Network of Northeast Tribes (NNET) end line report

MFS II country evaluations, Civil Society component

Dieuwke Klaver[1]
Caroline Desalos[1]

Soma Wadhwa[2]
Alisha Madaan[2]
Alisha Kalra[2]
Bibhu Prasad Mohapatra[2]

1 Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen UR
2 India Development Foundation, India

WAGENINGEN UR
For quality of life

I·D·F
India Development Foundation

This report describes the findings of the end line assessment of the Network of Northeast Tribes (NNET) in India that is a partner of Mensen met een Missie.

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 NNET'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 2013. 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

Report CDI-15-063

Contents

Acknowledgements

List of abbreviations and acronyms

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDC	Civic Driven Change
CDI	Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation
CDHR	Centre for Dalit Human Rights
CEC	Centre for Environment Concerns
CFAs	Co-Financing Agencies
CFO	Co-Financing Organisation
CS	Civil Society
CSC	Community Score Cards
Csc	Congregation of Holy Cross
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DCNC	Development Coordination Network Committee
FCRA	Foreign Contribution Regulation Act
FIR	First Information Report
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
IDF	India Development Foundation
INC	Indian National Congress
JP	JalPrahari
LCHR	Legal Cell for Human Rights
MoFa	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MFS	Dutch co-financing system
MSFS	Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MM	Mensen met een Missie
MNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MOBCs	Most Other Backward Castes
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNET	Network of Northeast Tribes
NREGA	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NRHM	National Rural Health Mission
NSWC	National Social Watch Coalition
PAIRVI	Public Advocacy Initiatives for Rights and Values in India
PDS	Public Distribution System
PLP	Para Legal Person
PME	Planning Monitoring and Evaluation
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PRI	Panchayat Raj Institution
RTE	Right to Education
RTI	Right To Information (Act)
SDM	Sub Divisional Magistrate
SJ	Jesuit Fathers and Brothers, Society of Jesus
SPO	Southern Partner Organisation
SROI	Social Return on Investments
SSI	Semi-structured Interview
SWARAJ	Social Work Academy for Research and Action Jaipur
ToC	Theory of Change
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
VANI	Voluntary Action Network India

VDC	Village Development Committees
Wageningen UR	Wageningen University & Research centre
WNTA	Wada Na Todo Abhiyan
WSF	World Social Forum

1 Introduction

This report presents the civil society end line findings of the Network of Northeast Tribes (NNET) in India which is a partner of Mensen met een Missie under the Communities of Change alliance. It is a follow-up to the baseline assessment that was carried out in May 2013. According to the information provided during the baseline study NNET is working on the theme good governance and civil society building.

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 CFAs 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 (see appendix 1) 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.

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. NNET was able to reach out to more Adivasis people, including more youth and women, as well as to more other marginalised groups although the involvement of these beneficiaries has not changed and remains very limited. Besides 3 members of NNET having won panchayat elections, NNET in Tripura has continued involving local political bodies. The number of applications filed by PLPs more than doubled between the period 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 and is to be interpreted as an increased satisfaction of the direct beneficiaries of NNET's programmes. PLPs are also involved in more complicated cases and have been able to trigger collective action which has been successful. Nevertheless, relationship and influence on public or private sector organisations have not improved and a change like ensuring ST status to Adivasis in Assam have not been achieved yet.

These findings were obtained through an analysis of documents, a workshop and follow-up interviews with the SPO, and interviews with external resources persons working in civil society organisations that receive support from the SPO; 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.

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. NNET was amongst those SPOs selected for in-depth-process tracing.

The outcome that tribal communities in Assam and Tripura in the villages where PLPs are active avail of their legal rights and entitlements can be explained by the following:
Factors valid for all villages in the state consist of; the above mentioned laws that create a conducive environment for both Adivasis and for NNET; improved accessibility of Tripura in terms of roads and mass media, which increases people's awareness about their rights and duties; easier access to

education, and local governments showing commitment. Al these factors are *necessary but not sufficient (conditions)*to ensure Adivasi households their access to the schemes and welfare programmes.

Several actors, including NNET, support Adivasi to avail of their rights, whilst using different strategies: the PLPs of NNET file applications or if necessary RTI applications, other NGOs work as pressure groups or use the same approach as NNET does. All these interventions are sufficient on their own to explain the outcome (after the above mentioned conditions have been met). It is to be observed that the effectiveness of the NNET programme largely depend upon the capacities and the motivation of PLPs to support Adivasi communities.

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

With regards to the baseline ToC, the interventions and outcomes achieved are relevant because most of the interventions align with the condition 'legal awareness' . They have also partly contributed to the conditions 'gender equality', 'economic equality' and 'socio-cultural-political equality' but unfortunately, they have not been to achieve successes to align under the condition 'favourable policies'

With regards to the context in which NNET is operating, its interventions and outcomes achieved are relevant because they benefited the women and the Adivasi community, considered the poorest of the poor.

With regards to the CS policies of MM, NNET's interventions and outcomes are relevant because they align with MM's India overall strategy which is about strengthening the Adivasi group so that they are aware of their rights. Nevertheless, MM would have liked NNET to go beyond helping the community reaching programmes and schemes towards handling atrocities.

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 NNET, the external context in which it operates and the relations between NNET and MM. Internal factors within the SPO that explain the findings are: constant change in leadership, poor internal cohesion, disengagement between the two components of the programmes and possibly tensions between the partners and the resource team (LCHR).
External factors that explain the findings in both states are poor infrastructure, connectivity and lack of adequate modes of transportation. Specific to Assam, flooding and riots have interfered with NNET's work. In Tripura, the cadre-based party makes functioning difficult for organisations like NNET to work on rights-based issues and holding the government accountable.
Factors that explain the findings that are related to the relation between NNET and MM are the long relationship between the two organisations and investment in building the capacity of NNET which unfortunately but consciously is ending with MFS II.

The following chapter briefly describes the political context, the civil society context and the relevant background with regards to the MDG/theme NNET is working on. Chapter three provides background information on NNET, the relation of its MFS II interventions with the CIVICUS framework and specific information on the contract with MM. 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 NNET is working in.

2.1 Political context

Assam

Assam is a north-eastern Indian state that has protested long for being deprived of central government attention. Poverty has risen in most of the north-eastern part of India, including Assam which now counts 11.6 million persons below the poverty line[1].

The 2014 general elections unravelled the most important political change in Assam since the baseline. The Indian National Congress, which dominated the state's politics for most of its political history, was defeated in the state and the centre, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in both.

The Assam Movement began with the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) in 1979, because the northeast felt disconnected with mainstream India. The All Assam Students Union (AASU) raised the foreigners issue (Indian Bengalis and Bangladeshi immigrants), demanding their deportation. This anti-alien feeling shaped Assam's politics since, to be resolved on paper with the Assam Accord[2] in 1985.Agitations, however, turned militant. The State imposed the Armed Forces Special Powers Act[3]in 1990, unleashing human rights violations by the army.

The state has witnessed a number of ethnic clashes and riots. In July 2012, wide-scale violence took place targeting the Bengali immigrants. Riots broke out between the immigrants and the indigenous Bodo community. It pushed 400,000 people into relief camps and resulted in the death of 77 people. Since 2001, 2400 persons have been killed (2095 civilians and 306 security personnel) and over 5500 injured due to militancy related violence in Assam.[4] In May 2014, 31 people were killed in another ethnic violence against "outsiders".[5]

Tripura:

Tripura, another north-eastern state, has 19 tribal communities. Tripuri is the largest tribe, followed by the Reangs. The government has termed them as "primitive tribes"[6]. According to the 2011 census 31.8 per cent of Tripura's population are tribal groups and 69 per cent ethnic Bengalis.

Tripura's political context has not undergone dramatic changes since the baseline. The dominance of the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) continues since 1993. In the state Assembly elections of 2013, CPI-M won 49 seats of 60 seats. The vote was for a status quo as Chief Minister Manik Sarkar's term since 1998 has seen peace and development.

---

[1]   The Planning Commissions Tendulkar Report of 2011,

[2]   Assam Accord was a Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) signed in 1985 by the government of India and the representative of Assam movement. *Refer,*http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/assam-accord-bjp-state-unit-chief-disowns-subramaniam-swamys-comments/

[3]   AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Powers Act) is a 1958 act of Parliament imposed in the states of Manipur, Assam and Jammu & Kashmir which has witnessed many insurgent protests. On account of the many powers it gives to the armed forces there have been many human rights violations committed by them. *Refer,* http://www.hrdc.net/sahrdc/resources/armed_forces.htm

[4]   According to the State Forest and Panchayat Minister Rockybul Hussain.

[5]   Bodoland militants who have been demanding greater autonomy for themselves are suspected of the attack.

[6]   Due to their economic dependence on hunting, shifting cultivation and poor literacy

The non-tribal ethnic Bengalis who have benefitted from CPI-M's rule is their major support base. The Indigenous Nationalist Party of Twipra (INPT) and Nationalist Socialist Party of Twipra are tribal parties opposed to Bengali domination.

The "the insurgency-politics nexus and the external support mechanism of insurgency" has shaped the politics of Tripura. The nexus between political parties and insurgent groups like the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) and All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) is clear when violence is often used as a method to change poll dynamics. Insurgent groups in neighbouring states of Mizoram and Manipur have fuelled the movement of arms and ammunitions in the region. The porous border with Bangladesh that many north-eastern states share is often held responsible for weaponry in the region; many also believe that Bangladesh serves as training ground for insurgency.

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.[7]

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.
- 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 sector[8].

An additional indicator for the social and economic context in India is the Social and Economic Rights Fulfilment Index (SERF Index)[9]. 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.

---

[7] Mati 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
[8] Bhaskara Rao Gorantla, Research Director and Ajay Kumar Ranjan, Research Officer, National Social Watch, India
[9] http://www.socialwatch.org/sites/default/files/SERF2012_eng.pdf

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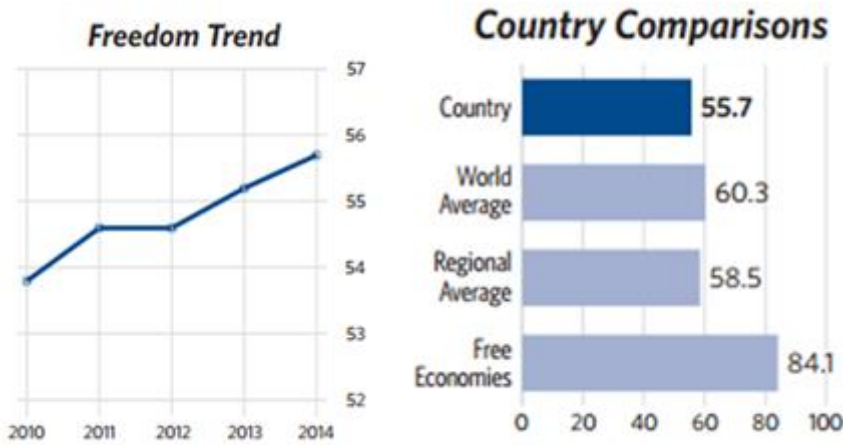
Figure 1: Freedom trend of India over time, and compared to other countries.

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 index[11]. 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 still perceived as a 'mostly unfree' country. The main reason for this, as stated in the Index report, is

---

[10] http://country-corruption.findthebest.com/l/98/India
[11] http://www.heritage.org/index/pdf/2014/countries/india.pdf

the institutional shortcomings in the country. The state owned enterprises and wasteful subsidy programs result in chronically high budget deficits. The Fragile States Index of FFP[12] 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 2010-2014[13]

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 2below 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. [14]

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 2011-2014[15]

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).

---

[12] http://ffp.statesindex.org/2014-india
[13] Idem
[14] https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2014/india-0#.VGCiRvlwtcQ
[15] Idem

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 life[16]. 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% indicted 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 countries[17]. 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	3.0	141 (of 162)
2014	2.4	2.4	3.0	143 (of 162)

Source: Vision of Humanity Global Peace index from 2010-2014[18]

2.2.4 The Foreign Contribution Regulation Act 2010[19]

NGOs are perceived as very important in India, as they contribute a lot in the development of the country[20]. 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

---

[16] http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp

[17] http://www.visionofhumanity.org/#page/indexes/global-peace-index/2014/IND/OVER

[18] http://www.visionofhumanity.org/#page/indexes/global-peace-index/2014/IND/OVER

[19] http://www.fcraforngos.org/

[20] Status of grass root level NGOs in Rajasthan

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 ActionAid[21]. 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 theme good governance and civil society building

Assam:

Assam faces the same civil society issues as it did during the baseline: communal riots, Adivasi rights, and floods.

There are 23 Scheduled Tribes (ST) in Assam; Adivasis, also called "Tea Tribes" are a sub-group among them and considered outsiders by Assam's indigenous tribes as their ancestors were brought from the Chotanagpur region to work in the state's tea gardens. They mainly inhabit the state's Kokrajhar, Nagaon, Darrang, Tinsukia, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, North Cachar and KarbiAnglong regions. Adivasis are denied the ST statusbecause "...tribal identity is forever linked to her or his place of origin". The Adivasishave been fighting for their status because they suffer abject poverty, illiteracy and political disenfranchisement. Indigenous tribes like Boros and Bodos have threatened the government with dire consequences if Adivasis are given the same ST status as them.

In 2012 Assam had witnessed massive riots between the Bengali-speaking Muslims and the indigenous Bodos. 2014 also witnessed violence when Naga insurgents attacked villages killing 15 people in August and made 10,000 villagers internal refugees. Student groups blocked the highway leading to Nagaland in response. The police used batons and tear gas to clear the highway, which resulted in the death of two protestors.

The 2013 floods also exacerbate the civil society situation in Assam, destroying agricultural harvests, infrastructure and livelihoods: 11 out 27 districts were inundated at that time. The September 2014 flash floods again caused landslides in many areas.

Tripura:

Tripura has a primarily agrarian economy, is geographically isolated, has poor infrastructure and high-incidences of poverty. Despite its poor economic growth leading to rising poverty, the state has an encouraging Human Development Index (HDI): according to the 2001 and 2011 censuses the ratio of women per 1000 men has increased from 948 to 961 respectively, the literacy rate has risen from 73.19 per cent to 87.75 per cent.

Civil society continues to cope with the effects of poor development whilst the cadre-based CPI (M) party that has ruled the state since 1993 still exercises strong control over the local politics and government machineries.

Insurgency has declined over the years, although political parties continue to use it as an election issue to garner votes. In the last decade, the government has attacked insurgency and pushed for development. The Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council has been created to design development programmes for the state's tribal population. More than 95 per cent of population now has access to drinking water, and 80 per cent have electricity. Tripura is considered one of the best implementers of the employment guarantee scheme MNREGA.

---

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

3 Description of the SPO and its contribution to civil society/policy changes

3.1 Background of the SPO

The Network of North East Tribes (NNET) was founded in 2007 with a concerted focus on the Tribal community in the North East of India. Various organisations involved with the cause of the Adivasis and tribes of Assam, Tripura and Manipur[22] decided to work together on these complex issues.

At the moment of the endline, NNET is formed of 10 civil society organizations based in Assam or Tripura. These civil society organisations are mostly religious organisations/branches. Since the baseline, two partners have been replaced in Assam but the organisations in Tripura have remained the same. At the time of the end-line, NNET Assam is made of: SMI sisters (at Baganpara), Fatima sisters (at Kumarikatta) - replacing GanaChetanaSamaj and Human Empowerment and Development Centre (HEDC) at Mazbath, Sisters of our Lady of Fatima, Auxilium convent HEDC (at Tinsukia) and FAsCE India at Chapar in Bongaigaon District.

In Tripura, the partners are: Deepika Social Service Centre/ Bethany Sisters, PabitraAtma Society (both in Moharpara and in Gandacherra),Association for Social and Human Advancement (ASHA) - social department of the Society of the fathers of Holy Cross and St. Joseph of Annecy sisters in Kamranga.

The Network started with the women literacy programme in Assam and Tripura, and after much consultation it was decided to focus on understanding the rights of the Adivasis and tribes, safeguarding their rights and bringing justice. In 2010-2011, the Network with the help of Legal Cell for Human Rights (LCHR) implemented a pilot on capacity building and legal assistance for Adivasis in the areas where the co-partners are active.

NNET is a network of a number of organisations with one vision 'to work as a catalyst in promoting Right Based Development to the Adivasis and indigenous tribal communities'.

NNET adopts a number of strategies that have been developed over time:
- Educational Empowerment- Adult Education and Educational Sponsorship;
- Legal Awareness, education and accompaniment to achieve the rights;
- Training of Para Legal activists in rural areas;
- Empower tribal leaders to analyse the social situations and understand the partisan system that denies them their rights;
- Generation of confidence and opportunities for skill development for youth and women.

---

[22] At the start of the project Manipur was also included, but due to small results and an instable area, it was decided to leave this state out of the project after the first year.

As of the 2013-2014 project is concerned, the structure is as follow[23]:

NNET PROGRAMME 2013-14
STRUCTURAL PROFILE
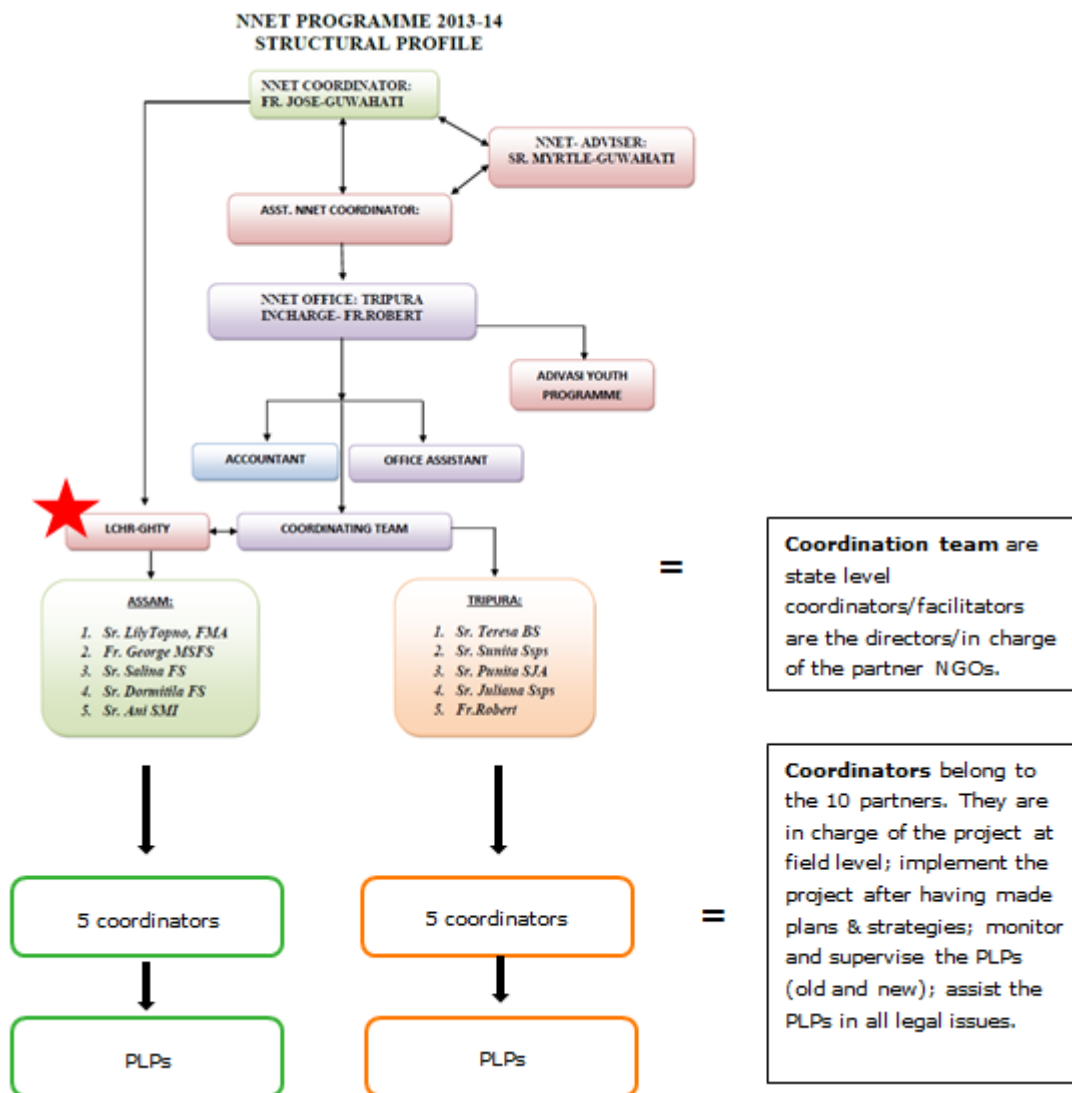
The resource team of the project is from LCHR-Legal cell for Human Rights, Guwahati. It has a distinct role in Assam and Tripura. At Tripura it serves only as a resource team responsible to provide legal training. However, in Assam it has accepted the responsibility of organizing, and conducting of the trainings as well as, implementing and following up of the legal components of the project at grass root level. It will also distribute the honorarium to the coordinators and PLPs and submit quarterly/ half yearly and annual reports to the NNET coordinator.

3.2 MFS II interventions related to Civil Society

The 'Capacity building of tribal leaders through para legal & skill trainings' project is financed by MFS II and its goal is to build the legal capacities of Adivasis and other marginalized communities in Tripura and Assam as a means to empower them to claim their constitutional and legal rights. The project follows a rights based approach whose main strategy is to train local leaders (Para Legal Personnel) in

---

[23] This representation is based on the project proposal for the 2013-2014 period. Only some of the roles and responsibilities are mentioned. For all information please look at the project proposal.

new villages on a yearly basis who are in charge of addressing legal issues in their village. A recently added strategy is to organize women and youth groups in respective areas so that they can serve as pressure groups.

The project objectives are as follow:
1. To disseminate legal knowledge to the grass root level communities and individuals.
2. To train local leaders from villages in legal knowledge and advocacy skills
3. To empower local leaders to take up legal issues to fight for justice and protect human rights
4. To train and capacitate Para–Legal Personnel with legal knowledge, information and legal procedure.
5. To empower women and youth to organize themselves as pressure groups to take up issues of their community and also enhance their livelihood opportunities.
6. To build up legal capacity of voluntary organizations and MM partners

The first four objectives are closely linked to the CIVICUS dimensions 'civic engagement', whereas the last two objectives are associated with 'level of organisation'.

3.3 Basic information

Table 5

SPO basic information.

Heading	Heading	Heading	Heading	Heading
Name of SPO	Network of Northeast Tribes (NNET)			
Consortium and CFA	Mensen met een Missie as part of the Communities of Change Alliance (Cordaid is the leader of the Alliance)			
Project name	capacity building of tribal leaders through para legal & skill trainings			
MDG/theme on which the CS evaluation focusses	Good governance and civil society building			
Start date of cooperation between the CFA and the SPO	2007 with a literacy programme for women			
Contracts signed in the MFS II period:	Period	# months	Total budget[24]	Estimation of % for Civil Society
Ref 317.2995	01.04.2011 - 31.03.2012	12	Rs 4,887,245(audited statement) / € 76,000 (contract)	46%
Ref 317 3022	April 1st 2012 – March 31st 2013	12	€ 77,682 1st instalment €30,000 / Rs 2,111,509 (audited statement) 2nd instalment €? / Rs2,634,779 (audited statement)	55%
Ref 317.3047	April1st2013- March 31st2014	12	1st instalment €40,000(contract) 2nd instalment €40,000 (contract) Total €80,000 / Rs 6,438,090 (audited statement)	37%

Sources: 317.2995 audit Report 2011-2012; NNET Budget [year 2011-2012]; 317.3022 Audited statement [year 2012-2013]; 317.3047 Contract 2013-2014 1st instalment; 317.3047 Contract 2013-2014 2nd instalment; Audit 2013-2014 Budget.

---

[24] The amounts mentioned deviate from the amounts in the contract due to exchange rate losses. The exchange rates used are the averages for 2011 (1:66) and for 2012 (1:68)

4 Data collection and analytical approach

4.1　Adjustments made in the methodology of the evaluation

The evaluators had to adapt the field work such that it accommodated the following:

1. Home to tension and strife between different ethnicities, Assam went through an especially turbulent phase in 2012 with communal violence in two districts of Assam adjoining the Bangladesh border; displacing 400,000 people and with 73 dying in clashes by August 2012[25]. In consequence the MFS II baseline workshops which were supposed to take place in the second half of 2012 had to be postponed till May 2013. This, in turn, meant that the evaluators needed to push NNET's end line evaluation as far as possible to maximise the time gap between NNET's baseline and end line; the end line was finally held between 29 October to 6 November 2014, ensuring a one and a half year space between the two points of assessments as against two years for the other Indian SPOs being evaluated.

2. NNET (Network of North Eastern Tribes) is a network of 10 organisations working in Assam and Tripura. So, unlike for other SPOs being assessed, two evaluation workshops had to be conducted for NNET, one in Guwahati with the five Assam-based partners and the other in Agartala with the remaining five Tripura partners—this for both the baseline and the end line evaluations. There were 14 and 13 respondents for the Guwahati and Agartala workshops respectively; these

---

[25] The North Eastern part of India has been the site of unusual violence and natural calamities recently. In 2012, the Brahmaputra River basin flooded displacing 700000 people in four districts of Assam. About 70000 people were living in government camps and rehabilitation centres till July 2012. Before the floods could recede, communal violence started in two districts of Assam, adjoining the Bangladesh border. By August 2012, the national media had reported 400,000 displaced and 73 dead due to this violence,15 among the dead killed in relief camps, seven of them children, and four in police firing. By the Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi's own admission in a statement released by him beginning August 2012, 65 companies of para-military forces were deployed in the affected districts and 95 police pickets set up in all the sensitive areas of the districts, with more pickets to be set up. The North Eastern part of India consists of seven states that are inhabited by multi ethnic and multi religious groups. Here tribalism and contesting territorial claims coexist with fear of losing identity and loss of land. The bone of contention is that under the Indian Constitution, Schedule V, people of these regions are entitled to special privileges regarding protecting their culture, land, and heritage. Illegal migration from Bangladesh and other parts of the country, like the 'Tea Tribes' brought in by the British, has resulted in the Bodos (an ethnic group) becoming a minority in their territory and losing out their land and resources to the "outsiders". The ongoing violence in Assam between the Bodos and Muslims has exposed the fault lines of the fragile social fabric of the Indian state and its policy of secular democracy. Communities in the Northeast live on the edge because of a number of contesting territorial claims. The states of Assam, Meghalaya, and West Bengal share a porous border with Bangladesh and migration to adjoining districts by Bangladeshis has given birth to conflict over identity and land. Small skirmishes by individuals from different communities erupt into major clashes. For example, the clashes between New Year revelers belonging to the Garos and Rabhas on the night of December 31, 2010, led to a full-scale ethnic conflict and displacement of about 50,000 Garos and Rabhas along the Assam-Meghalaya border. In the last one decade, Karbi Anglong, NC Hills and the Bodo Tribal Autonomous region have seen riots after riots but none of these was given a communal colour. There have been at least five major riots in Assam since 2005, including two between the Bodos and Muslims in 2008 and the recent one, but the fallout of these riots (except the latest) has never been felt outside the affected districts, not even in other districts of Assam. But in the riots last year, over 50000 people belonging to these regions fled from the southern states of India, after receiving anonymous messages threatening retaliatory vengeance for what has been done to the Muslims in Assam. The All Assam Students' Union (Aasu) has been raising the issue of illegal immigration since the 1970s. The United Liberation Front of Assam (Ulfa) was a product of the anti-foreigner agitation of the time and on that issue the Aasu leaders went on to occupy the state government seat straight from the university campuses, the first time anywhere in the world. The Bodoland movement was not started against illegal immigrants. It started against the failure of the Assamese leadership to address the plight of the Bodos. The founder of the All Bodo Students' Union (Absu), late Upendranath Brahma, was a leader of Aasu, but founded Absu after his colleagues in Aasu failed to address the demands of the Bodos for an autonomous region status in the state of Assam. The current situation in these states remain volatile and despite resource support. Political parties dare not resolve the issue fearing loss of votes and repercussions across India.

included partners, executive leadership, coordinators, and personnel from the legal resource centre employed for the intervention (in the Guwahati workshop).

3. A decision was taken against filing separate data collection formats for the post-plenary interviews. Indeed, while macro-level information and perspective—in the case of both states—were concentrated with the executive leadership, others present could at best supplement these with field level anecdotes.

4. Information from data collection was compiled to make a combined MoC for both states, given that NNET's MFS II-funded interventions are not designed differently for Assam and Tripura.

4.2 Difficulties encountered during data collection

NNET's assessment presented the evaluators with the following challenges:

1. Mother tongue, for most participants, in Assam was Assamese and Kokborok in Tripura. For the workshop, however, the Assam participants spoke in Hindi and English to the extent they could manage. The participants in Tripura spoke largely in Bangla, one of the state's official languages. Fluent in English, Hindi and Bangla, the IDF facilitators asked the Reverends present to help with translation whenever necessary. Some of the nuances might have been lost in translation;

2. All ten partners in NNET are faith-based NGOs affiliated to different Catholic congregations, and are represented by nuns and priests temporarily deputed to service NNET by their respective congregations. Therefore, many who had represented their organisations during the baseline had been replaced by their newer counterparts at the time of the end line;

3. The nature of NNET's intervention is such that community youth are recruited as Para Legal Personnel (PLPs) for a term of one year. So, PLPs who were interviewed for the baseline had ceased to be a part of the project by the end line. Also, and understandably so, the current batch of PLPs was too new to have information or insight on the changes in the intervention with the baseline period (2012) as a reference point. The evaluators, thus, conducted interviews with former PLPs who were still pursuing the NNET's mandate in their villages in their independent capacity; these interviews were conducted over and above those with the presently deputed PLPs;

4. Sourcing documentation was a challenge on two counts: in the first place NNET was initially using the Assam-based NGO LCHR (Legal Cell for Human Rights) as its resource centre for all PLP related work, including training, in both states. In 2013, Tripura started managing its own planning and activities around PLPs. Until so far LCHR continues to be involved in Assam. Documentation on PLPs, therefore, had to be collected from two sources, with reporting formats that were often different. In the second place the women and youth capacity building component is being managed by nuns who are representatives of NNET's partner organisations. They are neither trained, nor temperamentally inclined to keep rigorous records of their activities in written. The coordinators in both Assam and Tripura therefore regretted the lack of comprehensive documentation for this component of the programme;

5. No other NGOs work on legal issues with Adivasis and tribals in Assam and Tripura. In Tripura, in fact, no other NGOs work in the remote regions that NNET works in. And NNET does not really interact with many other NGOs. These factors made identifying rival pathways particularly difficult; those that were finally offered were weak;

6. Not many among the external interviewees were aware of NNET as an entity. They were more familiar with the names of the individual partners that collaborate in NNET. Most external interviewees knew of the Legal Cell for Human Rights (LCHR), the Assam-based legal resource centre for NNET;

7. Most organisations that the NNET partners and personnel named as being occasional contacts/part contributors to NNET's claimed outcomes were impossible to reach for interviews. None of these organisations had registered landlines, email ids, or websites. Their mobile phone numbers (provided by NNET) were mostly out of coverage range, on the rare occasion that the evaluators got through the calls these were not received. The evaluators had to give up on pursuing some of these organisations after numerous failed attempts, including futile follow-up requests to NNET to connect the concerned organisations with the evaluators.

4.3   Identification of two outcomes for in-depth process tracing

Based on the percentage of MFS II funding allocated for civil society related activities it was decided to select NNET for Process Tracing.

At the time of preparing the end-line assessment in September 2014 and therefore reviewing the project documents, few new documents had been made available for analysis, as compared with the ones of the baseline.

Based on these, the following potential outcomes had been selected to assess the extent to which more people and more diverse people engage in NNET's activities and outcomes: the number of persons that received assistance from PLPs so that they can access government schemes and programmes; the extent to which NNET has been able to recruit more female PLPs and; the extent to which the voluntary character of the PLPs ensures the long term support of PLPs to those that ask for legal support.

With regards to strengthening of organisations supported by NNET, the evaluators thought of assessing whether the youth and women pressure groups mentioned in the progress reports were operational and performing. A second option was to look at the organisational capacity of NNET itself and how it engages in the wider CS arena.

During field work it became clear that the youth and pressure groups had only been recently created and that no outcomes had been clearly reported yet. The organisational capacity of NNET itself was not assessed either because no concrete plan existed for strengthening NNET, making it irrelevant to assess contribution according to the evaluation team. Results

4.4 Results obtained in relation to intervention logic

As explained under paragraph 4.2, the quality of the reports provided as well as the fact that most of these documents are Assam or Tripura specific made it challenging to draw a comprehensive overview of the results achieved. Moreover the reports do not reflect on results achieved, which is also complicated because those described in the 2013-2014 proposal are not specific enough. These shortcomings have been acknowledged by MM who provided a training on results based management in the end of 2013 which unfortunately and to the knowledge of the evaluators has not been translated into actions.

In general, NNET has implemented the interventions planned for the Para Legal Personnel (PLP): In the three year programme, 90 villages have been targeted and in each village a PLP was trained; the selection of the villages was based upon a needs assessment and social mapping and the PLP selection included a leadership assessment and orientation programme, a consultation programme, 3 trainings in each state, guided field work, a follow-up programme and an evaluation. Most PLP related activities are well planned in specific months. Only the follow-up meetings have not taken place every 12 months: in Tripura it seems to take place every October but not information is available for 2014[26] but in Assam it took place in February 2013 and was expected to take place in December 2014. The interactions between old and new PLPs do not seem to be planned structurally either.

With regards the youth and women programme and the creation of pressure groups, the strategy is different in each state with the team in Assam having quarterly meetings whereas the team in Tripura

---

[26] Feed-back from NNET indicated that the follow up program for Tripura was conducted on Feb 3rd-6th 2015.

having monthly meetings for example. Some more activities have taken place but how they fit together is unclear so as the broader strategy sustaining this component.[27]

---

[27] Feed-back from NNET indicated the following "Partners meet quarterly in Assam due to distance. Tripura they plan their activities with coordinators every month. Village visits are planned accordingly."

5 Results

5.1 Results obtained in relation to intervention logic

As explained under paragraph 4.2, the quality of the reports provided as well as the fact that most of these documents are Assam or Tripura specific made it challenging to draw a comprehensive overview of the results achieved. Moreover the reports do not reflect on results achieved, which is also complicated because those described in the 2013-2014 proposal are not specific enough. These shortcomings have been acknowledged by MM who provided a training on results based management in the end of 2013 which unfortunately and to the knowledge of the evaluators has not been translated into actions.

In general, NNET has implemented the interventions planned for the Para Legal Personnel (PLP): In the three year programme, 90 villages have been targeted and in each village a PLP was trained; the selection of the villages was based upon a needs assessment and social mapping and the PLP selection included a leadership assessment and orientation programme, a consultation programme, 3 trainings in each state, guided field work, a follow-up programme and an evaluation. Most PLP related activities are well planned in specific months. Only the follow-up meetings have not taken place every 12 months: in Tripura it seems to take place every October but the 2014 session was postponed to February 2015; in Assam it took place in February 2013 and was expected to take place in December 2014. The interactions between old and new PLPs do not seem to be planned structurally either.

With regards the youth and women programme and the creation of pressure groups, the strategy is different in each state with the team in Assam having quarterly meetings whereas the team in Tripura having monthly meetings for example. Some more activities have taken place but how they fit together is unclear so as the broader strategy sustaining this component.[28]

5.2 Changes in civil society in the 2012-2014 period

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 2013, NNET has made slight improvements in advancing the interests of Adivasis and other marginalised groups in Assam and Tripura.

Both in Assam and Tripura 70 villages now have their Para Legal Person (PLP), which is 40 more villages reached out to in each state than during the baseline. The number of female PLPs increased from 1 person in 2011 to four persons in each state in 2014. The PLPs trained in the period 2013-2014 have been able to file more applications (including RTIs) than in the period before: 1327 applications were filed in the 2012-13 period and 3172 applications were filed in the 2013-14 period benefiting 9734 people directly and 7337 people indirectly. Generally speaking PLPs are more motivated and capable to work on their own, which also encourages more people to come for support. However challenges that hinder PLP's capacity to work appropriately consist of political inference in their work; PLP's being recruited lacking the education level needed to be able to communicate and report (16

---

[28] Feed-back from NNET indicated the following "Partners meet quarterly in Assam due to distance. Tripura they plan their activities with coordinators every month. Village visits are planned accordingly."

PLPs recruited in a batch of 20); PLPs not taking their work seriously; ethnic violence keeping people away from awareness raising activities and; non-cooperation of village headmen and villagers. On the other hand, better education and more serious PLPs have helped to create legal awareness but are more likely to leave NNET for better paying jobs.

Since the baseline, NNET has put more emphasis on working on/with youth and women: 4 women groups were formed in each state and 4 youth groups were formed in Assam. These should play the role of pressure groups supporting PLP work but the strategy behind the component of the programme keeps on being unclear for MM. Five youth clubs have been registered in Tripura and specific activities for youth were implemented, for example a skill training programme that enabled boys and girls to start their own business or find work. Since the baseline, NNET has become more aware that other marginalised groups than Adivasi also needtheir attention; NNET in both states is reaching out to many communities other than the Adivasi: Nepalis, Boros, Assamese and other linguistic groups are also attending NNET meetings. Target group' involvement in NNET's programme is rather limited and did not change since the baseline: PLPs are only involved in the yearly evaluation of the programme: The executive leadership considers that target groups don't have the knowledge to plan for the legal education programme. Involvement of youth and women groups in decision making over the programme is said to have increased because they can voice their concerns and needs, however no evidence was found. Since the baseline it was acknowledged that the population is participating more in NNET activities.

NNET continues to invite panchayat members, ward members and village council members (Tripura) to participate in legal awareness programmes organised for the target groups. Three members of NNET have contested and won panchayat elections and some of them had difficulties in merging their PLP work to advance the causes of the marginalised groups with their new responsibilities. However after the initiation period in their new functions they identified ways to do so.

Score baseline 2013 on an absolute scale from 0-3:   **2**
Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of -2 → +2   **+1**

5.2.2 Level of organization

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.

In general, NNET has shown almost no improvement in this dimension.

Since the baseline, NNET has intensified the relations between partners operating in each state although it showed to be difficult: "We learned that 'Networking' certainly is harder than individually operating."[29]In Assam joint trainings, followed by telephone calls and e-mailing are used for communication, and in Tripura the monthly prayer meeting is the time to come together. Relations between the partners between the two states have again proven to be very challenging and they only meet once a year as a team. The end line assessment showed again the sharp differences in network(ing) within NNET with the Tripura team being isolated whereas the Assam team having more contact with other organisations. NNET partners in Assam have engaged with 7 new organisations since the baseline(among which NEDSSS, partner of Cordaid under the Communities of Change alliance) and continues working with LCHR) and with 4 other organisations, based upon needs. NNET in Tripura has discontinued LCHR services since March 2013 and has only worked with one other organisation since the baseline. Partners in Tripura repeated the fact that hardly any other organisations work in the far-flung unconnected areas where they are working in. The PLPs have been mentioned as the ones being able to defend the best the interest of the marginalised groups. NNET has not diversified its financial resource base and Mensen met een Missie still is the only funder of the programme, apart from some contributions made by villagers.

---

[29] source: Evaluation Report 2013-2014 NNET Project – Assam Unit

Score baseline 2013 on an absolute scale from 0-3:   **1**

Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of -2 → +2   **0**

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.

No changes occurred with regards to practice of values since the baseline: information is only passed and shared between the partners and the executive leadership on finances and project progress and not to the programme coordinators and the PLPs. So it can be concluded that no such information is being passed to NNET's target groups[30]. NNET is a network of partner organisations with partners having an equal say over issues pertaining to its functioning but it does not have a board, or any other form of permanent structure. External auditing keeps on taking place as requested by the government.

Score baseline 2013 on an absolute scale from 0-3:   **1**
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 no to slight improvements since the baseline.

The key concerns of NNET's target groups have remained the same: inability of the tribal communities to avail their rights and legal entitlements among others the right to education, right to information, land rights, and the right to livelihood as well as to access government schemes and programmes such as MGNREGA, Indira AwasYojana (IAY), Public Distribution System (PDS),Midday Meal Scheme, widow and old age pensions, student scholarships etc. The number of applications filed more than doubled between the period 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 is to be interpreted as an increased satisfaction of the direct beneficiaries of NNET's programmes. Apart from this PLPs are involved in more complicated cases (like kidnapping, rape, out of court settlement) and approached by non-project villages and non-Adivasi villagers for their support. NNET has triggered communities to organise themselves to take collective action like the women groups in the Kathalcherra centre of Dhalai district, which succeeded in getting liquor shops closed in their respective villages in October 2013.These communities increasingly dare to talk to other communities and to government officials and children parliaments become more performing, all indications that changes are happening at the level of the society as a whole.

---

[30] Feed-back provided by NNET in February 2015 pointed out at the language barrier, documents being in English but actors not being fluent in that language. "You may take into account that we share the whole project with all concerned. Unfortunately many of them (Coordinators and PLPs) are not fluent in English to read up and follow on their own, nor are they capable of participating in the planning of the research designs. That makes it impossible to be totally transparent. All the communication of the project is done in English. At the project orientation time and training the whole concept is explained and the budget shared. More participation would be impractical due to the above mentioned reasons."

PLPs, together with NNET coordinators, have also dared to put to light profound society problems such as human trafficking, school drop-outs or corruption in the tea gardens. These successes may have been due to the increased performance of the PLPs but their sustainability is questioned; political interference remains one of the obstacles to lasting changes. In short, an external resource person said that NNET's work has helped people develop awareness about rights, legalities, government schemes with respect to education, health, nutrition etc, as also increased the confidence and courage of communities to fight for their rights.

Since the baseline, there have not been any outstanding developments in regards to NNET's relationship with public or private sector organisations. In both state NNET continues to face resistance from the panchayats and the government in terms of the use of public funds for what they are meant for. By claiming that they are working for people's welfare, NNET manages to get more support. NNET until so far lobbied in vain to ensure ST (Scheduled Tribe) status for the Adivasi community which is a politically charged issue in the state of Assam. The Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed at the time of the baseline to stop child labour and trafficking in Assam has been combined with two others by the Chief Justice of India for further process. NNET's work on the PDS system has continued as before. Although NNET mentioned to have been involved in influencing the policies on minimum wages in tea gardens, all other interviewees stated that NNET's role on that issue of influencing private companies has been very limited. PLPs on their part have been active in solving problems between workers and companies like in Simna, near Agartala, where the manager of an electric company was forced to pay adequate wages to his workers.

Score baseline 2013 on an absolute scale from 0-3:   **2**
Score end line 2014, relative change on a scale of -2 → +2   **+1**

5.2.5   Civil Society Environment

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 NNET is coping with that context.

The factors affecting negatively NNET's work have remained the same since the baseline: a) huge distances and poor connectivity between places, b) political tension resulting in regular shutdowns and road blocks, c) ethnic turmoil, d) trafficking of women and children, and e) suspicions over NNET as a faith-based organisation trying to convert people.

An additional issue affecting both States is the change in FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) Rules which do not allow the transfer of funds from one state to another. In the first year of the project, the funds would be put in LCHR's FCRA account and then transferred to the partners in Tripura. To overcome this problem, partners in Assam receive cash after it has been withdraw in Tripura. Specific to Assam, floods that occurred in October 2014 and inter-communities violence in NNET's target area of Kumarikata, Baganpara and Bodo districts created frequent disruptions to NNET's work. In Tripura and due to the political context, NNET coordinators and field staff have often been threatened by officials but still continued their work.

Score baseline 2013 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 Southern partners?

This paragraph assesses the extent to which some outcomes achieved can be "attributed" to NNET. 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 NNET's contribution to the outcome linked to civic engagement. The 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 Civic engagement

The outcome achieved and information that confirms this
The outcome chosen is the 'improved engagement of Para Legal Personnel (PLPs) between 2012 and 2014so that people covered by the project access government schemes and programmes'. NNET's programme mandate is to expand its coverage to include 40 new villages every year[31].

In the year 2013-14, 3175 applications were filed (including RTIs) which is more than two times the amount filled in the period 2012-2013 (1327 applications had been filed)[32].Based upon information obtained through interviews it can be concluded that the new PLPs are more educated[33], motivated and proactive[34] in their involvement with the community and their problems than those of earlier phases of the project. Some of the PLPs have filed RTI applications and deputations on their own[35]. Some of them continue to work on the NNET mandate (that is to say continuing serving their

---

[31] It should be noted that the list of villages for Assam is incomplete and that the information with regards Tripura does not include the name of the administrative boundaries.

[32] We can only compare number of applications filed and not the number of beneficiaries met or the number of issues solved since the figures are not available for each state and for both periods. We also lack comparative information between PLPs, between villages and between states.

[33] The evaluators were not provided with the level of education of each PLP and it does not seem that NNET keeps such a record. During interviews PLPs in Assam collectively said: "Unlike the previous requirement of recruiting PLPs who have at least passed their matriculation, the PLPs that are entering in the Assam programme (now) are much more educated." The increase level of education of the PLPs does not seem to apply to Tripura, according to Tripura staff.

[34] To sustain improved level of motivation and proactivity the evaluators used the following information: NNET in Assam stated the following: "Earlier we did not have the option to choose, but now, young boys apply to become PLPs, we have more than one option to choose from. We see the difference, the young generation now is keen to work with us, this was not the case initially. In the earlier phases of our programme we had to convince young people to become PLPs. Now we have large numbers offering their services, some are even ready to work just as volunteers. Now we ensure that a prospective PLP is at least a matriculate. The difference also shows up in the way the PLPs work now. Earlier, in 2012, we had to teach PLPs what RTI meant, how to file RTI applications. By 2014, the new batch seems to know much more about RTIs even at the time of joining." In Tripura, the following was shared "In terms of quality of PLP engagement in Tripura. In our context, they are class 8-10th educated, well known and identified among the villagers; they are most vocal and display leadership qualities among the villagers to be chosen as a PLP"

[35]NNET and Interview with a resource person associated with NNET and founder of Jana Kalyan Sansthan. Nevertheless, the evaluators don't have information about which PLPs have done this and for which villages.

communities so that they access government schemes and programmes) even after their one-year involvement in the project is over and therefore without receipt of any remuneration from NNET[36].The success and sustainability of the programme depends therefore on PLPs' willingness and ability to continue working.

Information that confirms or rejects pathways
The first pathway that potentially explains the outcome consists of a variety of activities carried out by NNET and PLPs to implement the project, as well as to strengthen the capacities of PLPs that enable them to educate communities on their legal rights and entitlements. This is done through the provision of trainings to PLPs on legal knowledge, information and legal procedures that help to file RTIs and deputations; guided fieldwork and monitoring of their work which in turn has helped communities obtain benefits of government schemes relating to education, health, employment, housing etc. and services such as supply of drinking water, electricity, street lighting etc.[37]

The following information provides evidence *in favour of this pathway:*
- In every project village that NNET enters, they organise meetings with the villagers where they conduct a needs assessment. Based on this they identify the issues and concerns of the villagers. The coordinators and the PLPs then pursue these issues by filing applications, and if that does not work, they follow up with filing RTI applications and then, armed with the information obtained through such RTIs they approach officials to redress or resolve the problem at hand.[38] In Tripura heads of Panchayats were also involved as a means to obtain their support and consent for the PLP programme in their respective villages[39].
- NNET interacts with the government at various levels for ensuring entitlement of the beneficiaries, often even "forcing" government officials to do their duties.[40] NNET coordinators and PLPs interact with district magistrates, sub-division magistrates, BDOs (Block Development Officials), the women and child welfare department, the revenue department, electricity department, water supply department, agriculture department, public banks. etc. to achieve desired results for the communities. NNET's coordinators and PLPs also organised meetings with government officials of the Assam State Legal Services Authority[41] on mediation and resolving issues without approaching courts.[42]
- NNET networks with other organisations such as PAJHRA (Promotion and Advancement of Justice, Harmony and Rights of Adivasis)[43] and AAWAA(All Adivasi Women's Association of Assam)[44]to conduct surveys on the situation of Adivasis creates awareness about their rights and help them avail of such rights.[45]

---

[36] sources: NNET, Report field visit Mensen met een Missie – NNET, November 2012, Assam; Interview with Assam PLPs; interview with MM; field observation by evaluation team. The evaluators were nevertheless not provided with figures of PLPs and the work each of them do. It seems NNET does not monitor this aspect structurally.

[37] NNET, *Final Report for MM (Tripura, April 2013-March 2014)* prepared by ASHA *and* Quarterly Reports by Assam partners titled, *Capacity Building of Tribal leaders through Para legal & Skill training Phase – II(April 2013-June 2013, June 2013-September 2013, October 2013-December 2013, January 2014-March 2014)*

[38] Quarterly reports for both Assam and Tripura and interviews with PLPs in Assam and former PLPs of Tripura.

[39] NNET

[40] Quarterly reports where examples of interaction between government officials and PLPs and coordinators are described

[41] The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has been constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 to provide free Legal Services to the weaker sections of the society and to organize LokAdalats for amicable settlement of disputes. In every State, State Legal Services Authority has been constituted to give effect to the policies and directions of the NALSA and to give free legal services to the people and conduct LokAdalats in the State. The State Legal Services Authority is headed by Hon'ble the Chief Justice of the respective High Court who is the Patron-in-Chief of the State Legal Services Authority. *Refer* http://nalsa.gov.in/directory.html

[42] NNET Assam staff, *LCHR: Annual Report (2013-14)*

[43] PAJHRA, which in Adivasi (Sadri) language means 'life Spring', stands for Promotion and Advancement of Justice, Harmony and Rights of Adivasis. PAJHRA was formalized on 9th April 2002. It is an initiative of Adivasis of Assam from all walks of life. Adivasis who have lived peacefully and whose contribution is substantial to the economy of Assam believe that they deserve and can have a better status in North East India and it is up to them, in collaboration with other agencies to change their lot. *Refer,* http://www.pajhra.org/

[44] AAWAA was started in November 2002. They work with the Adivasi community, especially women of the community. They conduct awareness programmes on child care, cultural strengthening, child education, domestic violence, and women's health and status in society.

[45] Interview with PAJHRA, AAWAA

- NNET's PLPs and coordinators in Assam organised village meetings to spread awareness on specific issues and subjects, like, human trafficking, women's rights etc. Six such village meetings have been organised for 2013-14 and these took place alongside other trainings and guided fieldwork.[46]
- NNET recruited interested PLPs (40 new PLPs for 40 new villages) on confirmation of basic level of education and a willingness to further NNET's programme mandate[47]. The final recruitment took place after an orientation programme in April-May 2013.[48]At the end of May the recruited PLPs received in-depth details about the programme and were briefly introduced to schemes like MGNREGA[49], PDS, IAY etc.[50]
- Former PLPs shared their experiences and learnings with new PLPs in March and May 2013.[51]
- PLPs received three trainings throughout the year, each training being followed by the preparation of an action plan, guided fieldwork and monitoring of PLPs' work. The purpose of these trainings and monitoring was to gauge the progress of PLPs' involvement with community issues and identify any new issues that might come up and take them up in subsequent trainings.[52] During the course of such trainings, PLPs were taught about basic rights, government schemes and entitlements, use of RTI, FIR and applications to avail access to rights and schemes and any community specific issue.[53] NNET continued to conduct follow up courses to train PLPs on specific topic such as human trafficking, PDS etc.[54][55]after their financial support to these PLPs ended by the end of the year;
- NNET evaluated the whole programme in March 2013 and March 2014.[56] NNET coordinators continued to monitor PLPs' work of those who finished their trainings to ensure sustainability of the programme.[57]
- Through the course of their training, the PLPs are capacitated to file applications independently without the support of the coordinators.[58]

Information that rejects the lasting role of NNET towards facilitating the community's access to their rights and legal entitlements is the following:
- Some PLPs are dropping out of the programme whereas they are being trained[59] and it is unclear how many old PLPs continue their work after the training trajectory ended and if there is structured contact between new and old PLPs[60]. These points question the design and the sustainability of the changes witnessed.
- The government has, over the years, passed some important laws and legislations like the RTI Act (2005)[61], the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005)[62], MGNREGA (2005), Food

---

[46]NNET

[47]NNET and Interview with Tripura new PLPs. As mentioned earlier this figure could not be triangulated with the reports provided. In Assam only 17 PLPs seem to have taken part in the project in the period 2013-2014 (see 'Assam- 1 qtrly report NNET Assam-sent to floor', 'Assam 2nd Quaterly report NNET Assam July -Sept 13', etc)

[48]NNET, *Final Report for MM (Tripura, April 2013-March 2014)* prepared by ASHA

[49] Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 2005, is designed to provide a guaranteed job (non-skilled) to all adult members of a family living in a rural area for at least 100 days. http://www.mgnrega.co.in/

[50]NNET

[51]NNET, *Report field visit Mensen met een Missie – NNET*, November 2012, Assam, Interview with Tripura former PLPs, Assam PLPs

[52]NNET, *LCHR: Annual Report (2013-14)*, Word documents of training modules, *Final Report for MM (Tripura, April 2013-March 2014)* prepared by ASHA, *Capacity Building of Tribal Leaders through Para Legal and Skill Training: Project Proposal, Phase II (2013-14)*, Interviews with academic from Tripura University, Tripura former PLPs, Tripura new PLPs, respondent from PAJHRA. Assam PLPs and AAWAA.

[53]NNET, Interview with Tripura former PLPs

[54] Public Distribution System (PDS) in the country facilitates the supply of food grains and distribution of essential commodities to a large number of poor people through a network of Fair price shops at a subsidised price on a recurring basis. *Refer,* http://epds.nic.in/

[55]NNET, *Final Report for MM (Tripura, April 2013-March 2014)* prepared by ASHA and Interview with a resource person associated with NNET and founder of Jana Kalyan Sansthan

[56]NNET; Evaluation- Assam- NNET &LCHR; 317.3047 Report SWOT analysis 2014

[57]NNET; A letter from Jose Karipadam, NNET to MM on Monitoring (October 2013)

[58] NNET staff in Tripura

[59] 317.3022 Report 2013

[60] Interviews with old and new PLPs.

[61] Right to Information Act 2005 mandates timely response to citizen requests for government information. It is an initiative taken by Department of Personnel and Training, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions to provide a– RTI Portal Gateway to the citizens for quick search of information on the details of first Appellate Authorities, PIOs   etc.

Security Bill (2013)[63], Forest Rights Act (2006)[64], Right to Education (2009)[65], Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (2012)[66] which has created a conducive environment where villagers are much more inclined to accept NNET's mandate and messages.[67]

- Tripura now enjoys better infrastructure, roads are being built in the tribal areas. Today, accessibility to education is easier, and also, the spread of and access to mass media has increased awareness and knowledge, making people more curious towards understanding their rights and duties. In colleges and schools, students are given trainings on the purpose of RTIs and how to utilise them to bring transparency to government departments.
- The panchayats have become increasingly proactive in helping people access schemes for the betterment of the adivasis and marginalised communities.[68]
- Other organisations in Assam like PAJHRA, AAWAA, AASAA (All Adivasi Students Association of Assam)[69], Bosco Reach Out[70] have also been working on the rights of the Adivasis.[71] PAJHRA started by a group of Adivasi social activists, leaders and academicians works for the Adivasis in the tea gardens and villages of Assam on issues such as identity, Adivasis' constitutional rights, human trafficking, health, education and livelihood. AAWAA started in November 2002 work with the Adivasi community, especially women of the community and conduct awareness programmes on child care, cultural strengthening, child education, domestic violence, and women's health and status in society. AASAA, formed in 1996, is an Adivasi students organisation working in 17 districts of Assam. They mainly work as a pressure group, organising dharnas, roadblocks on issues of minimum wage for tea garden workers and the Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for Adivasis.
- In Tripura, Adivasi Unnayan Samiti (AUS)[72] in Unakoti district conducts surveys on Adivasi people and their literacy levels, how many live in tea estates, wages in tea estates, land ownership etc. SBU for the Reang community, an NGO which is based out of the North District's Kanchanpur village and Bru Student Union (BSU) also work on Adivasi rights and upliftment, although at a small scale.[73]

---

amongst others, besides access to RTI related information / disclosures published on the web by various Public Authorities under the government of India. *Refer,* http://righttoinformation.gov.in/

[62] An Act to provide for more effective protection of the rights of women guaranteed under the Constitution who are victims of violence of any kind occurring within the family and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. *Refer,* http://wcd.nic.in/wdvact.pdf

[63] A BILL to provide for food and nutritional security in human life cycle approach, by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices to people to live a life with dignity and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. *Refer,*www.thehindu.com/multimedia/.../National_**Food**_Secu_1404268a.pdf

[64] A BILL to recognise and vest the forest rights and occupation in forest land in forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forests for generations but whose rights could not be recorded; to provide for a framework for recording the forest rights so vested and the nature of evidence required for such recognition and vesting in respect of forest land. *Refer,* http://www.forestrightsact.com/the-act

[65] The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which represents the consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21-A, means that every child has a right to full time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards. *Refer,* http://mhrd.gov.in/rte

[66] An Act to protect children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and pornography and provide for establishment of Special Courts for trials of such offences and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. *Refer,* http://wcd.nic.in/childact/childprotection31072012.pdf

[67]NNET

[68]NNET

[69] AASAA is an Adivasi students' organisation working in 17 districts of Assam. They were formed in 1996. They mainly work as a pressure group, organising dharnas, roadblocks on issues of minimum wage for tea garden workers and the Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for Adivasis. They have been very effective on these two issues.

[70] Since 1983 Bosco Reach Out has been associated with the promotion of Self Help Groups, particularly focused on empowerment of women through group activities. Bosco Reach Out Self Help Group movement has encompassed the states of Assam and Meghalaya covering 16 districts. *Refer,* **boscoreachout**.org/ *and* http://www.indianngos.org/ngo_detail.aspx?nprof=5501241216

[71]NNET and Interviews with PAJHRA, AAWAA, AASAA

[72]Adivasi Unnayan Samiti (AUS) is a small NGO organisation in Tripura working on conducting surveys on Adivasi people and their level of literacy, how many live in tea estates, wages in tea estates, land ownership etc.

[73]NNET
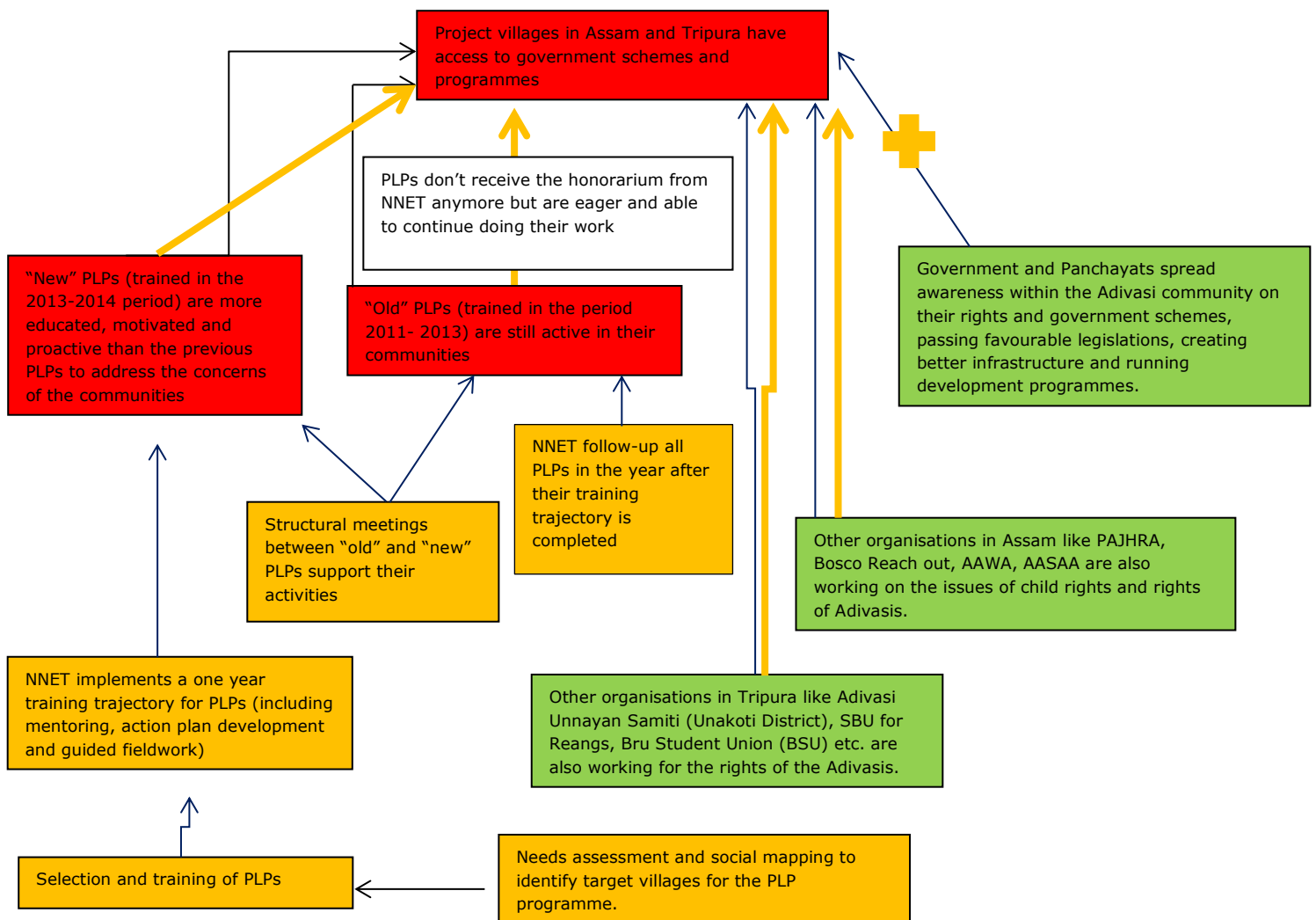
Figure 1: Pathways that possibly explain outcomes and conclusions about the nature of the relations between pathways and the outcome, Adivasi claiming their rights

Conclusion

The outcome that tribal communities in Assam and Tripura in the villages where PLPs are active avail of their legal rights and entitlements can be explained by the following:

Factors valid for all villages in the state consist of; the above mentioned laws that create a conducive environment for both Adivasis and for NNET; improved accessibility of Tripura in terms of roads and mass media, which increases people's awareness about their rights and duties; easier access to education, and local governments showing commitment. Al these factors are *necessary but not sufficient (conditions)*to ensure Adivasi households their access to the schemes and welfare programmes.

Several actors, including NNET, support Adivasi to avail of their rights, whilst using different strategies: the PLPs of NNET file applications or if necessary RTI applications, other NGOs work as pressure groups or use the same approach as NNET does. All these interventions are sufficient on their own to explain the outcome (after the above mentioned conditions have been met).

NNET through its legal awareness programme has trained and monitored PLPs in a selected number of villages. In these villages, the people have benefited from government schemes and programmes. As noted by an external resource person and as concluded by the evaluation team, NNET is one of the organisations that support Adivasis to claim their rights. It is to be observed that the effectiveness of the NNET programme largely depend upon the capacities and the motivation of PLPs to support Adivasi communities.

5.4　What is the relevance of these changes?

5.4.1　Relevance of the changes in relation to the Theory of Change of 2013

According to the respondents from Assam and Tripura the changes achieved by NNET are in line with the ToC prepared in 2013. Since the baseline NNET's work has focused on enhancing 'legal awareness' described in the ToC with the PLP programme and to some extent on the condition 'gender equality' with the work done with women (pressure) groups and more female PLPs taking part in the programme. The increased number of people benefiting from government schemes and programmes and increased client satisfaction helped to make contributions to 'economic equality' and to some extent to 'socio-cultural-political equality'. NNET however has had limited influence on public and private policies and practices which would have been relevant under the condition 'favourable policies'. Maybe the fact that some NNET staff have won panchayat elections will influence some practices leading to favourable policies in the villages of the programme.

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

Most respondents agreed that the changes benefited the women and the Adivasi community in the villages targeted by the project. One has to keep in mind that the Adivasi community in the North East is not yet recognised as a tribe; all respondents said that the changes were relevant for the poorest of the poor. Women have become more confident and proactive in their communities and the villages are more aware of their rights, an initial step towards development said some respondents. Besides individual being aware of their rights, the communities have also started taking collective action which resulted in some cases in more children going to school, toilets being available in the villages and even closing liquor shops (alcoholism is a severe problem among men in the villages). Whereas changes might have been slow, some respondents hope that villages will become fully aware and that these villages could be seen as examples for other who have not benefited from the project.

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

Mensen met een Missie does not have per se a vision document on strengthening civil society but is developing every year a specific country strategy plan. In India and specific to the North East region it is about strengthening the Adivasi group so that they are aware of their rights[74]. Mensen met een Missie's website also mentions women as another of their target groups[75].Complementing what the State is offering in terms of services is essential to MM.

As seen earlier, NNET's programme managed to secure access to some government schemes and programmes for Adivasi families and has been addressing gender issues. As such NNET's work and the changes seen are relevant to the overall strategy of MM. Nevertheless, the rights-based approach advocated by MM has yet to be fully utilized by NNET. Most results achieved are at the level of schemes and programmes accessed by the communities whereas MM would like to see "atrocities" also picked up.[76]

---

[74] interview with MM respondent
[75] http://www.mensenmeteenmissie.nl/land/india, (23012015)
[76] Interview with MM respondent

5.5   Explaining factors

5.5.1 Internal factors

NNET is a network of 10 partner organisations in Assam and Tripura; all the partners in NNET are faith-based NGOs affiliated to different Catholic congregations, and are represented by nuns and priests temporarily deputed to service NNET. These routine transfers, in turn, make for constant changes in leadership.
The partners in the two states mainly work as independent units and not as one single organisation. The resource team, the Assam based Legal Cell for Human Rights (LCHR)initially was responsible for the training and mentoring of the PLPs in both the states. Tripura ceased to use LCHR's services in March 2013 after having built legal resources internally. LCHR is contracted to work with Assam NNET till October 2015.

Poor internal cohesion is also evident on examining the documentation provided by the partners in Assam and Tripura. The difference in formats is quite problematic as it prevents any pattern or single thread of information to emerge. This is for instance observable with regards to record keeping of numbers of applications filed and RTIs filed and the number of beneficiaries reached. Apart from this report formats differ from one year to another. This disconnect between the two shows how loosely connected the network is.

Another disconnect in NNET's work is the disengagement between the two components of its programmes—PLP programme and the women and youth capacity building programme. The women and youth capacity building programme has only taken off in 2013-14 in Assam, and for Tripura in 2014. The purpose of the programme was to work in tandem with the PLP programme and serve as a support system to it in the villages. This has not happened. The tensions between the partners and the resource team (LCHR) might be partly responsible for this, but also the almost informal nature of functioning of the women and youth programme. Since the programme is just taking off no results have been obtained yet.

5.5.2 External factors

NNET's external context poses challenges to its performance, and most so to its organisational cohesiveness. Assam and Tripura have poor infrastructure, connectivity and lack of adequate modes of transportation, making travelling tedious and time-consuming. This prevents the NNET partners from meeting frequently. The change in the FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) Rules[77]has also made the cohesion between the partners in the two states problematic, as the new rules do not allow the transfer of funds from one state to another. In response to this, NNET's coordinator in Tripura is transferring these funds in cash to the Assam based coordinator.

Assam is marked with protests and demonstrations against the ignorance of the central government towards the northeast. Over the years, the region has paid socio-economically for this. According to the Planning Commission's Report of 2011, poverty has risen in most of the states in the north-east, including Assam which now has 11.6 million persons living below the poverty line.[78]

The two main problems that affect any and every form of organisation and people in the state are consist of flooding, ethnic clashes and riots. The state has had a long history of ethnic riots and violence between the various tribes and has been racked with demands for separation from the Indian state and faced violence because of this insurgency from the militants and the army.

---

[77] FCRA 2010, an act to regulate the acceptance and utilisation of foreign contribution by certain persons or associations. *Refer*, http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/only-11-of-22-ngos-in-ib-report-are-fcra-compliant-none-filed-13-14-statement/99/
[78]*Refer,* http://www.telegraphindia.com/1120320/jsp/frontpage/story_15270991.jsp#.VCPEMhZFEuc

Politically, Tripura has been ruled by the Left front (Communist Party of India-Marxist, CPI-M[79]) which has been in power in the state since 1993. As the ruling party is a cadre-based party, it often makes functioning difficult for organisations like NNET to work on rights-based issues and holding the government accountable. Due to this, NNET coordinators and field staff have often been threatened by these officials to desist from creating trouble for them. The same happened in 2013, when a coordinator was threatened by members of the ruling party to discontinue trainings or workshops while election campaigning was taking place.

5.5.3 Relations CFA-SPO

Mensen met een Missie has been working with NNET since 2007, the inception of the network. According to the MM respondent and at least during the MFS II period, MM has visited NNET every year. MM also provided NNET with some trainings like in 2013 on results-based management. During the interview with MM respondent it appeared that MM would not finance NNET after MFS II funding is over. Whereas MM does not phase out of India they decided to focus on states in the South where partners are stronger and pick up atrocities directed to the Adivasi (in comparison with NNET partners who are more focusing on access to government schemes as success stories). According to MM respondent, the rights based approach (advocated by MM) has been picked up with difficulties by the partners of NNET who are more used to work on a needs based approach. The evaluators have not seen the official communication of the end of the partnership but it appeared clear when looking at the answers provided by NNET to the inquiries from MM. "Secondly, we are not in a position to redraft the project at this last phase of the project. Hence I believe that MM would consider the rationale"[80].

---

[79]Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) is a leading left party of India. It has a strong presence in the states of Kerala, Tripura and West Bengal.
[80]Answer to Explanation asked by MM

6 Discussion

6.1   Design of the intervention

NNET works in two remote States of India where there is unrest, whether ethnical or political. NNET's works focuses on the Adivasi tribe which is not recognized by the government in these States. Their legal awareness programme with capacity building of para legal persons takes place every year in different villages with some follow-up done with the PLPs trained the year before. To strengthen the work of the PLPs some women and youth pressure groups are formed and trained.

The evaluation team noticed some limitations with regards the design of the programme. Whereas the PLP component is well structured, the pressure groups component lacks information and linkages with the PLP component. This has also been observed by MM. According to NNET the pressure groups also aim to raise the awareness of women and youth and inconsequence help them to claim their rights. Moreover, besides some follow-up done with the PLPs trained the year before, no specific activities have been foreseen in the programme to sustain the work of the PLPs: are they also empowered enough to stay updated with the schemes and programmes set by the government? How are they going to pay for the costs linked to filling deputations up? Having said this, the programme is suitable for the environment in which it is implemented where local leaders are trained for the legal work. This legal work is necessary for the population targeted. However more attention need to be paid to sustain the network of the PLPs after they have worked for one year with NNET.

With the necessary will to work in these remote villages, other organizations would be able to implement a similar programme, thinking more through the sustainable aspect of it.

7 Conclusion

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. NNET was able to reach out to more Adivasis people, including more youth and women, as well as to more other marginalised groups although the involvement of these beneficiaries has not changed and remains very limited. Besides 3 members of NNET having won panchayat elections, NNET in Tripura has continued involving local political bodies. The number of applications filed by PLPs more than doubled between the period 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 and is to be interpreted as an increased satisfaction of the direct beneficiaries of NNET's programmes. PLPs are also involved in more complicated cases and have been able to trigger collective action which has been successful. Nevertheless, relationship and influence on public or private sector organisations have not improved and a change like ensuring ST status to Adivasis have not been achieved yet.

Contribution analysis
The outcome that tribal communities in Assam and Tripura in the villages where PLPs are active avail of their legal rights and entitlements can be explained by the following:

Factors valid for all villages in the state consist of; the above mentioned laws that create a conducive environment for both Adivasis and for NNET; improved accessibility of Tripura in terms of roads and mass media, which increases people's awareness about their rights and duties; easier access to education, and local governments showing commitment. Al these factors are *necessary but not sufficient (conditions)*to ensure Adivasi households their access to the schemes and welfare programmes.

Several actors, including NNET, support Adivasi to avail of their rights, whilst using different strategies: the PLPs of NNET file applications or if necessary RTI applications, other NGOs work as pressure groups or use the same approach as NNET does. All these interventions are sufficient on their own to explain the outcome (after the above mentioned conditions have been met).

NNET through its legal awareness programme has trained and monitored PLPs in a selected number of villages. In these villages, the people have benefited from government schemes and programmes. As noted by an external resource person and as concluded by the evaluation team, NNET is one of the organisations that support Adivasis to claim their rights.

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

With regards to the baseline ToC, the interventions and outcomes achieved are relevant because most of the interventions align with the condition 'legal awareness' . They have also partly contributed to the conditions 'gender equality', 'economic equality' and 'socio-cultural-political equality' but unfortunately, they have not been to achieve successes to align under the condition 'favourable policies'

With regards to the context in which NNET is operating, its interventions and outcomes achieved are relevant because they benefited the women and the Adivasi community, considered the poorest of the poor.

With regards to the CS policies of MM, NNET's interventions and outcomes are relevant because they align with MM's India overall strategy which is about strengthening the Adivasi group so that they are

aware of their rights. Nevertheless, MM would have liked NNET to go beyond helping the community reaching programmes and schemes towards handling atrocities.

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 NNET, the external context in which it operates and the relations between NNET and MM. Internal factors within the SPO that explain the findings are: constant change in leadership, poor internal cohesion, disengagement between the two components of the programmes and possibly tensions between the partners and the resource team (LCHR).

External factors that explain the findings in both states are poor infrastructure, connectivity and lack of adequate modes of transportation. Specific to Assam, flooding and riots have interfered with NNET's work. In Tripura, the cadre-based party makes functioning difficult for organisations like NNET to work on rights-based issues and holding the government accountable.

Factors that explain the findings that are related to the relation between NNET and MM are the long relationship between the two organisations and investment in building the capacity of NNET which unfortunately but consciously is ending with MFS II.

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	5
The CS interventions were implemented as designed	8
The CS interventions reached their objectives	7
The observed outcomes are attributable to the CS interventions	6
The observed CS outcomes are relevant to the beneficiaries of the SPO	8

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

References and resource persons

Documents by SPO

Title	Year
linked to project 317.2995	
Project Proposal "Capacity Building of Para Legal Personnel" 2011-2012	*2011*
317.2995 audit Report 2011-2012 (1)	2012
317.2995 audit Report 2011-2012 (2)	2012
317.2995 audit Report 2011-2012 (3)	2012
Covering Letter-PDF	2012
Completion report-PDF...	2012
Annexures-PDF	2012
NNET Budget	2012
NNET stories of change	2012
PPT NNET 2011-2012	Unknown
linked to project 317.3022	
Capacity Building of Tribal Leaders through Para Legal and Skill Training: Project Proposal, Phase II	2012-2013
Budget project no. 317.3022	unknown
317.3022 Audited statement (1)	2013
317.3022 Audited statement (2)	2013
317.3022 Monitoring 2013	2013
NNET- 2012-2013 FINAL REPORT:	
1. final report 12-13 Tripura	2013
2. final report 12-13 Assam	2013
3. ASHA-Completion Report	2013
Apendix-1-Follow up Assam-11-12 period	2013
Apendix-2. Follow up prog Tripura 11-12 period	2013
Apendix-3. Coordinator meet Assam	2013
Apendix-4. Coordinators meet Agartala	2013
Apendix-5. success stories-Out of Court Settlement	2013
Apendix-6. Exposure Programme,- Amaravati	2013
Apendix-7. women's meet- October-2012	2013
NNET Evaluation at BRO	2013
Powerpoint "Capacity Building of Tribal Leaders Trough Para Legal & Skills Training" Phase II 2012-2013	unknown
linked to project 317.3047	
Capacity Building of Tribal Leaders through Para Legal and Skill Training: Project Proposal, Phase III	2013-2014
1 Budget 2013-2014	2013
1 Project Proposal 2013-2014	2013
2 NNet- Asha-Budget 2013-2014	2013
3 Timeline	2013
4 Organogram	2013
5 Staff Name list for the year 2013	2013
6 Training schedule	2013
7 roles Responsibilities	2013
Capacity Building of Tribal Leaders through Para Legal and Skill Training (Assam)-Phase II-A quarterly report	October-December 2013
LCHR: Annual Report	2013-2014
1st quarterly report on Capacity Building of Tribal leaders through Para legal & Skill training (Assam) Phase – II	April 2013-June 2013
2nd Quarterly report – LCHR Guwahati, Assam	01-07-2013 – 30-09-2013
3rd Quarterly report – LCHR Guwahati, Assam	01-10-2013 – 31-12-2013
4th Quarterly report – LCHR Guwahati, Assam	01-01-2014 to 31-03-2014
Tripura MM report 2013-14	2014
Tripura-1 Quterlyrept April - sent to Floor	July 2013
Tripura-2nd quarterly report	Oct 2013

Minutes Report of Women's Capacity building Training under NNET	January 2014
Report of legal capacity building of local communities (Assam)	April-Oct 2013
Report of Women's Capacity Building of local Communities (Assam)	October-March 2014
Report of Legal Capacity Building of Local Communities	April-September 2013
Report of Women's Exposure Programme	2014
Name List of Women's PLPs (Tripura)	2013-2015
Women Training on Domestic Violence (Photograph)	aug-14
Youth Leadership Training (Photograph)	May 2013
Women Leadership Training (Photograph)	aug-13
Tailoring Training for 10 Women (Photograph)	September-October 2013
Live-in Camp for Adivasi Youth (Photograph)	March 2014
Adivasi Youth Exposure Visit to Agartala (Photograph)	March 2014
Audit 2013-2014 ASHA	2014
Audit 2013-2014 ASHA1	2014
Audit 2013-2014 Budget1	2014
Audit 2013-2014 Budget 2	2014
Audit 2013-2014 Budget 3	2014
Audit 2013-2014 Budget 4	2014
Audit 2013-2014 Budget 5	2014
Audit 2013-2014 Budget 6	2014
317.3047 Report SWOT analysis 2014	2014
Answer to Explanation asked by MM	2014
Evaluation- Assam- NNET &LCHR	2014
Forwarding letter	2014

others

Word documents of training modules	Undated (2012-2014)
A document containing news clippings around organisation of PLP trainings	Undated (2012-2014)
Survey lists	Undated (2012-2014)
Action Plan	October-November 2014

Documents by CFA

Title	Year
Letter of approval 2011-2012 (also called 317.2995_goedkeuring 1j_002)	2011
"Capaciteitsverklaring van tribale leiders" projectnummer 317.3022, programma Vrede en Verzoening 23-5-2012	2012
317.3022 Fieldreport NNET Nov 2012	2012
317.3047 Fieldreport NNET nov 2013	2013
Contract Mensen met een Missie- NNET "Capacity Building of Tribal Leaders trough paralegal & skill training ref. no. 317.3022	2012
317.3022 Structure NNET discussion	undated (probably end 2012 or early 2013)
317.3047 Contract 2013-2014 1st installment	2013
317.3047 Contract 2013-2014 2nd installment	2013

Documents by Alliance

Title	Year
Rapportage Conflict Transformation - COC baseline	2011
Progress report 2013 MFS II Alliance Communities of Change	2014
Annex C. civil society monitoring survey 2013	undated (most probably 2014)

Other documents

Government of India, Planning Commission. 2013. *Press Note on Poverty Estimates, 2011-12* . New Delhi, India

The Gazette of India. 2005. *THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACT, 2005*. New Delhi, India

The Gazette of India. 2012. *THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENSCES ACT, 2012*. New Delhi, India

South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre. ?. *Armed Forces Special Powers Act: A study in National Security tyranny*.

Webpages

Author	Title	Webpage link	date

Samudra Gupta Kashyap, *Assam Accord: BJP state unit chief disowns SubramaniamSwamy's comments,*http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/assam-accord-bjp-state-unit-chief-disowns-subramaniam-swamys-comments/. accessed in November 2014

Public Distribution System,http://epds.nic.in/. accessed in 2015

National Legal Services Authority (NALSA),http://nalsa.gov.in/directory.html, accessed in 2015

PAJHRA,http://www.pajhra.org/, accessed in 2015

Right to Information,http://righttoinformation.gov.in/, accessed in 2015

The Forest Rights Act,*The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006,* http://www.forestrightsact.com/the-act

Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Development of School Education & Literacy, *Right to Education,* http://mhrd.gov.in/rte, 2015

Bosco Reach Out, http://boscoreachout.org/about_us/

Mensen met een Missie, http://www.mensenmeteenmissie.nl/land/india,accessed on 23-01-2015

Shyamlal Yadavm, *Only 11 of 22 NGOs in IB report are FCRA compliant, none filed '13-'14 statement,*http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/only-11-of-22-ngos-in-ib-report-are-fcra-compliant-none-filed-13-14-statement/99/, 2014

The Telegraph, *Poverty rises in Northeast - Decline in Tripura, Arunachal; increase in Assam, Nagaland, Manipur,*http://www.telegraphindia.com/1120320/jsp/frontpage/story_15270991.jsp#.VM9My53F-uJ

Indian Mirror,http://www.indianmirror.com/tribes/bodotribe.html

http://www.indiamapped.com/ngo-in-assam/guwahati/bongaigaon-gana-seva-society-2616/

http://sk-dib.org/

FMA National Development Forum,http://fmandf.org/guwahati/origin/

North Eastern Community Health Association,http://nechaindia.org/vision.htm

North East Diocesan Social Service Society,http://www.nedsf.net/

ANMA INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (AIDA), http://aidasdb.org/

Jesuits in Social Action (JESA), Case Studies and Success Stories from Assam,http://www.jesaonline.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=632:case-study-ii-chapaguri-village-community&catid=14:programmes&Itemid=18

JeevanVikasSanstha (JVS),http://www.ngojvsindia.org/

Bethany Society,http://bethanysociety.in/highlights/

Asha (Association for Social and human Advancement),http://www.ashaholycross.org/

Aid Project Database, http://www.aidprojects.org/ngos-edit.aspx?cmd=0&login=guest&id=430

http://www.mgnrega.co.in/

Panchayati Raj Department,http://odishapanchayat.gov.in/english/IAY.asp

National Health Mission,http://nrhm.gov.in

BachpanBachaoAndolan (BBA),http://www.bba.org.in/?q=content/about-us

Tribal Research Institute,http://www.tritripura.in/tri/Tribes/Reang.aspx

SurekhaSule,Jhum cultivation under sharper scrutiny,http://indiatogether.org/jhum-agriculture

Resource persons consulted

For confidentiality reasons we have removed the names and details of the persons contacted.

Organisation	Function in organisation	Relation with SPO
Community Development Initiative	Not available	Collaborating with SPO
Tripura University	Assistant Professor	Other
NNET	Former PLP (Tripura)	
NNET	Former PLP (Tripura)	
NNET	Former PLP (Tripura)	
NNET	New PLP (Tripura)	
Jana KalyanSanstha	Founder	Collaborating with SPO
PAJHRA (Promotion and Advancement of Justice, Harmony and Rights of Adivasis)	Director	Collaborating with SPO
NNET	Former PLP (Assam)	
NNET	New PLP (Assam)	
NNET	New PLP (Assam)	
NNET	New PLP (Assam)	
NNET	New PLP (Assam)	
All Adivasi Students Association of Assam (AASAA)	Central President	Not applicable (Not-in 9b format)
All Adivasi's Women's Association of Assam (AAWAA)	President	Collaborating with SPO
Mensen met een Missie	Programme coordinator for Asia team.	

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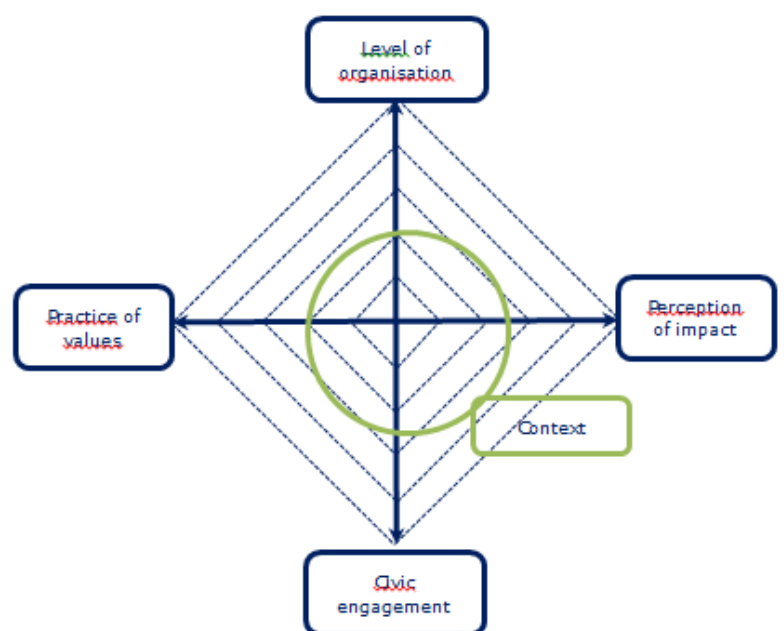
freedoms, personal rights and freedoms within the law and associational and organisational rights and freedoms. Information about CSO experience with the country's legal framework and state effectiveness round out the picture of the socio-political context;

- Socio-cultural context: utilises interpersonal trust, which examines the level of trust hat 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)[81].

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)[82].

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.

---

[81] 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)
[82] 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 tracinganalysis.

Country	SPO in the in-depth analysis	Strategic CS orientation to include
Indonesia	Elsam, WARSI, CRI, NTFP-EP, LPPSLH	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, CECOEDECON, Reds Tumkur, CSA	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	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-tracing[83] 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 a 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:[84]
- *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).

---

[83] 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).

[84] 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 finding 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 South[85], 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 to 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.

---

[85] 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 is 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.

- 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	

organisation level of	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 thatn 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 indernational 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 .....

Category	#	Topic	Question						
			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	

				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	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?						
Environmental context	**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.	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	

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?	+1
	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?	+1
	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?	0
	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?	0
	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?	0
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?	0

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?	+1
	12	Civil society impact.	In the past 12 months, what impact did you have on building a strong civil society?	+1
	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?	0
	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?	0
	15	Influence upon public policies, rules, regulations	How successful have you been in influencing public policies and practices in the past 2 years?	0
	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?	0
CS context	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

Appendix 4   Changes in civil society indicators between 2012 and 2014

1.   Civic Engagement

1.1 Needs of marginalised groups

As at the time of the baseline, so also now, NNET continues to be a network of 10 organisations that works at "spreading legal awareness among Adivasis and primitive tribes in states of Assam and Tripura in the North Eastern part of India". Towards this NNET has two specific programme components. First, recruiting, training and guiding a Para Legal Personnel (PLP) in each of its project villages, who is paid an honorarium[86] for spreading awareness on rights and entitlements under government schemes, and assisting villagers avail of these. Second, capacitating women and youth in the project villages such that they evolve into pressure groups that complement the PLPs' work[87].

The PLP programme's outreach since the baseline has increased as per its fixed mandate. The PLP programme pilot in 2011 was implemented in 10 villages, with 10 PLPs recruited. Since then, the programme's expansion in geographical terms has been laid down—20 new villages are to be reached out to every year by each of the two states, and one PLP is to be employed per village. So, the period between 2011 and 2014 have seen NNET Assam and Tripura cumulatively reaching out to 140 villages (70 Assam and 70 Tripura), and 140 PLPs recruited and trained.

According to NNET Assam's Quarterly Reports and Tripura's Report for MM 2013-14 there has been improved engagement of PLPs so that 40 villages in Assam and Tripura have had access to government schemes through filing 3172 applications in 2013-14 (including RTIs) to benefit 9734 people directly and 7337 people indirectly. In comparison and in the period 2012-2013, 1327 applications were filed and through the awareness programme 5,586 people were reached (no similar figures as in 2013-2014 are available).

NNET staff reported improvement in the performance of the PLPs associated with its programme. The Tripura coordinators said that many PLPs now file applications on their own, motivate and mobilise people to participate in awareness programmes, and conduct follow-ups. The new PLPs, they said, are proactive, keen learners and motivated to help the community access their rights and entitlements. The villagers approach PLPs for receiving assistance in filing RTIs since they know that PLPs have the technical know-how and legal knowledge that can help them claim their rights. Community hesitation has also come down since PLPs do not charge anything for their services. The action plan and guided fieldwork has helped the PLPs in devising ways to solve issues on their own and take charge of situations. Such initiatives have helped for example revive the Anganwadi system in the Kamranga centre, Cachar district, in 2014. Moreover, some PLPs have graduated to the position of being full time employees of NNET and are now working as coordinators, assisting new PLPs in their work.

Even as these improvements in PLPs' performance were registered, NNET staff reported some challenges that still pose a problem for sustainability of the programme and as such supporting the changes the civil society is experiencing. The Assam coordinators feel that there is a need to expand the number of PLPs that are employed per village, but that is not possible unless funding constraints are released. The year-end evaluation of the 2013 PLP programme saw NNET Tripura partners, coordinators and PLPs discussing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats associated with the 20 PLPs that were hired for the programme. While the PLPs' dedication, enthusiasm and rapport

---

[86] The PLP honorarium is Rs 400 per month, and expenses incurred for travel, meeting's organised etc.
[87] This aspect includes according to us the skill training programme for youth implemented by one of Tripura's partner (ASHA)

with the target population formed the areas of strength of PLPs' work, political interference posed a problem for PLPs. Moreover, out of 20 PLPs who were recruited, only four had passed matriculation exams and most lacked good communication and reporting skills, creating a problem in mapping the success of their work. Similar difficulties were identified during evaluation of NNET Assam where in some cases, PLPs' lacked seriousness in their work and in others, ethnic violence kept people from participating in awareness programmes and non-cooperation from village headman and villagers led them to miss their mark in stopping human trafficking and sending drop-out children to schools.

The capacity building programme for women and youth, meanwhile, has been a more recent addition with money having been first budgeted for it in 2012 and ground activities beginning only in 2013.

The Assam partners spoke of having selected around 20 to 25 women in Kumarikata in Nalbari district, in 2013-14, based on their leadership[88] qualities. The Assam reports available[89] mention the formation of four women groups. An initial capacity building workshop was organised for them. After that monthly trainings were held; the subjects taught were decided by the partners and included issues such as domestic violence, human trafficking and women leadership. The women were also trained on dealing with local issues. For instance, in Kumarikata last year, about 50 people had worked under MNREGA without getting paid. The women and youth supported the PLPs in the struggle to get these people their dues. In Assam, four youth groups were formed and received quarterly meetings. 45 young people also attended a 3-day training.

The Tripura personnel had varied versions on what had been done under the women and youth programme component in 2013 and 2014. In that state four women groups were formed. According to the (April-September 2013) report, legal awareness meetings have been organised by them for the youth and women every month, in the four villages, under every centre. The programme managers said that these two years had seen them: a) holding meetings with 80 women and youth from their project villages in 2013 and 2014, on issues such as domestic violence, women's rights, health and hygiene; b) organising annual camps for about 40 to 45 Adivasi youth, the last held in October 2014, where the participants interacted with PLPs and coordinators and were lectured on subjects like tribal culture, leadership skills etc; c) organising four-days long workshops in May 2013 and January 2014 where 10 boys were taught mobile repairing and 10 girls were given trainings on embroidery and tailoring (Final Report for MM: 2013-14). This sub-component corresponds to the skill building training programme run by ASHA since 2013 and that helped 32 youth, including 11 girls, turn entrepreneurs and earn an average daily income of Rs. 250 to 350 in 2013. The field staff, on the other hand, stated that annual training had been organised for women, 24 monthly issue-based village meetings with both women and youth. At any rate, there seemed to be a consensus that this year would see a combined training organised for women and youth.

The participation of its target group, the Adivasis, is central to NNET which has, from its inception year, recruited unemployed youth, mostly Adivasis, from the project villages as PLPs. But the period since the baseline has seen NNET reflecting on its strategy to focus on a particular community alone. A NNET Field Report dated November 2013 asks: "Are we only concentrating on the Adivasis? There are multi communities where some partners work; therefore awareness programme (should reach out to) to all without any discrimination. Awareness programme may prevent stereotypes in the minds of the other communities."

And both states are indeed reaching out to many communities other than the Adivasis, as also more women, since the baseline. For instance, NNET Assam conducted a survey in July 2014 on human trafficking in Baganpara in Nalbari district aimed at identifying people and children who had left their homes for work but had not returned with their whereabouts unknown; the exercise had made no distinctions between Adivasis and non-Adivasis. With regards to women, in 2011 there was one female PLP in Assam and none in Tripura. In 2012, there was only one female PLP in Assam, but in the 2013 and 2014 batches there were four each. In Tripura, data is not available for 2012, but there were

---

[88] On further probing "leadership quality" was described being articulate, willingness and capability to attend meetings and maybe even travel out of the village if such a need arises. Education was seen as a contributing to the "leadership quality" but not an imperative, because there aren't many educated women in the villages.

[89] See 'Assam- Report of women group formation'; 'Assam-Report of Women'; 'Assam-Women's Capacity building Training; 'Assam-women's Exposure Programme'

three in 2013 and four women PLPs in 2014. Over the past two years Assam has had nine women PLPs and Tripura has had seven women PLPs. The NNET Tripura Report for MM 2013-14, in fact, states that 50 per cent of women in project villages now attend meetings and programmes. The Assam programme managers also said that larger numbers of women presently attend NNET meetings, they attribute this to a growth in the community's trust for NNET. They add that people from non-Adivasi communities have also now started attending NNET meetings. Tripura's leadership and field staff corroborate this and shared that the NNET beneficiaries have now expanded to include not just the Adivasis, but also Nepalis, Boros[90] , Assamese and other linguistic groups[91].

Everyone across the NNET hierarchies in both states was unanimous that there had been considerable improvement vis a vis outreach since the baseline. While NNET Assam admitted that the numbers had not risen remarkably because of a set geographical expansion plan, they emphasised that they looked at their work as a process and not just a multiplication of numbers—one PLP has the capability of influencing many people, so the expansion has been in qualitative terms.

Score: +1

1.2 Involvement of the target groups

Beginning 2011 till date, NNET continues to ensure the involvement of its target groups by selecting educated and unemployed youth from within the project villages as PLPs.

The improvement in PLP profile and work now finds reflection within the larger target group. NNET personnel in both states said that the participation and interest of target groups has risen since the baseline. Having said which, the executive leadership in both states was categorical its target group has had no role in the analysis, planning and evaluation of NNET's activities in the PLP component since the baseline. This part of the programme is about "legal education"—the target group is not considered to have competent technical knowledge to be planning project activities for this presently. They, however, qualified that this was not so for the women and youth capacity building component, and that the target population is consulted at planning and evaluation levels for it. The evaluators found no evidence, either by way of documentation or interview, backing this claim. It may be noted however that, according to the project documents, the PLPs take part in the evaluation of the PLP component of the programme.

Score: +1

1.3 Intensity of political engagement

NNET personnel across hierarchies, in both states, said that the network's engagement with elected representatives has improved since the baseline. This even as NNET has from the beginning, in fact, invited panchayat members, ward members and village council members (Tripura) to participate in legal awareness programmes organised for the target groups. Coordinators and PLPs have also, since the programme was initiated, routinely obtained information on government schemes available through the village panchayat and Village Development Centre (VDC), and passed it on to villagers.

The only remarkable change since the baseline seems to have been that some NNET personnel have contested and won panchayat elections. In 2013, a NNET Assam coordinator was elected ward member and another became Gaonburah (headman) of his village's VCDC (Village Council Development Committee) in 2014. A woman who was a participant in Tripura's capacity building workshop became a panchayat member in 2013 in a project village under the Gandacherra centre in Dhalai district. But these victories have also brought in a new set of challenges, said the Tripura

---

[90]Boro (Bodo) is the largest tribe in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam. The bodo 's have been economically and socially deprived compared to other communities in the region, giving rise to the Bodoland Movement. A Bodoland Territorial Council is a "territorial privilege" guaranteed to the Bodos' of Assam to protect their culture. *Refer,* http://www.indianmirror.com/tribes/bodotribe.html

[91] With regards the extension of NNET work to other groups than Adivasi, MM staff did not see it as part of a clear strategy. She agreed that as such NNET is a network not only for Adivasi but she questioned the relevance of such an expansion mentioning that often the Adivasi live in villages where no other groups are living.

personnel. A colleague became the Kamranga village (Dhalai District) sarpanch in 2014, only to realise that NNET's work, often done by pressurising the government to work effectively for people, stood to disconnect him from the state's larger politics. His subsequent efforts at stalling NNET's work had to be stymied through discussions. Convinced, he now informs villagers of government schemes and also, recently, gave a talk on land rights.

Score: +1

2.   Level of Organisation

2. 1 Relations with other organisations

As in the baseline, so also now, NNET's most intensive relations are amongst its own network partners, followed by that with LCHR which is the resource organisation for the network's collective project under MFS II. And though the NNET teams largely gave positive scores for this indicator these scores seem to be incongruous given that the period since the baseline, in fact, saw a stress in the primary relations within the network. An Evaluation Report 2013-2014 NNET Project – Assam Unit states: "The NNET project in Assam was operated in 20xx [92]under lots of new circumstances. New 'working arrangements' were required to enhance networking among the stakeholders such as NNET team, partners and LCHR. There were occasions of strains and misunderstanding among these stakeholders. It taught all of us new lessons of cooperation and working together. We learned that 'Networking' certainly is harder than individually operating.'

As they had during the baseline, NNET teams in both states continued to cite the partners' inability to intervene in or influence each other's work as a major weakness. Remote locations and long distances, meanwhile, continue to keep the partners from physically meeting each other frequently. LCHR was active in both Assam and Tripura at the time of the baseline, but NNET in Tripura discontinued its LCHR services in March 2013 having built a legal resource team within its staff. Whether NNET Assam continues to seek LCHR's services post its contract ending in October 2015 remains to be seen; the evaluators got no clear response pertaining to this either from NNET or LCHR.

Meanwhile, NNET Assam's interactions with other organisations appeared to be informal. Most of these collaborations, moreover, are new, in that they were not named during the baseline. The Assam field staff said that they work with: a) Discover in Kokrajhar on women's issues, livelihoods and marginalised communities; b) Bongaigaon Gana Seva Society (BGSS)[93] on women's issues, livelihoods and rights-based issues; c) EkalVidyalayaAbhiyan (EVA)[94] on education and RTI in Tinsukia District; d) Seva Kendra (SK)[95] in Dibrugarh on awareness programmes on legal rights. The programme managers said they work with: a) Human Empowerment and Development Centre (HEDC)[96] on legal awareness, children's parliament and vocational issues; b) North Eastern Community Health Association (NECHA)[97] on women's health and hygiene. Assam's executive

---

[92] This information remains missing, also after feed-back provided by NNET.

[93] BongaigaonGanaSeva Society (BGSS) is an NGO based out of Bongaigaon in Assam. It works on the issues of dalitupliftment, disaster management, legal awareness, tribal affairs and women empowerment etc. It was registered in 1998. *Refer,*http://www.indiamapped.com/ngo-in-assam/guwahati/bongaigaon-gana-seva-society-2616/

[94] EkalVidyalayaAbhiyan (EKV) is part of the EkalVidyalaya Foundation, a not-for profit organisation working to bring basic education and village development to rural India.
*Refer,*https://www.google.co.in/search?q=kamranga&oq=kamranga&aqs=chrome..69i57j0l5.1553j0j4&sourceid=chrome&es_sm=93&ie=UTF-8#q=Ekkal+Vidyalaya+Abhiyaan+

[95] Seva Kendra (SK) in Dibrugarh was established in 1982. It's a not-for profit organisation, and "an official organ of the Diocese of Dibrugarh for planning social and development programmes". *Refer,* http://sk-dib.org/

[96] Human Empowerment and Development Centre (HEDC) based out of Guwahati in Assam, works on "social transformation and economic development of backward communities" in the states of Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh. *Refer,* http://fmandf.org/guwahati/origin/

[97] North Eastern Community Health Association (NECHA) works as a not-for profit. Its goal is to, "community health a people's initiative in the village of North East India". *Refer,* http://nechaindia.org/vision.htm

leadership spoke of a newfound cooperation with the Guwahati-based NEDSSS (North East Diocesan Social Service Society)[98] towards monitoring the situation in the North East.

Apart from these new alliances, NNET Assam seems to have had continued collaborations with five organisations since the baseline: i) AIDA-ANMA (Integrated Development Association-Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh)[99] which also works to provide legal awareness to the marginalised communities; ii) All Adivasi Women's Association of Assam (AAWAA), which was commissioned by NNET to conduct a survey in 2014 on trafficking/migration out of the region for domestic work. The survey was conducted in GuhaibitiBasti, Dahelua and Kampour of Naigaon district; iii) PAJHRA (Promotion and Advancement of Justice, Harmony and Rights of Adivasis)[100] with whom NNET in Assam has been collaborating on the advocacy concerning hike in minimum wages for tea workers; iv) GanaChetnaSamaj[101]

The Tripura team, meanwhile, said hardly any organisations work in the far-flung unconnected areas they work in, which makes forging and nurturing relationships difficult. According to the partners and field staff, 12 health camps were organised in July-August 2014, for malaria affected villages, with the social service organisation called JUST based out of Agartala. Also, in October 2014, in Kamranga, Cachar district, they organised a health camp and through all of health camps combined they managed to reach out to 1200 people. Apart from this, most of Tripura's interactions with others since the baseline seem to have been through one-of exposure visits. One was for the coordinators, organised in collaboration with JeevanVikasSanstha (JVS)[102] in Amravati, Pune and Central India, in March 2013, objective being to observe the income generation activities and work with farmers' suicides families by JVS. Another was a programme managers' visit to observe SHG groups in Shillong, in November 2013, on an exposure programme with Bethany Development Society[103] who work on forming SHGs and livestock promotion. The field staff reported occasional interactions with BSU (Bru Student Union) on legal awareness (the evaluators could not connect with BSU to confirm this despite many attempts). No mention was made of SHAKTI—Legal Aid and Human Rights Centre (LAHRC) in Surat, Gujarat and TUDI (Tribal Unity and Development Initiative) in Kerala, the two organisations NNET Tripura had said it was working with at the time of the baseline.

Score: 0

2.2 Frequency of dialogue with closest civil society organisation

Remote locations and long distances continue to keep the NNET partners from physically meeting each other frequently. The Assam partners usually come together only during training programmes, but keep in touch over regular emails and phone calls. The Tripura partners manage to meet once in a month at the office of a partner, ASHA Holy Cross[104] , in Agartala, a day before the Bishops Monthly Recollection (monthly prayer meeting) where the congregations meet. By having the partner meeting

---

[98] The North East Diocesan Social Forum is a voluntary non-governmental organisation. "It is the official organisation of all the Catholic Dioceses of North East India, for the facilitation and promotion of the integrated development of the region. The Social Forum is collectively owned by all the dioceses of the North East".*Refer,* http://www.nedsf.net/

[99]ANMA (Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh) Integrated Development Association (AIDA**)** is the social development wing of the Salesians of Don Bosco, Province of Dimapur. *Refer,* http://aidasdb.org/

[100] PAJHRA (Promotion and Advancement of Justice, Harmony and Rights of Adivasis) is an organisation which was started by a group of Adivasi social activists, leaders and academicians. The main issues that they address are similar to the ones picked by NNET like – identity, Adivasis' constitutional rights, human trafficking, health, education and livelihood. They work with Adivasi institutions, strengthening them and promoting those that require it. *Refer,*www.pajhra.org

[101]GanaChetanaSamaj (GCS) is an offshoot of the Nagaland Jesuit Society (NJS). It works with tea tribe workers and also helps tribal and Adivasi women to form self-help groups (SHGs). *Refer,* http://www.jesaonline.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=632:case-study-ii-chapaguri-village-community&catid=14:programmes&Itemid=18

[102]JeevanVikasSanstha (JVS) is a voluntary, not-for-profit, social development wing of the Catholic diocese of Amravati in Maharashtra. *Refer,*http://www.ngojvsindia.org/

[103]Bethany Development Society is based in East Garo Hills of Meghalaya and is a not-for profit charitable trust. It works with disabled people, training and strengthening SHGs, training teachers etc. *Refer,*http://bethanysociety.in/highlights/

[104] Asha (Association for Social and Human Advancement) is an official social service wing of the Society of the Fathers of Holy Cross, North-East India. They have been involved in formal and informal education and performance of social service, aimed towards a higher socio-economic and human development in north-east India since 1937. Refer, http://www.ashaholycross.org/

at the same time as the prayer meetings, they have managed to increase communication and contact between the partners in Tripura. And partners from both the states meet once a year in Guwahati. NNET Assam's interactions with other organisations seem largely on a needs basis. While one or two weekly phone calls are made to Discover on work related issues, BGSS is met on a monthly basis, or whenever the need arises, and KS is met three to four times a year. HEDC meets three to four times a year and NECHA about four times a year. NNET Assam's interactions with AIDA-ANMA and AAWAA have been consistent and frequent since the baseline. The Tripura team, meanwhile, seems to have very minimal interactions with other organisations. The Tripura field staff, for instance, regretted that their last interaction even with their Assam counterparts, or indeed LCHR, had been in 2010-11. Some coordinators, however, claimed to be interacting with BSU on a monthly basis; the evaluators could not establish contact with BSU for a confirmation of this claim.

Barring the Tripura programme managers who saw no change as compared to the baseline, NNET teams across hierarchies in both states reported an improvement in the frequency of interactions with other organisations. However, there seemed to be little by way of evidence to substantiate this.

Score: 0

2.3 Defending the interests of marginalised groups

At the time of the baseline, the NNET executive named the ten partner organisations that comprise the network as best defendants of the interests of the marginalised. The end line had them highlighting the PLPs' work as illustrative of the best efforts made to defend the interests of NNET's target groups.

The other organisations named by the Assam and Tripura NNET partners and staff in this context were: PAJHRA, Chetna Society (CS), Guwahati-based NEDSSS (North East Diocesan Social Service Society), and Seva Kendra (SK), GramyaVikashManch[105], BongaigaonGanaSeva Society (GSS) and EkalVidyalayaAbhiyan (EVA).

Score: +1

2.4 Composition of Financial Resource Base

As in the baseline, MM continues to be the sole funder of NNET. This funding is being utilised for the PLP trainings as well as capacity building trainings for youth and women. Apart from this staff salaries, programme costs and consultation costs etc. are also being sustained with the help of MM funding. This funding will be ending in March 2015; NNET is yet to arrange for alternative funding when this happens.

The executive leadership also listed their religious congregations as another monetary source for the network partners but the Tripura executive leadership disagreed.

The field staff and programme managers in Assam also added that, at times, the community also takes responsibility for a particular programme. As such, the villagers would make arrangements on their own for venues, seating, and snacks etc. As for the field staff, they said that little information is passed to them in terms of finances and monetary entitlements which often force them to pay out of their own pockets for official work.

Score: 0

---

[105]GramyaVikash Mancha is a non-profit people oriented development organization working in rural areas of Assam, it has mainly worked to train people in disaster management and also, provides support to help strengthen SHGs. *Refer,*http://www.aidprojects.org/ngos-edit.aspx?cmd=0&login=guest&id=430

3. Practice of Values

3.1 Downward accountability

Since the baseline, NNET's leadership has continued to consider the organisation's structure horizontal rather than vertical, with all the ten partners being equal. Although, information is passed and shared between the partners and the executive leadership on finances and project progress, no such information is being passed to the programme coordinators and the PLPs. And it can, therefore, be concluded that no such information is being passed to NNET's target groups.

The programme coordinators and the PLPs claimed that they are not provided any information with regards to funding. They are given a fixed amount and are required to make all and any arrangements for the project through that. They make monthly reports which are passed on to the executive leadership but once these field reports are compiled they are not shared with the field workers and PLPs. Also, as in the baseline, the PLPs continued to regret that there is little information passed on to them, in terms of, funds, budgets, travel expenses etc, and that they are often forced to spend out of their own pocket for official work.

Score: 0

3.2 Composition of Social Organs

NNET is a network of partner organisations with the partners having an equal say over issues pertaining to its functioning. NNET does not have a board, or any other form of permanent structure. The partner organisations belong to different Catholic congregations and are represented by nuns and priests, liable to be transferred to other posts by their respective congregations. The coordinator and assistant coordinator of the network are priests.
Since the baseline, there has been no change in this structure.
The field staff in Assam continued to insist that the leadership should preferably be from the target villages and the marginalised communities as they will be more readily accepted by the people. But this has not happened, as the partners or the coordinators after almost two years are still not chosen from the marginalised communities or the target groups. What also becomes apparent is the disconnect between the Assam and Tripura partners, as according to the field staff in Tripura, they do not have any idea about the leadership of Assam partners.

Score: 0

3.3 External financial auditing

As at the time of the baseline, external auditing continues to take place once a year.

Score: 0

4. Perception of Impact

4.1 Client satisfaction

At the time of the baseline, the NNET executive leadership mentioned the inability of the tribal communities to avail their rights and legal entitlements as the most important concern of their target groups. Their rights and entitlements include, among others, the right to education, right to information, land rights, and the right to livelihood. The target groups also need to get access to government schemes and programmes such as MGNREGA[106] , Indira AwasYojana (IAY)[107] , Public

---

[106] Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 2005, is designed to provide a guaranteed job (non-skilled) to all adult members of a family living in a rural area for at least 100 days. *Refer,* http://www.mgnrega.co.in/

Distribution System (PDS)[108] , Midday Meal Scheme[109] , widow and old age pensions, student scholarships etc. Towards this, NNET aims to empower Adivasi and marginalised tribes to build their legal skills and knowledge so they are able to exercise and claim the above mentioned rights and entitlements.

During the end line workshop, NNET maintained that the key concerns of its target groups have remained the same but that NNET's work since the baseline has expanded its outreach such that many more people now have access to their rights and entitlements. Showcasing the varied nature of their work, the Tripura team shared that the PLPs' efforts in the period between 2012 and 2014 brought BPL (Below Poverty Line) cards for 27 families in Kathalcherra in Dhalai district of Assam, old age pensions for 60 families, widow pensions for 21, job cards under NREGA for 60 families, permanent residence certificate for 30 people, panchayat certificates for 35 families, income certificate for 40 families, handicapped pensions for 25 families, death and birth certificates for 15 and 21 families respectively.

Other examples were cited by the Assam PLPs: several people from a project village recovered dues for their NREGA work from the Panchayat head; women benefitted from the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)[110]scheme after a RTI was filed by the PLPs and coordinators to help them get their dues since 2009.According to the quarterly reports for Assam and Tripura, the PLPs have in the period of 2013-14, helped 105 people open bank accounts, irrespective of which community they belonged to. The Assam staff reported having assisted 76 girls and boys in Saint Mary's in Margherita town receive scholarships reserved for minority communities. For this they helped the students obtain the required paperwork such as minority certificate, income certificate etc, and facilitated the opening of bank accounts for them so that their scholarships could be deposited for the 2013-14 academic year.

Beyond getting access to government schemes and programmes there is an increased number of examples where PLPs (sometimes together with communities as collective action) took action in more complicated cases (like atrocities): In July 2014, PLPs in Simna intervened when a teacher was found treating children belonging to the "lower castes" as untouchables and throwing their midday meal at them. The PLPs and coordinators built community opinion against the teacher, and the teacher had to stop under such pressure. Another new issue that was dealt with was kidnapping, which is common in these regions of Tripura. In August 2014, the project village Gandacherra, in Dhalai district, saw two men who had been kidnapped for three months being released only after a ransom was paid. This was followed by two more kidnappings in a neighbouring village. The PLPs decided to intervene by campaigning with people about the ills of kidnapping, how to protect oneself against such an eventuality, and speaking to concerned authorities on the matter. On their part, the Tripura team narrated an instance when a PLP lodged an FIR (First Information Report) with the police in September 2014 after two adolescent girls were raped in his project village of Purna Kishore Para. The PLP was beaten up by the villagers, upon which he filed yet another FIR which saw the accused being arrested, and the girls being admitted into a hospital. PLPs from Assam shared instances of Jagun centre of Tinsukia district, where they served as mediators to settle local issues of under-age girl marriage and domestic violence after the plaintiffs approached them for assistance.

All the successes achieved have reinforced the villagers' trust in PLPs' and NNET's work and they have started approaching PLPs for assistance on a number of legal issues concerning their rights and entitlements and the PLPs then help them take necessary action. Also, an increase in the number of participants for the awareness programmes, especially women (NNET Tripura said that women's

[107]Indira AwaasYojana (IAY) was launched during 1985-86 as a sub-scheme of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) and continued as a sub-scheme of JawaharRozgarYojana (JRY) since its launching from April, 1989. It is a social welfare programme aimed at providing housing for the poor. *Refer,* http://odishapanchayat.gov.in/english/IAY.asp

[108]Public Distribution System (PDS) in the country facilitates the supply of food grains and distribution of essential commodities to a large number of poor people through a network of Fair price shops at a subsidised price on a recurring basis. *Refer,* http://epds.nic.in/

[109]The Midday Meal scheme was introduced in 1952. Through this, the *State Governments/Union Territories have to provide every child in every Government and Government assisted Primary School with a prepared mid-day meal. Refer,* http://mdm.nic.in/

[110] The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) was launched in 2005. Its aim was to provide affordable and quality health care to the rural population, especially the vulnerable groups. *Refer,* http://nrhm.gov.in

participation has reached an average of 50 per cent in most of their village meetings), has been registered over the past two years as people have developed confidence and are eager to learn about schemes beneficial for them. Increasing numbers of people now enquire as to when NNET will conduct its next trainings. Like during the baseline, the changes that took place in the villages supported by the programme led people from non-project villages to approach the PLPs with their problems as well as non-Adivasi groups to solicit NNET's help.

Overall, NNET partners and staff in both Assam and Tripura agreed that there had been considerable improvement vis a vis client satisfaction since the baseline. NNET personnel in both states said that the participation and interest of target groups has risen since the baseline. Also, that there is lot more repeat participation in the village meetings compared to earlier.

Score: +1

4.2 Civil Society impact

The objective of NNET's programmes and campaigns is to spread general awareness on rights and entitlements at the community level, while ensuring that individual claims to government schemes and benefits are realised.

As a result of the interventions made by PLPs and the coordinators, village communities at large have claimed various benefits provided under government schemes and programmes by using RTI (see descriptions of the results under indicator 4.1). The capacity building tribal youth initiative of NNET Tripura has enabled a number of Adivasi youth to become entrepreneurs and to become financially independent[111] in 2013 after having undertaken skills training in mobile repairing, computer applications and working as beauticians. The example cited earlier (see under indicator 1.3) of a colleague who became the Kamranga village (Dhalai District) sarpanch in 2014 but did not automatically embrace the cause of the Adivasi and has needed some extra sensitization shows the difficulty in bringing changes but is a great behavior and mind change example of the impact of NNET's work on society.

Beyond individual changes, the knowledge shared through the programme has helped the communities to organise themselves to take collective action to achieve desired results in many instances such as closing down liquor shops, getting mid-day meals and uniforms for their children etc. Former Tripura PLPs reported to have contributed towards organising women groups in the Kathalcherra centre of Dhalai district, which succeeded in getting liquor shops closed in their respective villages in October 2013.PLPs, with the help of the communities, have also picked up some more complicated problems which deal with recurrent behaviors among villagers (please refer to the examples of rape and kidnapping under indicator 4.1). Apart from this, the PLPs and coordinators succeeded in establishing communications with government officials and ministers to uncover corruption in the tea gardens of Assam where one labourer is made to do the work of two at minimal wages, reported Assam coordinators. Moreover, the surveys on human trafficking and school drop-outs[112] conducted with the help of PLPs have borne positive results: NNET Assam field staff reported having being ableto send six students back to school and in the sense that the survey on human trafficking in July 2014 in the villages covered under the Baganparacentre of Nalbari district also included non-Adivasi communities. According to MM, the fact that the backward communities are willing and able to talk to other communities, that these marginalized people dare to talk to government officials or that children parliaments seem to be functioning are more example of improvement of the society.

Despite challenges linked to PLPs as mentioned under indicator 1.1, staff from both the states agreed that the intensity of PLPs' engagement as also the quality of their work has improved since the baseline. The former PLPs from Tripura, residents themselves from the project villages, said that their work has helped empower people and created a positive impact for the communities of villages

---

[111] As quoted in Asha's report (2013) "[…] students have become self-entrepreneurs by earning their livelihood. They also help the family to be stable in terms of finance and status".
[112] The survey was conducted in Kumarikatacentre of Nalbari district, in September 2014

associated with Kathalcherracentre, Dhalai district, where people have managed to get toilets for their homes through the knowledge given by the PLPs. Most importantly, they said, members from the marginalised groups, especially women, have learnt to actively fight for their due as citizens.

An external resource person said that NNET's work has helped people develop awareness about rights, legalities, government schemes with respect to education, health, nutrition etc, as also increased the confidence and courage of communities to fight for their rights.

Score: +1

4.3 Relations with Public Sector Organisations

As at the time of baseline, there have not been any outstanding developments in regards to NNET's relationship with public sector organisations.

NNET in both the states faces resistance from the panchayats and the government in the process of their work that involves getting the panchayats and the government to work with diligence, and use funds for what they are meant for, instead of corrupt officials pocketing it for themselves. This often creates friction between the state machineries and the organisation. NNET has tried to cope with this by getting the officials involved in their work, making it clear that they are apolitical and are only working for the people's welfare. In some areas, the panchayats now support NNET in carrying out their mandate.

One new development has been a one-off interaction with NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development). The bank got in touch with the PLPs of Assam and informed them about certain schemes relevant to the target groups NNET works with, and asked them to spread this information to Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in their area.

Score: 0

4.4 Relations with Private Sector Agencies

At the time of the baseline, NNET partners in Assam said their relationship with private sector agencies was on a case to case basis and at times only limited to receiving donations from them. An organisation called IDEA, in Dimapur (Nagaland) was casually mentioned by the executive leadership with whom they have started initial discussions. The Tripura staff had denied having any relationship at all with the private sector. Similarly, almost two years later, the situation remains the same; there has been no interaction with the private sector in the period since the baseline either in Tripura or Assam.

Score: 0

4.5 Influence upon public policies, rules, regulations

In terms of influencing public policies, rules and regulations NNET, at the time of the baseline, was working to ensure ST (Scheduled Tribe) status for the Adivasi community through advocacy and networking. They were also filing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) with child-rights NGO BachpanBachaoAndolan (BBA)[113] to stop child labour and trafficking in Assam. Apart from this they had been able to strengthen the functioning of the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and the Public Distribution System (PDS) by filing RTI applications.

There has not been much progress over the ST status issue. This issue is a politically charged matter in the state of Assam, preventing any rapid developments. The Assam partners on their part interacted with a member of parliament on the issue. Also, a group of its staff had visited the Andaman & Nicobar Islands to study the Adivasi communities there and thus, understand the issue better. But no change in public policy has been achieved.

---

[113]BachpanBachaoAndolan (BBA) is a child rights NGO formed in 1980, to fight against slavery, forced labour and trafficking of children. *Refer,*http://www.bba.org.in/?q=content/about-us

In Tripura, the issue of rights of Adivasis' is comparatively not as politically charged a matter as in Assam. Nevertheless, NNET partners in Tripura organised a five-day awareness programme on culture, in March 2014, in an effort to influence and shape opinions of the people over the issue of recognition of Adivasi and linguistic groups' rights by the state.

External resource persons interviewed during the workshop did not have any information about NNET's role in relation to the ST status movement for the Adivasi community. The name of All Adivasi Students Association of Assam (AASAA) was mentioned for spearheading this movement by PAJHRA who NNET collaborates with on building legal awareness over the minimum wage issue.

On the issue of PIL on child trafficking and labour there have been new developments since the baseline. The PIL filed by NNET in 2013 has now been clubbed by the court with two other PILs submitted on the matter—a suo-moto and a letter written on the matter by another organisation to the Chief Justice of India. These three have now been combined and will be treated as a single case file.

NNET's work on the Public Distribution System has continued as before, by bringing changes in its functioning in areas where NNET operates. For instance, in Margherita in Tinsukia district of Assam, NNET coordinators spoke to the Sub-Divisional Officer in-charge of ration shops which were before located far away and inaccessible and managed to get them shifted to their area.

Score: 0

4.6 Influence upon private sector agencies' policies, rules, regulations

NNET's executive leadership, at the time of the baseline, was involved in trying to influence the policies on minimum wages for tea garden labourers. During the period since the baseline, the minimum wage has increased from Rs 62 in 2012 to Rs 94 in 2014 for tea garden workers and Rs 120 in 2012 to Rs 167 for NREGA workers.

NNET on its part has been involved in advocacy on the issue of minimum wage of tea garden workers along with PAJHRA. PAJHRA confirmed that they had taken support of and consulted with LCHR (NNET's resource organisation) on this issue. PAJHRA, however, qualified that the change in wage is mainly been driven by AASAA which has played a very active role in ensuring a wage hike. AASAA, meanwhile, made available to the evaluators a number of news clippings outlining their efforts for this cause; NNET has not been mentioned in these news clippings, nor was the AASAA representative interviewed aware of NNET.

NNET's executive leadership mentioned that their role on changing policies of tea garden workers' wages has been only as a supportive organisation: together with PAJHRA they focused on creating legal awareness on the issue. Even NNET's field staff in Assam has named AASAA as the main runner behind this change.

In Tripura, the PLPs have been involved in ensuring that the existing policies of private agencies are being followed. For instance, in Simna, near Agartala, an electric company was not paying its workers the promised wages. The workers brought this to the attention of the PLP who took the manager of the company to the police station, following which he was forced to pay adequate wages to the workers.

Also, Reangs[114] , a scheduled tribe, working in Jhum[115] cultivation were not receiving adequate wages. The PLPs from Kathalchhera, Dhalai district, Assam, filed a complaint with the labour office following which the workers started getting Rs 200; this was an increase from Rs 75 which they were getting earlier.

NNET has had very limited, if any role over influencing private policies, rule and regulations.

---

[114]The Reangs are the second largest tribal community of Tripura. Most of them even today are nomadic and involved heavily in Jhum cultivation. *Refer,*http://www.tritripura.in/tri/Tribes/Reang.aspx

[115]Jhum cultivation is also referred to as slash and burn, shifting cultivation. It is a cultivation practice mostly in prevalent in the north-eastern hills of India. *Refer,*http://indiatogether.org/jhum-agriculture

Score: 0

5. Environment

5.1 Coping Strategies

At the time of the baseline, the challenges that the environment in which NNET works were as follows: a) huge distances and poor connectivity between places, b) political tension resulting in regular shutdowns and road blocks, c) ethnic turmoil, d) trafficking of women and children, and e) suspicions over NNET as a faith-based organisation trying to convert people.

In the past two 1,5 years, these same challenges continued to pose problems in addition to a new set of issues.

Assam and Tripura, like most of the north-east states, have poor infrastructure, connectivity and lack of adequate modes of transportation from one place to another, making travelling tedious and time-consuming. Some of these issues are chronic problems in the region with no immediate resolution. The NNET partners from both the states only meet once a year, as they are situated far-away from each other making physical meetings difficult. This is especially problematic for a network like NNET, as according to its executive leadership, coordinating the different and often conflicting interests of the partners is quite a demanding task which reduces efficiency.

The change in FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) Rules [116] has also made the cohesion between the partners in two states problematic, as the new rules do not permit transfer of funds from one state to another. In the first year of the project, the funds would be put in LCHR's FCRA account and then transferred to the partners in Tripura. They have managed to overcome these new regulations, as for now, the funds are first transferred to ASHA FC in Tripura, and then they are given by Cheques to Father Jose in Assam, who distributes it to the Assam partners.

Issues relevant from the baseline still affect the workings of NNET. There is still a fear of conversion when NNET enters a new target area; they try to counter this by making it a point to talk about people's rights rather than religion.

According to external resource persons, the positive has been that the youth are today more aware and educated which has helped in creating legal awareness easier to a more attentive audience. NNET has also had to made peace with the fact that with increasing levels of education of the PLPs, they are more likely to leave for better paying jobs.

Score: +1

---

[116] FCRA 2010, an act to regulate the acceptance and utilisation of foreign contribution by certain persons or associations. *Refer*, http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/only-11-of-22-ngos-in-ib-report-are-fcra-compliant-none-filed-13-14-statement/99/

The Centre for Development Innovation works on processes of innovation and change in the areas of food and nutrition security, adaptive agriculture, sustainable markets, ecosystem governance, and conflict, disaster and reconstruction. It is an interdisciplinary and internationally focused unit of Wageningen UR within the Social Sciences Group. Our work fosters collaboration between citizens, governments, businesses, NGOs, and the scientific community. Our worldwide network of partners and clients links with us to help facilitate innovation, create capacities for change and broker knowledge.

The mission of Wageningen UR (University & Research centre) is 'To explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life'. Within Wageningen UR, nine specialised research institutes of the DLO Foundation have joined forces with Wageningen University to help answer the most important questions in the domain of healthy food and living environment. With approximately 30 locations, 6,000 members of staff and 9,000 students, Wageningen UR is one of the leading organisations in its domain worldwide. The integral approach to problems and the cooperation between the various disciplines are at the heart of the unique Wageningen Approach.