV)¹¹³ and the All India People's Science Network¹¹⁴ on issues of agrarian crisis and sustainable agriculture. CSA organised district level network meetings addressing agrarian crisis including farmers' suicides in the Warangal¹¹⁵ and Nalgonda¹¹⁶ districts in February 2014.

Over and above these CSA's past relations with the following CSOs continue since the baseline: ActionAid, OXFAM International, Centre for World Solidarity (CWS)¹¹⁷, Open Source Seed Initiative (OSSSI)¹¹⁸, Deccan Development Society (DDS)¹¹⁹, Chetna Organic¹²⁰ and the Vivekananda Kendriya Trust (Kanyakumari)¹²¹. CSA also organised a Cooperative Mela (Fair) in February 2014 in collaboration with Accion Fraterna Ecology Centre, Anantapur, which shared 50 per cent of the expenses.

¹¹² Caring Citizens' Collective (CCC) comprises social activists, academicians, intellectuals and journalists who formed it in 2007 in Andhra Pradesh. The CCC volunteers work in the Telangana region of AP where the farmer suicides are high specifically in Medak, Mahabubnagar and Warangal districts. A beginning has been made to support the education of the children belonging to farmer's families affected by suicides. In addition to supporting the children's education, CCC is also working hard to assist the suicide and starvation deaths affected families to obtain financial and other required assistance from the government. Refer, <http://www.lamakaan.com/events/548>; <http://www.actionaid.org/india/what-we-do/andhra-pradesh/our-response-acute-agrarian-crisis-and-spate-farmer-suicides-medak>

¹¹³ Jana Vignana Vedika (JVV), is an organisation working towards popularisation of science among the people. It started in 1988 in Andhra Pradesh. It has three main aims, one, science for the people, second, science for progress, and third, science for self-reliance. Refer, <http://jvv.org.in/about.php>

¹¹⁴ The All India People's Science Network (AIPSN) came into being in 1988. It organizes All India People's Science Congress (AIPSC) every two years. It was born out of the People's Science Movement (PSM) of the 1970s, it has evolved around the concept of conscious application of science for social activism. Refer, <http://aipsc2010.weebly.com/organisation.html>

¹¹⁵ A district-level meeting on women farmers' issues was held in Warangal on February 19th February 2014 to discuss issues related to women-headed farmer families and suicide affected farmer families. All the participants felt an urgent need to establish a Vadhika (Forum) on women's issues at district-level.

¹¹⁶ A district-level women farmers meeting was held in Nalgonda on February 25th, 2014 to identify the issues related to the rights of women farmers, especially single women and widows from farmer suicide families. A decision was taken to form a committee at district-level to fight for women's right to education, land and livelihood. Also, a district-level committee comprising 12 women farmers was formed and the process was facilitated by CSA, RSV and PEACE. This meeting was covered extensively by the media.

¹¹⁷ Centre for World Solidarity (CWS) emerged from Action for World Solidarity (ASW) a Berlin-based charitable organisation. Its offices are located in Secunderabad, Telangana. The organisation makes various interventions on issues of gender, dalits, adivasis, forest and agriculture. The last is carried out in collaboration with CSA. Refer, <http://www.cwsy.org/html/wware.html>

¹¹⁸ Open Source Seed Initiative (OSSSI) is dedicated to maintaining fair and open access to plant genetic resources worldwide. Launched by three academics from the *University of Wisconsin*, OSSSI aims to provide an alternative to the patent-protected seeds sold by major corporate seed producers, but partners and customers are free to use the open-source seeds to make money, as long as they don't patent any of their developments. Refer, <http://www.opensourceseedinitiative.org/about/mission-vision/>; <http://www.opensourceseedinitiative.org/>

¹¹⁹ The Deccan Development Society (DDS) is a two-decade old grassroots organisation working in about 75 villages with women's Sanghams (voluntary village level associations of the poor) in Medak District of Andhra Pradesh. The organisation mainly represents women, dalit women. It works on ensuring these women have food security and eventual food sovereignty. Refer, <http://www.indiaorganic.net/institutions/dds.html>

¹²⁰ Chetna Organic aims to improve the livelihood of small farming households by helping them create innovative farming systems to become more sustainable and profitable. Refer, <http://www.solidaridad.nl/files/The%20Chetna%20Story.pdf>

¹²¹ Vivekananda Kendriya Trust, part of the Vivekananda Kendra which has the twin aims of "Man-making and nation-building". The purpose of the organisation is to offer "spiritual oriented service mission". Refer, <http://www.vivekanandakendra.org/english/mission>

A CSA board member said that the organisation's advocacy and campaigns have now reached CSOs in Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Maldives through the international network SAAPE (South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication)¹²² which is working to promote food sovereignty in the region. The executive leadership added that the past two years had also seen donor agencies seeking CSA's support to buttress the fieldwork of their partners.

Score: +1

4.2.2 Frequency of dialogue with closest civil society organisation SPO

The CSA personnel were unanimous that the frequency of interactions between CSA and its closest associates had increased since the baseline. Constant communication is maintained with the cooperatives through meetings held in the field and the CSA office, and over the phone. Business plans, livelihood diversification, trainings, etc. are discussed. Interactions with local NGO partners are also called regularly. These are about thrashing out operational matters, and on occasion also ad-hoc so as to frame responses on emerging issues. Meetings with RSV are held twice a month on issues such as credit, insurance, tenant farmers' issues, etc. Meetings with ASHA is held once every three months, the agenda often pertains to CSA's providing technical support to the network's members (NGOs) on issues such as seed management. The past two years, however, saw CSA, RSV and ASHA meet each other over and above the regular meetings given the imminent elections in 2014, and the desire of these organisations to influence manifestoes favourably for farmers.

CSA continued to update all the CSOs in its contact with the most current literature and news on production and policy related issues on sustainable agriculture.

Score: +1.

4.2.3 Defending the interests of marginalised groups SPO

The past two years saw the farmers' cooperatives supported by CSA becoming more capable of defending the interests of the small and marginal farmers who comprise its membership. Also, CSA, along with a local partner REDS, the RSV and ASHA networks, and the citizen's collective CCC, undertook activities especially focused at addressing the concerns of the families affected by farmer suicides due to the state's agrarian crisis. Meetings with women from such bereaving families were held at the district level in Kadiri and the state level in Hyderabad.

The executive leadership named the US-based Open Source Seed Initiative (OSSI) as potentially being able to strengthen a Community Managed Seed System (CMSS)¹²³ in providing farmers with good quality foundation seeds and strengthening legal systems in favour of farmers in the long run.

Score: +1

4.2.4 Composition financial resource base SPO

Like at the time of the baseline, CSA continues to have multiple funding sources: grants from donor agencies for particular projects/activities; donations from individuals; consultancies and trainings to other CSOs; consultancies with the governments for delivering particular services; proceeds from the sales of organic seeds and food; resource generation from developing and selling publications.

¹²² Constituted in circa 2000 SAAPE, or the South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication, works on poverty eradication in a holistic way, with a special focus on food sovereignty, gender justice, demilitarisation, democratisation and social justice issues in South Asia. It brings together existing like-minded networks to strengthen and build on their work; to make explicit the links between different issues that impact on poverty; and to link and bring a regional understanding to national level campaigns. *Refer*, <http://www.saape.org/>

¹²³ The Community Managed Seed System (CMSS) is an initiative that started in 2011 with the objective of meeting the requirements of both seed producers and consumers. Under this system, the Department of Agriculture provides a form of subsidy and overall there is control established over seed production, supply and distribution. *Refer*, <http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/community-managed-system-sows-the-seeds-of-success/article5322435.ece>

Funds from HIVOS contribute towards the bulk of CSA staff salaries, this funding ends in March 2015. In HIVOS' CSA Assessment Document for 2011-2012 its contribution to CSA was 33 per cent, this figure is at 21 per cent in a similar document for 2012-13. The percentage of contributions by other parties and CSA-generated income, meanwhile, shot up from 67 to 79 per cent in 2011-12 and 2012-13 respectively.

Qualifying that concerns regarding fund mobilising for the working capital for various cooperatives did exist, the executive leadership and managers, in fact, assessed CSA's financial situation as having largely improved over the past two years. They said that more public institutions are expressing willingness to collaborate with it, and that CSA has emerged as a lead organisation in providing technical support on sustainable agriculture techniques and practices to various organisations across the country being supported by World Bank, ActionAid, and Reliance Foundation¹²⁴ etc. Discussions have been initiated with various donors, agencies and concerned individuals for floating a marketing agency that could cater the fund flow through marketing as a social enterprise. The field staff, however, perceived no change vis a vis funding. They reported only partial success in CSA's attempts to raise money by offering consultancy to commercial projects, government departments and NGOs on organic farming. They were more satisfied with the revenues being generated by selling products like vermi-compost, organic manure etc. to farmers.

Two awards won in 2014 by CSA contributed to its funds: the best rural innovation award for non pesticidal management in Bihar Innovation Forum¹²⁵ which included Rs 7 lakh as prize money; the best rural innovation award for 'community managed sustainable agriculture' in Maharashtra Rural Livelihood Mission (MSRLM)¹²⁶ which had a cash component of Rs. 5 lakh. Also, the television show Satyamev Jayate that CSA had participated in June 2012 had seen a tremendous viewer response from across the country, with Rs 30 lakhs being sent in as donations; this amount saw an increment over the past two years with CSA receiving cumulative donations of over 40 lakhs.

Score: +1

4.3 Practice of Values

4.3.1 Downward accountability

CSA's executive leadership continues to be answerable to the staff meetings, HR committee within the organisation and the Board of Trustees. And this accountability is shared by all the organisations created by CSA. For instance, the farmers' cooperatives are accountable to their general body and executive committee.

Project wise an annual planning meeting is conducted with all staff members. Logframes and action plans are prepared, and activities are implemented as per these. Project performance and achievements are reviewed with the Project Management Committee. Partner organisations provide action plans and activity reports every six months, with un-audited statement of accounts. CSA takes the approval of the Board of Trustees on all the policies, and all programmes are reviewed for programme achievement in the trustee's meeting.

The programme managers saw no change in the situation as compared to the baseline. They, in fact, expressed the need for a more proactive HR committee, more monthly meetings, internal auditing processes and increased disclosure of project fund related information to CSA's partners. The field staff agreed, saying that the leadership's baseline announcement of its decision to disclose project

¹²⁴ Reliance Foundation was set up in 2010 by an initiative of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL). It works in tandem with partners on issues of rural transformation, education, health, urban renewal and culture & heritage. Refer, http://www.reliancefoundation.org/about_us.html

¹²⁵ The Bihar Innovation Forum (BIF) is a platform which offers opportunity to various stakeholders to present innovative solutions and ideas which can help create a more sustainable impact in rural Bihar. It is developed and supported by the Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (BRLPS). Refer, <http://www.biharinnovationforum.in/pages.php?pid=8>

¹²⁶ The Maharashtra Rural Livelihood Mission (MSRLM) is an institution that both enables and empowers the poor to access better livelihoods. It is responsible for integration of livelihoods innovation across various sub-sectors. Refer, <http://msrlm.org/mrlif/>

fund information to its partner organisations and associated farmers had not been implemented yet. Contrarily, the executive leadership reported considerable improvement vis a vis CSA's accountability issues. This is to be attributed to an increased awareness amongst cooperatives on the need for accountability, book keeping and maintenance of balance sheet and increased membership to enhance the value of share capital. Personnel from the Human Resources, Administration and Accounts department said that CSA's monitoring systems had improved at each level through community involvement, local partners and CSA staff.

Score: 0

4.3.2 Composition of social organs SPO

CSA's seven-member board comprises a farmer and two women. The board membership in the farmers' cooperatives is mandated to have 50 per cent women's representation. More than half of the farming community CSA works with belongs to socially backward classes. Barring the leadership, all other staff in CSA reported no change with regard to the representation of the marginalised in CSA and its associate cooperatives.

This opinion is sustained by the figures concerning the evolution of cooperative board members between 2012-2014: Already in 2012-2013, and also in 2013-2014, only three cooperatives out of the seven had 50 per cent women. In one cooperative three men replaced women on the board. In another cooperative several board members left but were not replaced: eventually there were less women than men on the board. The leadership said considerable increase in women's participation in its cooperatives, and the achievements of its women-led cooperatives, since the baseline were illustrations of such improvement

Score: 0

4.3.3 External financial auditing SPO

As in the baseline, so also now, CSA undergoes an audit conducted by an external agency annually. However, the executive leadership observed considerable improvement in the organisation's auditing processes because the past two years had seen such audits—conducted by external auditors—being initiated in the cooperatives as well. Staff from the Human Resources, Administration and Accounts reported improved financial control, regulation and management systems since 2012.

Score: +1

4.4 Perception of Impact

4.4.1 Client satisfaction SPO

At the time of the baseline, CSA staff listed livelihood and income security as the most important concerns of its target groups. While these remain the same, CSA has taken many significant steps to alleviate such concerns between 2012 and 2014.

CSA has made efforts in organising farmers around input production by promoting seed cooperatives and extending input based support to all its cooperatives, which, in turn, has helped reduce input costs and dependence on external sources for such inputs. Farmers from two CSA cooperatives said that the cost of cultivation has gone down due the farmers now producing vermi-compost and seeds for their own consumption, which has also reduced dependence on fertilisers and pesticides. Farmers of their cooperatives had benefitted by saving an average of Rs. 7,000 per season on account of this, they added.

CSA provided interest free loans to farmers for seed procurement and other livelihood activities. Similar loans are issued by CSA's consumer cooperative Sahaja Aharam. This is through the Value Chain Fund started as a pilot in 2012 and institutionalised in 2013; under this, easy loans are provided for a business model from the CSA-created corpus fund, the loans are interest free in the first year

with farmers deciding on their repayment schedule based on the cooperatives financial performance. Farmers from the Punnami cooperative said they had received a loan of Rs. 1.5 lakhs under the Value Chain Fund for procurement and marketing of grains, which was interest free in its first year. The cooperative, after making a profit, has applied for a fresh loan to upscale their activities.

Apart from providing financial support/working capital to the farmers, CSA provided technical trainings on seed processing, compost making, preparation of bio-fertilisers and organic manure; a farmer from the Tungabhadra Cooperative verified that its women members had received three such trainings on preparation and marketing of bio-fertilisers in 2013.

To increase the marketability of the organic foods being produced by the farmers associated with the cooperatives, CSA entered into third-party certification agreement with Aditi Organics, accredited by Government of India in 2012. CSA helps cooperatives obtain licenses to market their produce as organic—500 and 1075 farmers associated with CSA obtained such certification in 2012 and 2013 respectively. Farmers from CSA cooperatives agreed to have gone through the certification process for their produce where the certification agency, Aditi Organics, randomly chose the farmers for the inspection of the produce.

CSA also works on building a community managed seed bank system in collaboration with REDS, as a part of which farmers obtain subsidies from state DoA (Department of Agriculture) for producing and selling seeds. This is still in its early stages of development.

CSA has also been facilitating government support for the cooperatives by building a large scale convergence between cooperatives and various schemes in government line departments such as the DoH (Department of Horticulture), DoA, NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development)¹²⁷, etc. Farmers from cooperatives confirmed that they had received such support from CSA in accessing mobile processing seed units through DoA for marketing of seeds, obtaining benefits under Tank-Silt application programme, and obtaining subsidies for the purchase of farm equipment under the DoA Yantralakshini scheme to promote mechanisation in agricultural activities.

Over the years, its work with the farmers to promote non-pesticidal agricultural practices, CSA realised that awry weather patterns and unexpected droughts, are making producing food alone a risky proposition for the farmers. Therefore, it started its work to expand farmers' income basket by promoting diversification of livelihood by helping cooperatives take up activities such as backyard poultry, compost making, seed processing, dairy, sericulture etc. to support their incomes. The Haritha cooperative in Vizayanagaram district has incorporated dairy as one of commercial activities in 2013 to support the incomes of its members. Similarly, poultry was introduced in Warangal district's Enabavi cooperative in 2013 for which the farmers reported to have received financial support from CSA, while Kadiri cooperative in Anantapur now produces and sells seeds. CSA extended its support to the farmers of the Enabavi cooperative for selling seeds by providing them mini mobile seed processing units and packaging material, said farmers. Farmers from Punnami cooperative reported to have received CSA support in establishing bank linkages for their dairy related initiatives. Fifteen farmers who received training in raising kitchen gardens at Mutlyala Chervu village reported an increase in their household income by Rs. 2,000 along with considerable savings on vegetable purchase—Rs. 30,000 collectively for all the 15 families.

CSA engages in influencing policies related to women in agriculture. It organised a state-level workshop on women land rights and food sovereignty in September 2013 in Hyderabad. CSA, in collaboration with REDS, constituted the Women Farmers' Forum (WFF) as a pilot in Anantapur district in 2013 with the aim to organise women farmers- especially those belonging to farmer suicide families and women headed households and provide them a platform where they can discuss, debate and plan and execute strategies around issues concerning women farmers. It helps women farmers avail benefits of the government's programme Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojna (MKSP)¹²⁸. Also, plans

¹²⁷ National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) was set up by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in 1982, for the upliftment of rural India by increasing the credit flow for improving agriculture and rural non-farm sector. Refer, <https://www.nabard.org/english/mission.aspx>

¹²⁸ Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP) is a Ministry of Rural Development project and aims at empowering women in agriculture by making "systemic investments to enhance their participation and productivity". It also works to

are underway to promote a women's cooperative that focuses on equity, food security and enhancement of livelihood options.

CSA and Sahaja Aharam started organising Organic Farmers Cooperative Mela/Fair (OCFM) in 2012 in order to provide a platform to bring organic producers, farmers' cooperatives, NGOs, consumers, government institutions and policy makers together. This, to enable shared learning on organic farming, improve the bargaining power of farmers, improve market access to enable them to get a better share in consumer price and enable the farmers to access various government schemes. CSA approaches organisations like NABARD, APMAS, Chetna Organics, CWS, Cooperative Development Foundation (CDF), Bala Vikasa etc. to ensure their participation in such fairs. These are annual fairs and until now three have been organised in 2012, 2013 and 2014. CRP member from one of the cooperatives, who attended the 2013 organic fair, reported to have observed good demand for safe and organic food in the fair.

Score: +2

4.4.2 Civil society impact SPO

According to CSA staff and as already described in the baseline report, CSA has been working meaningfully at organising farmers into groups/cooperatives/producer companies to access more markets and gain better percentage in the consumer price. However, over time, especially the past two years, CSA has also emerged as a leading organisation in providing technical guidance and support on sustainable agriculture, seed production etc to various groups across the country supported by, to name a few, the World Bank, ActionAid and Reliance Foundation.

CSA's focus has been to get increasing numbers from civil society to engage in the cause of sustainable agriculture. Towards this CSA has worked with a range of people from different platforms and at all levels; ranging from the government's DoA to the World Bank funded project called 'Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture' (CMSA)¹²⁹ to the very mainstream media. CSA constantly works at building alliances with civil society organisations like NGOs, farmers' organisations, human rights organisations and coordinating these; and especially strengthening the ASHA network comprising more than 400 members from about 25 organisations across the country.

According to one of CSA's board members, CSA through its partnership with South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE) has been involved in spreading the message on promotion of food sovereignty amongst the not so active CSOs in South Asian countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Maldives. Further, through its partnership with media (channels such as MAHA TV, Sakshi TV, HMTV, AIR, TV5, TV9 etc.), CSA has been able to influence discussions and debate on issues related to agriculture, farmer suicides, need to promote sustainable agriculture, separate budget for agriculture and maintenance of bio-diversity. This has taken the debate on agriculture to the general public where citizens are discussing policies related to agriculture and opting to buy organic safe food. Positive media response has in turn fed back into CSA's activities and helped it to enlarge its outreach.

While some of CSA's partners appreciate its efforts and achievements towards building up a strong civil society network and said that it provides cooperatives both financial and technical support, others said that it has not been able to affect a considerable improvement on promotion of sustainable agricultural practices and non-farm livelihood practices in the state and attribute it largely to government programmes.

Score: +2

grant women more control and power over production resources. Refer, <http://rural.nic.in/sites/downloads/latest/SGSY.pdf>

¹²⁹ The Community Managed Sustainable Program was initiated in 2006-07 by CSA and REDS. The program developed out of the agriculture crisis. A part of the program was to enable women self-help groups in different villages to become self-sufficient and manage their own seed production.

4.4.3 Relation with public sector organisations SPO

The past two years have seen CSA continuing, and expanding, its work with the public sector. All sections of the CSA staff interviewed said that efforts were made to build large scale convergence between the cooperatives and various administrative line departments and agencies. Especially so in the DoA, DoH, DoS (Department of Sericulture), the Commissioner and Registrar of Cooperatives (CRC) and NABARD. Facilitating such convergence was now easier because of CSA's enhanced access to these government departments and agencies compared to earlier. Many public sector agencies now look at CSA as a partner organisation to be engaged in the implementation of development programmes. CSA also mobilised organic agri-inputs and subsidies for its cooperatives the state's DoA and DoH. Further, NABARD, DoA, DoH and NIRD (National Institute of Rural Development) have been collaborating with CSA in organising the Organic Cooperative Mela (Fair) held every year since 2012. CSA conducted seed trials with two government agriculture institutions: PDK Vidyapeethin Akola, Maharashtra and the Acharya N G Ranga Agricultural University in Hyderabad.

Over and above, these the past two years saw CSA expanding its work into other states through partnerships with their governments on scaling up programmes, this especially in Bihar and Maharashtra; for which was awarded by the Bihar Innovation Forum and the Maharashtra Rural Livelihood Forum in January 2014. CSA has also been providing training to farmers on sustainable agriculture practices in Odisha, Chhattisgarh through the states' Rural Livelihood Missions. CSA worked as a consultant with the Maharashtra State and Agricultural Marketing Board.

CSA's increasing success in its collaboration with the public sector was, however, held suspect by the respondent from para-statal agency SERP (Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty)¹³⁰ who had a negative experience with CSA when the two had worked together from 2005 to 2008. The SERP official maintained his baseline position that NGOs like CSA do not have the capacity to upscale their activities and this can only be done by public or para-statal organisations. The official regretted that CSA has barely maintained contact with SERP, an important player in the NPM activities in the state's rural parts.

Score: +1

4.4.4 Relation with private sector agencies SPO

Like in 2012, CSA remains open to sharing information and interacting with private sector actors to the extent that such collaborations are in line with its ambitions for small and marginal farmers. To encourage its cooperatives to market their produce, it works with private food marketing agencies and entrepreneurs. Also, CSA has been providing market linkages to producers' organisations through non-profit as well as private marketing agencies like Hyderabad Goes Green, Good Seeds Hyderabad, Deccan Organics-Hyderabad, Sristi Naturals-Hyderabad, Sahaja Samrudha-Banglore, Thanal (NGO) Trivandram (Kerala), Restore-Chennai and Malladi Exports. CSA's efforts to get farmers in its associate cooperatives third party certification programme for organic products in the past two years has had it working with the Bangalore-based Aditi Certifications Pvt. Ltd. Notably, CSA has started working with the CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)¹³¹ initiatives of Reliance Foundation towards promoting sustainable agriculture. Discussions for collaboration with Michael & Susan Dell Foundation and HSBC Bank are on.

Score: +1

¹³⁰ SERP or Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty is an autonomous society of the Department of Rural Development, Government of Andhra Pradesh. SERP has been a key organization in the development of community based organisations and self-help groups in the state to facilitate poverty reduction through social mobilization. Refer, <http://www.serp.ap.gov.in/SHGAP/FrontServlet?requestType=CommonRH&actionVal=loadaboutus>

¹³¹ The Companies Act 2013 as well as Companies Corporate Social Responsibility Policy Rules 2014 demands that every company, private or public, with a net worth of Rs 500 crore or a turnover of Rs 1,000 crore or net profit of Rs 5 crore, will be required to spend at least 2 per cent of its average net profit from preceding three financial years on corporate social responsibility. Refer, http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/an-overview-of-csr-rules-under-companies-act-2013-114031000385_1.html

4.4.5 Influence upon public policies, rules, regulations SPO

In the past CSA has been successful in stalling the Seed Bill¹³² and influencing the Biotechnology Regulatory Authority Bill (BRAI)¹³³ by mobilising civil society. It also mobilised public opinion on farmers' suicides in the state such that policy makers had to take note of it.

But, as established during the baseline, significantly influencing agricultural policies is still a distant reality because the establishment believes in an industrial model of farming, while CSA is arguing for more ecologically sustainable agriculture managed by communities and small holders. Despite which, the CSA Annual Report 2013-2014 states that the organisation conducted various campaigns and advocacy activities—through RSV and ASHA—to influence policy change through creating pressure on the government to revisit policies on Minimum Support Price (MSP)¹³⁴, the Seed Bill, bio-technology and GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms) including other issues like crop insurance and direct income support to farmers. The required data used for such campaigns were sourced from the cooperatives. There are, however, no remarkable success stories to narrate as a consequence. Except that some of these farmers' issues—such as a task force on sustainable agriculture and farmers' income commission—were included in the 2014 election manifestoes of mainstream political parties. Also, years of lobbying saw a separate budget for agriculture being passed in the AP legislative assembly in May 2014.

The efforts of CSA, and its associate CBOs and CSOs, however, impacted many public sector practices:

- The CSA Annual Report 2013-2014 states that as a result of persistent efforts of CSA, CCC and other partners of RSV, all the pending cases of exgratia for farmers' suicide families were settled by the District Collector in Medak district. Several meetings at district level and regional level were organized in the past year and the participants, along with CSA, were farmers, farmer suicide families, NGO's, farmer union leaders, and concerned citizens.
- NABARD, and the Andhra's Pradesh's DoA, DoH and DoS, because of CSA's interventions, granted subsidies for farmers, sanctions for projects, farm mechanisations and licenses for cooperatives to produce and market seeds. Some instances: a) in 2013, the DoA provided subsidy worth Rs 15 lakhs for farm implements like tractors, threshers, sprayers etc for the resource centre of Tungabhadra cooperative in Kurnool district; services of these implements are made available to cooperative members and other farmers at minimal charge; b) the Enabavi and Mulugu cooperatives acquired mobile mini seed processing units in 2013-14 with 90 per cent of the costs financed through DoA subsidies; c) the Kadiri cooperative, a part of CMSS (Community Managed Seed System), is now receiving subsidies from the state's DoA.
- CSA successfully approached the APMIP (Andhra Pradesh Micro Irrigation Project) for help with providing sprinklers and drip irrigation equipment to farmers in 2013.
- CSA also had intensive interactions with the Commissioner and Registrar of Cooperatives (CRC) over the 2012-14 period. The CRC visited the Enabavi cooperative in November 2013 and agreed to sanction money for construction of a warehouse there.
- Earlier green manure seeds were not produced in AP and state government would import them from the north Indian states. Beginning 2013, the Tungabhadra cooperative has started producing such seeds and AP Seeds, the government body on seeds, has started purchasing it at reasonable rates.
- The CSA-facilitated convergence meetings saw 500 acres in Kadapa district's Kondapuram village linked to the National Food Security Mission (NFMS), supported by NABARD, in 2013. The latter provided seeds in the form of grant. The same year, under the INSIMP (Integrated Nutrient Security

¹³² The Seed Bill, 2004 seeks to regulate the production, distribution and sale of seeds. It requires that every seller of seeds meet certain minimum standards. New amendments have been proposed to the bill in April 2010 and November 2010, the government has accepted most of the recommendations of the standing committee. *Refer*, <http://www.prsindia.org/billtrack/the-seeds-bill-2004-104/>

¹³³ The Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India (BRAI) was set up as an independent authority on the basis of BRAI bill, 2013. One of its main purposes is to regulate the research, transport, import, containment, environmental release, manufacture, and use of biotechnology products. *Refer*, <http://www.prsindia.org/billtrack/the-biotechnology-regulatory-authority-of-india-bill-2013-2709/>

¹³⁴ The Minimum Support Price (MSP) is a scheme by the government of India to protect the interests of the farmers. Under this scheme, the government declares the minimum support prices of agricultural produces assuring the farmers that their produce will be purchased.

Millet Program), 20 farmers owning 20 acres of land in Kurnool district's Erladinne village were given a similar grant for seeds.

- CSA organised exposure visits to successful organic farms through ATMA (Agriculture Technology Management Agency) and the DAATT (District Agriculture and Technology Transfer) centres.

The leadership observed that CSA, since the baseline, has strengthened its position as a credible information source for farmers' cooperatives which now use such information to negotiate in the convergence meetings with government line departments organised by CSA. Many MPs, MLAs and Panchayat representatives consult CSA on agriculture related issues because of its reputation. CSA's reports and experiences are, in fact, used by political parties while planning policy on farmers' livelihood issues. Importantly, CSA's lobbying over the past years saw the inclusion of farmers' issues—such as a task force on sustainable agriculture and farmers' income commission—in the 2014 election manifestoes of mainstream political parties. This through RSV at the state level and ASHA (Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture)¹³⁵ at the national level; these networks incorporated several of CSA's recommendations in the farmers' issues they were pushing to be included as agenda for the 2014 general elections. Also CSA's demand for a separate agriculture budget for Andhra Pradesh was finally conceded, with such a budget being presented in the state legislative assembly in 2013-14¹³⁶.

Score: +2

4.4.6 Influence upon private sector agencies' policies, rules, regulations SPO

Much like it had said during the baseline, CSA maintained that any influence that it might have had on the private sector is largely through having pushed for regulations by government, and not directly. Also, more private agencies are getting involved with organic marketing, some private pesticide companies and new entrepreneurs have started coming up with organic farming inputs like bio pesticides, manures, etc; and though CSA might have contributed to this trend it certainly does not claim sole credit for it. Another indirect influence might have been CSA's success in having convinced some private sector companies to divert CSR funds towards sustainable agriculture practices.

Score: Not Applicable

4.5 Civil Society context

4.5.1 Coping strategies

Andhra Pradesh became a site of political tumult as the demand for a separate Telangana¹³⁷ state gathered frenzy over the past two years. The long, and often violent, struggle for Andhra's bifurcation that began in 1969, finally saw the Parliament appointing 2 June, 2014 for the creation of Telangana¹³⁸. The announcement triggered off more protests and suicides¹³⁹. Overall, the period between 2012 and 2014 saw the state government and administration at near standstill. Much of

¹³⁵ Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture or ASHA is an alliance of about 400 diverse organisations drawn from more than 20 states across India that came together through the Kisan Swaraj Yatra (Oct-Dec 2010), a nation-wide mobilisation around Food-Farmers-Freedom. Refer, https://www.facebook.com/AshaKisanSwaraj/info?ref=page_internal

¹³⁶ The Andhra Pradesh government presented the first ever separate agricultural budget in August 2014. The total agricultural budget is for Rs 13,110.39 crores. Refer, <http://www.financialexpress.com/news/andhra-pradesh-presents-first-ever-separate-agriculture-budget/1281660>

¹³⁷ The Telangana movement, a struggle in Andhra Pradesh for a separate state of Telangana came to a conclusion with its creation on 2nd June 2014, making it India's 29th state. The 'Jai Telanagan' movement began in 1969, over cultural and economic differences with the larger state of Andhra Pradesh. Refer, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/15-facts-you-need-to-know-about-Telangana/articleshow/35955351.cms>

¹³⁸ The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 for the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh into two states was given the go ahead by the President on 1st March 2014. This was following decades long struggle for Telangana. Refer, <http://reorganisation.ap.gov.in/index.jsp>

¹³⁹ The announcement to divide Andhra Pradesh met with celebration on the Telangana side and protests and suicides on the Andhra and Rayalseema side. 13 districts were shut down in Seemandhra as protests took place. A home guard is said to have committed suicide after hearing the news about the division. Refer, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/telangana-triggers-protests-suicides-clamour-for-more-states-grows-across-india/article1-1101346.aspx>

CSA's work, including registration of three new cooperatives for instance, suffered as a consequence. Despite which CSA attempted an appropriate response to this evolving context by conducting several awareness meetings around the formation of Telangana, and producing a report on how the agriculture and agriculture-based livelihoods in the newly formed states could be sustained. Also, plans are afoot to establish another office in Seemandhra, as the current office is now in Telangana.

The general elections in 2014 saw CSA collaborate with networks like RSV and ASHA—at the state and national levels—towards ensuring that farmers' issues are included in the political parties' manifestoes.

Meanwhile, the state's agrarian crisis continued. The 2011 Kharif¹⁴⁰ and 2012 Rabi seasons had been declared as drought-hit. This along with farming practices heavily reliant GMO seeds and private companies had seen farmers incurring heavy losses¹⁴¹, and a spate of farmer suicides¹⁴². Even as the impact of all this spilled over into 2013-14, unseasonal rains and hailstorms in many of the project areas compounded the problems. And farmers' suicides continued in many parts of cotton and chilly growing areas of Andhra even post 2012¹⁴³. At the time of the baseline, CSA and ASHA had been among the first CSOs to organise fact finding missions to the affected areas and release the reports, they had also conducted hearings on the issue¹⁴⁴.

Score: +1

¹⁴⁰ Kharif comes from Arabic and means autumn. It is a term used to describe a cropping season in India from July-October. The cropping season in the Indian subcontinent revolves around the monsoon rains.

Refer, http://www.arthapedia.in/index.php?title=Cropping_seasons_of_India-_Kharif_%26_Rabi

¹⁴¹ With a 15 per cent deficit in the south-west monsoon and consequent damage to rain-fed crops in more than 85 lakh acres, the Andhra government had declared the 2011 kharif season as drought-hit in 856 mandals. Four of CSA's project implementing districts—Anatapur, Kadapa, Kurnool and Nalgonda—came under these. It was reported that 51, 5300 farmers incurred severe loss due to the drought. As a consequence, the rabi season 2011-12 was also affected. There was a severe shortage of water for irrigation, even for drinking. Forcing many farmers to turn to dairy. In Anatapur, for instance, farmers shifted from high water intensive crops (paddy) to less water requiring crops like maize and fodder crops, etc. The farmers' protests against the government's low minimum support prices (MSPs) took a turn with paddy farmers from the Godavari Delta declaring a 'Crop Holiday'. Increasing costs of cultivation, lack of procurement for paddy, low MSPs forced farmers in the fertile Godavari districts—called the 'rice bowl of Andhra--to leave their lands fallow. The state government appointed a committee under Mohan Kanda, a retired IAS officer, to study the issue and make recommendations. CSA made a presentation on this issue and also a detailed presentation to the Kanda Committee. Refer, <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/ap-to-receive-rs-714-cr-as-drought-relief-from-centre/article3349818.ece>

¹⁴² During October-November, 2011 about 95 farmers' suicides were reported in six Andhra districts. Refer, <http://www.downtoearth.org.in/content/95-farm-suicides-month-andhra-pradesh>

¹⁴³ "Five states account for two-thirds of all farm suicides in the country one among them being Andhra Pradesh. Suicide rates among Indian farmers in 2013 was 47 per cent higher than they were for the rest of the population in 2011". <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/columns/sainath/farmers-suicide-rates-soar-above-the-rest/article4725101.ece>

¹⁴⁴ A Round Table with MPs in November 2011 in Delhi; a public hearing in November 2011 in Kurnool; a Round Table in Hyderabad in collaboration with a television channel, with political parties and farmers' unions in January 2012.

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Report CDI-15-021



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