



COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATIONS: THE EMERGING FORCE WITHIN THE THIRD SECTOR

STRENGTHENING THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAPACITY
OF COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATIONS (CBOS):
A SURVEY OF 9 SOUTHERN AFRICAN COUNTRIES
January 2004



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Introduction

Firoze Manji and Anil Naidoo

Since about the mid-1990s, there has been growing interest in the development community in the work of “community-based organisations” (CBOs). Many agencies have sought to provide grants to enable these organisations to grow and become effective in the delivery of services to their constituencies.

What exactly are CBOs, and why has there been such interest in their work?

The term CBOs is often used synonymously with ‘grassroots organisation’. There doesn’t appear to be much clarity about exactly which organisations are embraced by this term. According to the World Bank, CBOs are “distinct in nature and purpose from other NGOs”. While national and international organizations are intermediary: “NGOs which are formed to serve others ... CBOs are normally ‘membership’ organizations made up of a group of individuals who have joined up together to further their own interests (e.g.: women’s groups, credit circles, youth clubs, cooperatives and farmer associations).”¹ Such a definition side-steps the issue of whether we should consider organisations such as Amnesty International, trades unions, chambers of commerce and other such membership organisations as CBOs. As our review of literature shows, attempts to define CBOs using either function or the degree of formality in their constitution provides no satisfactory method for defining such entities.

Yet despite these ambiguities, the term is in practice widely used to refer to (usually) non-urban, organisations of the ‘poor’, managed (if not controlled) by constituent members.

The growth in interest in CBOs appears to coincide with the rise of neo-liberal economic policies in Africa that were influenced by the international financial institutions from the 1980s purportedly to enable the repayment of international debt. The policies that became widespread on the continent involved, among other things, the reduction in the role of the state in providing social services, with the expectation that the private sector would fulfil those roles vacated by the retrenching state. In practice, the only section of the ‘private sector’ that was willing to become the replacement service provider was the NGO sector – and for rural populations, their rural counterparts, the

¹ Malena C: Working with NGOs: A practical guide to World Bank-NGO Operational Collaboration. Washington: World Bank, 1995



CBOs². Indeed, that role was explicitly foreseen by the World Bank who saw CBOs as undertaking the “implementation of community-level project components” with NGOs seen as working with CBOs “either channelling development resources to them or providing them with services or technical assistance.”³ With NGOs, and CBOs in particular, perceived as playing such a vital role in ‘development’, there was inevitably concern that these organisations had the necessary competence to manage projects, finances and so on.

But not all NGOs or CBOs became merely ‘service providers’. Many sought to engage as advocates for the poor and for social justice. Membership organisations emerged that sought to protect and promote their own interests or those of their constituents or neighbourhoods. From the early 1990s, the region witnessed a flourishing growth of numerous organisations concerned with human rights and social justice. Human rights activism is not, of course, new to Africa. It has been a feature of all democratic struggles in the region both during and since colonial times. However, it has largely been during the last 15 years that there has been a proliferation of self-proclaimed human rights organisations whose explicit purpose is to investigate, monitor and report on violations or abuses of human rights and to campaign, lobby and advocate for human rights.

In 1998, we undertook surveys involving more than a hundred human rights and civil society organisations in eastern and southern Africa. We wanted to know how such organisations used the internet, what kind of technology they had access to, what their training priorities were, and the way they managed their organisations. We were able to visit the offices of about 60% of the organisations interviewed, enabling us to inspect their ICT infrastructure and to test out the problems of accessing the Internet.⁴

Our survey confirmed the findings of previous surveys on the training needs of human rights organisations in the region^{5,6}. Their priorities included: skills training in fact-finding, investigation and monitoring; knowledge and application of international and regional standards and mechanisms, especially

² Manji F: The depoliticisation of poverty. In *Development and Rights*. Oxford: Oxfam GB 1998, pp 12-33

³ Malena (1995): op cit

⁴ Manji F, Njuguna E and Jaffer M: Enhancing the capacity of human rights and advocacy organisations in southern Africa. Report to the International Development Research Centre (IDRC: Centre file: 97-5924-00), December 1998

⁵ International Human Rights Internship Program & The Swedish NGO Foundation for Human Rights: *The Status of Human Rights Organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Stockholm 1994

⁶ Martin JP & Cobham, K: Human Rights NGOs in Africa: the Emerging Agenda. Centre for the Study of Human Rights, University of Columbia, 1997 (personal communication).



in the field of social and economic rights; strategies for human rights litigation, reporting complaints and adjudication; provision of paralegal services; campaigning and lobbying; documentation techniques and uses of documentation; monitoring of elections and trials; popular education and human rights education.

The outcome of this survey led to the development by Fahamu of a series of distance learning courses aimed at strengthening the campaigning, advocacy and organisational capacities of human rights organisations in the region⁷. The programme, jointly developed with the Oxford University Department for Continuing Education, sought to enable staff in human rights organisations to participate in intensive learning without the need to absent themselves from work.

In their evaluation of this programme, the external evaluators stated that: “The materials are genuinely innovative in the field they seek to serve – organisations working in the area of human rights in southern Africa. They provide, taken together, an excellent menu of materials designed to strengthen the functioning of any NGO or CSO organisation, alongside those that contribute more directly to the particular focus of a human rights organisation. The presentation of the materials through CD-ROM is of very high quality and generally found to be user-friendly ... it is quite clear that this approach breaks new ground. The evaluators are not aware of any others [sic] such comprehensive approach to both personal and organisational professional development. The key word describing the response of individuals to the courses is ‘empowerment’... Many participants spoke and wrote of feeling more ‘connected’ about the current human rights realities across SADC.”⁸

The methodology has now been adopted by other institutions including the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN-affiliated University for Peace.

But learning is more than about studying. It is also about reading, reflecting, commenting on, and contributing to a discourse on issues that matter. It is about sharing one's own experiences, and about gaining an authority of one's experiences. One of the most powerful mediums – at least potentially – for that is of course the Internet. There are numerous sources of information; there are numerous opportunities for dialogue and engaging in discussion. But what happens to a community that is unable to access these? People often speak of the ‘digital divide’ as if this is a technical divide. It is deeper than that. It is

⁷ For further details see <http://www.fahamu.org/>

⁸ Allsop, T and Odayan, M: Adilisha Evaluation Report, 2003. Copies of the report are available from info@fahamu.org



also a social divide that prevents the experiences of the greater part of humanity from being heard, and which, therefore, under-nourishes the discourse of those who do have access to the technology.

If the constituency with whom we have worked doesn't have access to the web, would it not be possible to bring the web to them? Would it not be possible to provide them the means with which they can share their own experiences and information with others on the Internet? One of the outcomes of the initiative described above was that we began receiving requests from human rights and other civil society organisations for assistance in finding information on the web, and with disseminating information about their own work. To begin with, we responded on a case-by-case basis, sending off the results of searches or disseminating by email information we had received from others to those on our modest contacts list. But soon the demand became overwhelming. We simply could not respond to all the requests we received.

To make the process of response more manageable, we compiled the information in the form of a newsletter, with a number of categories that reflected the subjects that the constituency appeared to be interested in. To make the newsletter more interesting, we included editorial commentary and opinion pieces from activists in the region and elsewhere.

The newsletter is sent out as an email, with text only format so that even those without HTML enabled email programs can read the content with ease. Each section contains a five line summary of the item, with a URL pointing to the relevant website. Stories or information announcements sent to us directly are stored on the Pambazuka online database (there are currently some 20,000 such news items and editorials available free online). The newsletter receives more than 200 postings each week from which we draw for the different sections. And each week, there is a vibrant debate on critical issues related to social justice in the region and in response to editorial materials.

Through forming strategic alliances with other organisations⁹, we were able to expand the reach of the newsletter. In December 2001, the newsletter was named Pambazuka News (pambazuka in Kiswahili means to awaken or arise – as in the breaking dawn). From an initial base of a few hundred subscribers, Pambazuka News has grown today to more than 15,000 subscribers and a readership estimated at least 60,000. The newsletter is also reproduced in its entirety at allAfrica.com, with a potential readership probably in the hundreds of thousands.¹⁰

⁹ With Kabissa (<http://www.kabissa.org>) and SANGONeT (<http://www.sn.apc.org>)

¹⁰ A collection of the editorials from 2004 are now available in book form: Manji F and Burnett P (eds): *African Voices on Development and Social Justice: Editorials from Pambazuka News*



But because of the disparities in wealth and opportunities between urban and rural Africa, and the concentration of computers and the internet in the urban centres, Fahamu's programmes have reached largely urban based organisations and institutions. We have hitherto been unable to reach CBOs working in rural areas, where 85% of the African population lives, primarily because of the technologies we have used.

With the exception of CIVICUS's extensive survey of civil society organisations in one country – South Africa¹¹ – there is surprisingly little empirical information about CBOs in southern Africa. What kind of work do CBOs do? What is the nature of these organisations? How are they constituted? To what extent do they seek to protect and promote human rights? What are their priorities? What are their strengths and weaknesses as organisations? What training do they already access and what training would make a difference to their work? What are their sources of information, and would they find an electronic newsletter such as Pambazuka News useful? What kind of information do they need? What access to computers and the internet do CBOs have? And what kind of training materials should Fahamu develop that would support them to be effective in achieving their goals?

It was to answer such questions that Fahamu sought support from the Foundation for Human Rights to undertake research in the southern African region. The research was conducted jointly with the Centre for Adult Education, University of KwaZulu Natal, who were also responsible for data analysis. We are also indebted to the following organisations who carried out in-country research:

Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO) Lesotho: Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (LECONGO); Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre (MHRRC); Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) (Namibia); Co-ordinating Assembly of Non-governmental Organisations (CANGO) (Swaziland); Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) (Tanzania); Centre for Health, Science and Social Research (CHESSORE) (Zambia); and NGO Network Alliance Project (NNAP) (Zimbabwe).

2004. Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota Publishers, 2005

¹¹ Co-operative for Research and Education (CORE) and Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA), (2001a), Two Commas and a Full Stop: A Preliminary Report on the CIVICUS Index on Civil Society in South Africa. CIVICUS Index on Civil Society Occasional Paper Series Vol. 1. Issue 9



Key findings

Over half of the CBOs surveyed started within five years of being interviewed. Most organisations are working in more than one sector. Legal and human rights work, HIV/AIDS and health issues, and income-generation are the sectors within which the greatest number of organisations are working. On the whole, organisations are working on a very similar range of human rights issues as those they identified as important in their country. There are, however, some significant variations between human rights issues identified as priority issues in individual countries, and the issues actually being worked on by the CBOs in that country. This is particularly the case so far as domestic violence, political freedom, issues concerning the police/security forces, and access to justice is concerned.

Most organisations are involved in a variety of activities, with education and training being mentioned most often. 70% of the CBOs surveyed have been involved in at least one campaign, with a significant number involved in more than one. Most organisations have worked with one or more partners in these campaigns. Zimbabwean CBOs on the whole had a higher number of partners in their campaigns. Nearly all of the organisations involved in campaigns reported experiencing difficulties with these, and most reported more than one difficulty. Lack of community participation, or resistance by the community to the campaign was most often cited.

Education and training for both the CBOs and the broader community was given most often as the solution to problems attendant to campaigns. Financial assistance was also frequently cited. Nearly all of the CBOs surveyed believe that they have impacted positively on their context. Both beneficiaries and the broader community have benefited.

Less than half of the organisations have paid staff. On the whole, the number of paid staff is small, with 43% of CBOs with paid staff employing fewer than five people. However, differences across countries are extreme, with only one organisation in Malawi having paid staff compared to 100% of organisations in Zimbabwe. 88% of organisations have volunteers, but again there are variations across countries. 82% of organisations have members. Membership varies hugely, from four members to 20,000. Education levels vary considerably. Education levels tend to be higher in Zimbabwean and Tanzanian CBOs, and lower in Malawian organisations. Staff/workers tend to have higher levels of education than members, and more staff/workers than members appear to be able to speak English. 82% of the organisations surveyed have a constitution. In most cases this was written within a year of establishment.



97% of respondents said that they had seen the constitution, and 90% said that it was regularly used by the organisation. Most constitutions were written by either members or the governance structure of the organisation. Most respondents believe the chairperson/president and/or governance structure of the organisation to be the leader of the organisation. Most leaders are elected, although elections are sometimes infrequent. 94% of organisations surveyed have some kind of governance or management structure. These vary in size from four to fifteen members. Malawian organisations tend to have larger governance structures, whilst South African and Swazi organisations tend to have smaller governance structures. Most governance structures are elected, usually by members, and meet regularly (usually monthly).

In 36% of the organisations surveyed, the governance/management structure is responsible for the day-to-day work of the organisation. There are a number of leadership and management problems within CBOs, and in particular the existence of undemocratic practices in some organisations is cause for concern.

78% of organisations have access to some kind of space in which to meet and conduct the business of the organisation. However, the kind of space varies enormously across organisations and countries, and only half of the CBOs in Lesotho and Zambia have access to a space. In many cases, the space is a borrowed or shared space. 49% of organisations with access to a space do not have to pay for this.

Two-thirds of organisations receive some kind of funding from other agencies, but there is considerable variation across countries, with only two organisations in Lesotho receiving funding compared to all ten in Zimbabwe. Most of those who receive funding get it from more than one source. There is a range of different funders in the region. The vast majority of funding is short term, being of a year or less in duration. About 83% of organisations engage in some kind of fundraising activity, with approaches to donors being the most significant followed by the sale of products and services. 87 out of 89 organisations (98%) are experiencing some kind of problem. Funding is the most frequently cited problem, and relates to a number of other problems mentioned by organisations, such as office space and equipment, transport, and the inability of organisations to keep good workers. The lack of skills is also a major issue for CBOs in the region.

Funding and training feature prominently in the solutions suggested by CBOs. They are also most often cited as the factors which would help them to do their work better. 53% of CBOs believe that funding would help them to do their work better, whilst 78% believe that training would help them to do their work better. Zimbabwean CBOs appear to differ notably from the majority of



other CBOs surveyed, having substantial office space and relatively large paid staff. Nearly all organisations need information about funding.

Information on development issues and human rights are also a priority. Only four organisations felt that they currently got all of the information they needed. Organisations identified a range of information, and in particular information about funding and human rights issues, as information they needed but do not currently get. Local people, newspapers, radio and other organisations are the most common sources of information for CBOs in the region. However, there are wide discrepancies among countries concerning the ways in which they access information. Although radio was given as a key source of information across the countries, 78% of organisations report that there is not a community radio station in their area, and no CBOs in Zimbabwe, Swaziland or Malawi reported the presence of a community radio station. 87% of CBOs feel that community radio could be of value to their organisation, although fewer organisations in South Africa believe this than in any other country.

Access to technology varies considerably across organisations and countries. Most organisations use the postal service, and telephone access via a landline is also high. Both are considered fairly reliable. There is significant access to photocopy machines and fax machines across countries. Most CBOs believe that their power supply is reliable. However, the power supply in Malawi is not at all reliable. Just over half of the organisations surveyed had access to a PC. Access to a PC is very uneven across countries - Zimbabwe, Namibia and Botswana can be considered "high access" (80-100% of organisations), whilst Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia are "low access" (30% or less).

Most PCs are accessed in-office, and access is relatively easy. Most PCs are used on a daily or regular basis. Management and administrators (particularly secretaries) have preference of use where PCs are limited, whilst programme staff are the next largest category of users. Most organisations with PC access do not have to pay for this access. Most PCs have a CDROM, but this varies considerably across countries. Windows 98/Windows 2000 are the most common operating systems. Microsoft products predominate. About half of all PCs have a modem. No PC in Zambia or Malawi had a modem.

Less than 40% of the CBOs surveyed have access to the Internet. Access varies considerably between countries, with 80% of organisations in Zimbabwe having access, and no organisation in Swaziland having access. Internet access is more often in-office, but nearly half of all organisations with Internet access do so via another organisation or Internet Café.



Internet Explorer is the browser used on all except one PC. No one service provider dominates. Africaonline is the only service provider used in more than one country. Most organisations consider their service provider to be fairly reliable. The Internet is accessed daily or weekly by those organisations with access. Internet access is largely restricted to management/leadership positions. The Internet is used mainly for information searches and exchange. Most CBOs do not subscribe to a mailing or subscription list.

Only three CBOs, all in Zimbabwe, currently receive Pambazuka News. Three quarters of respondents found Pambazuka News easy to read, although most CBOs in Swaziland, and half of those in Tanzania, found it either too hard, or difficult but manageable. Most respondents believed that others in the organisation would find the newsletter harder to read than they did themselves. Three quarters of respondents found the content of Pambazuka News to be very relevant, but believed that others on the organisation might not find it as relevant. Nearly three quarters of respondents found it easy to find information in Pambazuka News.

Many comments on the newsletter suggest relatively low levels of reading comfort. It is likely that many respondents found Pambazuka News more difficult to read than they were prepared to admit. Over 91% of all CBOs felt that there was a need for a newsletter specifically for CBOs. Respondents gave as the primary purpose of such a newsletter the sharing of information. Most respondents believed that the newsletter should be produced by an NGO or group of NGOs and/or the government, but in collaboration with CBOs. This is probably because of the low levels of resources CBOs have.

Nearly all (93%) of CBOs want the newsletter to be available in a printed hard copy. 29% want it in electronic format. Nearly three-quarters of respondents would like the newsletter to be available in both English and the vernacular. Nearly all organisations would prefer a monthly or less frequent newsletter. Organisations across the countries would most like the newsletter to contain information on human rights issues, development issues, CBO news and activities, and finance and fundraising, but a wide variety of other topics were also suggested. Over 90% of all organisations said that they would be prepared to contribute towards such a newsletter by contributing articles and helping decide on content. They would also be prepared to pass the newsletter on to others.



Over three quarters of the organisations surveyed reported that someone in their organisation had had some form of training connected to helping the work of the organisation within the last 24 months. The lowest incidence in terms of number of organisations was in Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia, whilst the lowest incidence in terms of number of people trained was in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

There does not appear to be a strong correlation between staff training and staff turnover. Most organisations retained the staff who have been trained over the last 24 months. Training received over the last 24 months was extremely varied in content, but there was a noticeable lack of training in computer and ICT training. Most training concerned organisational skills. More people at senior management level received training than any other group, but Board and committee members also received much of the training. Most training undertaken in the last 24 months was in the form of short courses of between three and seven days' duration. Every single organisation surveyed felt that they or someone else in the organisation required further training.

Most identified organisational development-related training as the priority area, although a very wide range of other training was also mentioned. Respondents expressed considerable interest in the Fahamu courses, with 82 out of 89 organisations interested in undertaking the Fundraising and resources mobilisation course, and 81 the Leadership and management course. Finance for the non-financial manager and Campaigning and advocacy were also popular, with 65 organisations expressing an interest. Use of the Internet for research and advocacy was the least popular, largely because only 1 organisation in Swaziland, and only 2 in Zambia (i.e. the countries with least access to IT), expressed an interest in this option.

Future plans

To overcome the lack of access to computers, Fahamu will seek to make course materials available in interactive format on handheld computers with built in mobile phones. Fahamu will seek to break through this 'digital divide' by developing the means by which grassroots organisations can access learning and information resources via mobile technology (with handheld computers). Taking advantage of increased satellite network coverage in Africa, this approach would make Fahamu's courses available in remote locations.



The wide reach of radio and its ability to cross the urban/rural divide make it a potentially potent tool for distributing information and for supporting campaigns for social justice. Programming will eventually be recorded and made available for download from the Pambazuka News website or distributed through CD-ROM to radio stations throughout Africa.

Acknowledgements

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Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa; Foundation for Human Rights; Centre for Adult Education (CAE); University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN); Thabani Ngwira; Muzi Mthembu; Zandile Wanda; Charlene Houston; K. Tladi; Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO) Lesotho: Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (LECONGO); Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre (MHRRC); Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) (Namibia); Co-ordinating Assembly of Non-governmental Organisations (CANGO) (Swaziland); Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) (Tanzania); Centre for Health, Science and Social Research (CHESSORE) (Zambia); and NGO Network Alliance Project (NNAP) (Zimbabwe).

Report on a survey of CBOs in Southern Africa

October 2002 - August 2003

Introduction

In 2001, Fahamu established an electronic newsletter that was eventually named '*Pambazuka News*', as a response to requests from civil society organisations in the Southern African region. *Pambazuka News*, currently produced in association with two other organisations (Kabissa and SANGONeT) has been extremely successful, with the number of subscribers increasing from 700 to 10,556 in just one year. Approximately 65% of subscribers are in Africa. The actual readership is likely to be greater than 10,556 since the newsletter is forwarded to many both in electronic and hard-copy format. It is individuals who subscribe to the newsletter, but it is likely that a greater proportion of urban based NGOs in Africa receive the newsletter. What is unclear is the extent to which community based organisations (CBOs) in the region receive this newsletter and the extent to which its format and content meet with the specific needs of CBOs.

Fahamu was awarded a grant by the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) to investigate the needs of CBOs in the southern Africa region with a view to developing, if so required, a complementary newsletter to *Pambazuka News* aimed at CBOs. A sample of CBOs in nine Southern African countries were thus surveyed to assess their access to email, their views on the current newsletter, the issues and subjects it covers and the extent of interest in establishing an editorial advisory board for a parallel newsletter, should this be so recommended by them.

Since the needs of CBOs in relation to a social justice newsletter were to be assessed during this survey, the opportunity to assess their training needs was also taken. Additional funds from the Foundation for Human Rights allowed this work to be undertaken in parallel.

Fahamu is currently developing a series of CDROM-based distance learning materials for strengthening the campaigning, advocacy and organisational capacity of human rights and other NGOs in the region. These include courses on: fact finding and investigation, human rights monitoring and reporting, campaigning, advocacy and lobbying, leadership and management, financial management, fundraising, training and facilitations skills, and using the Internet for research and advocacy.

An assessment of the training needs of CBOs, in terms of their campaigning, advocacy or organisational/managerial capacities, enables Fahamu to develop appropriate training materials specifically for CBOs – either by adopting or adapting existing materials or by developing new courses. Thus, a survey of nine countries in the SADC region was undertaken between September 2002 and October 2003.

The Centre for Adult Education of the School of Education, Training and Development, University of Natal, based in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, was contracted to develop the instrument that was used in the survey, train interviewers in administering this, and analyse the data arising from the pilot and full survey and report on this.

This report constitutes the final report on the survey.

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Executive summary

This survey, involving as it did 89 organisations across nine countries, has resulted in a considerable quantity of very rich data. This data provides valuable insight into almost every aspect of community-based organisations (CBOs) involved in human rights work in each of these countries, and offers those working in this field a wealth of information to assist them in building human rights capacity both within individual countries and across the region.

The following methodology was used in this survey:

1. With the exception of South Africa (where Fahamu's regional office administered the survey), Fahamu contracted an organisation in each of the nine Southern African countries where the survey was to be undertaken. Each sub-contracted organisation (SCO) was responsible for administering the survey in their country.
2. With the assistance of the SCOs and Fahamu SA, the Centre for Adult Education (CAE) compiled a list of CBOs in each of the countries, from which representative samples were drawn.
3. A draft instrument was developed by the Centre, and piloted in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa in October 2002.
4. A briefing meeting was held in March 2003 with the SCOs to finalise the instrument and samples for each country, and train SCOs in administering the instrument.
5. The SCOs and Fahamu SA then administered the survey. Data were submitted to CAE, who analysed the data, and produced this report.

Whilst a number of problems were experienced in the administration of this survey, these are by no means unique to this project, and simply highlight common difficulties faced when doing this type of research in this context. The fact that no survey of this kind has previously been done, and the logistical difficulties attached to great distances and little or uneven infrastructure, inevitably meant that simply arriving at a good, representative population of CBOs was inordinately difficult. Whilst this affected the sampling, a fairly representative sample of CBOs in each country, and across the region, was arrived at, and data collected for 89 organisations in nine countries, viz. Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Limitations

The following limitations are acknowledged:

1. Since the population of CBOs drawn up by the SCOs was limited and uneven, representative sampling was constrained.
2. Not enough information on all of the seven sampling criteria was submitted by all SCOs to ensure a good spread across all of the criteria.
3. Where organisations on the sample list were substituted with others, these did not always match the criteria of the original organisation/s.
4. Data returned was uneven, and not always of good quality.
5. Some quality control measures in some cases were compromised by time constraints.

Key findings on organisational profile

- Over half of the CBOs surveyed started within five years of being interviewed.
- 28% of the organisations surveyed were started by another organisation.
- Most organisations started because of a local need or problem.
- Just over half of the organisations surveyed reported that their work has not changed since the inception of the organisation. Where work has changed, it has generally involved an expanded focus, largely as a result of increased or shifting demands by the beneficiaries/communities they serve.
- Most organisations are working in more than one sector. Legal and human rights work, HIV/AIDS and health issues, and income-generation are the sectors within which the greatest number of organisations are working.
- On the whole, organisations are working on a very similar range of human rights issues as those they identified as important in their country. There are, however, some significant variations between human rights issues identified as priority issues in individual countries, and the issues actually being worked on by the CBOs in that country. This is particularly the case so far as domestic violence, political freedom, issues concerning the police/security forces, and access to justice is concerned.
- Most organisations are involved in a variety of activities, with education and training being mentioned most often.
- 70% of the CBOs surveyed have been involved in at least one campaign, with a significant number involved in more than one. Most organisations have worked with one or more partners in these campaigns. Zimbabwean CBOs on the whole had a higher number of partners in their campaigns.
- 94% of the organisations involved in campaigns reported experiencing difficulties with these, and most reported more than one difficulty. Lack of community participation, or resistance by the community to the campaign was most often cited.
- Education and training for both the CBOs and the broader community was given most often as the solution to problems attendant to campaigns. Financial assistance was also frequently cited.
- 97% of the CBOs surveyed believe that they have impacted positively on their context. Both beneficiaries and the broader community have benefited.
- Most organisations are working in urban or peri-urban areas (this could be sampling effect), although many work across the urban/rural divide.
- Less half of the organisations have paid staff. On the whole, the number of paid staff is small, with 43% of CBOs with paid staff employing fewer than five people. However, differences across countries are extreme, with only one organisation in Malawi having paid staff compared to 100% of organisations in Zimbabwe.
- 88% of organisations have volunteers, but again there are variations across countries.
- 82% of organisations have members. Membership varies hugely, from four members to 20 000.
- Education levels vary considerably. Education levels tend to be higher in Zimbabwean and Tanzanian CBOs, and lower in Malawian organisations. Staff/workers tend to have higher levels of education than members, and more staff/workers than members appear to be able to speak English.
- 82% of the organisations surveyed have a constitution. In most cases this was written within a year of establishment.

- 97% of respondents said that they had seen the constitution, and 90% said that it was regularly used by the organisation. Most constitutions were written by either members or the governance structure of the organisation.
- Most respondents believe the chairperson/president and/or governance structure of the organisation to be the leader of the organisation. Most leaders are elected, although elections are sometimes infrequent.
- 94% of organisations surveyed have some kind of governance or management structure. These vary in size from four to fifteen members. Malawian organisations tend to have larger governance structures, whilst South African and Swazi organisations tend to have smaller governance structures. Most governance structures are elected, usually by members, and meet regularly (usually monthly).
- In 36% of the organisations surveyed, the governance/management structure is responsible for the day-to-day work of the organisation.
- There are a number of leadership and management problems within CBOs, and in particular the existence of undemocratic practices in some organisations is cause for concern.
- 78% of organisations have access to some kind of space in which to meet and conduct the business of the organisation. However, the kind of space varies enormously across organisations and countries, and only half of the CBOs in Lesotho and Zambia have access to a space. In many cases, the space is a borrowed or shared space. 49% of organisations with access to a space do not have to pay for this.
- 67% of organisations receive some kind of funding, but there is considerable variation across countries, with only two organisations in Lesotho receiving funding compared to all ten in Zimbabwe.
- Most of those who receive funding get it from more than one source.
- There are a range of different funders in the region.
- The vast majority of funding is short term, being of a year or less in duration.
- 83% of organisations engage in some kind of fundraising activity, with approaches to donors being the most significant followed by the sale of products and services.
- 87 out of 89 organisations (98%) are experiencing some kind of problem. Funding is the most frequently cited problem, and relates to a number of other problems mentioned by organisations, such as office space and equipment, transport, and the inability of organisations to keep good workers. The lack of skills is also a major issue for CBOs in the region.
- Funding and training feature prominently in the solutions suggested by CBOs. They are also most often cited as the factors which would help them to do their work better. 53% of CBOs believe that funding would help them to do their work better, whilst 78% believe that training would help them to do their work better.

Zimbabwean CBOs appear to differ notably from the majority of other CBOs surveyed, having substantial office space and relatively large paid staff.

Key findings on information and information technology

- Nearly all organisations need information about funding. Information on development issues and human rights are also a priority.
- Only four organisations felt that they currently got all of the information they needed. Organisations identified a range of information, and in particular information about funding and human rights issues, as information they needed but do not currently get.
- Local people, newspapers, radio and other organisations are the most common sources of information for CBOs in the region. However, there are wide discrepancies among countries concerning the ways in which they access information.
- Although radio was given as a key source of information across the countries, 78% of organisations report that there is not a community radio station in their area, and no CBOs in Zimbabwe, Swaziland or Malawi reported the presence of a community radio station. 87% of CBOs feel that community radio could be of value to their organisation, although fewer organisations in South Africa believe this than in any other country.
- Access to technology varies considerably across organisations and countries.
- Most organisations use the postal service, and telephone access via a landline is also high. Both are considered fairly reliable.
- There is significant access to photocopy machines and fax machines across countries.
- Most CBOs believe that their power supply is reliable. However, the power supply in Malawi is not at all reliable.
- Just over half of the organisations surveyed had access to a PC.
- Access to a PC is very uneven across countries - Zimbabwe, Namibia and Botswana can be considered “high access” (80-100% of organisations), whilst Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia are “low access” (30% or less).
- Most PCs are accessed in-office, and access is relatively easy.
- Most PCs are used on a daily or regular basis.
- Management and administrators (particularly secretaries) have preference of use where PCs are limited, whilst programme staff are the next largest category of users.
- Most organisations with PC access do not have to pay for this access.
- Most PCs have a CDROM, but this varies considerably across countries.
- Windows 98/Windows 2000 are the most common operating systems.
- Microsoft products dominate.
- About half of all PCs have a modem. No PC in Zambia or Malawi has a modem.
- Less than 40% of the CBOs surveyed have access to the Internet.
- Access varies considerably between countries, with 80% of organisations in Zimbabwe having access, and no organisation in Swaziland having access.
- Internet access is more often in-office, but nearly half of all organisations with Internet access do so via another organisation or Internet Café.
- Internet Explorer is the browser used on all except one PC.
- No one service provider dominates. Africaonline is the only service provider used in more than one country. Most organisations consider their service provider to be fairly reliable.
- The Internet is accessed daily or weekly by those organisations with access.
- Internet access is largely restricted to management/leadership positions.
- The Internet is used mainly for information searches and exchange.
- Most CBOs do not subscribe to a mailing or subscription list.

Key findings on *Pambazuka News*

- Only three CBOs, all in Zimbabwe, currently receive *Pambazuka News*.
- Three quarters of respondents found *Pambazuka News* easy to read, although most CBOs in Swaziland, and half of those in Tanzania, found it either too hard, or difficult but manageable. Most respondents believed that others in the organisation would find the newsletter harder to read than they did themselves.
- Three quarters of respondents found the content of *Pambazuka News* to be very relevant, but believed that others on the organisation might not find it as relevant.
- Nearly three quarters of respondents found it easy to find information in *Pambazuka News*.
- Many comments on the newsletter suggest relatively low levels of reading comfort. It is likely that many respondents found *Pambazuka News* more difficult to read than they were prepared to admit.
- Over 91% of all CBOs felt that there was a need for a newsletter specifically for CBOs.
- Respondents gave as the primary purpose of such a newsletter the sharing of information.
- Most respondents believed that the newsletter should be produced by an NGO or group of NGOs and/or the government, but in collaboration with CBOs. This is probably because of the low levels of resources CBOs have.
- Nearly all (93%) of CBOs want the newsletter to be available in a printed hard copy. 29% want it in electronic format.
- Nearly three-quarters of respondents would like the newsletter to be available in both English and the vernacular.
- Nearly all organisations would prefer a monthly or less frequent newsletter.
- Organisations across the countries would most like the newsletter to contain information on human rights issues, development issues, CBO news and activities, and finance and fundraising, but a wide variety of other topics were also suggested.
- Over 90% of all organisations said that they would be prepared to contribute towards such a newsletter by contributing articles and helping decide on content. They would also be prepared to pass the newsletter on to others.

Key findings on training

- Over three quarters of the organisations surveyed reported that someone in their organisation had had some form of training connected to helping the work of the organisation within the last 24 months. The lowest incidence in terms of number of organisations was in Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia, whilst the lowest incidence in terms of number of people trained was in South Africa and Zimbabwe.
- There does not appear to be a strong correlation between staff training and staff turnover. Most organisations retained the staff who have been trained over the last 24 months.
- Training received over the last 24 months was extremely varied in content, but there was a noticeable lack of training in computer and ICT training. Most training concerned organisational skills.
- More people at senior management level received training than any other group, but Board and committee members also received much of the training.
- Most training undertaken in the last 24 months was in the form of short courses of between three and seven days' duration.
- Every single organisation surveyed felt that they or someone else in the organisation required further training.
- Most identified organisational development-related training as the priority area, although a very wide range of other training was also mentioned.
- Respondents expressed considerable interest in the Adilisha courses, with 82 out of 89 organisations interested in undertaking the *Fundraising and resources mobilisation* course, and 81 the *Leadership and management* course. *Finance for the non-financial manager* and *Campaigning and advocacy* were also popular, with 65 organisations expressing an interest. *Use of the Internet for research and advocacy* was the least popular, largely because only 1 organisation in Swaziland, and only 2 in Zambia (i.e. the countries with least access to IT), expressed an interest in this option.

Conclusions and recommendations

This survey on CBOs involved in human rights issues in the SADC region has been a significant and unprecedented intervention, providing a wealth of data on these organisations. This data allows for a number of findings and recommendations to be made concerning both existing capacity and needs of these CBOs, particularly in terms of information and training.

Recommendations regarding a newsletter for CBOs

There is clearly a need and desire for a newsletter targeting CBOs in the region. However, this needs to differ from *Pambazuka News* in a number of respects, although its existing infrastructure lays a good foundation for the production of a CBO newsletter:

The success of such a newsletter relies on a solid partnership between Fahamu and at least one organisation with significant capacity in each country - possibly an NGO or umbrella organisation - to assist with translation and distribution¹.

The newsletter needs to be less frequent than *Pambazuka News*, and should probably be issued monthly. However, it is critical that the length of the newsletter be limited. It is possible that the lower frequency desired by respondents has more to do with length than anything else; but given the mode and pace of distribution that will be required, it is probably not practical to produce it more often than monthly.

The newsletter should be available in both electronic format and hard copy. It should be emailed in PDF format to the partner organisations, who should provide a brief translation in the major vernacular language/s of the country. Where possible, it should then be emailed on to CBOs; where this is not possible, it should be faxed; and where this is not possible, hard copies should be photocopied and distributed via the postal service.

Given the level of reading discomfort expressed by respondents, the PDF version should be at a simpler language level and a larger font size than is the case with *Pambazuka News*, and preferably in 14pt serif. The text needs to be broken up into fairly small chunks through the use of headings and sub-headings, and there should be a significant amount of white space on each page. Translations need to follow similar set guidelines.

Content needs to include information on human rights issues and events in the region, as well as information about CBOs and funding and training opportunities. There needs to be some

¹ NOTE that in some countries some CBOs have existing close relationships with one or more NGOs. In Lesotho, at least two organisations were started by Selibeng, and maintain a close relationship with this organisation, whilst in Zambia a number of CBOs were founded/have a close relationship with Women for Change. These could provide the basis for intervention in these countries.

local content², but this should not displace regional content, for both logistical and strategic reasons. Local content could be gathered from existing *Pambazuka News* sources, or through regional networks, utilising partner organisations - but the latter probably should not be relied on, given the difficulties of managing this kind of process. Given the need to restrict length, the possibility of focusing on a particular theme or sector in each issue could be explored, e.g. HIV/AIDS, funding, advocacy, women's rights, etc.

It is recommended that any initiative taken by Fahamu in regard to a CBO newsletter be piloted for six months after putting in place a careful and thorough monitoring process.

Recommendations regarding training

The need and desire for training is clearly considerable. However, whilst respondents expressed enormous interest in the Adilisha courses, logistical problems make it impossible to provide these courses using the current model, except in a few countries.

It is thus recommended that Fahamu use a two-pronged approach, by rolling out courses in countries with high access to IT, viz. Zimbabwe, South Africa, Botswana and Namibia³, whilst at the same time creating an enabling environment in the remaining countries to allow future roll out in these countries.

The creation of an enabling environment would involve, in the first instance, twinning or clustering CBOs with little or no IT or capacity with organisations (such as NGOs) or private providers (such as Internet cafés) with sufficient IT and capacity⁴. Fahamu would need to contract with these partner organisations to ensure sufficient access by CBOs, and could perhaps explore the possibility of “buying” time from partner organisations for exclusive use by CBOs.

Face-to-face training of CBOs in IT would then be required, probably on a country-by-country basis, to ensure that organisations have the capacity to use IT (note that the survey showed a notable lack of such training available to CBOs). In order to prevent unevenness and ensure a sufficiently enabling environment, Fahamu would need to establish what would constitute the appropriate level of computer literacy for successful engagement with the Adilisha courses. It is here recommended that Fahamu explore the possibility of becoming an accredited provider/partnering with an accredited provider of international Microsoft

² Given that most CBOs were founded on the basis of local need, and exist primarily to service that need, supporting CBOs to retain close links with local communities and local problems remains an important intervention.

³ Organisations in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia are also relatively mature, which provides additional reason for beginning with these countries.

⁴ NOTE: Providing increased access to PCs through direct provision of PCs to CBOs is not recommended, at least in the interim, given the lack of a dedicated, appropriate office space available to a significant number of CBOs, particularly in “low access” countries.

certificates. This would standardise training whilst providing students with an accredited certificate with considerable currency.

In the provision of IT training, it would be important to identify key individuals in these CBOs, whilst not entrenching current undemocratic practices and trends.

Once basic IT capacity has been established, and IT access secured, training using the existing Adilisha courses (appropriately adapted for content and language level) could begin. It is recommended that the *Leadership and Management* course be offered first, because a number of issues and problems in this area have been raised by respondents; because training in this area was requested by a significant number of organisations; because training in other issues will not be as effective if a sound organisational base has not been established; and because successful funding and resource mobilisation (the other key area of training requested by CBOs) relies on being able to read the context, undertake strategic plan, and manage projects, all of which are covered in the *Leadership and Management* course. It is probable that the *Funding and resource mobilisation* will be the course most in demand subsequent to this, but given the relatively high number of CBOs involved in campaigns, and the significant problems they have faced in these campaigns, *Campaigning and advocacy* should also be offered as a priority.

It is likely that CBO students in all countries, including the “high-access” countries, will require considerably more support than those in NGOs. It is thus recommended that in the first instance students be partnered with someone who has already completed the course, who can act as a mentor (here the existing pool of past students who have already expressed an interest in mentoring others could be drawn on). This should preferably be someone in the same country as the student, and where possible, someone within a partner organisation.

It is also recommended that Fahamu work in only one or two countries at a time, and that an attempt be made to “buy” time from partner organisations in a carefully scheduled way to allow for synchronous immediate on-line support from a facilitator/IT support person. In addition, student support via teleconferencing should also be explored.

Report on the survey

Since this is the first survey of this kind to be conducted in Southern Africa, this section of the report describes and comments on the actual process of conducting the survey in some detail.

Methodology

The following framework was devised as the basic methodology for the survey:

1. With the exception of South Africa (where Fahamu have an established office), Fahamu would enter into a contractual arrangement with an organisation in each of the nine Southern African countries where the survey was to be undertaken. Each sub-contracted organisation (SCO) would be responsible for administering the survey by interviewing ten CBOs in their country. Fahamu SA would be responsible for administering the survey in South Africa.
2. With the assistance of the SCOs and Fahamu SA, the Centre for Adult Education (CAE) would compile a list of CBOs in each of the countries, from which to draw a representative sample.
3. A draft instrument would be developed by the Centre for Adult Education, and piloted in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa.
4. A briefing meeting would then be held with the SCOs to finalise the instrument and samples for each country.
5. The SCOs and Fahamu SA would then conduct the survey. Data would be submitted to CAE, who would analyse the data and report on the findings to Fahamu. The results of the survey would be presented at a regional consultative meeting of CBOs.
6. As a result of the research and consultations, Fahamu would make recommendations about the need for both a social justice newsletter for CBOs (and the possible content and format of this) and capacity-building initiatives for these organisations.

In the event, whilst these steps were followed fairly closely, the process was not as smooth as had been envisaged, with certain of the steps requiring considerably more time than had been budgeted for. Each of the steps leading up to this report is discussed in more detail below.

1. The sub-contracted organisations

Fahamu entered into a contractual arrangement with the following SCOs:

Botswana:	Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO)
Lesotho:	Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (LECONGO)
Malawi:	Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre (MHRRC)
Namibia:	Legal Assistance Centre (LAC)
Swaziland:	Co-ordinating Assembly of Non-governmental Organisations (CANGO)
Tanzania:	Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC)
Zambia:	Centre for Health, Science and Social Research (CHESSORE)
Zimbabwe:	NGO Network Alliance Project (NNAP)

2. Creating a population of CBOs - compiling lists

Since the survey aimed to make findings concerning CBOs working in the human rights field in Southern Africa, it was important that the CBOs included in the survey were as representative as possible. CAE, in consultation with Fahamu, agreed that the following criteria would be used as the basis for ensuring a good spread of CBOs:

1. Size of the organisation, in terms of the number of people actively participating in its activities
2. Geographical spread, including urban/rural
3. Cultural/ethnic group at whom the activities of the organisation were aimed
4. Nature of work (e.g. lobbying, research, training etc.)
5. Sector working in (e.g. women, youth, environment, etc.)
6. Resources available to the organisation
7. Length of operation

Each of the SCOs and Fahamu SA were asked to submit a list of CBOs in their country, including sufficient information about each to allow CAE to choose a provisional sample which would be as representative as possible based on these criteria. Information specifically requested included:

- Number of members/staff, and if possible, number of active members (in order to determine size)
- Exact geographical location (in order to determine geographic spread) and whether or not the organisations worked in a primarily urban or rural setting
- Language spoken by majority of members (in order to determine likely cultural/ethnic grouping being targeted)
- Nature of work (e.g. lobbying, research, training etc.)
- Sector working in (e.g. women, youth, environment, etc.)
- Information on whether or not the organisation had a telephone, fax and/or email (as an indication of how well resourced the organisation might be)
- When the organisation started (in order to determine length of operation).

It was repeatedly emphasised to the SCOs that it was imperative that they gather this information, and that they did not simply include CBOs they knew of, or were in direct contact with:

Otherwise we could end up saying yes, CBOs in Malawi all have excellent access to the Internet (and as a result developing Internet-based courses or resources), when in fact only large, well-resourced, well-established CBOs working on the delivery of land rights on behalf of the government, based in Lilongwe, and with staff of the same ethnic group as the ruling party, have excellent access to the Internet (and as a result only ten CBOs - those surveyed - actually benefit from what we develop) [Briefing manual given to SCOs, 7 March 2003].

It was anticipated that the lists would be submitted prior to the briefing meeting to allow CAE to analyse these and compile provisional samples, which could then be finalised at the briefing meeting. Fahamu was thus requested to instruct the SCOs to begin compiling their lists whilst the pilot was underway (i.e. from October 2002).

It is clear that this did not happen, and, as can be seen from the above email, the issue of the lists was still under discussion some time after the completion of the pilot. It was ultimately agreed that a list of 27 CBOs which met the seven criteria should be compiled for each country, and submitted by 3rd March 2003, and all SCOs were notified of this by Fahamu on 25 February. A list of 15 organisations per country would be drawn from this at the briefing meeting. This would include the final sample of ten organisations, and an additional five organisations which could be substituted for one or more of the ten if this need arose.

In the event, many of the initial lists were incomplete, and very few were submitted by the due date. This resulted in a long and often tortuous process, in which SCOs had to be requested to submit additional information about CBOs on the list, and/or provide further organisations. As a result, some final lists were only submitted after the date by which interviews were expected to have been completed.

Country	List submitted (population)	Adequacy of information provided	Date submitted
Botswana	First list: 27 Second list: 14 Further list of 13 organisations from original list submitted after sample drawn from second list.	Many organisations on initial list did not fit definition of CBO as agreed on, and had no information on age, size, urban/rural location, nature or work or language. Second list of further information on 14 CBOs had no information on age, and was skewed to sector (HIV/AIDS) and location (rural). Further list of 13 had further information on remaining organisations, but not age.	First list: ? Second list: 14 March 2003 Further list: 25 March 2003
Lesotho	First list: 18 Revised list: 17	First list had only names and addresses - Lesotho requested to furnish details. Revised list contained details.	First list: 7 March 2003 Revised list: 12 March 2003
Malawi	First list: ?	Complete	7 March 2003
Namibia	First list: 35	Complete	7 March 2003
South Africa	First list: 15 Final list: 14 (of which 6 had already been interviewed)	First list geographically skewed and incomplete. Final list complete (but 6 already interviewed).	First list: 26 March 2003 Final list: 6 May 2003
Swaziland	First list: 7 March 2003	Complete	7 March 2003
Tanzania	First list: 30 Further 3 submitted after request. Further list of 8 organisations on original list submitted.	First list very incomplete - little information on size, age, resources; very skewed to urban (28 out of 30); skewed to sector (women). Tanzania asked to provide details. Second list of 3 new organisations. Third list provided details of 8 organisations on original list.	First list: 5 March 2003 Further 3: 27 March 2003 List of 8: 7 April 2003
Zambia	First list: 28 Revised list of 15 submitted.	Many on first list did not meet definition of CBO as agreed to, and information incomplete. Revised list of 15 submitted on request with complete information.	First list: 4 March 2003 Revised list: 14 March 2003
Zimbabwe	First list: 30	Information for 26 complete	2 March 2003

Many final lists contained fewer than 20 organisations, and many final samples contained only ten organisations, so in some cases where interviews failed, organisations which did not fit the criteria were substituted, in some cases from the initial, incomplete lists (in some cases, samples were not adhered to). This is discussed in more detail below.

Obviously, the small number of CBOs for which there was complete information significantly impacted on the sampling, since it gave CAE a smaller population from which to sample, and made it difficult to ensure a good spread across all of the criteria.

3. Developing and piloting the instrument

A draft instrument was developed by CAE and submitted to Fahamu on 31 October 2002. A meeting was held with the Director of Fahamu SA to discuss the instrument, and comments were also received from Dr Firoze Manji, Director of Fahamu. A number of changes were made as a result, including a new set of questions on human rights abuses in the country and community in which the CBO worked, and specific questions on the Adilisha courses.

The instrument was piloted with ten organisations in KwaZulu-Natal in November 2002. A full report on the pilot was submitted to Fahamu on 10 December 2003. The pilot provided useful information and guidance for the main survey and for the briefing session with interviewers from the various countries.

The pilot indicated that:

- Skilled interviewers who were familiar with the instrument would be needed
- The language and translation ability of the interviewers was critical
- A small number of questions in the survey instrument needed to be rephrased, added to or deleted
- Some additional instructions for interviewers were required
- Certain instructions needed focussed attention during the training of interviewers (i.e. the briefing workshop)
- Greater attention would need to be given to sampling criteria in drawing up both the initial list and the final sample
- Adequate time for interviews would need to be planned for

Questions rephrased, added to or deleted, included asking additional information about the constitution of the organisation; asking whether the work of the organisation had changed since its inception; and asking for more information concerning human rights work and campaigns about human rights issues, including problems encountered and possible solutions to these. Questions whose answers showed that they could be interpreted in different ways were rephrased to avoid ambiguity. Some questions were restructured. For example the question “What kinds of information does your organisation need, and how important is this to you”, which required respondents to rank information, and was very badly answered in the pilot, was changed to asking them to choose the 5 most important kinds of information needed. A question concerning education levels in the organisations was changed to a multiple choice rather than open response to ensure a more standardised response. The layout of the questionnaire was slightly adapted to overcome the problem of interviewers skipping certain questions where a previous question had received a negative response.

The questionnaire was also revised to include a list of key instructions at the beginning of the instrument, and instructions were embedded in the instrument itself. The pilot report also recommended that Fahamu implement financial penalties on SCOs for the failure to satisfactorily complete certain critical questions.

The pilot report commented that the briefing meeting would serve an essential role in making it clear to Sub-contracted Organisations (SCOs) what their responsibilities were with respect to the interviews. In particular, the report recommended that the questions concerning leadership of the organisation and the questions concerning problems encountered by the organisation be specifically discussed at the briefing meeting, and strategies for dealing with them highlighted. Other questions which had been particularly badly answered in the pilot as a result of the interviewer, rather than phrasing or layout, also needed to be specifically covered at the briefing.

For example, the question “What information do you not get that you would like?” was very badly answered, being left entirely blank in 4 of the 10 questionnaires. The question itself was clear, and included a prompt to get as much detail as possible. Since the satisfactory completion of this question was critical to the success of the survey, it was suggested that this be one of the critical questions, and that failure to answer it satisfactorily should result in financial penalties (which should be indicated at the beginning of the instrument, and SCOs warned of this at the briefing).

4. The briefing meeting with the SCOs to finalise the instrument and samples for each country

The pilot report included the following recommendations for the briefing meeting:

The briefing meeting, in the first instance, needs to be used to clarify the critical question of how representative the CBOs involved in the KwaZulu-Natal pilot are. The nature and origin of CBOs in the region needs to be explored, and, in the light of this, certain adjustments may need to be made to the instrument.

Clearly, the briefing meeting will play an essential role in ensuring that SCOs understand their obligation to satisfactorily complete the instrument. In this regard, the critical questions will be highlighted, and SCOs warned of possible financial penalties (if Fahamu decides to implement this strategy).

The briefing meeting will also be the primary means to train SCOs in how to ensure satisfactory completion of the instrument. Overall instructions will also be gone through, and the repercussions of not adhering to these in terms of the usability of data explained.

We believe that in this regard, using the completed pilot instruments will be a useful illustration. Roleplay will also be used to show SCO representatives how to probe for more, and more thoughtful, information, rather than merely go through the questions by rote. Each interviewer should have an opportunity to roleplay an interview

In addition, possible problems with specific questions, or sets of questions (such as those on leadership and organisational problems), will be highlighted, and strategies for dealing with these discussed [Harley et al. 2002. Report on CBO Survey Pilot, KwaZulu-Natal].

The briefing meeting was held in Durban, South Africa on 7 March 2003. It had originally been planned that the briefing would take place over a two-day period. This was shortened to a single day by Fahamu, and meant that a considerable amount of information and training had to be covered in an extremely short period.

All of the SCOs were asked to read a shortened version of the report on the pilot (prepared by Fahamu), and to familiarise themselves with the questionnaire before the briefing workshop. A briefing manual was developed by CAE for each SCO (see Appendix). The manual was intended to help SCO representatives during the workshop by giving them an idea of what would be covered, and by including copies of briefing documents and the worksheet which would be used in this workshop, and to provide them with enough information to allow them to brief the interviewers who would be doing the actual interviews, if this was not the representative present.

The workshop included:

- an introductory session on conceptual clarity, looking at inter alia the question of what a CBO actually is.
- a session explaining the data needs of the researchers, and introducing the SCOs to the questionnaire;
- an opportunity for participants to practice interviewing each other in a roleplay situation, and to reflect on this experience;
- a worksheet which participants worked through, asking them to comment on the appropriateness of the questions to CBOs in their country, to suggest possible changes to the questionnaire, to think about practical difficulties they might encounter in administering the survey in their country, and to reflect on training others to conduct the interviews;
- the modelling of interview skills, using two critical questions
- a session of dos and don'ts in interviewing (including a complete list of instructions to the interviewer and to the co-ordinator of the survey in each SCO on what to do before, during and after each interview).

Samples were also discussed, including the reason for sampling, and the importance of the criteria to be used. Where possible samples were finalised - but this was only the case for Swaziland and Malawi.

The briefing workshop achieved the following outcomes:

1. A final definition of CBO was agreed to:
 - a CBO is an organisation based in a local community which serves the needs of that community;
 - it could be initiated from within or from outside the community;
 - its staff and/or membership are drawn from the local community;
 - it has some form of accountability to the local community in the form of a board or committee.
2. A final questionnaire was confirmed
3. SCOs were trained in the administration of the questionnaire, and warned of possible financial penalties if critical questions were not satisfactorily completed
4. SCO representatives had a full set of instructions to take back with them.

5. Finalising the samples for each country

As has been mentioned, it was envisaged that this process would be completed at the briefing itself, since SCOs would have submitted their lists prior to the briefing meeting.

In the event, only the samples for Swaziland and Malawi were finalised at the meeting, since, as has been seen above, very few SCOs submitted their lists on time, and in many cases these were incomplete and further information had to be requested from SCOs.

Country	Date sample finalised
Botswana	18 March 2003
Lesotho	14 March 2003
Malawi	7 March 2003
Namibia	14 March 2003
South Africa	7 May 2003
Swaziland	7 March 2003
Tanzania	4 August 2003
Zambia	19 March 2003
Zimbabwe	10 March 2003

The final samples gave the following spread across the criteria:

Country	Sectors	Activities	Size	Urban/ rural	Language	Resources	Age
Botswana	5 sectors	8 types	all	both	3 languages	incomplete	no info
Lesotho	6 sectors	6 types	all	both	1 language	incomplete	all
Malawi	9 sectors	5 types	all	both	4 languages	spread	all
Namibia	8 sectors	3 types	all	both	5 languages	spread	all
South Africa	7 sectors	7 types	all	both	4 languages	incomplete	no <1 year
Swaziland	5 sectors	5 types	all	both	2 languages	incomplete	no info
Tanzania	8 sectors	5 types	no small	both	4 languages	spread	no <1 year
Zambia	5 sectors	5 types	no large	both	8 languages	spread	no <1 year
Zimbabwe	8 sectors	7 types	no small	both	3 languages	spread	spread
Total	15	11	all	both	24	spread/ incomplete	incomplete

Country	Sector	Nature of work	Size	Urban/rural	Language	Resources	Age
Botswana	HIV/AIDS: 5 women: 1 youth: 1 community development: 1 environment: 2	advice: 2 advocacy: 1 counselling/support: 2 education/training: 6 monitoring/research: 1 lobbying: 1 home-based care: 1 income-generation: 1	small: 3 medium: 6 large: 1	urban: 3 rural: 7	English: 4 Setswana: 8 Sesarwa: 2	telephone: 2	
Lesotho	women: 2 children: 2 community development: 1 environment: 1 income-generation: 1 peace/conflict: 1	advice: 1 awareness: 3 counselling/support: 2 education/training: 5 community development: 1 environmental conservation: 1	small: 3 medium: 4 large: 1	urban: 4 rural: 5	Sesotho: 9	telephone: 5 fax: 1	<1 year: 1 1-5 years: 6 5+ years: 2
Malawi	HIV/AIDS: 5 women: 2 children: 7 elderly: 2 youth: 3 income-generation: 2 legal/human rights: 3 democracy: 2 land/housing: 1	advice: 2 advocacy: 4 education/training: 9 home-based care: 2 income-generation: 1	small: 2 medium: 3 large: 4	urban: 3 peri-urban: 2 rural: 4	English Chichewa Tonga Tumbuka	none: 2 telephone: 8 fax: 1 email: 2	<1 year: 2 1-5 years: 4 5+ years: 3
Namibia	HIV/AIDS: 1 women: 1 children: 1 elderly: 1 community development: 2 democracy: 2 legal/human rights: 2 land/housing: 4	advice: 3 education/training: 4 lobbying: 9	small: 2 medium: 3 large: 5	urban: 6 rural: 8	Afrikaans: 4 Damara: 3 English: 2 Nama: 3 Oshvambo: 2 all: 2	telephone: 10 fax: 7 email: 4	<1 year: 3 1-5 years: 3 5+ years: 4

South Africa	HIV/AIDS: 3 women: 1 disabled: 1 legal/human rights: 1 land/housing: 1 environment: 2 security: 1	advice: 1 advocacy: 4 awareness: 1 counselling/support: 3 education/training: 4 monitoring/research: 2 lobbying: 2	small: 1 medium: 4 large: 3	urban: 6 rural: 3	English: 3 North Sotho: 1 Xhosa: 1 isiZulu: 2	telephone: 3 fax: 2	<1 year: 1-5 years: 2 5+ years: 5
Swaziland	HIV/AIDS: 1 women: 5 youth: 3 democracy: 1 legal/human rights: 2	advice: 1 advocacy: 2 counselling/support: 3 education/training: 1 lobbying: 2	small medium large	urban: 1 peri-urban: 1 rural: 5	English: 3 Siswati: 10	telephone: 1	
Tanzania	HIV/AIDS: 1 women: 7 children: 5 refugees: 1 democracy: 2 legal/human rights: 2 peace/conflict: 2 land/housing: 1	advice: 7 awareness: 1 counselling/support: 3 education/training: 6 monitoring/research: 5	small: 0 medium: 7 large: 3	urban: 5 peri-urban: 1 rural: 4 semi-rural: 1	Barbaig: 1 English: 7 Irwag: 1 Kiswahili: 10	none: 1 telephone: 8 fax: 2 email: 3	<1 year: 1-5 years: 2 5+ years: 7
Zambia	women: 2 community development: 4 democracy: 1 legal/human rights: 2 peace/conflict: 1	advocacy: 5 education/training: 5 monitoring/research: 2 lobbying: 4 income-generating: 1	small: 3 medium: 7 large: 0	urban: 3 peri-urban: 1 rural: 5 semi-rural: 1	Bemba: 2 English: 2 Lenje: 1 Lozi: 2 Nyanja: 3 Sanga: 1 Tonga: 1 Tumbuka: 1	none: 9 telephone: 1	<1 year: 1-5 years: 3 5+ years: 6
Zimbabwe	HIV/AIDS: 5 women: 5 children: 2 youth: 4 disabled: 1 community development: 1 democracy: 1 legal/human rights: 3	advice: 1 advocacy: 3 awareness: 1 counselling/support: 1 education/training: 7 home-based care: 1 income-generating: 2	small: 0 medium: 2 large: 3	urban: 8 rural: 4	English: 6 Ndebele: 4 Shona: 2	telephone: 5 fax: 5 email: 4	<5 years: 4 5+ years: 6

Thus a relatively good spread across the seven criteria was achieved, across both countries and CBOs, particularly as regards sector, work, size and urban/rural breakdown. Every country included organisations involved in at least five sectors, and every country included organisations working in both urban and rural areas. The Namibian sample was weighted slightly towards the land and housing sector (and in fact Namibia was asked to find a tenth organisation which was NOT involved in land housing, because the original list was skewed in this respect). The Botswana sample was also slightly weighted as regards sector, with half of the organisations working on HIV/AIDS issues, whilst the remainder were spread across the other sectors; and the Tanzanian and Malawian samples were skewed towards organisations working on women's issues and children's issues respectively (seven each).

The Namibian sample included relatively few types of work, with only three types of work being mentioned (and skewed towards lobbying), and the Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, and Zimbabwe samples being weighted towards education and training activities.

Whilst the Tanzanian and Zimbabwean samples included no small organisations, and the Zambian sample no large organisations, in the case of Zambia and Swaziland this probably did not greatly skew the sample, since most organisations were of medium size. No information on size was available on the list for five of the Zimbabwean organisations, and it thus not clear whether this sample was weighted as regards size. The Namibian sample was, however, skewed towards large organisations.

Overall, roughly half of the organisations were working in rural or semi-rural areas, and half in urban or peri-urban areas. Whilst not all languages in all countries were included in the sample, most dominant languages were. The lists provided by the SCOs included little or very patchy information regarding the resources of the organisation, insofar as telephone, fax and email was concerned, and age. Thus several samples had to be drawn without sufficient information on these two criteria. As will be seen, the organisations included in this survey were somewhat skewed as regards both resources and age.

As has been mentioned, some SCOs deviated from the sample in their actual administration. In fact, only Lesotho and Namibia interviewed only those organisations which had been chosen for the sample.

Substitution happened for a number of reasons:

- Malawi substituted one organisation because it was discovered to be defunct.
- Tanzania, which had experienced financial difficulties during the course of the survey, substituted a more accessible organisation for a less accessible one.
- Zambia substituted one organisation which refused to participate in the survey.
- Zimbabwe substituted one organisation after the interviewer was turned away for political reasons.

However, a number of SCOs substituted organisations for no known reason:

- Botswana substituted one organisation;
- South Africa substituted three organisations;
- Swaziland substituted six organisations;
- Zambia substituted one.

In Malawi the substituted organisation was sufficiently similar to the original organisation to prevent any impact on the sample criteria. In the case of the Botswana, the substituted organisation did not match the original organisation in any respect, and whilst correcting a slight bias towards organisations in the HIV/AIDS sector, it increased the bias towards rural organisations. Botswana also only interviewed a total of nine organisations. In the case of South Africa, none of the three substituted organisations matched the criteria of the original organisations, and increased the weighting of the sample towards older organisations, whilst alleviating a weighting towards large, urban organisations.

Both the Tanzanian and Zambian substitutions slightly increased a weighting of those country's samples towards older organisations, whilst the Zimbabwean substitution skewed the Zimbabwean sample towards organisations working with women. In the case of Swaziland, where six out of ten organisations were substituted, this completely changed the sample as regards sector, activities and urban/rural spread, although the SCO claimed that the substitutes matched the criteria of the original organisations. Because no information was ever available on size or age, it is impossible to tell whether these were affected. It is also impossible to tell what the geographic spread of these organisations is.

Thus whereas the samples reflected a relatively good spread across the agreed criteria, despite the difficulties in arriving at a sufficient population, because of the high level of substitution, the final spread is not as representative as could be hoped.

6. Administering the survey

The considerable delay in finalising the samples resulted in a renegotiation of the survey time-frames between CAE and Fahamu and agreement that all data should be submitted to CAE by 14 April 2003. SCOs were thus instructed to submit completed questionnaires by 11 April 2003. However, only two countries (Malawi and Zimbabwe) met this deadline, and questionnaire returns were received extremely late in most instances:

Country	Questionnaire returns received
Botswana	7 received on 12 May 2003. Further 2 received in June 2003. Final questionnaire not returned
Lesotho	All received April 2003. Incomplete information required follow up. Final information received July 2003.
Malawi	5 April 2003
Namibia	1 st 5 received 22 April 2003. Remainder received 8 May 2003.
South Africa	Final 2 questionnaires received August 2003
Swaziland	23 June 2003. After asking for missing information to be included, final information received July 2003.
Tanzania	June 2003
Zambia	16 May 2003
Zimbabwe	10 April 2003

The process of actually administering the survey was uneven across the countries, and has been seen, many SCOs submitted their data very late, and/or did not work according to their samples. A number of the SCOs mentioned specific problems they had encountered in administering the survey, some of which delayed the process (South Africa and Namibia did not comment):

Botswana:

- Some organisations appeared to exist only in name, since no-one from the organisation could be traced.
- Some organisations had either relocated or changed their names, and could not be traced.

Lesotho:

- A number of organisations had changed their names.

Malawi:

- It proved very difficult to contact organisations to set up interviews, since the postal service in Malawi is very slow, and some organisations had no telephone/no-one answered the number given as a contact number.
- One organisation in the sample proved to be defunct when the researchers arrived, and had to be substituted.
- The questionnaire took between 3 and 5 ½ hours to administer (somewhat longer than had been planned, since the pilot suggested an average of between 2 and 2 ½ hours). Respondents found many questions repetitive, and many irrelevant (especially those relation to Information Technology, since they did not have access to any).
- Some interviews had to be rescheduled because of vehicle problems experienced by the researchers.

Swaziland:

- Despite the sample being finalised at the briefing meeting, the SCO did not begin the actual survey until late May 2003. The co-ordinator claimed that she had not received the final questionnaire (which was emailed to all SCOs in the week following the briefing meeting).
- The SCO reported that the list they had first compiled was drawn from organisations working directly with CBOs involved in human rights, viz. Swaziland Action Group against Abuse, Swaziland Council of Churches and World University Service. However, when implementation actually began, some of these organisations could not be contacted, and alternative organisations were provided.

Tanzania:

- Many organisations could not be tracked down, since only post-office box numbers were available, and no response was received from them.
- The SCO underestimated the budget for the work, with the result that it could not interview three of the more outlying organisations without additional financial assistance from Fahamu (which they received). This delayed the completion of the survey in this area.

Zambia:

- The considerable distances which had to be travelled by the researchers made the process very slow and exhausting.
- One organisation on the sample was unwilling to participate, since it said that when it had participated in surveys in the past it never received any feedback, and didn't know what the information was used for. It was substituted.

Zimbabwe:

- The volatile political situation in this country affected the survey. The civil disobedience campaign, timed to coincide with the anniversary of the Presidential election, made it imperative that the SCO complete the work in haste.
- The shortage of fuel, and the fact that youth militias had control of many rural areas which made it dangerous to travel in these places, meant that the SCO was unable to interview organisations that were too remote or in certain areas. This was taken into account in the sampling.
- One of the sample organisations could not be interviewed, after the District Assistant (DA) and local police public relations person (who "happened" to be there at the time) insisted that it was not in the interests of Zimbabwean security for the SCO to discuss human rights with the CBO concerned. The DA wanted to keep the questionnaire, but the interviewer argued that he needed to use it for another organisation, and could not afford to make a copy. The organisation concerned was substituted.

SCOs were asked to try to set up interviews with more than one person in each organisation, preferably with one respondent from the governing structure, and one volunteer or staff member. This was done in order to ensure that a fairer assessment of the organisation could be made, since a single person was more likely to reflect a bias simply because of his or her position in the organisation - someone with a different position could help balance this.

Ultimately, however, in the case of 57 organisations (64%), only one person was interviewed. In 32 organisations (36%), more than one person was interviewed, with two people being interviewed in 15 organisations (17%), three people being interviewed in 11 organisations (12%), four people being interviewed in four organisations, and six people being interviewed in two organisations. In Namibia and Swaziland, only one person was interviewed in all ten organisations, whilst in Lesotho only one person was interviewed in nine out of ten organisations, and in both South Africa and Tanzania, only one person was interviewed in eight organisations.

In contrast, more than one person was interviewed in the majority of organisations in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

It was most often someone who was involved in the governing/management structure of the organisation who was interviewed, with 119 out of 148 interviewees (80%) holding this position. Indeed the position of the person was the reason given most often for why that person was being interviewed (n=66), followed by the availability of the person (n=30), and the knowledge of the person (n=18). Ten people were interviewed because they were the founder of the organisation.

Quality of data received

In the report on the pilot, a number of questions regarding quality control were raised. Several steps were taken to try to ensure better quality data in the final survey:

- Certain questions were rephrased to make them clearer.
- It was stipulated to SCOs that financial penalties would be incurred if certain critical questions were not properly completed. These questions were listed on the front cover of the questionnaire, and were clearly marked in the questionnaire itself.
- SCOs were briefed and trained at a briefing workshop.
- Obviously, as has been seen, considerable attention was given to the sampling.

In the briefing manual supplied to the SCOs, the following instructions were given to the Co-ordinator:

Before the interview:

- make sure that the interviewer/s are thoroughly familiar with the questionnaire
- make sure that the interviewer/s are well briefed - they need to know why this research is being done; why they need to make sure that the questions are answered fully and that they follow the instructions; what the Adilisha training project is, and details about it; and what *Pambazuka News* is, and details about it
- alert interviewer/s to the possibility that errors may arise because of translation between languages - they should interview in the mother-tongue of the person they are interviewing, and be careful of possible misunderstanding or mistranslation
- make sure that the interviewer/s have read the pilot report
- make sure the interviews are set up well before-hand
- make sure appointments are made with the most appropriate people. We would prefer:
 - a member of Board/Committee AND
 - a senior member of staff/volunteer
- make sure appointments are confirmed the day before or as close to the date of the interview as possible
- make sure the interviewer is well prepared (has the necessary documentation; knows where to go; knows who to interview etc.)

2. After the interview

- check that all pages of the questionnaire are there
- check that all the questions that should have been answered have been answered
- check that the critical questions have been fully and properly answered
- check that there are no:
 - acronyms that have not been written out in full
 - abbreviations
 - unexplained place names or names of people
- check that the handwriting is legible (please read everything!)
- ONLY if you are satisfied with all of the above, sign the questionnaire
- make a photocopy (please remember to check the backs of pages as well)
- submit THE ORIGINAL to Fahamu.

In the same document, the interviewers were given the following instructions:

1. Before the interview

- make sure that you are thoroughly familiar with the questionnaire
- make sure that you are well briefed - you need to know why this research is being done; why you need to make sure that the questions are answered fully and that you follow the instructions; what the Adilisha training project is, and details about it; and what *Pambazuka News* is, and details about it
- confirm that date and time of the interview the day before, and make sure it is understood how much time you need for the interview
- make sure you have two, complete (please check all the pages are there!), blank Questionnaires
- make sure you have at least two pens or pencils
- make sure you have a hard copy of *Pambazuka News*
- make sure you understand the Adilisha training project
- complete the first page of the Questionnaire
- read the instructions again before you arrive
- make sure you know the name of the organisation, and the name and position of the person you are interviewing
- make sure you have detailed instructions on how to get to the place you are meeting, and budget enough time to get there - please make sure you are not late!
- dress appropriately

2. The interview

Instructions you need to follow throughout (these are written on the Questionnaire):

- circle correct answers
- write things in full - if you use abbreviations during the interview, make sure you write them out in full after the interview
- don't use unexplained names of places or people
- give details wherever possible - never be satisfied with a short answer unless it's the only possible answer
- make sure you specify what currency is being used (and PLEASE CHECK THIS WITH THE PERSON BEING INTERVIEWED!)
- make sure you respond to every relevant question (beware of skipping questions or pages); make sure that you circle "No", if that is the answer.
- YOU MUST ANSWER ALL THE CRITICAL QUESTIONS AS COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE. These are:
Question 37: Does your organisation have any problems at the moment?
Question 40: What kinds of information does your organisation need, and how important is this to you?
Question 43: What information do you not get that you would like?
Question 57: Is there any training you or anyone else in the organisation thinks the organisation needs?
Question 58: Fahamu currently offers a number of different training courses to NGOs in SADC countries. Which of the following courses do you think might be useful to your organisation?

- introduce yourself
- explain why the interview is being done, for whom, and why the information is important
- interview in the mother-tongue of the person you are interviewing, and be careful of possible misunderstanding or mistranslation
- complete the questionnaire FOLLOWING THE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE. These are written in ***bold italic***.
- check once again that you have not skipped any questions or pages
- thank the person for their time
- check whether they are prepared to be contacted to clarify anything

3. After the interview

- check that all pages of the questionnaire are there
- check that all the questions that should have been answered have been answered
- check that the critical questions have been fully and properly answered
- check that there are no:
 - acronyms that have not been written out in full
 - abbreviations
 - unexplained place names or names of people
- check that the handwriting is legible (please read everything!)
- ONLY if you are satisfied with all of the above, sign the Questionnaire
- hand the Questionnaire to your co-ordinator

Despite the piloting of the instrument, these instructions, the training provided at the briefing itself, and the threat of financial sanctions, we were not satisfied with the quality of all of the data that was provided by the SCOs. We note that in many instances:

- some questions were skipped altogether, even critical questions incurring financial penalties.
- we are unsure how to interpret some questions which were ambiguously answered or that were left blank - was the question not asked, or no response offered, or the response not recorded?
- some questionnaires contained conflicting data, and no attempt was made by the interviewer to clarify this. For example, one CBO in Lesotho gave agriculture as the work it does; gave child abuse as the human rights issue it was involved in; said that it is involved in an AIDS project in its response to the question on relationships; and includes “selling our goods” as a fundraising strategy. Whilst these are not incompatible, they suggest that answers to certain questions were very incomplete.
- some instructions were not followed. For example, questionnaires included acronyms that were not explained.
- some questionnaires were illegible in places, either because of bad handwriting, or because they had been completed in pencil and then photocopied.
- some questionnaire returns had missing pages or entire pages left blank.
- very little probing seems to have taken place in certain countries.

In many cases where questionnaires had been badly completed, both the interviewer and the co-ordinator of the research for that SCO had signed off on the questionnaires, despite clear instructions that they should check for incomplete data, missing pages, illegibility etc.

Where critical questions were not completed, or badly completed, CAE advised Fahamu to withhold payment to the SCO until this had been rectified. However, time for ensuring SCOs corrected mistakes/filled in gaps simply ran out, and thus some flawed data has had to be used (where possible) or abandoned.

As has been seen, in the case of Swaziland, the data remain tainted by the fact that Swaziland interviewed only four of the CBOs included in the agreed sample. Botswana submitted only nine returns. South Africa used the pre-pilot questionnaire in interviews with two of the organisations.

The problems experienced in the administration of this survey are by no means unique to this project, and simply highlight common difficulties faced when doing this type of research in this context. The fact that no survey of this kind has previously been done, and the logistical difficulties attached to great distances and little or uneven infrastructure, inevitably meant that simply arriving at a good, representative population of CBOs was inordinately difficult; and this clearly affected the sampling.

However, using a number of different organisations, each located in a different country, with different issues and problems posed by their specific resources and contexts (not to mention the logistical difficulties mentioned above), increased the potential for the actual administration to be uneven and potentially affect quality. Unfortunately, the fact that several SCOs took far longer to administer the survey and submit the returns inevitably also impacted on quality, since no time remained to insist that SCOs corrected problems.

Despite these drawbacks, undertaking the survey in this way has meant that a number of organisations have collaborated relatively effectively in producing valuable (and new) knowledge about community-based human rights work in the region. This collaboration could well serve as the basis for future work in building capacity in the region.

Limitations

As a result of the various factors discussed above, the following limitations are acknowledged:

1. Since the population of CBOs drawn up by the SCOs was limited and uneven, representative sampling was constrained.
2. Not enough information on all of the seven sampling criteria was submitted by all SCOs to ensure a good spread across all of the criteria.
3. Where organisations on the sample list were substituted with others, these did not always match the criteria of the original organisation/s.
4. Data returned was uneven, and not always of good quality.
5. Some quality control measures in some cases were compromised by time constraints.

Report on the findings: CBOs in Southern Africa

Despite the limitations mentioned above, this survey, involving as it did 89 organisations across nine countries, has resulted in a considerable quantity of very rich data. This data provides valuable insight into almost every aspect of community-based organisations (CBOs) involved in human rights work in each of these countries, and offers those working in this field a wealth of information to assist them in building human rights capacity both within individual countries and across the region.

Context

The organisations involved in the survey were asked to comment on the human rights context within which they worked, both at a country and community level.

There was considerable variation across the countries in certain respects, and considerable overlap as regards other issues, particularly child and woman abuse.

Human rights issues present in the country	Number of organisations specifying this	Number of countries
Child abuse	38	9 (i.e. all)
Domestic violence	37	9 (i.e. all)
Political freedom	29	8 (not Botswana)
Women's rights and issues (including rape)	26	8 (not South Africa)
Access to justice	22	8 (not Namibia)
Basic needs	18	8 (not Malawi)
Issues related to police/security forces	18	7 (not Botswana or South Africa)
Labour	18 (5 from Zambia)	9 (i.e. all)
Crime and violence	13 (6 from Lesotho)	6
Health	12	7 (not Botswana or Tanzania)
Housing	10 (4 from Zimbabwe)	4
Lack of access to education/information	9	4
Environment	8	6
HIV/AIDS	4	3
Land grabbing/access to land/evictions	4	4
Unemployment	2	2
Racism	1	1
Cultural discrimination	1	1
Elderly	1	1

Lesotho CBOs identified crime and violence, in the form of stock theft and violence accompanying this, as one of the two most pressing human rights issues in the country. The other is rape. Nine out of ten organisations in Zambia identified the lack of political freedom in the country as an issue, whilst six out of ten organisations in Malawi identified this problem, compared to five organisations in Zimbabwe and four in Swaziland. In Malawi, as in Zambia, the lack of political freedom was the single most-mentioned issue. Zimbabwean organisations stressed that the lack of access to basic needs, and particularly food, was the most pressing issue in the country, with the lack of political freedom and lack of access to justice following close behind.

However, child and woman abuse/issues related to women, if not the most pressing issues, were certainly close behind, with at least half of all organisations identifying these issues in Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia.

Within the communities in which the organisations surveyed worked, similar issues were identified, with child abuse (in the form of child labour, sexual exploitation, and neglect) again being identified more often than any other. Domestic violence and women's issues and rights also featured prominently, as did health.

Human rights issues present in the community	Number of organisations specifying this	Number of countries
Child abuse	37	9 (i.e. all)
Women's rights and issues (including rape)	29	8 (not Swaziland)
Health	20 (6 from Zimbabwe)	8 (not South Africa)
Political freedom	13	8 (not Botswana)
Access to justice	12 (4 from Tanzania, 3 from Zimbabwe)	7 (not Botswana or Namibia)
Domestic violence	12 (4 each from Lesotho and Zimbabwe)	5
Labour	11 (5 from South Africa)	5
Basic needs	10 (3 from Swaziland)	6
Lack of access to education/information	10 (4 from Namibia)	6
Issues related to police/security forces	8 (3 from Tanzania)	6
Environment	8 (4 from Lesotho)	5
Housing	7	5
Land grabbing/access to land/evictions	7	3
HIV/AIDS	7	5
Crime and violence	4	4
Elderly	2	2
Prisoner's rights	1	1 (Zimbabwe)
Development	1	1 (Botswana)

Thus CBOs identified a very similar range of human rights issues and abuses in their own communities as in the country, although they placed more or less emphasis on some.

For example, whilst child abuse and children's rights remained the most identified issue, domestic violence (whilst still high) was superseded by women's rights and issues in general, health, political freedom, and access to justice. Health was named by far more CBOs as an issue at local level, whilst political freedom was slightly less of an issue at local level.

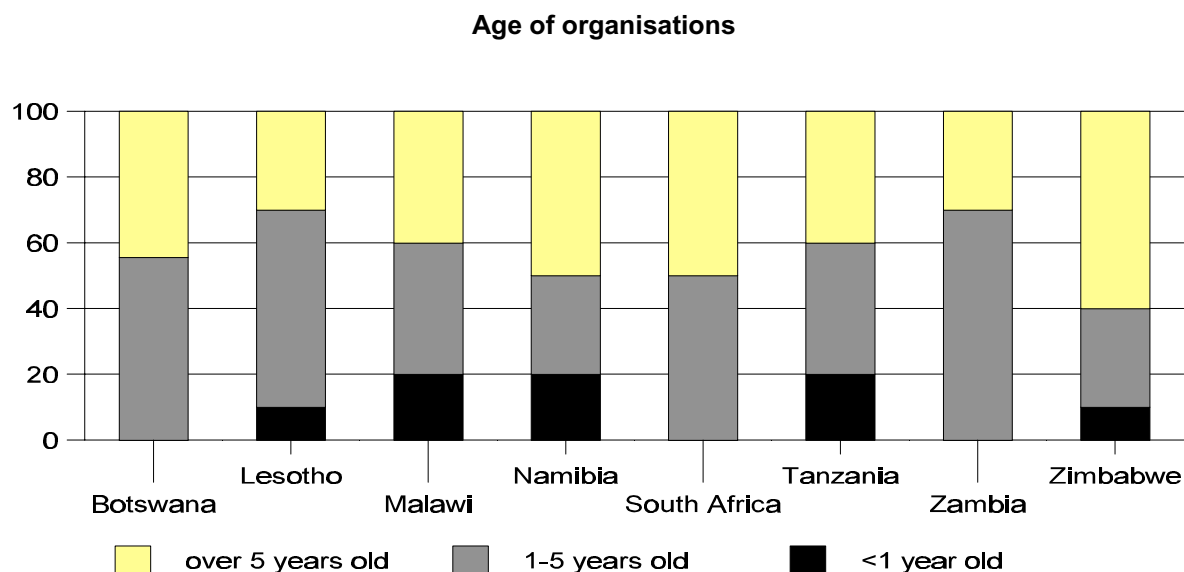
Interestingly, whilst labour was an issue identified as a national concern by Zambian CBOs, this was identified as a community-level concern (primarily related to farmworkers) by South Africa CBOs.

On a country level, CBOs in fewer countries named domestic violence, labour issues, basic needs, issues related to the police/security forces, the environment, land issues, and crime and violence. Organisations in more countries identified access to education/information, housing, and HIV/AIDS as a community-level issue.

Organisational profile

History of the organisation

Most of the CBOs involved in the survey were relatively young, with 56% having been started within the five years prior to being interviewed, and 10% within the previous year. Zambia and Lesotho showed a slightly higher proportion of organisations younger than five years, whilst Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe showed a greater proportion of organisations older than five years:



A total of 25 organisations said that they had been started by another organisation, usually an NGO (12 organisations), although the government and the church was also mentioned. Four of the founding organisations were international rather than national or local. In both Lesotho and Zambia, two organisations had been started by the same NGO (Selibeng, in the case of Lesotho, and Women for Change, in the case of Zambia). Namibia had the highest number of CBOs started by another organisation, with four out of ten CBOs having been started in this way. The remainder of the organisations were founded by either a local individual or group.

Most of the organisations said that they had been started because of a local need or problem. Four had been founded specifically because of research which had been done in the community, and six because of a specific historical problem or event (for example, political independence, drought, and so on). Three organisations were an offshoot of an existing project or organisation, and one was formed when an NGO working in the area advised the community to begin a CBO. One CBO was a response to the President of the country's challenge for everyone to become involved in the fight against HI/AIDS. One CBO in Malawi was formed by a group of former employees when a local textile factory closed down.

A total of 48 (54%) out of 89 organisations involved in the survey reported that their work has not changed since their inception (three of these were very new organisations). The remaining 46% said that their work had changed largely as a result of increased or shifting demands placed on the organisation by the community they served. 25 organisations had expanded their work and focus, whilst two had narrowed their focus, either by developing clearer objectives, or narrowing their target group. One organisation reported that its work had changed because the organisation had run out of money. The organisation was now largely defunct. Six organisations reported that they had shifted focus, largely because of circumstances beyond their control (one of these had been forced to do so by their funder). Across the countries, significantly more organisations in South Africa (90%) reported that their work had changed; whilst 70% of organisations in Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe also reported this. In contrast, 90% of organisations in Swaziland and Tanzania said that their work had not changed, whilst 70% of CBOs in Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia reported this.

Work

The organisations are currently working in a wide range of sectors, with the majority being involved in more than one. Legal and human rights work, HIV/AIDS and other health issues, and income-generation are the sectors within which the highest number of organisations are involved:

Sector	Number of organisations reporting activity in this sector n=89	Number of countries with CBOs active in this sector n=9
Income generation	30	8 (not Tanzania)
Legal/Human rights	26	7
HIV/health	24	8 (not Swaziland)
Women	22	8 (not South Africa)
Children	21 (7 in Malawi)	8 (not South Africa)
Democracy	13 (5 in Zambia)	5
Youth	12	6
Land/housing	9 (5 in Namibia)	4
Community development	8	4
Environment	6	4
Crime/security	5	5
Elderly	5	4
Peace/conflict	4 (3 in Lesotho)	2
Disabled	3	2
Refugees	1	1 (Tanzania)

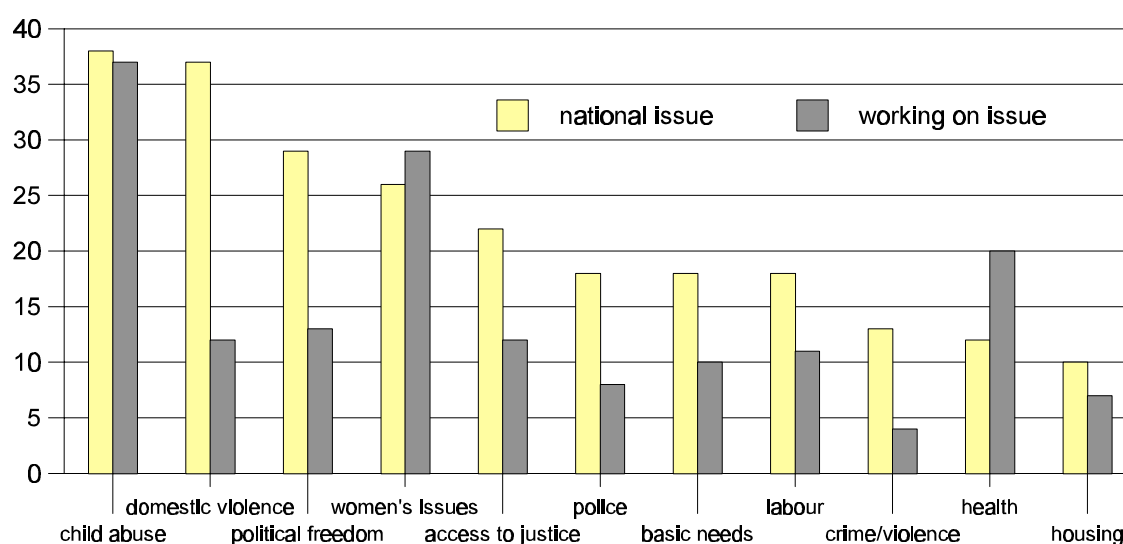
On the whole, organisations were thus working on a very similar range of human rights issues to those they identified as important in their country. There are, however, some significant variations between those human rights issues CBOs in each country identified as priority issues, and the human rights issues actually being dealt with by those CBOs.

Thus in Botswana, Namibia and South Africa, domestic violence was the most frequently mentioned human rights issue at a national level; but very few of the CBOs in these countries were working specifically on this issue (none in Botswana or Namibia, and only two in South Africa, although some were working on women's rights and issues more broadly).

In Lesotho, six organisations named crime and violence as one of the most important human rights issues in the country (making it the most mentioned issue in the country), but only two organisations reported that they were working on this issue. Similarly, six organisations in Malawi said that political freedom was an important issue, but only three were working on it. Political freedom was also identified as a critical national issue in Zambia, by no less than nine organisations; but only one organisation said that it was specifically dealing with this. However, in both Tanzania and Zimbabwe, political freedom and/or issues relating to the police/security forces, and/or access to justice, which were highlighted as problem areas, were being dealt with by a number of organisations.

Child abuse was identified as a critical issue by 38 organisations across the region, and appears to be being tackled by a significant number of organisations across the region, with 37 CBOs reporting that they were working on the issue.

Number of organisations identifying human rights issues as priority national issues versus number of CBOs working on these areas



However, across the region in the areas of domestic violence, political freedom, issues concerning the police/security forces, and access to justice, considerably fewer organisations reported actually working on these than had identified them as issues for concern.

Human rights campaigns

CBOs appear to be very active in a number of campaigns on a number of human rights issues, usually related to their area of work. Thus 70% (n=62) of the organisations surveyed reported being involved in at least one campaign, usually with one or more partners. All of the CBOs in Zambia reported being part of a campaign, whilst nine out of ten CBOs in Malawi, and eight out of ten CBOs in Namibia, Lesotho, Tanzania and Zimbabwe were part of a campaign. However, only one organisation in Swaziland reported this, and only half of the South Africa CBOs reported being involved in a campaign.

A significant number of CBOs were involved in more than one campaign, with 35 organisations (56% of organisations involved in campaigns) having more than one campaign, ten of these being involved in at least four campaigns. 27 organisations (44%) were involved in only one campaign.

Four of the organisations in Zambia had no partners in their campaign, and were running the campaign alone; whilst one organisation in each of Botswana, South Africa and Swaziland had no partner in the campaign they were running. Thus most CBOs had at least one partner, and many had more than one partner, with six organisations reporting more than five partners. Zimbabwean CBOs on the whole had a higher number of partners in their campaigns.

Organisations were asked whether they had experienced any problems in running the campaign. 94% (n=58) said that they had experienced difficulties, and most of these reported more than one difficulty. Problems most frequently mentioned included:

Campaign problems	Number of organisations n=58
lack of community participation/community resistance	28
lack of funding/resources	18
government interference or resistance/political interference/police interference	17
lack of transport/bad roads	12
lack of educational/informational materials	5
conflicting agendas of partners/leadership conflicts:	4
voice of CBOs not heard/NGOs dominating/business & govt reluctant to listen to or work with us	3
lack of time	2

A number of reasons were given for the lack of community participation/resistance, including a lack of education or information, the low level of literacy, cultural/traditional mindset, political problems in the area, gender inequality, and a belief by people that they knew better.

Not surprisingly, education and training was given as the primary solution to the problems CBOs experienced in campaigning - for both CBO staff/members, and for the broader community; although financial assistance also ranked high as a potential solution:

Solution to campaign problems	Number of organisations n=58
Training of public/raising awareness of public	21
Funding/resources	21
Training of organisation staff/members	19
Transport	7
Information, education and communication materials	6
Better working together of NGOs and CBOs	6
Networking	3
More workers	2
Incentives to public	2

Being more strategic, information on others involved in similar campaigns, legislative change, advice and technical assistance were also suggested solutions (one organisation each).

Activities involved in

As well as being involved in a variety of sectors, most organisations are also involved in a variety of activities, with education and training being mentioned most often (51% of CBOs surveyed), followed by counselling and support (34%). A considerable number of CBOs are also involved in income-generating activities (30%), and awareness raising (26%).

Activity	Number of organisations undertaking this activity n=89	Number of countries n=9
Education/training/capacity building	45	9 (i.e. all)
Counselling/support	30	9 (i.e. all)
Income-generating	27	8 (not Tanzania)
Awareness	23	8 (not Swaziland)
Advice	16	6
Disseminating information	12	6
Advocacy	12	6
Food security	9	5
Home-based care	8	5

Lobbying	7	5
Monitoring/research	6	5
Revolving fund/savings/loans/co-operatives	5	5
Environmental conservation	3	3
Community mobilisation	3	2
Community development	2	2
Institutional care	2	2
Litigation	2	2

Other activities listed include offering shelter, building houses, paying school fees or orphans, conflict management/resolution, and networking.

Within countries, certain activities clearly dominate. Thus eight out of ten organisations in Tanzania are involved in education and training, and seven in giving advice. In Malawi, seven out of ten are engaged in education and training activities.

Impact

The vast majority of organisations believe that they have had an impact on their context, with 86 out of 89 organisations saying they had had an impact, whilst only two organisation said that they had not, and one was ambivalent. One of the two organisations which believed it had not made a difference said that this was because it was very new. The other, an organisation in Swaziland, said that it had not made a difference because it was not meeting the needs of the broader community. The organisation that expressed uncertainty said that its financial difficulties meant that it was not always able to adequately implement planned programmes and meet its objectives.

Organisations were asked whom they believed had benefited from the organisation's work. 33 organisations said that their beneficiaries had gained from the work of the organisation, whilst 17 said that their members had (note that for some organisations these are the same thing). 53 organisations (60%) felt that the broader community had benefited, and eight more felt that "the nation", "the general public", "citizens", or 'society as whole' had benefited.

Organisations listed a range of ways in which they believed people had benefited from their interventions, including increased levels of confidence and hope, increased awareness, shifting attitudes and behaviour, increased levels of information/knowledge/skills, increased awareness of their rights and the rights of others, increased levels of participation and action, and a variety of physical benefits, such as land and housing, schools fees, food, health care, decreased levels of crime, and a general increase in standards of living. Some organisations also felt that they had influenced policy and legislation.

Urban/rural location or work

It is not always clear whether an organisation is working in an urban or rural area. Of those for whom this information is available, 55% are working in urban (n = 30) or peri-urban areas (n=14) (55%). 35% are working in rural areas, and a further 10% in semi-rural areas. Many organisations work across the urban/rural divide. More organisations in Botswana, Lesotho, and Zambia are working in rural/semi-rural areas than in urban/peri-urban areas, whilst in Namibia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe the opposite is true. It should be noted that this urban/rural spread could be a sampling effect.

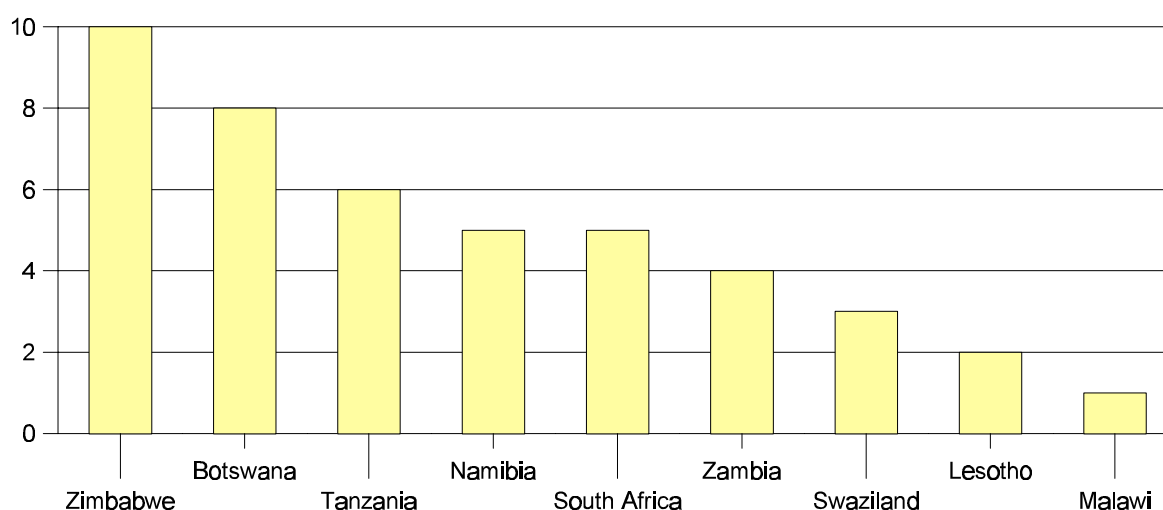
CBO staff, workers, volunteers and members

It is difficult to categorise the CBOs surveyed by size, because their composition is so diverse. Some CBOs have paid staff, whilst others have volunteer workers. In some cases, organisations have members, who may or may not also be the workers.

Just less than half (49%) of the organisations surveyed had paid staff. On the whole, the number of paid staff is very small, with 19 (43%) of the 44 organisations who have paid staff employing fewer than five people, and a further 15 (34%) employing between five and ten staff. Nine organisations (20%) employ between 11 and 25 people. One organisation in Botswana claimed to employ over 50 people.

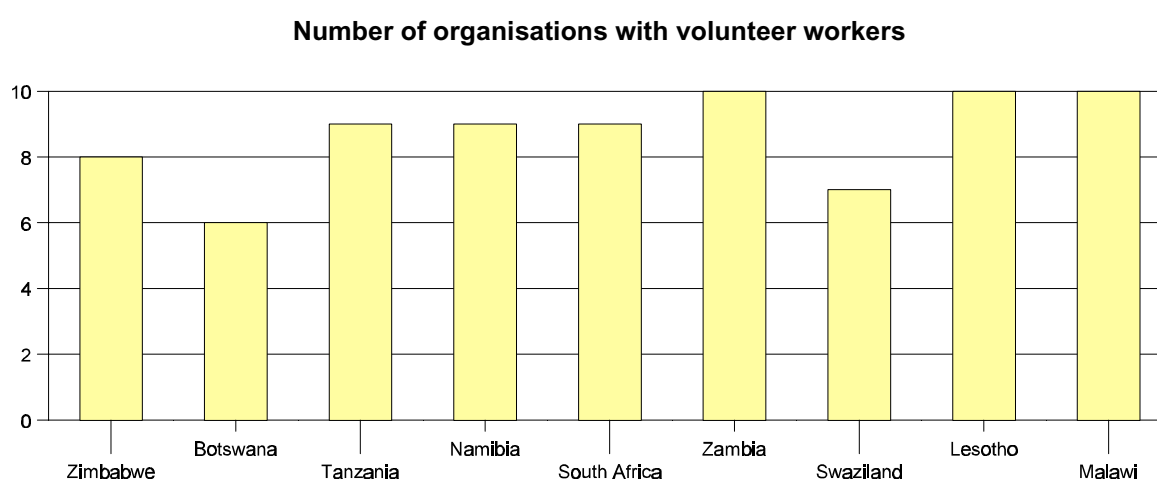
However, differences between the countries are extreme, with only one organisation (10%) in Malawi having paid staff, compared to all ten (100%) of the organisations in Zimbabwe.

Number of organisations with paid staff



Most staff were recruited through fairly conventional methods, with posts being advertised, followed by an interview of applicants, and final selection. However, in a small number of organisations (five) founder members became the staff, whilst in three organisations some staff appear to have been elected by the members of the organisation. In a few cases (three) volunteers were converted into paid staff. These rather more unorthodox methods of selecting staff appear to have been more prevalent in Zimbabwe and Zambia than elsewhere, and in Zimbabwe is probably a reflection of the metamorphosis of small CBOs into the larger, better-resourced, organisations that characterise this country.

A far higher number of organisations have unpaid volunteer workers, with 78 (88%) organisations saying they had volunteers, and only ten (11%) saying they did not (there was one no-response). The number of volunteers varied far more than the number of staff, although over one third of the CBOs have between five and ten volunteers:



Again, there are variations across countries. All of the organisations in Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia have volunteers, whilst only one organisation in Namibia, South Africa and Tanzania does not have any volunteers. Botswana has the lowest number of CBOs with volunteers. Malawian CBOs had the largest number of volunteers, with five organisations having more than 50 volunteers, three of these more than 100. Three CBOs in Zimbabwe also reported more than 100 volunteers.

Membership

The vast majority, 82% (n=73), of all of the CBOs surveyed have members, and 58% of these actively recruit members. Membership numbers vary hugely, from four members to 20 000. Membership appears to be largest in Zimbabwe, where eight out of the ten CBOs have more than 100 members, Namibia, where seven of the ten CBOs have more than 100 members, and Zambia, where six out of ten organisations have more than 100 members. CBOs in Swaziland appear to have the smallest membership, with none of the organisations having more than 20 members.

Education levels within CBOs

Education levels across the organisations involved in the survey varied considerably, with Zimbabwe and Tanzania showing generally higher levels amongst staff/workers, and Malawi showing relatively lower levels. On the whole, staff/workers appear to have significantly higher levels of education than members; and on the whole, whereas staff/workers are able to speak English, members are not.

Botswana:

Most of those involved in CBOs in Botswana have completed secondary education or have some secondary education. Quite a few have only a primary education. Some have no formal education at all. Very few have certificates, diplomas or degrees. Regarding language, senior staff are able to speak English and Setswana. Many CBO workers speak only Setswana or another language such as Sesarwa, Maro or Sekgalagadi.

Lesotho:

The educational levels of those involved in CBOs in this country are uneven across organisations, with all workers in one organisation having post secondary qualifications, and all workers at three other organisations with secondary education or lower. Most had completed their secondary education or had a certificate. All had some level of formal education. Dominant languages are English and Sesotho, with most workers able to communicate in both except for a few who had Sesotho only.

Malawi:

About 50% of people involved in CBOs in the Malawi survey have a secondary education, and about 40% a primary education. Very few workers have post-secondary qualifications. Most CBOs have large memberships - either of members, volunteers or village committees - ranging from 20 to 540. These memberships vary in educational level from primary to secondary. The language situation is complex, with English as a common language in all the CBOs. Chichewa and Tumbuka are prominent, but various CBOs also use Chinyanja, Tonga, Swahili, Yao and Manganja, depending on the CBO's location.

Namibia:

Most of those involved in Namibian CBOs have completed secondary education or have some secondary education. Quite a few have only a primary education. A sprinkling of CBO workers have post-secondary qualifications, although half of the CBOs surveyed have no workers with qualifications beyond a certificate. The educational levels of members vary from secondary and primary education to no formal education at all. The main languages written and spoken are English, Afrikaans and various vernaculars (depending on region).

South Africa:

CBOs in this country reported a spread of educational levels, ranging from some primary education to post-graduate degrees. Ordinary members tended to have lower levels of education (some primary or completed primary) whereas CBO workers usually had completed secondary education, while many had certificates or diplomas, with a smaller number undergraduate or postgraduate degrees. Most CBO workers could read and write in two or three South African languages (all English and then one or two regional languages). Some

committee members and most ordinary members had a more restricted linguistic repertoire of one or two regional languages, sometimes excluding English.

Swaziland:

Most CBO workers have a primary or secondary educational level. Just over 40% have a post secondary qualification, mainly a certificate or diploma. The educational level of members is primary or some secondary. The main languages written and spoken are English and Siswati, with most CBO workers able to communicate in both.

Tanzania:

CBO workers have relatively high levels of education - most have post-secondary qualifications, and over 1/3 have degrees. Members have a range of educational levels, from no formal education (very few) to post-graduate levels. Swahili and English are the dominant languages with the vast majority of workers and members able to read and write in both.

Zambia:

About 80% CBO workers have a primary or secondary education and about 20% a post-secondary qualification - either a certificate or a diploma. No CBO workers had a degree. The language situation among Zambian CBOs is complex with nine local languages mentioned as languages of reading and writing along with English, which is common to all CBOs.

Zimbabwe:

As has been seen, all of the Zimbabwean organisations surveyed had paid staff. The vast majority of staff had completed secondary education with a large number having a degree or postgraduate qualification. Relative to other countries, CBO workers in Zimbabwe are highly qualified. Two organisations had large memberships. The educational levels of members were typically quite low - some without formal education and most with primary level education. Staff members communicate in English and either Shona or Ndebele, or sometimes both, depending on the region. A few other languages such as Shangaan, Tonga and Nhabya are spoken by individual workers members.

Structure and management of CBOs

Well over three quarters (82% n=73) of organisations reported that they have a constitution, whilst only 16 (18%) do not. Far fewer organisations in Lesotho (only three out of ten) have a constitution than in any other country. All of the organisations in Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Swaziland said that they had a constitution.

For those organisations who do have a constitution, in most cases (51%) this was written within a year of the establishment of the organisation, although many organisations (33%) took up to five years to write their constitution. Eleven organisations (15%) took more than five years. Organisations in Zimbabwe on the whole took longer to write their constitutions than organisations in other countries.

Almost all of the respondents from organisations who do have a constitution said that they had seen it (97%), and that the constitution was regularly used by the organisation (90%). Only two respondents had never seen their constitution, and only three reported that it was not used (in one case, that of a very new organisation, this was because the constitution had not yet been finalised).

Most constitutions were written by either the members (22 CBOs) or governance structure (26 CBOs) of the organisation. Four respondents said that the founders had written the constitution. Three organisations said that their constitution had been written by the local community, and one said that the constitution had been drafted by stakeholders. Ten CBO constitutions had been written by someone outside the organisation, usually a lawyer or the founding NGO, and 16 organisations had been assisted in drawing up their constitution by an outsider.

Leadership

Most respondents (44% n=39) saw the chairperson or president of the organisation as the leader of the organisation, rather than any other individual or group. A further 23 (26%) identified the governance structure (Board, Management Committee, Executive Committee etc.) as the leader of the organisation. 14 organisations (16%) felt that both a staff member/worker and the governance structure/chairperson led the organisation, whilst 10 organisations (11%) believed that only a staff member/worker was the leader.

Other leaders identified included local traditional leaders, and a local priest. One organisation (in Lesotho) said that there was no leader.

When asked why that specific person was the leader, organisations gave as the reason either the personal characteristics of that person, such as charisma, knowledge, expertise, level of education, leadership qualities, and so on (31 organisations); or the fact that that person had been given the power/authority by the organisation or its members, usually through elections (28 organisations); or the fact that that person was the leader because of his or her structural location (e.g. “because of the Constitution”, or “because he is the chairman”) (31 organisations). Four organisations said that the leader was the leader because he or she was the founder of the organisation.

Most leaders were elected (76% n=68), although a significant number of organisations (15% n=13) said that the leader/s had been appointed. One organisation said that the leader was available and had volunteered, and was thus in this position, whilst another said that a particular staff member (not the most senior) was the leader because he was the older staff member (this person was the respondent). One organisation reported that there was currently no mechanism in the organisation for deciding on a leader, since the organisation was very new, whilst the two organisations who identified local traditional leaders as leaders in the organisation said that no decision as such was made by the organisation, since these positions were hereditary. One of these organisations said “She is not elected or appointed, but the organisation’s members agreed that she maintain her status”.

Although elections appear to be the norm in deciding who will lead or govern an organisation, in a number of cases this apparent democracy is undermined by the infrequency of elections. For example, one organisation said that no elections had been held since 1999; in another two, elections have not held since 2000. One organisation only holds elections every three years, whilst another said that tenure on the governance structure was for ten years.

There do not appear to be any significant variations in leadership across the countries, although the idea that the chairperson/president is the leader is slightly more prevalent in Lesotho (eight out of ten organisations) than elsewhere. Elections also seem to be a slightly more favoured mechanism for deciding on leadership in Tanzania (all), Zambia (nine organisations), Botswana, Malawi and Zimbabwe (eight each) than Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa (six organisations each; and then not every year).

Governance structures

Nearly all (94% n=84) of all of the organisations surveyed have some kind of management or governance structure, usually in the form of a Board of Trustees or Executive Committee. Of the five organisations who do not, three are in Lesotho, and one each in South Africa and Swaziland. The Swazi organisation planned to have a structure, but was still very new, and said that it needed time to set up such a structure. The South African organisation said that it did not have a management structure because “traditional structures stifle participatory culture in organisations” (this organisation does have a Core Group, which appears to effectively run the organisation). One Lesotho organisation gave no reason why it did not have a management structure, whilst the other two had specifically decided not to have such a structure - “we don’t need one after having problems with the previous board”; “management structures are time-wasting and have a lot of troubles”. The second of these organisations consisted of twelve women, had no other members or staff, and effectively runs as a co-operative (this was the organisation who reported that it had no leader). It is not clear how the other organisation in Lesotho manages itself.

Management/governance structures vary in size from four to fifteen. Malawian organisations tend to have larger management structures than those in any other country, which an average of ten members, whilst South African and Swazi organisations’ structures are far smaller, with an average six members. Most have a fairly standard apportioning of responsibilities, with a chairperson, deputy or vice-chairperson, secretary, and treasurer, and often deputy or vice-secretary and/or -treasurer.

Most of these structures are elected (77% n=65), usually by members. A couple were set up by founders, and remain as the governance structure. Five are self-reproducing, in that they recruit and co-opt others. Six were appointed by some other organisation or structure.

Only one organisation which has a management structure reported that no meetings are held (this organisation also reported that it was experiencing difficulties as a result of this). Four organisations said that this structure meets “once in a while”, or “as needed”. The remainder meet regularly, with most meeting monthly (46%), quarterly (19%) or even weekly (14%), and a few more or less regularly than this. This appears to a correlation between how regularly management structures meet and whether or not the organisation has staff, with

organisations where there are no staff tending to meet more often. Thus, for example, in Zimbabwe (where all ten organisations have paid staff), the management structures of six organisations meet quarterly, one meets monthly, and two meet as needed/on an ad hoc basis.

Organisations were asked whether there was any work of the organisation which was not undertaken by the management structure. 30 organisations (36%) reported that the management structure is responsible for all day-to-day work, and there is thus no work done in the organisation which the management structure does not do. In the remainder of cases, management structures do not on the whole do work done by paid staff (unless they are also the paid staff, or are volunteers as well), or field work undertaken by members/volunteers.

Financial management

Financial management within the CBOs is largely seen as the responsibility of the treasurer, with or without the rest of the governance structure, although where there are paid staff, senior staff are also seen as having some responsibility. 63 organisations (71%) reported having a bank account, in a few cases operated by another organisation (the founding organisation), although this was very uneven across the region, with only one organisation in Lesotho, and five in Zambia, having a bank account, compared to all ten in Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

Most organisations believed that they had a responsibility to report to someone about their money, with only four organisations (two in Lesotho and two in Tanzania) saying that they did not need to report to anyone. Where organisations said that they did have to report to someone, this was more often their governance structure, or to key members on it (for example, the chairperson) (47%) than any other group, although funders were also frequently mentioned (36%). Less than a third of the organisations felt that they needed to report to their members. Organisations in Zambia and Swaziland (six each) were far more likely to feel some responsibility towards reporting on their finances to their membership than organisations in any other country, whilst only one organisation in Lesotho and one in South Africa felt they needed to report to their members.

Fourteen organisations also said that they had to report to some other organisation or structure, often the founder, and two organisations, one in Malawi and one Swaziland, said that they had to report to traditional leaders.

Where reporting was seen as a responsibility, this usually fell to the treasurer, chairperson, or senior staff member. In an alarming 18 organisations (20% of all organisations), only one person (usually the treasurer) was the only person mentioned as having any responsibility for dealing with the finances, including reporting. The highest incidence of this was in Zambia (five organisations) and Namibia (four organisations).

Thus whilst the majority of CBOs have a constitution, a bank account, and some form of management structure, there are some leadership and management issues which are of some concern. These relate particularly to the very strong role played by individuals - thus the chairperson often wields considerable influence, and is in a number of cases also the founder of the organisation. As will be seen below, this is often compounded by the fact that it is the

chairperson's home that is used as office space/the meeting place, and that the chairperson's resources (telephone, in particular) are the only resources available to the organisation. Relatively few organisations specifically mentioned leadership or governance problems in the organisation - but given the fact that it was primarily members of governance structures, if not the chairperson him or herself, who were interviewed, such problems may simply not have been revealed.

Relations with beneficiaries, broader community and other organisations

The CBOs surveyed have remarkably complex relationships with a variety of other organisations, with 90% (n=80) of all those surveyed having a relationship with at least one other organisation. Only eight CBOs said that they did not have a relationship with anyone else, three of these in Swaziland, three in Zambia, and one each in Malawi and Namibia. Where these organisations gave reasons, most said it was because they were still too new to have formed relationships, but one Zambian organisations said that it did not have relationship because it did not share objectives with anyone else, and two organisations in Swaziland who do not have relationships said "we are just a community organisation", and "we are the only ones doing we what we are doing". The other Swaziland organisation said that they did not know about any other organisations.

Of the 80 organisations who do have a relationship, 74 (93%) are in contact with more than one other organisation, with 17 CBOs in contact with three or more organisations, 16 CBOs in contact with more than four organisations, and 29 CBOs (i.e. one third of all CBOs involved in the survey) in contact with five or more organisations.

On the whole, CBOs in Zimbabwe are each in contact with more other organisations than CBOs in other countries, with all ten having a relationship with four or more other organisations. In contrast, three Lesotho organisations are in contact with only one other organisation, and none is in contact with more then five other organisations. Zimbabwean CBOs are thus overall in contact with more other organisations than CBOs elsewhere, whilst CBOs in Swaziland and Zambia are overall in contact with far fewer.

Most of the organisations CBOs in the region are in contact with are NGOs, with NGOs forming 59% of the organisations CBOs are in contact with. However, government is also a significant partner, and forms 21% of partner organisations. Other CBOs constitute 7% of the organisations CBOs in the region are in contact with, and faith-based organisations 4%. Very few CBOs have contact with the private sector, and in fact only CBOs in Namibia and Swaziland have any contact at all with private sector organisations. Only a very few CBOs have contact with United Nations institutions.

Across countries, government is a far more significant partner in Botswana and Malawi than in any other country, forming the majority of partners in both of these countries. CBO partners are more prominent in Zambia and South Africa. A few individual CBOs also report being in contact with parastatals, universities, hospitals, trades union, and local traditional authorities and structures. CBOs in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe are also in contact with NGO and CBO coalitions or umbrella bodies.

Most of the partners (58%) across the region are national organisations, whilst 32% are local or district organisations, and 10% are international organisations. National partners form at least half of all partners in all countries except South Africa (where they constitute 41%), and Zambia (where they constitute only 27%). In these two countries, local organisations account for 57% and 67% of partners respectively. In Botswana, international organisations (a number of these regional) account for a very high proportion of the organisations with whom CBOs have contact, constituting 37% of partners, although in real terms this is only four organisations.

Resources, funding and fundraising

The resources of an organisation include its human, financial and technological resources. Human resources available to the CBOs surveyed have been discussed above, and technological resources will be discussed in detail in the next section. This section will thus focus on the financial resources of the organisations.

However, an issue that impacts on all of these resources, and can constitute a resource (or lack thereof) in and of itself, is office space.

Office space

The vast majority of the organisations surveyed (78% n=69) said that they had access to some kind of space in which to meet and conduct the business of the organisation. However, the kind of space varies enormously across organisations and countries.

Thus only half of the organisations in Lesotho and Zambia have such a space, whilst all of the organisations in Tanzania and Zambia do. In a number of cases, the space is the home of a member, usually a committee member (in most cases the chair), with one organisation each in Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland, and two in Zambia, reporting this. A number also make use of a local school (one each in Swaziland, Namibia and Malawi), or church building (one each in Swaziland and Botswana, and two in Lesotho and Malawi).

Organisations also make use of government offices and the offices of NGOs, and organisations in Lesotho and Malawi have been given permission to use land by a local chief.

Thus whilst a relatively high number of organisations in, for example, Swaziland, have “office” space, in many cases this is borrowed or shared space. This does appear to have increased the access of some organisations to technology (see below), but clearly impacts on the work of the organisation, and adds to the expenses of a number of them.

32 (46%) of the organisations who do have a space pay for this space, whilst 34 (49%) do not. Although a number of organisations who do not have to pay for their space have been donated the space, many do not pay because they own it. Thus, for example, all three of the organisations in Zimbabwe who do not have to pay for office space own the premises in which they work.

Indeed, Zimbabwean organisations have access to quite considerable physical resources:

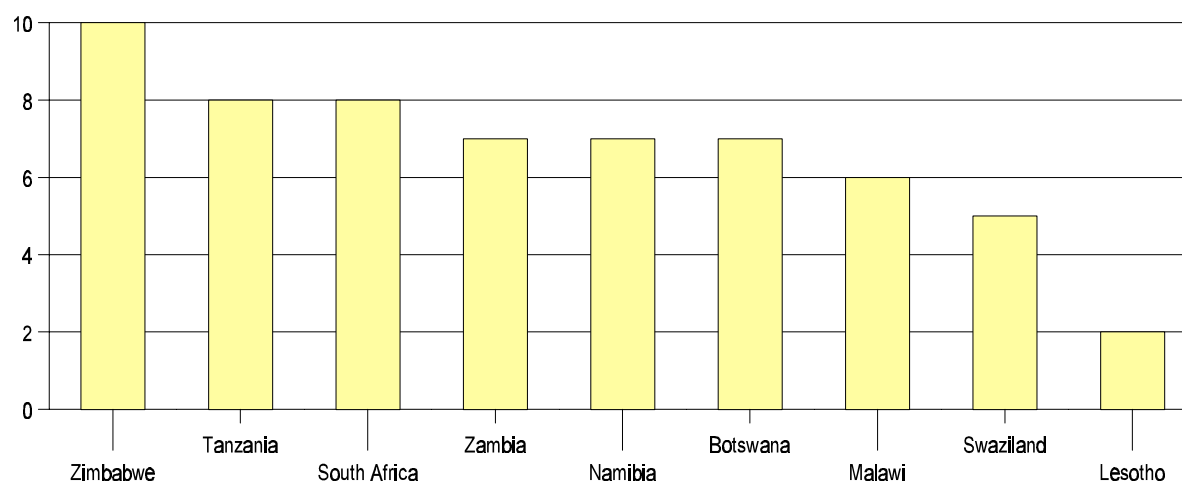
- organisation 1: Premises built by organisation; consist of five offices, and three training centres/workshops in other areas, each with its own office.
- organisation 2: Premises consist of five rooms and a garden.
- organisation 3: Premises consist of nine rooms in one place, and three single rooms in three other places.
- organisation 4: Premises consist of two houses and additional property. The organisation is currently building a new centre.
- organisation 5: Premises consist of seven rooms and numerous outbuildings, all of which are rented from the city council.
- organisation 6: Premises consist of five offices, a studio, and a reception area, with an additional two studios in another area.
- organisation 7: Premises consist of a house and additional property with three buildings.
- organisation 8: Owns a small house, and lets out part of it to other organisations.
- organisation 9: Rents a single room, but have built five centres in other areas.

Thus, in this respect (as in many others, including access to technology, as will be seen) Zimbabwe is clearly atypical.

Funding

Zimbabwe is also atypical in that all of the ten organisations surveyed receive funding, many of them from a number of donors.

Number of organisations receiving funding



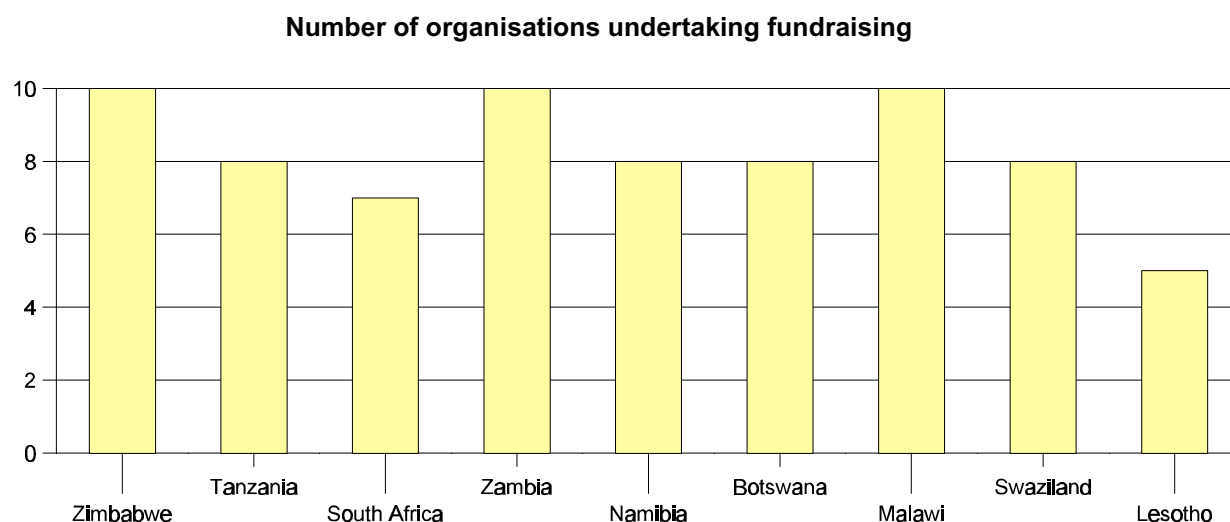
Thus there is considerable variation across the region in terms of funding, although for the region as a whole 67% (n=60) of CBOs are funded. Most of the CBOs in the region who do receive funding have more than one funding source, with 13 organisations (22% of funded

CBOs) having two funders, 25% having three funders, and 22% having more than three. Most CBOs in Zambia, however, have either only one or two funders, whilst the two Lesotho organisations which are funded have one funder and three funders respectively. (Note that whilst organisations largely confined themselves to donor agencies in naming funding sources, many rely on income-generating activities, including membership fees, the sales of products and services, and other fundraising activities. These are covered in more detail below).

There is clearly a range of different funders in the region, with foreign governments being mentioned most frequently followed by donor organisations, NGOs and International NGOs. National governments are also a common source of funding, as are a variety of church organisations, both national and international. Various United Nations-related institutions are also mentioned. The private sector is the least cited source of funds.

The vast majority of funding is short term, with 45% of the 121 funders for whom information was given granting funding for a one year period, and a further 21% for an even shorter period. Only twelve of the 121 funders was granting funding for a three year period, eight of these to Zimbabwean organisations.

74 CBOs (83%) report that they engage in some kind of fundraising activity, with all of the CBOs in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi actively raising money.



47 organisations (64% of those that fundraise) say that they fundraise on an ongoing basis, whilst eight (11%) do so annually. The remainder fundraise monthly, quarterly, or as needed.

Fundraising activities vary, with approaches to donors being the most significant, followed by the sale of products and services.

Fundraising activity	Number of organisations engaged in this n=74
Proposals to donors	30
Sale of products and services (including consultancy fees, renting out of office space, cleaning the premises of an NGO, and undertaking piecework on local farms, sale of produce, operating a creche, sale of petrol, operating of telephone booth, sale of donated second-hand clothing)	26
Raffles, dinners, beauty contests, sponsored walks, concerts, flea market, golf tournament) etc.	19
Membership fees/contributions	17
Donations (including door-to-door and street collections)	9
Administrative fees from micro-loans/stokvel etc.	3

Organisational problems and suggested solutions

Only two (2%) organisations involved in the survey said that they were not experiencing any problems. The remainder were experiencing a range of problems, many of which they felt unable to deal with.

Problem	Number of organisations experiencing this n=89
Funding	65
Transport	36
Land/office space	30
Lack of skills	26
Office or other equipment	26
Inability to keep competent staff/volunteers	22
Management/leadership	15
Lack of capacity to deal with increasing demand	10
Poor/difficult relationship with key stakeholder/s	7
Lack of markets	3

Clearly, funding is seen as the greatest single problem, and relates to a number of other problems, such as office and other equipment, transport, and the inability of organisations to keep good workers. However, the lack of skills is also a major issue for CBOs in the region.

Other problems identified by CBOs include:

- difficulty in sustaining support groups;
- lack of education, information and communication materials;
- difficulties in communicating with members;
- difficulties in keeping members involved;
- the impact of HIV/AIDS and other illnesses on beneficiaries and members;
- external factors, such as the political situation, drought, the fuel shortage in Zimbabwe, and so on.

Not all CBOs, and not all countries, experienced these problems to the same extent. Thus, not surprisingly, Zimbabwean CBOs identified external factors more than those in any other country. Funding, whilst identified as a need in all countries, was mentioned by all ten CBOs surveyed in Zambia, but only four in Lesotho, whilst transport was identified by all ten CBOs in Malawi, but only one in Swaziland. The issue of keeping competent staff was mentioned by far more Tanzanian CBOs (seven) than in any other country, although five South African organisations also mentioned this problem.

Given the problems identified by CBOs, it is not surprising that funding and training feature prominently in both the solutions offered by CBOs, and in their identification of the factors that could help them do their work better.

In fact, over half of all the CBOs surveyed (53% n=47) said that funding would help them do their work better; whilst an even higher proportion (78% n=69) wanted training. This is discussed in greater detail below.

Key findings on organisational profile

- Over half of the CBOs surveyed started within five years of being interviewed.
- 28% of the organisations surveyed were started by another organisation.
- Most organisations started because of a local need or problem.
- Just over half of the organisations surveyed reported that their work has not changed since the inception of the organisation. Where work has changed, it has generally involved an expanded focus, largely as a result of increased or shifting demands by the beneficiaries/communities they serve.
- Most organisations are working in more than one sector. Legal and human rights work, HIV/AIDS and health issues, and income-generation are the sectors within which the greatest number of organisations are working.
- On the whole, organisations are working on a very similar range of human rights issues as those they identified as important in their country. There are, however, some significant variations between human rights issues identified as priority issues in individual countries, and the issues actually being worked on by the CBOs in that country. This is particularly the case so far as domestic violence, political freedom, issues concerning the police/security forces, and access to justice is concerned.
- Most organisations are involved in a variety of activities, with education and training being mentioned most often.
- 70% of the CBOs surveyed have been involved in at least one campaign, with a significant number involved in more than one. Most organisations have worked with one or more partners in these campaigns. Zimbabwean CBOs on the whole had a higher number of partners in their campaigns.
- 94% of the organisations involved in campaigns reported experiencing difficulties with these, and most reported more than one difficulty. Lack of community participation, or resistance by the community to the campaign was most often cited.
- Education and training for both the CBOs and the broader community was given most often as the solution to problems attendant to campaigns. Financial assistance was also frequently cited.
- 97% of the CBOs surveyed believe that they have impacted positively on their context. Both beneficiaries and the broader community have benefited.
- Most organisations are working in urban or peri-urban areas (this could be sampling effect), although many work across the urban/rural divide.
- Less half of the organisations have paid staff. On the whole, the number of paid staff is small, with 43% of CBOs with paid staff employing fewer than five people. However, differences across countries are extreme, with only one organisation in Malawi having paid staff compared to 100% of organisations in Zimbabwe.
- 88% of organisations have volunteers, but again there are variations across countries.
- 82% of organisations have members. Membership varies hugely, from four members to 20 000.
- Education levels vary considerably. Education levels tend to be higher in Zimbabwean and Tanzanian CBOs, and lower in Malawian organisations. Staff/workers tend to have higher levels of education than members, and more staff/workers than members appear to be able to speak English.
- 82% of the organisations surveyed have a constitution. In most cases this was written within a year of establishment.

- 97% of respondents said that they had seen the constitution, and 90% said that it was regularly used by the organisation. Most constitutions were written by either members or the governance structure of the organisation.
- Most respondents believe the chairperson/president and/or governance structure of the organisation to be the leader of the organisation. Most leaders are elected, although elections are sometimes infrequent.
- 94% of organisations surveyed have some kind of governance or management structure. These vary in size from four to fifteen members. Malawian organisations tend to have larger governance structures, whilst South African and Swazi organisations tend to have smaller governance structures. Most governance structures are elected, usually by members, and meet regularly (usually monthly).
- In 36% of the organisations surveyed, the governance/management structure is responsible for the day-to-day work of the organisation.
- There are a number of leadership and management problems within CBOs, and in particular the existence of undemocratic practices in some organisations is cause for concern.
- 78% of organisations have access to some kind of space in which to meet and conduct the business of the organisation. However, the kind of space varies enormously across organisations and countries, and only half of the CBOs in Lesotho and Zambia have access to a space. In many cases, the space is a borrowed or shared space. 49% of organisations with access to a space do not have to pay for this.
- 67% of organisations receive some kind of funding, but there is considerable variation across countries, with only two organisations in Lesotho receiving funding compared to all ten in Zimbabwe.
- Most of those who receive funding get it from more than one source.
- There are a range of different funders in the region.
- The vast majority of funding is short term, being of a year or less in duration.
- 83% of organisations engage in some kind of fundraising activity, with approaches to donors being the most significant followed by the sale of products and services.
- 87 out of 89 organisations (98%) are experiencing some kind of problem. Funding is the most frequently cited problem, and relates to a number of other problems mentioned by organisations, such as office space and equipment, transport, and the inability of organisations to keep good workers. The lack of skills is also a major issue for CBOs in the region.
- Funding and training feature prominently in the solutions suggested by CBOs. They are also most often cited as the factors which would help them to do their work better. 53% of CBOs believe that funding would help them to do their work better, whilst 78% believe that training would help them to do their work better.

Zimbabwean CBOs appear to differ notably from the majority of other CBOs surveyed, having substantial office space and relatively large paid staff.

Information profile

Organisations were asked a range of questions in order to determine what information they need, what information they get, and how they use this information. Information technology capacity and reliability was also determined, including access to computers and the Internet.

Information needs

Organisations were asked to identify which five kinds of information their organisation needed most. Not surprisingly, given the problems CBOs identified above, information about funding is a striking priority across all the countries (99%). Information about development issues (88%) and human rights (80%) is also considered important. Whereas national news is fairly important to CBOs (58%), local news and international news are not as important (36% in both cases), except in the case of South Africa, where local news has high priority. 45% of CBOs wanted information about other organisations, and in Zimbabwe this was second only to funding. There is also demand for information about how to help organisations do their work better across the region; this is a fairly high priority for CBOs in Namibia, Swaziland and Zambia.

Kind of information needed	Number of organisations n=89	Number of countries n=9
funding	88 (99%)	all
development issues	78 (88%)	all
human rights issues	71 (80%)	all
national news	52 (58%)	all
how to help your organisation do its work better	51 (57%)	all
information about other organisations	40 (45%)	all
international news	32 (36%)	all
local news	32 (36%)	all

Organisations in Zimbabwe also wanted information on women's rights (2 organisations), and information on legal issues/legislation (2 organisations), whilst organisations in Lesotho wanted information on issues related to HIV/AIDS.

Organisations were also asked whether there was any information which was important to their organisation that they did not currently get. Only four organisations (4%) felt that they currently got all of the information they needed. The remaining organisations identified a range of information, and in particular information about funding and about human rights issues, as information they needed but did not currently get.

This is obviously significant, given that these are priority areas in terms of the information needs identified above.

Information needed but not currently getting	Number of organisations n=89	Number of countries n=9
Funding sources/resources	27	8 (not Zimbabwe)
Human rights	25	8
Training	15	8 (not Zimbabwe)
Sharing experiences - information on other organisations/countries	14	8 (not Botswana)
New legislation/information on government	13	5
Management	11	5
HIV/AIDS	8	4
Development	7	5
Lobbying	6	4
Gender issues	5	4
Local news	2	2

Information gaps varied across countries. CBOs in Zambia were particularly in need of information about human rights, with nine out ten organisations identifying this as a gap in their current information supply. CBOs in Namibia highlighted information about funding (six organisations). Information about new legislation and government policy was identified as a particular gap in South Africa (five organisations). Organisations also listed a number of other information gaps about specific subjects, many of these to do with specific human rights issues (for example, refugees, justice and peace, press freedom, land restitution, and so on).

Sources of information

Local people, newspapers, radio and other organisations are the most common sources of information for CBOs across the region. The Internet and email are least common sources. There are wide discrepancies among countries concerning the sources of information that they rely on. For example, funders are a source of information for all CBOs surveyed in Zimbabwe, whereas only one CBO in Namibia and three each in South Africa, Swaziland and Malawi get information from funders. Zimbabwe also has higher levels of connectivity to email and the Internet than other countries, and thus source more information from these than other countries. Government departments are a source of information for about 66% of CBOs in the region, but for only 30% of Swaziland CBOs. Local people are a primary source for information for CBOs in all countries except South Africa and Swaziland, where only 50% of CBOs cited them as a source.

Source of information	Number of organisations n=89	Number of countries n=9
Local people	74 (83%)	all
Newspapers	72 (81%)	all
Other organisations	68 (76%)	all
Radio	68 (76%)	all
Government departments	60 (67%)	all
News letters	50 (56%)	all
Television	45 (51%)	all
Funders	42 (47%)	all
Email	36 (40%)	8 (not Swaziland or Zambia)
Internet	29 (33%)	8 (not Swaziland or Zambia)

Organisations in South Africa also get information from the Human Rights Commission and Gender Commission, whilst one CBO in Botswana named brochures as an important source of information, and books and leaflets were given as source by organisations in Tanzania.

Although radio was given as a key source of information across the countries, most organisations report that there is not a community radio station in their area (78% n=69). Community radio does not appear to be widely available across the region, and no CBOs in Zimbabwe, Swaziland or Malawi reported the presence of a community radio station. Most organisations (87% n=77) did, however, feel that community radio could be of value to their organisation, although fewer organisations in South Africa (six) believed this than in any other country. Community radio was seen as being most useful in disseminating information, although publicising activities, raising awareness, and educating the community were also mentioned.

Information technology

Organisations were asked to specify whether certain types of technology, including information technology, were available to them.

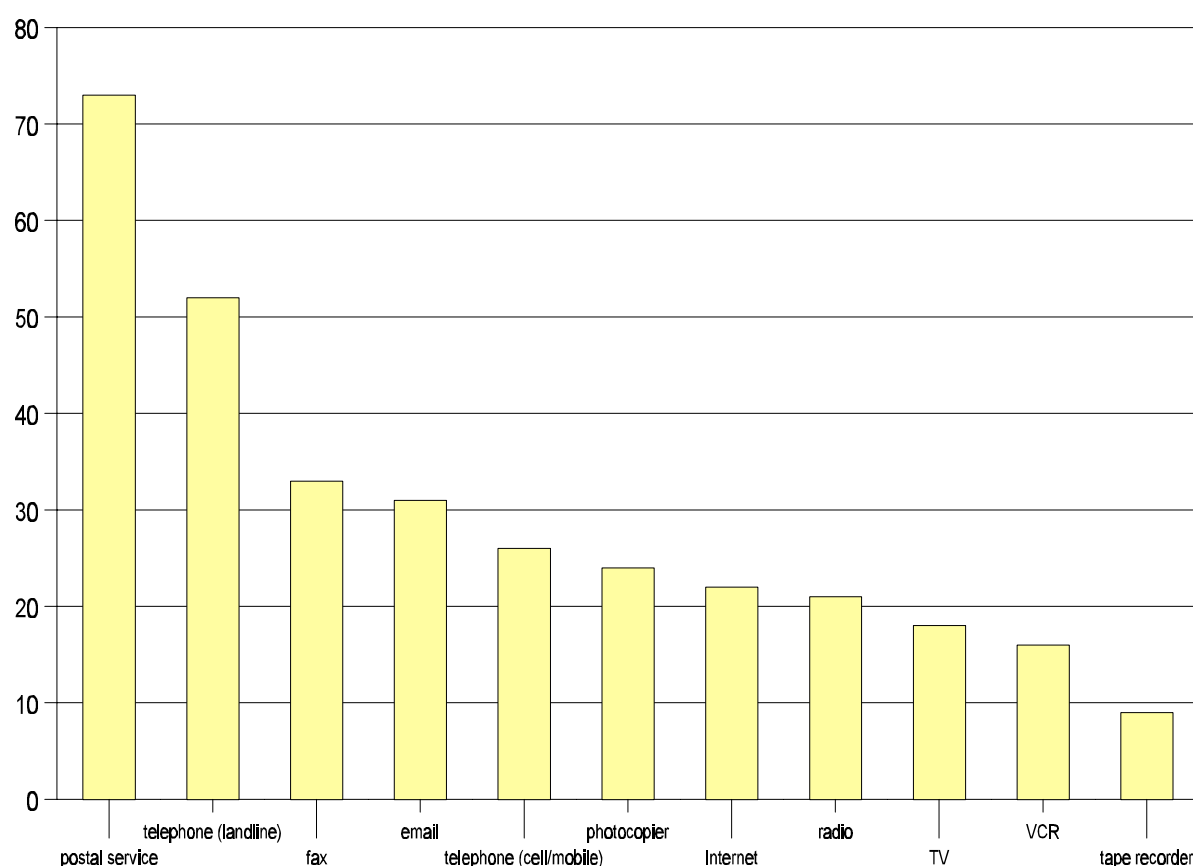
Access to technology varies considerably across countries, and between individual organisations. Thus some CBOs have access to a range of technology, whilst others have little or none. Zimbabwe showed by far the highest access to technology, whilst Swaziland and Zambia showed least access.

Access to the postal service is highest, with 73 (82%) organisations reporting access (although three were using another organisation's post box, two of these in Zambia). Access to telephones is also significant, with 52 organisations (58%) having a landline, and 26 (29%) having access to a cell/mobile phone. Only in a few cases did those with access to cell/mobile

phones not have access to a landline. Two organisations, one in Tanzania, and one in Zambia, reported that whilst they had a landline, this was disconnected. A number of organisations reported that access to a telephone was only through the personal telephone of a member.

Interestingly, access to a fax machine and/or photocopier machine is relatively high, with only Zambia having no organisation with access to a fax machine, and Lesotho having no organisation with access to a photocopier machine. There was no country in which no organisation had access to a radio; and in Zambia two organisations reported very high access, with one having ten radios, and another 16 (all donated by the same organisation).

Access to different technologies
n=89



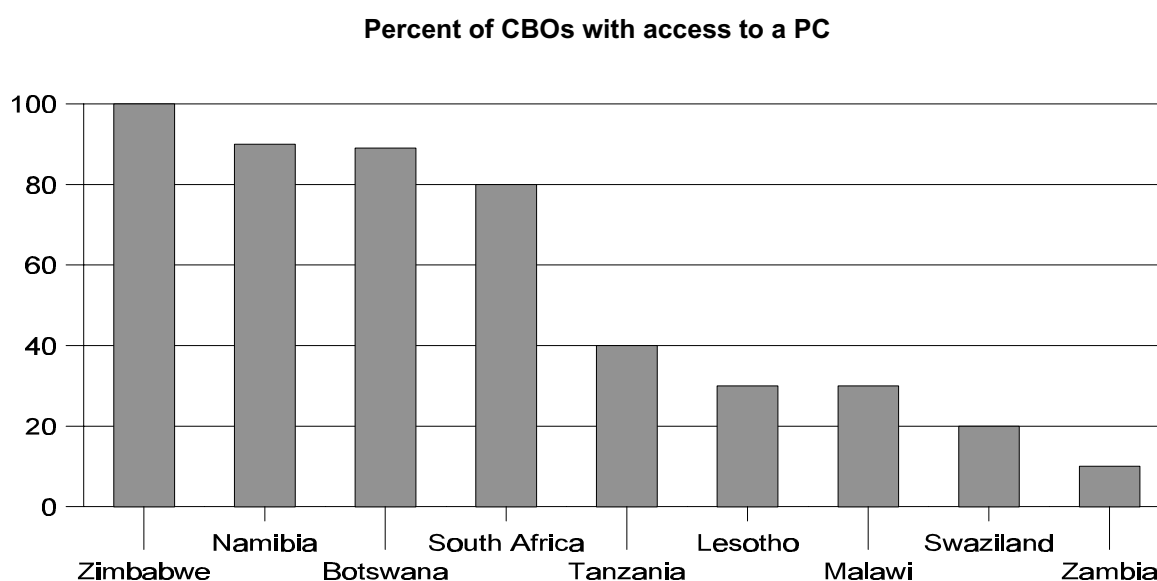
Most organisations said that the postal service in their country was either very reliable (48% n=43), or fairly reliable (35% n=31). Eight organisations said that the postal service was not at all reliable. Three of these organisations were in Malawi, whilst two organisations each were from Zimbabwe and Botswana. One organisation in Zambia also said this.

Most organisations also believed that the telephone service in their country were either very reliable (35% n=31) or fairly reliable (37 % n=33). Six organisations, spread across four countries (Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi) said that telephone lines were not at all reliable.

Internet and email access is clearly limited to a few countries. This will be discussed in greater detail below.

Access to computers

While 54 % of CBOs in SADC countries have access to personal computers (PCs), access is very uneven, with a range from 10 % of all CBOs in the country (Zambia) to 100% of all CBOs in the country (Zimbabwe). Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa, and Namibia show the highest access to computers, with between 80%-100% of CBOs surveyed having access. Tanzania, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia all fall into the category of countries whose CBOs have “low PC-access” of between 10% and 40%.

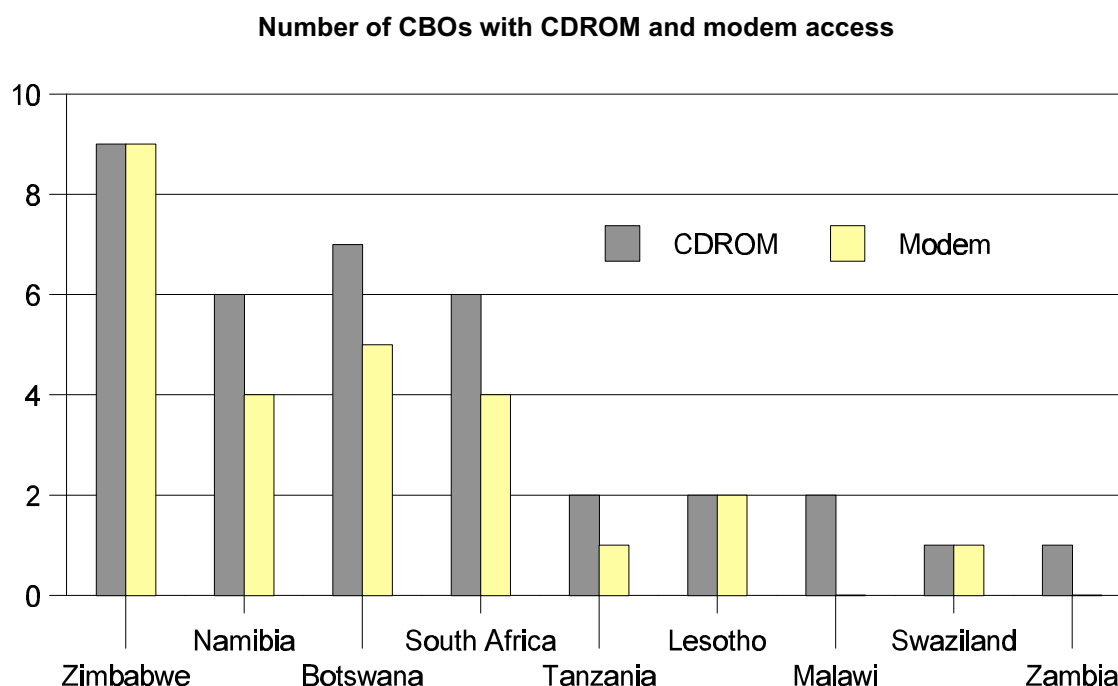


Across all of the countries, there is an average of 2.1 PCs per CBO. Not surprisingly, high PC-access countries generally have access to a larger number of PCs per CBO, with an average of 2.6 PCs compared to an average of 1.7 PCs per CBO for low PC-access countries.

Where CBOs do have access to PCs, these PCs are most often located within the office/space to which the CBO has access, with 71% of PCs accessed by CBOs being in-office. Thus, in most countries, where CBOs do have access to PCs, they report ease in accessing these. When PCs are described as not being within easy access, the limited number of PCs or the distance to the PC was the reason given. 69% of respondents reported having a PC in their own office. PC access is also affected by the reliability of the power supply. Whilst the majority of CBOs reported that the power supply in their country was “very reliable” (27%) or “fairly reliable” (29%), eleven organisations (12%) said that the supply was “not at all reliable”. Seven of these organisations were in Malawi. Reliability of power supply appears to be higher in Zimbabwe, and slightly lower Swaziland and Zambia, whilst clearly it presents a major challenge in Malawi. Two organisations in Tanzania said that they did not have a power supply in their area.

Across all countries, PCs are mostly used on a “daily” or “regular” basis. Only a small number of CBOs use PCs on a monthly or less regular basis. Across all countries, most daily-users spend approximately 5 hours per day on their PCs. Most CBOs who have access to a PC (83%) do not have to pay for PC use. For the small number (17%) who do pay, the charge for using PCs is considered to be expensive.

Most PCs have a stiffy drive (85%) and a high percentage of them also have a CD drives (83%) and speakers (58%). Just over half of the PCs have modems (51%), less so in the less-resourced countries such as Swaziland, Lesotho and Tanzania. In 2 countries, namely Zambia and Malawi, not a single PC available to CBOs included a modem.



NOTE: Not all CBOs in Namibia provided data, and no information was provided for one CBO in Lesotho and one in Malawi. One CBO in Swaziland was unsure whether PCs in the organisation had a CDROM or modem.

High PC-access countries enjoy faster PCs, especially Zimbabwe where most of the PCs are Pentium grade. PCs in low access countries are mostly 386 and lower. Not all CBOs with access to a PC in Lesotho, South Africa and Namibia provided data on PC speed, and thus a final determination on these countries cannot be made.

In terms of operating systems and software, where information on this was provided⁵, Windows 98, followed by Windows 2000, is the most popular operating system, and Microsoft products dominate throughout SADC. While MS Word is the most popular wordprocessing package, a number of these PCs also have WordPerfect. With the exception of a single PC, Internet Explorer is the dominant browser package.

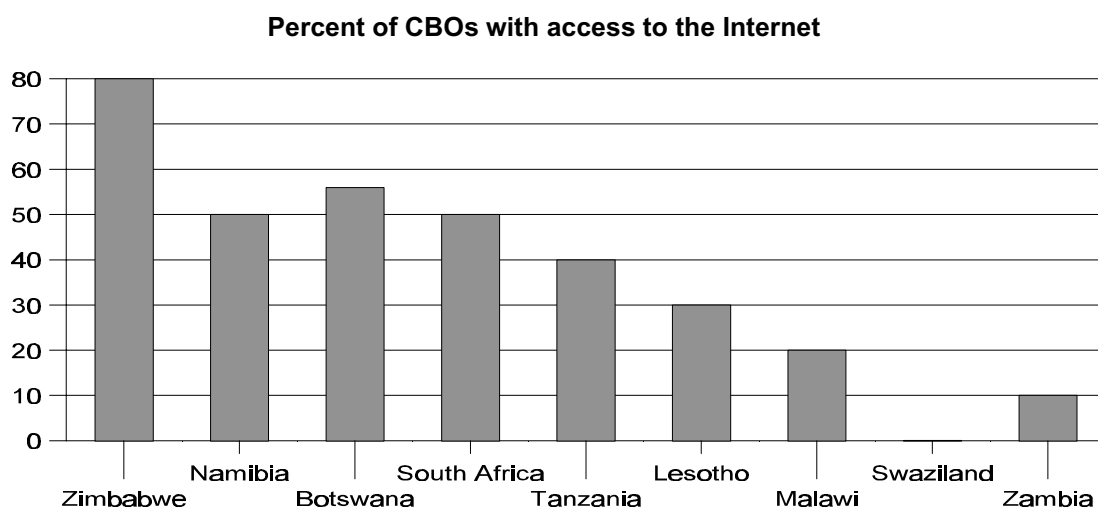
For a number of CBOs, use of PCs is open to anyone in the organisation. Where PCs are limited, management and administrators (particularly secretaries) have preference in use, whilst programme staff appear to be the next category of users. Reasons given as to why these people are the users include:

- They are skilled/were trained in using a PC.
- Their work requires it.
- They are office bound.
- They are responsible for the day-to-day running of organisation.

Training in the use of computers does not appear to be a common occurrence in CBOs, and a large proportion of users are self-taught. Where training has been received, it has usually been introductory computer and wordprocessing courses. When specific programmes are mentioned, they are mainly Microsoft programmes.

Access to the Internet

As has been seen, only just over a half of the PCs accessed by CBOs have modems, with CBOs in Swaziland, Lesotho and Tanzania having a lower percentage of modems, and not a single PC available to CBOs in Zambia and Malawi having a modem. This inevitably impacts significantly on Internet access.



⁵NOTE: Information for South Africa, Botswana and Namibia is incomplete, since the number of PCs with a CDROM and /or modem was not provided. One CBO in Swaziland was unsure of what software was being used.

Just 37.5% of SADC-based CBOs have Internet access, with a range from no CBOs at all in Swaziland, to 80% of CBOs in Zimbabwe. Even within countries with relatively high access to PCs, South Africa, Botswana and Namibia, Internet access is only in the 50%-56% range.

SADC CBOs with access to the Internet use a range of providers, with no one provider dominating. Only Africaonline is used in more than one country. In South Africa and Zimbabwe, CBOs make use of a wide range of providers:

Country	Provider	Country	Provider
Botswana	Botsnet (2 CBOs) ITBW	South Africa	Telkom SANGONET Mailbag
Lesotho	Lesotho Internet Office (2 CBOs) ILesotho	Tanzania	Africaonline (4 CBOs)
Malawi	Sustainable development network provider	Zimbabwe	MWEB (3 CBOs) Africaonline (2 CBOs) ZARNET MANGO Advantage Technology
Namibia	I-Way (5 CBOs)		

Those CBOs who do have access vary in their assessment of how reliable their service providers are. Only eight organisations reported that their service provider was “very reliable”, whilst 14 said the service provider was “fairly reliable”. Three organisations felt that their service provider was not at all reliable (Telkom South Africa, and AfricaOnline in Tanzania. The remaining organisation, in Malawi, was probably commenting on the fact that they accessed the Internet some 20km away, at a local business).

Most CBOs who do have access to the Internet consider their costs related to access to be reasonable or cheap. However, all CBOs in Tanzania described the cost as expensive. For those who provided details on access, Internet access is more often from within the CBO (55%) as opposed to external access points (45%). However, this does show that a significant number of CBOs are gaining access via another organisation or an Internet café, particularly in Namibia, where five organisations access the Internet externally.

Across SADC, most CBOs who do have Internet access make daily or weekly use of the technology. Internet access is usually restricted to management/leadership within the CBOs, although in some CBOs in South Africa, Lesotho and Zimbabwe, all staff have access to the Internet. Reasons given as to why these people have access to the Internet include:

- They are skilled/were trained.
- Their work requires it.
- They are office bound.
- They are paid staff.
- They are responsible for the day-to-day running of organisation.
- The PC with Internet access is in their office.

The Internet is used mainly for information searches and exchange, but is also often used for fundraising and communication with funders. In a small number of cases the Internet is used to search for training opportunities.

Most CBOs (59%) do not subscribe to a mailing list. Only two CBOs (8%) subscribe to a subscription list. Many did not name the service/list that they subscribe to, but for those who did, the following subscriptions were mentioned:

- NGO Coalition (3 CBOs)
- Kubatana (3 CBOs)
- Government
- SANGONET
- OXFAM
- CIVICUS
- Water Aid
- A-Z Kids
- BONEPWA (Botswana Networks of People Living with AIDS).

Key findings on information and information technology

- Nearly all organisations need information about funding. Information on development issues and human rights are also a priority.
- Only four organisations felt that they currently got all of the information they needed. Organisations identified a range of information, and in particular information about funding and human rights issues, as information they needed but do not currently get.
- Local people, newspapers, radio and other organisations are the most common sources of information for CBOs in the region. However, there are wide discrepancies among countries concerning the ways in which they access information.
- Although radio was given as a key source of information across the countries, 78% of organisations report that there is not a community radio station in their area, and no CBOs in Zimbabwe, Swaziland or Malawi reported the presence of a community radio station. 87% of CBOs feel that community radio could be of value to their organisation, although fewer organisations in South Africa believe this than in any other country.
- Access to technology varies considerably across organisations and countries.
- Most organisations use the postal service, and telephone access via a landline is also high. Both are considered fairly reliable.
- There is significant access to photocopy machines and fax machines across countries.
- Most CBOs believe that their power supply is reliable. However, the power supply in Malawi is not at all reliable.
- Just over half of the organisations surveyed had access to a PC.
- Access to a PC is very uneven across countries - Zimbabwe, Namibia and Botswana can be considered “high access” (80-100% of organisations), whilst Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia are “low access” (30% or less).
- Most PCs are accessed in-office, and access is relatively easy.
- Most PCs are used on a daily or regular basis.
- Management and administrators (particularly secretaries) have preference of use where PCs are limited, whilst programme staff are the next largest category of users.
- Most organisations with PC access do not have to pay for this access.
- Most PCs have a CDROM, but this varies considerably across countries.
- Windows 98/Windows 2000 are the most common operating systems.
- Microsoft products dominate.
- About half of all PCs have a modem. No PC in Zambia or Malawi has a modem.
- Less than 40% of the CBOs surveyed have access to the Internet.
- Access varies considerably between countries, with 80% of organisations in Zimbabwe having access, and no organisation in Swaziland having access.
- Internet access is more often in-office, but nearly half of all organisations with Internet access do so via another organisation or Internet Café.
- Internet Explorer is the browser used on all except one PC.
- No one service provider dominates. Africaonline is the only service provider used in more than one country. Most organisations consider their service provider to be fairly reliable.
- The Internet is accessed daily or weekly by those organisations with access.
- Internet access is largely restricted to management/leadership positions.
- The Internet is used mainly for information searches and exchange.
- Most CBOs do not subscribe to a mailing or subscription list.

Pambazuka News

None of the CBOs surveyed in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, South Africa, Tanzania or Zambia currently receive *Pambazuka News*. Six CBOs in Namibia said that they did not receive *Pambazuka News*, and the question was not completed in the remaining four cases, making it impossible to know whether any of the CBOs in this country receive *Pambazuka News*. Three CBOs in Zimbabwe do receive *Pambazuka News*, whilst the remaining seven do not.

For the three CBOs (all in Zimbabwe) who do receive *Pambazuka News*, two said that they receive it monthly, and one said that they have not received it this year (2003) at all, but used to get it. One of the CBOs said that it was passed on to them by another organisation, whilst the other two said that they received it directly (one of these had claimed to be receiving it monthly - it is not clear why this organisation claimed to be receiving it monthly, rather than weekly, since the interviewer clearly did not pick up this discrepancy).

Two of the respondents who receive *Pambazuka News* said that they pass it on to someone else, one to donors and local youth, the other to everyone in the office. The third organisation does not pass it on to anyone.

Respondents were also asked whether anyone in their organisation actually read *Pambazuka News*. Two of the three Zimbabwean organisations who said that they receive *Pambazuka News* said that it is read.

One of the Zimbabwean respondents reads everything for what is relevant or making headlines at the time, whilst the other reads information on women, gender, fundraising, job searches, the political situation, and international awards and prizes. The most relevant parts, and particularly the parts relating to Zimbabwe, are used to get information, and to inform others, but also for fundraising and job searches.

Interviewers had been briefed to give all respondents, even those who do not currently receive *Pambazuka News*, a copy of the newsletter, and ask them to comment on the content and format. However, four South African CBOs did not respond (in one case, the interviewer had written "Interviewee had no time to read and give feedback"), and seven CBOs in Botswana gave no response to the question on content, whilst nine gave no response to the question on format. Three CBOs in Lesotho did not complete the question, two of these because they were unable to read English, and thus could not comment on *Pambazuka News*.

Respondents were first asked to comment on what they thought about the level of language and content, and then what they thought others in the organisation would think.

For those who responded to these questions, three quarters (75%) reported finding *Pambazuka* very easy to read, with only 6 organisations out of a total of 75 reporting that it was too hard. Most respondents (8) in Swaziland found *Pambazuka News* either too hard (3), or hard to read but could be managed (5), whilst half of the respondents in Tanzania found the newsletter hard to read, but manageable.

However, a higher proportion felt that other people in the organisation would struggle to cope - only 61% of respondents felt that others would find *Pambazuka News* easy to read, whilst 12 organisations (i.e. twice as many) said it would be too hard for the others in the organisation. A slightly higher number of organisations in Swaziland felt that other people in the organisation would find it too hard than admitted to finding it too hard themselves.

57 out of 75 respondents (i.e. 76%) found the content of *Pambazuka News* very relevant, whilst a further 13 (17%) found the content not very relevant, but interesting. Only five organisations, all from Swaziland, found the content not at all relevant (three of these had found it “too hard”, whilst the remaining two had found it hard, but manageable). In reporting on what others in the organisation might think, again a higher proportion (23%) felt that they would not find it relevant, but were likely to find it interesting, whilst the five Swaziland CBOs felt that others in the organisation would also find the content not at all relevant.

The vast majority (74%) of respondents said that it was easy to find information. Just over a quarter (26%), however, found it difficult to find. Of those who found it hard, half (9) were from Swaziland, with only one respondent in Swaziland reporting that it was easy to find information. One Zimbabwean respondent reported that it “Sometimes cannot find websites mentioned”. Respondents on the whole felt that others in the organisation would find it slightly more difficult to find information than they themselves did.

A number of other comments were made about *Pambazuka News*:

Lesotho:

- Layout not attractive
- English too difficult

Malawi:

- Needs to be in vernacular
- Print too small
- Difficult to access
- Layout poor
- Split information by countries
- Mailing list should be developed

Namibia:

- Should be accompanied by pictures or illustrations (2 CBOs)

Swaziland:

- Our organisation needs to be taught on the issues
- Have in local language (3 CBOs)
- Improve format - paragraphs, subsections (2 CBOs)
- Include issues that will assist us improve our projects
- Address local issues
- Too long
- Use pictures
- Layout not attractive

Tanzania:

- Include picture on cover
- Use colour (2 CBOs)
- Use simple language (2 CBOs)
- Indicate content clearly
- Reduce size (too big)

Zambia:

- Takes time to find info due to thickness
- Too thick

Zimbabwe:

- Why did they stop sending it?
- Too little time to look at it properly (3 CBOs)
- Too big for downloading

These comments indicate low levels of reading comfort of the respondents, focusing as they do on issues of level of language and layout (wanting text broken up into more manageable chunks, bigger font size, illustrations, colour, and not too much text). Very few of the comments relate to actual content, bar suggestions by Swaziland CBOs to “include issues that will assist us improve our projects”, and “address local issues”, and the suggestion by a Malawian NGO that content be divided up by country.

Many organisations commented that these kinds of issues would be even more of a problem for other people in the organisation, and argued for much simpler language, preferably in the vernacular, increased font size, and greater use of pictures.

Over 92% (n=81) of the organisations who responded to the question “Do you think there is a need for a newsletter specifically for CBOs?” said yes. This constitutes 91% of all CBOs included in the survey. Only seven organisations surveyed said that there was not a need for such a newsletter, four of these from Lesotho (the remaining three were from South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana). Reasons given for why there was not a need for a newsletter for CBOs included:

Country	Reason/s given
Botswana	(no reason given)
Lesotho	“Basotho (the people of Lesotho) do not read”. “No one among us can waste time reading. We are not used to read”. “Most of our members cannot read”. “I think it is expensive”.
South Africa	“NO - we don't need another - SANGOCO forwards NGO Matters”.
Zimbabwe	“If you concentrate on the local situation only, you may lose the greater picture”.

Reasons given for why there should be such a newsletter included:

Country	Reason/s given
Botswana	Information sharing (5 CBOs) Networking Collaboration Improve knowledge CBO's voice to be heard / profiling CBOs
Lesotho	Information sharing (4 CBOs) Publicise work (2 CBOs)
Malawi	Information sharing (10 CBOs) Improve knowledge Education purposes
Namibia	Information sharing (7 CBOs) Publicise work Transfer skills Avoid duplications Update program Topics are useful Use as reference / research document Use for training
South Africa	Information sharing (8 CBOs) Networking CBO's voice to be heard / profiling CBOs Communicate issues
Swaziland	Information sharing (6 CBOs) Sharing ideas with other organisations Publicise work Market ourselves Give us knowledge
Tanzania	Information sharing (5 CBOs) Use to educate the masses (2 CBOs) Advocacy on different issues Learning from each other Networking Raise awareness Cultivate changes
Zambia	Information sharing (5 CBOs) Communication (3 CBOs) Widen advocacy (3 CBOs) Use to educate the masses (3 CBOs) Publicise work Evaluate ourselves
Zimbabwe	Information sharing (8 CBOs) Improve knowledge (2 CBOs) Communities to air views Can unite us see the way forward Helps with discussions (2 CBOs)

Thus CBOs in the region see such a newsletter as having as its primary purpose linking CBOs, by sharing information and helping CBOs share ideas and learnings. Some see it as having the potential to aid collaboration, or at least decrease duplication.

The role of such a newsletter in increasing the knowledge levels of CBOs themselves, or assisting CBOs in education and training of others, is also highlighted. A CBO newsletter is also seen as performing a PR function, by publicising/profiling the work of CBOs, and allowing them to “market ourselves”. Some would like it to be a tool for evaluation, and even as reference material, for themselves.

A few CBOs believe that a newsletter could act as an agent for change, playing a role in advocacy and awareness raising.

The CBOs surveyed see NGOs in the region, either individually or collectively, as having a pivotal role to play in the production of a CBO newsletter, whilst many also feel that government has a responsibility in this regard. This is possibly because of the resources and skills CBOs feel are necessary for the production of such a newsletter, which many clearly doubt CBOs have. However, the role of CBOs is also strongly argued:

Country	Who should produce the newsletter?
Botswana	An organisation with the skills and resources Rotation of organisations Government CBOs Botswana Council for Disabled Umbrella body
Lesotho	My organisation (4 CBOs) Individual organisations Any national NGO with capacity
Malawi	CBOs, NGOs and National AIDS Commission NGOs (3 CBOs) Organisations outside Malawi Diocese Anyone who can Fahamu (2 CBOs) Executive committee
Namibia	NGOs (2 CBOs) Namibia NGO Forum (3 CBOs) Ministry of Information Information should come from communities Umbrella & NANASO National Radio Media Institute of Namibia
South Africa	Anyone with information and equipment (3 CBOs) CBOs themselves / network of CBOs Funders CBOs: content; Consultant: production Organisations that oversees CBO work

Swaziland	In-house A coalition / umbrella of CBOs (4 CBOs) CANGO (Co-ordinating Assembly of NGOs) (3 CBOs) Ministry of Agriculture The government
Tanzania	User CBOs (3 CBOs) CBOs with NGOs All CBOs (3 CBOs) Network Own organisation
Zambia	Own organisation (3 CBOs) The Board The members (2 CBOs) The organisation Various developmental organisations Pambazuka All the CBOs and NGOs
Zimbabwe	An organisation with the skills and resources Locally, nationally or regionally (3) - all could do it. A task force, e.g. NGO Leadership Forum NANGO (National Assoc of NGOs) Radio Dialogue Umbrella

56 (67%) of the 84 organisations who responded to the question concerning the format of a possible CBO newsletter said that the newsletter should be produced as a printed hard copy only. All of the CBOs in Swaziland, and nine of the organisations in Tanzania and Malawi held this view, whilst 8 organisations in Zambia, and seven in South Africa wanted a printed hard copy only. A further 22 said that it should be made available in both hard copy and email format, whilst only two organisations felt that the newsletter should be in email format only. One organisation in Zimbabwe said that the newsletter should be produced as a CDROM, and one organisation in Zambia said that it should be available on the Internet (but only if all CBOs could get computers). An organisation in Namibia argued that either radio or tape would be the best format, since Namibians are generally not interested in reading.

Thus a total of 93% of all CBOs who responded (or 88% of the total number of organisations surveyed) believe that the newsletter should be available in hard copy, whilst 29% believe that it should be made available in electronic format.

Only two organisations (3%) felt that the newsletter should be produced weekly, and three (4%) wanted it to come out every two weeks. 47 (59%) organisations said that it should be monthly, whilst ten (13%) felt it should come out every two months. Thirteen organisations (16%) wanted a quarterly newsletter. The remaining five (6%) organisations that responded to the question wanted it even less frequently, either twice or three times a year.

Thus almost all organisations (98%) would not be in favour of a weekly newsletter, and would favour a monthly (59%), or even less frequent (35%), newsletter.

The CBOs surveyed wanted a wide range of issues to be included in the newsletter, including:

Content	Number of requests n=89	Number of countries n=9
Human rights issues/violations	32	9
Development	20	8 (not Swaziland)
CBO news/profiles/activities	19 (6 from Swaziland)	8 (not Zimbabwe)
Finance and fundraising	12	6
HIV/AIDS	11 (6 from Malawi)	5
Women/gender	11	5
Success stories/best practice	9	6
Training	9	5
Health	8	4
Community news/views/issues	5	3
Education	5	4
Children's rights	5	2
Socio-economic issues and analysis	5	4
Leadership/management/governance	5	4
Politics	4	3
Programme implementation	4	3
Poverty/hunger	2	2
Democracy	2	1 (Malawi)
Ethical issues/corruption	2	2
Advocacy /policy	2	1 (Zimbabwe)
Peace	2	1 (Tanzania)

Other subjects suggested include:

- Legislative issues
- Land issues
- Computing
- Democracy
- Environment
- Agriculture
- Globalization
- Refugees
- Children's rights
- Crime issues
- Social welfare
- Media and human rights
- Tourism information
- Youth issues
- Self-reliance

However, in keeping with the strongly held view that such a newsletter should play a role in helping CBOs learn and share, CBOs also suggested including information on “Things that are happening on the ground”, “Action orientated strategies that people are using”, “Problems and how to over-come them”, as well as general news, services available, major events, and current projects. Two organisations recommended that the newsletter cover the same content as at present (i.e. as *Pambazuka News*).

Only four organisations (two of these from Zimbabwe) wanted the newsletter to be produced in the vernacular only. 20 (24%) wanted the newsletter to be in English only. No organisations in Swaziland or Malawi wanted an English-only newsletter - all of these organisations wanted a combination of languages. Thus nearly three-quarters (73% n=61) (including CBOs in all nine countries) think that a newsletter aimed at CBOs should be in both English and the vernacular. Some CBOs felt that the language used would depend on the format, with one Zimbabwean organisation suggesting that a regional newsletter should be in English only, whilst a national newsletter should include some vernacular, and a South African organisation suggesting the email version be in English only, whilst the printed hard copy be in a combination of English and vernacular.

The vast majority of organisations (90% n=80) said that their organisation would be prepared to contribute to a newsletter project by contributing articles. No organisations said that they would not be prepared to contribute articles. All of these organisations also said that they would pass the newsletter on to others, although one organisation in Zimbabwe said that this would depend on factors such as “procedures/cost element/capacity”.

All except one of these organisations also expressed willingness to help decide what should be in the newsletter. Only one organisation, from Lesotho, said that it would not be prepared to do this. Two organisations in South Africa gave no response to the question, and one organisation in Zimbabwe said it would depend.

Key findings on *Pambazuka News*

- Only three CBOs, all in Zimbabwe, currently receive *Pambazuka News*.
- Three quarters of respondents found *Pambazuka News* easy to read, although most CBOs in Swaziland, and half of those in Tanzania, found it either too hard, or difficult but manageable. Most respondents believed that others in the organisation would find the newsletter harder to read than they did themselves.
- Three quarters of respondents found the content of *Pambazuka News* to be very relevant, but believed that others on the organisation might not find it as relevant.
- Nearly three quarters of respondents found it easy to find information in *Pambazuka News*.
- Many comments on the newsletter suggest relatively low levels of reading comfort. It is likely that many respondents found *Pambazuka News* more difficult to read than they were prepared to admit.
- Over 91% of all CBOs felt that there was a need for a newsletter specifically for CBOs.
- Respondents gave as the primary purpose of such a newsletter the sharing of information.
- Most respondents believed that the newsletter should be produced by an NGO or group of NGOs and/or the government, but in collaboration with CBOs. This is probably because of the low levels of resources CBOs have.
- Nearly all (93%) of CBOs want the newsletter to be available in a printed hard copy. 29% want it in electronic format.
- Nearly three-quarters of respondents would like the newsletter to be available in both English and the vernacular.
- Nearly all organisations would prefer a monthly or less frequent newsletter.
- Organisations across the countries would most like the newsletter to contain information on human rights issues, development issues, CBO news and activities, and finance and fundraising, but a wide variety of other topics were also suggested.
- Over 90% of all organisations said that they would be prepared to contribute towards such a newsletter by contributing articles and helping decide on content. They would also be prepared to pass the newsletter on to others.

Training experience and needs

Over three-quarters (76%) of all of the organisations surveyed reported that someone in their organisation had had some form of training connected to helping the work of the organisation within the last 24 months. All of the South African CBOs reported having had training, whilst nine out of ten Swazi organisations, and eight out of ten organisations in Zimbabwe, Namibia and Malawi had had training.

The lowest incidence of training (only six organisations) was in Botswana, Tanzania, and Zambia, although in terms of actual numbers trained, South Africa and Zimbabwe show the lowest incidence of training. Malawian CBOs indicated the highest number of people trained (although only two organisations account for most of this).

Country	Number who received training	Number of these who subsequently left the organisation
Botswana	57	1
Lesotho	52	0
Malawi	123	20 (all from 1 organisation)
Namibia	27 + 300 members	3 + 100 members
South Africa	18	0
Swaziland	26	0
Tanzania	51	3
Zambia	22	0
Zimbabwe	20	3

Note: This question did not appear in the pre-pilot questionnaire, and thus the two South African CBOs who were interviewed using this questionnaire were not asked to respond.

As can be seen, there does not appear to be a strong correlation between staff training and staff turnover. Most organisations have retained the staff who have been trained over the last 24 months.

Training undertaken in the last 24 months was extremely varied in terms of both content and length. There has, however, been a noticeable lack of computer and ICT training among CBOs in the region in the 24 months prior to the survey.

Type of training	Number of responses	Number of countries
Organisational skills (planning, leadership, reporting, monitoring, evaluation)	16 (5 from S. Africa)	6
Business Management/administration/marketing	13	8 (not Malawi)
Financial management/Fundraising	13	7 (not Botswana or Swaziland)
Train the trainer/Facilitation	10 (4 from Zimbabwe)	4
Human rights/advocacy	8	6
HIV/AIDS	7	5
Paralegal	5	3
Conflict management/Peace building	5	4
Home-based care/care-giving	3	3
Skills related to income-generation (pottery, silk screen printing, building)	3	3
New legislation	3	2
Agriculture	2	1 (Zambia)
Development	2	2
ICT	1	1 (Botswana)
Gender	1	1 (Malawi)

Other training mentioned included training on radio production, driving, housing, transformation in the workplace (2 CBOs in Namibia), peer counselling, how to protect the environment, refugees, behaviour change, and drug abuse.

More people at senior management level (Manager/ Director/ Co-ordinator)(33 out of 110, or 30%) received this training than any other group. This was particularly true of South Africa (9 out of 17 people who received training). Board and committee members also received much of the training, with 25% (n=27) of all of those trained falling into this category. Of these 27, nine were from organisations in Swaziland (90% of those who received training in this country), and 6 from Zambian CBOs (67% of those who received training in Zambia).

Project workers were also major recipients of training (19% of all of those training n=21), especially in South Africa (n=5) and Zimbabwe (n=6), where as many project workers as senior managers were trained. Members constituted 15% (n=17) of those who received training, whilst administrators constituted only 3% (n=3). There was little or no training for project workers/field officers in Namibia, Swaziland, Lesotho and Zambia.

Overall, training appears to happen on a larger scale and to include more ordinary members in Malawi. CBOs in Zimbabwe and Zambia had fewest staff members trained in the last 24 months.

Typically, those trained have attended short courses of between three and seven days' duration. Of the total of 95 courses reported in the survey, 44 (46%) were one-week courses, and 23 (24%) were even shorter. Ten of the courses (11%) lasted between two and three weeks, whilst 11 (12%) were between one and three months long. Only seven (7%) lasted longer than three months.

Every single organisations surveyed felt that they or someone else in the organisation required further training. Most identified organisational development-related training as the priority area, with organisations in all nine countries specifying management and resource mobilisation/fundraising as key training needed.

Type of training	Number of responses	Number of countries
Business Management/administration/ Human Resources/marketing	28	9 (i.e. all)
Organisational skills (planning, leadership, reporting, monitoring, evaluation)	25	7 (not South Africa or Zambia)
Human rights/advocacy	23	7 (not South Africa or Botswana)
Fundraising/resource mobilisation	22	9 (i.e. all)
Financial management	21 (6 from Namibia)	7
ICT	17	6
Project management	8 (3 from South Africa)	4
Counselling	8	5
Training for office bearers/Board	6 (4 from Zimbabwe)	3
Conflict management/Peace building/ Negotiation	5 (3 from South Africa)	2
Legal aspects/new legislation	5 (4 from Tanzania)	2
Gender	4	3
Home-based care/care-giving	3 (2 from Malawi)	2
Development	3 (2 from Zambia)	2
HIV/AIDS	3	3
Paralegal	3 (2 from Malawi)	2
Research	2	2
Agriculture	2	2
Skills related to income-generation (pottery, silk screen printing, building, fishing)	2	2
Train the trainer/Facilitation	1	1 (Zimbabwe)

As can be seen, training in human rights issues was also identified as a critical area in all countries except South Africa and Botswana (this type of training was identified as the highest priority training need in Lesotho and Zambia). Organisations in six countries felt that they needed training in ICT, and this was identified as the highest priority training need in South Africa, and as important as organisational skills training in Zimbabwe. (CBOs in Swaziland and Lesotho did not identify this area, possibly because of the very low access to ICT in these countries; however, Namibian organisations also did not identify ICT training as a need).

Country-specific training needs appear to be training in governance in Zimbabwe, and financial management in Namibia (where this was identified as the single greatest training need).

Other training needs mentioned by respondents included:

Country	Training need identified
Botswana	Care for children Speech therapy Occupational therapy Mobilisation Community services
Lesotho	Domestic violence campaigns Poverty reduction
Malawi	Care of orphans Capacity building
South Africa	Media liaison/Publicity
Swaziland	Learning for transformation Civic education Care of orphans
Tanzania	How to exchange ideas Capacity building (2 CBOs) Poverty reduction
Zambia	Capacity building Lifeskills Health issues
Zimbabwe	Pre-school teacher training Physiotherapy Ethics First Aid Music production Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

Respondents not surprisingly expressed considerable interest in the Adilisha courses, with a particular interest in Fundraising and Resource Mobilisation and Leadership and Management.

Course	Number of organisations per country									
	Bots	Les	Mal	Nam	S.A.	Swaz	Tanz	Zam	Zim	Total
Fundraising and resource mobilisation	8	8	9	10	8	10	10	10	9	82
Leadership and management	9	9	9	10	8	7	10	10	9	81
Finance for the non-financial manager	8	6	8	9	7	2	6	9	10	65
Campaigning and advocacy	5	8	4	7	7	5	10	10	9	65
Human rights fact-finding and investigation	7	8	4	3	8	8	9	10	7	64
Monitoring and reporting	7	6	2	6	7	8	10	4	9	59
Use of the Internet for research and advocacy	7	6	6	6	6	1	5	2	8	47

Note: 1 CBO in Botswana and 1 CBO in Lesotho did not respond to the question

Thus the areas of training need identified by the CBOs were confirmed by their indications of interest in Fahamu courses. CBOs in Namibia (4) and Malawi (3) indicate less interest in the human rights course than other countries, whilst Swaziland and Zambia show very little interest in Use of Internet for research and advocacy. This is almost certainly linked to the lack of access to computers and the Internet in these two countries. Training in financial management is also clearly of low priority to CBOs in Swaziland, (probably because of the relatively low number of organisations either receiving funding, or controlling their own finances), whilst Zambian CBOs show lower than average interest in Monitoring and reporting, which is surprising given the fact that the lack of political freedom is identified as such an important issue in Zambia by these CBOs.

Key findings on training

- Over three quarters of the organisations surveyed reported that someone in their organisation had had some form of training connected to helping the work of the organisation within the last 24 months. The lowest incidence in terms of number of organisations was in Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia, whilst the lowest incidence in terms of number of people trained was in South Africa and Zimbabwe.
- There does not appear to be a strong correlation between staff training and staff turnover. Most organisations retained the staff who have been trained over the last 24 months.
- Training received over the last 24 months was extremely varied in content, but there was a noticeable lack of training in computer and ICT training. Most training concerned organisational skills.
- More people at senior management level received training than any other group, but Board and committee members also received much of the training.
- Most training undertaken in the last 24 months was in the form of short courses of between three and seven days' duration.
- Every single organisation surveyed felt that they or someone else in the organisation required further training.
- Most identified organisational development-related training as the priority area, although a very wide range of other training was also mentioned.
- Respondents expressed considerable interest in the Adilisha courses, with 82 out of 89 organisations interested in undertaking the *Fundraising and resources mobilisation* course, and 81 the *Leadership and management* course. *Finance for the non-financial manager* and *Campaigning and advocacy* were also popular, with 65 organisations expressing an interest. *Use of the Internet for research and advocacy* was the least popular, largely because only 1 organisation in Swaziland, and only 2 in Zambia (i.e. the countries with least access to IT), expressed an interest in this option.

Conclusions and recommendations

This survey on CBOs involved in human rights issues in the SADC region has been a significant and unprecedented intervention, providing a wealth of data on these organisations. This data allows for a number of findings and recommendations to be made concerning both existing capacity and needs of these CBOs, particularly in terms of information and training.

Recommendations regarding a newsletter for CBOs

There is clearly a need and desire for a newsletter targeting CBOs in the region. However, this needs to differ from *Pambazuka News* in a number of respects, although its existing infrastructure lays a good foundation for the production of a CBO newsletter:

The success of such a newsletter relies on a solid partnership between Fahamu and at least one organisation with significant capacity in each country - possibly an NGO or umbrella organisation - to assist with translation and distribution⁶.

The newsletter needs to be less frequent than *Pambazuka News*, and should probably be issued monthly. However, it is critical that the length of the newsletter be limited. It is possible that the lower frequency desired by respondents has more to do with length than anything else; but given the mode and pace of distribution that will be required, it is probably not practical to produce it more often than monthly.

The newsletter should be available in both electronic format and hard copy. It should be emailed in PDF format to the partner organisations, who should provide a brief translation in the major vernacular language/s of the country. Where possible, it should then be emailed on to CBOs; where this is not possible, it should be faxed; and where this is not possible, hard copies should be photocopied and distributed via the postal service.

Given the level of reading discomfort expressed by respondents, the PDF version should be at a simpler language level and a larger font size than is the case with *Pambazuka News*, and preferably in 14pt serif. The text needs to be broken up into fairly small chunks through the use of headings and sub-headings, and there should be a significant amount of white space on each page. Translations need to follow similar set guidelines.

Content needs to include information on human rights issues and events in the region, as well as information about CBOs and funding and training opportunities. There needs to be some

⁶ NOTE that in some countries some CBOs have existing close relationships with one or more NGOs. In Lesotho, at least two organisations were started by Selibeng, and maintain a close relationship with this organisation, whilst in Zambia a number of CBOs were founded/have a close relationship with Women for Change. These could provide the basis for intervention in these countries.

local content⁷, but this should not displace regional content, for both logistical and strategic reasons. Local content could be gathered from existing *Pambazuka News* sources, or through regional networks, utilising partner organisations - but the latter probably should not be relied on, given the difficulties of managing this kind of process. Given the need to restrict length, the possibility of focusing on a particular theme or sector in each issue could be explored, e.g. HIV/AIDS, funding, advocacy, women's rights, etc.

It is recommended that any initiative taken by Fahamu in regard to a CBO newsletter be piloted for six months after putting in place a careful and thorough monitoring process.

Recommendations regarding training

The need and desire for training is clearly considerable. However, whilst respondents expressed enormous interest in the Adilisha courses, logistical problems make it impossible to provide these courses using the current model, except in a few countries.

It is thus recommended that Fahamu use a two-pronged approach, by rolling out courses in countries with high access to IT, viz. Zimbabwe, South Africa, Botswana and Namibia⁸, whilst at the same time creating an enabling environment in the remaining countries to allow future roll out in these countries.

The creation of an enabling environment would involve, in the first instance, twinning or clustering CBOs with little or no IT or capacity with organisations (such as NGOs) or private providers (such as Internet cafés) with sufficient IT and capacity⁹. Fahamu would need to contract with these partner organisations to ensure sufficient access by CBOs, and could perhaps explore the possibility of "buying" time from partner organisations for exclusive use by CBOs.

Face-to-face training of CBOs in IT would then be required, probably on a country-by-country basis, to ensure that organisations have the capacity to use IT (note that the survey showed a notable lack of such training available to CBOs). In order to prevent unevenness and ensure a sufficiently enabling environment, Fahamu would need to establish what would constitute the appropriate level of computer literacy for successful engagement with the Adilisha courses. It is here recommended that Fahamu explore the possibility of becoming an accredited provider/partnering with an accredited provider of international Microsoft certificates. This would standardise training whilst providing students with an accredited certificate with considerable currency.

⁷ Given that most CBOs were founded on the basis of local need, and exist primarily to service that need, supporting CBOs to retain close links with local communities and local problems remains an important intervention.

⁸ Organisations in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia are also relatively mature, which provides additional reason for beginning with these countries.

⁹ NOTE: Providing increased access to PCs through direct provision of PCs to CBOs is not recommended, at least in the interim, given the lack of a dedicated, appropriate office space available to a significant number of CBOs, particularly in "low access" countries.

In the provision of IT training, it would be important to identify key individuals in these CBOs, whilst not entrenching current undemocratic practices and trends.

Once basic IT capacity has been established, and IT access secured, training using the existing Adilisha courses (appropriately adapted for content and language level) could begin. It is recommended that the *Leadership and Management* course be offered first, because a number of issues and problems in this area have been raised by respondents; because training in this area was requested by a significant number of organisations; because training in other issues will not be as effective if a sound organisational base has not been established; and because successful funding and resource mobilisation (the other key area of training requested by CBOs) relies on being able to read the context, undertake strategic plan, and manage projects, all of which are covered in the *Leadership and Management* course. It is probable that the *Funding and resource mobilisation* will be the course most in demand subsequent to this, but given the relatively high number of CBOs involved in campaigns, and the significant problems they have faced in these campaigns, *Campaigning and advocacy* should also be offered as a priority.

It is likely that CBO students in all countries, including the “high-access” countries, will require considerably more support than those in NGOs. It is thus recommended that in the first instance students be partnered with someone who has already completed the course, who can act as a mentor (here the existing pool of past students who have already expressed an interest in mentoring others could be drawn on). This should preferably be someone in the same country as the student, and where possible, someone within a partner organisation.

It is also recommended that Fahamu work in only one or two countries at a time, and that an attempt be made to “buy” time from partner organisations in a carefully scheduled way to allow for synchronous immediate on-line support from a facilitator/IT support person. In addition, student support via teleconferencing should also be explored.



A Survey of the Literature on CBO Capacity-Building in Southern Africa

Introduction

This paper is an attempt to survey the literature on capacity-building among Community Based Organisations in southern Africa; not the most prolific or accessible of literatures in the wide range of resources on capacity-building as a whole. The information on capacity-building that focuses specifically on the needs and capacities of CBOs rather than NGOs is relatively sparse. Moreover, that literature that does exist has a tendency to be segregated either into academic or policy-focused analysis, with insufficient cross-fertilisation between them; and accessing it is also difficult, as many NGOs for example do not publish their findings in this area, while few institutions have attempted a systematic organisation of the material that does exist (Seekings 2001). The relative dearth of literature on this subject, and its relative ghettoisation is reflective of the fact that understanding the capacity building needs of CBOs in southern Africa is not a high priority for either states, donors, NGOs or universities. As this paper hopes to demonstrate, this in turn reveals the degree to which such terms as CBO or capacity-building, while used frequently, are far from neutral. The literature surveyed here reveals that such terms are the subject of insufficient understanding and ongoing debate: there is no agreed definition of what a CBO is, let alone what the meaning or purpose of capacity building may be. Thus, such definitions, and the debates around them reveal the degree to which concepts and organisations are embedded within wider discourses and structures, and that CBO capacity building is a highly political and ongoing issue.

At the same time, however, there is a substantial literature on capacity-building more generally, in terms of both African organisations, and of capacity building for NGOs that often, as we shall see, directly implicates CBO capacity needs too. There is an even vaster literature on the meaning and politics of development - the context in which capacity building takes place, and the goal to which it is directed. Thus, it should be pointed out that this literature survey is far from exhaustive. Where, however there are further bibliographic resources available that have not been surveyed here, they are referenced in the text.

This paper begins by discussing the difficulties in finding an agreed or comprehensive definition of a CBO. It then summarises findings from a series of



recent surveys of civil society organisations in South Africa, and explores why there may be a lack of comprehensive information on CBO capacity building needs. It argues that capacity building for CBOs and for CSOs more generally occurs within a wider political framework, and that capacity building is a politicised issue. It thus goes on to focus on an assessment of the literature on CBO capacity building in the context of organisations in the southern African region working within a specifically rights-based development paradigm. It attempts to show that the politics of development essentially defines the parameters of CBO needs at a local level, but also their potential to appropriate and thus transform the development agenda. The paper therefore concludes with a series of suggestions on where further work could be done on our understanding of the particular needs of CBOs in the southern African region, and the particular issues that they face, in the context of the wider developmental frameworks within which they are working.

Defining a CBO

There are a variety of terms in the literature used to describe organisations in the non-profit and civil society sector, the most common being: Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and Community Based Organisations (CBOs). The World Bank, for example defines NGOs as “private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development. In wider usage, the term NGO can be applied to any non-profit organization which is independent from government” (Malena 1995:1). The South African Nonprofit Sector Study uses the following criteria to define a non-profit organisation: NPOs must be organised; private; self governing; non-profit distributing; voluntary (2002:1); while the southern African CIVICUS Index Project defines civil society in looser terms, and includes a wide range of organisations within such a definition, although does not specify definitions for each type of organisation within this wider umbrella term (2001a:3-4).

The terms NGO, NPO and CSO can therefore be used generically, to cover a wide variety of groups working in the voluntary, non-profit sector, and further distinctions are therefore usually made in an attempt to sub-categorise different sorts of NGO/CSO. It is at this point that the specific category of CBO is used. The CIVICUS Index survey of civil society organisations in southern Africa for example lists civil society sub sectors as including: faith based organisations, trade unions, training and research CSOs, and explicitly includes the category of “community-based and informal associations” in this list



(2001b: Appendix 2). The World Bank on the other hand, first makes a distinction between operational and advocacy based NGOs:

The World Bank tends to interact with two main categories of NGOs: i) operational NGOs - whose primary purpose is the design and implementation of development-related projects, and; ii) advocacy NGOs - whose primary purpose is to defend or promote a specific cause and who seek to influence the policies and practices of the Bank.

It then lists CBOs as a category under the first - ie operational - form of NGO:

The World Bank classifies operational NGOs into three main groups: i) community-based organizations (CBOs) - which serve a specific population in a narrow geographic area; ii) national organizations - which operate in individual developing countries, and; iii) international organizations - which are typically headquartered in developed countries and carry out operations in more than one developing country (1995:2).

Moreover, the World Bank goes on:

CBOs (also referred to as grassroots organizations or peoples' organizations) are distinct in nature and purpose from other NGOs. While national and international organizations are "intermediary" NGOs which are formed to serve others; CBOs are normally "membership" organizations made up of a group of individuals who have joined together to further their own interests (e.g.: women's groups, credit circles, youth clubs, cooperatives and farmer associations). In the context of Bank-financed activities, national or international NGOs are normally contracted to deliver services, design projects or conduct research. CBOs are more likely to be the recipients of project goods and services. In projects which promote participatory development, grassroots organizations play the key function of providing an institutional framework for beneficiary participation. CBOs might, for example: be consulted during design to ensure that project goals reflect beneficiary interests; undertake the implementation of community-level project components; or receive funds to design and implement sub-projects. Many national and international NGOs work in partnership with CBOs - either channeling development resources to them or providing them with services or technical assistance. Such NGOs can play a particularly important role as "intermediaries" between CBOs and institutions such as the World Bank or government. (1995:2).



The World Bank document represents one of the very few attempts to define CBOs. Their definition focuses on the direct relationship between the organisation and the group of people they serve as critical to the definition of a CBO, but it also relates the role of CBOs to a much larger donor-constructed institutional framework. In contrast, the allusion to CBO status as “informal” organisations in the CIVICUS survey emphasises exactly the opposite characteristic: the informal and unstructured nature of CBOs.

The World Bank definition therefore appears to exclude at least two types of CBO: the most glaring is the apparent exclusion of those CBOs whose mission may be directly advocacy-based (although the Bank’s methodology does not make clear whether this is a deliberate exclusion). The second is to focus on CBOs that implement projects on the ground that are organised and funded at higher levels, rather than on those that are more informally organised and may not receive funding in this way. Such a limited definition clearly has political implications. On the one hand it attempts to position CBOs explicitly within a service provision rather than an advocacy role. Yet, that immediately excludes over half of CSOs in South Africa for example, who describe their work as ‘human rights’ related, as well a wide range of local organisations working in advocacy-based initiatives across the region (CORE/IDASA 2001a: 14). On the other hand, a focus on large-scale project implementation reflects a top-down view of CBO roles.

While some CBOs may function - and may even have been created - to implement projects on the ground that are organised and funded at higher levels, this fails to take account of those CBOs that have come into being in direct response to local needs rather than to implement projects administered by NGOs, and who maybe directly community-driven in their agendas and even in their funding.

The capacity of both kinds of CBO may be severely limited: the first through exclusion from donor-controlled funding with an emphasis on service-based intervention; the second by their organisational lack of access to external networks and forms of financial and other support (Oldfield 2001). It is also arguable that the capacity of such locally created organisations, with a specific rights-based agenda, is the most critical in any transformation of the culture of development (Kaplan 1996) and therefore, where there is most need for knowledge about their function and capacity building needs.

The allusion to the “informality” of CBOs in the CIVICUS survey is suggestive of a potential distinction between NGOs and CBOs, at least in terms of the jurisdiction of South Africa. While the recent survey of the South African Nonprofit Sector defines all NPOs as having a certain degree of organisational



and institutional structure, and therefore excludes ad hoc or temporary groups of people, it nevertheless makes a distinction between NPOs that are more or less formally structured. The former are “formally structured as Section 21 companies, trusts, churches, trade unions or cooperatives”; the latter are not, but in legal terms may be classifiable as voluntary organisations (2002:4). The latter are described as “less formalised community-based organisations”, suggesting that the level of formal structure may therefore define differences between CBOs and NGOs.

However, the CIVICUS survey found a high level of formal structure among the CSO organisations it surveyed: although the CIVICUS project only surveyed 213 CSOs, the survey data revealed that of these organisations, 36% were registered as a non-profit organisation under the NPO Act, 38% were registered as a Section 21 company, 10% as a trust, only 2% as a voluntary organisation, 1% as a cooperative, and 8% were not registered at all (2001a:20). This would suggest either that the number of CBOs surveyed by CIVICUS was minimal, or that the formal structure of these organisations is not in itself indicative of whether they should be defined as NGOs or CBOs. While formality of structure therefore may be helpful in terms of thinking through differences between organisations, and is vital in assessing the work and capacity needs of those organisations that are less formally structured, it may be problematic if it is used as criteria to construct strict distinctions between NGOs and CBOs. Such attempts to do so are likely to lead to the kind of excluding definitions employed by the World Bank that may in turn be driven by ideological rather than classificatory motivations.

In addition to the problems outlined above, defining CBOs as membership-based organisations as the World Bank does, excludes the possibility that organisations that may be better described as NGOs may also be membership-based. For example, 66% of respondents in the CIVICUS Index survey described themselves as membership-based; but there is no way of knowing whether these organisations are best described as CBOs on the basis of other criteria (2001a:12). This confusion is echoed by Deborah Eade (1997:6?), who includes both local voluntary organisations and the international NGO Amnesty International under the definition of membership organisations - organisations who otherwise have vast differences in size, type, function and need. Equally, there seems to be no attempt to define CBOs in the literature on the basis of size or location.

The use of a generic description that adequately defines a CBO is therefore not in widespread use in the literature, and where such definitions have been attempted and used, they appear to have a variety of shortcomings, leading several commentators to cast doubt on whether any useful distinction between



NGOs and CBOs can in fact be made (CORE/IDASA 2001a:2). Finding an acceptable working definition of a CBO is therefore clearly highly problematic, despite the fact that the term continues to be used regularly. While these problems may lead to the conclusion that the term should in fact no longer be used, they may also highlight the degree to which there is a serious gap in our knowledge and understanding of the different ways in which CSOs function, and the place and space they take up in civil society. The fact that it is so hard to define a term that continues to have currency has interesting and significant implications for the debate on both the organisational capacities of civil society organisations, and on their political roles. It certainly implies that any further work on assessing the role and capacities of CBOs, in the region and elsewhere, needs to engage directly with this debate about what CBOs actually are and to further explore its implications.

While it is impossible to extract a definitive definition of CBOs from the current literature, it maybe possible to isolate a set of key characteristics that, in combination, distinguish CBOs from other types of civil society organisations. These include organisations that:

- ◆ Are directly involved with, and in many cases emerge from, the communities that they serve
- ◆ Exist on the less formal end of the organisational spectrum, and in some cases may have no legal structure or status at all
- ◆ Are located within the communities they serve, whether in rural, peri-urban or urban contexts
- ◆ Undertake service provision or advocacy work for the communities they work with

In addition, the South Africa-based Kagiso Trust identified areas of potential CBO activity in their 1992 report on a Community Capacity-Building Programme. These include:

- ◆ consciousness raising; public education on rights
- ◆ negotiating and claim-making toward authorities
- ◆ pressurising authorities for change in the local structure of power arrangements
- ◆ generating and delivering information for communities
- ◆ conflict management within communities
- ◆ planning and goal setting for development action
- ◆ resource mobilisation, including self-help activities
- ◆ service delivery to communities (Kagiso Trust, 1992).
- ◆



CBOs in Southern Africa

The CIVICUS survey states that there is no accurate, definitive data of the actual numbers of CSOs currently operating in South Africa, although estimates have ranged from 17,000 to 140,000 (2001a:11). The South African Nonprofit Sector survey states that there are 98,920 NPOs across all sectors.

Of these it states that the majority of NPOs are less formalised community-based organisations:

Most NPOs are less formalised community-based organisations concentrated in the poorer communities. No less than 53% of all NPOs can be classified as less formalised community-based associations (2002:4).

In other words, according to this survey, there are at least 50,000 informal CBOs in the South African nonprofit sector; however, it has not proved possible to find figures for the number of CBOs in the region as a whole.

The South African Nonprofit Sector survey also states that the NPO sector as a whole is dominated by service provision rather than advocacy-based organisations:

Culture, services and development dominate the sector. Not only are the largest number of NPOs concentrated in the culture/recreation (20,587), social services (22,755), and development/housing (20,382) sectors, but also together these sectors employed 178,370 full-time equivalents or 54.3% of the total number employed in the sector and made use of the labour time of an additional 165,125 full-time equivalent volunteers. This means that the total number of full time paid and volunteer equivalents in the largest three sectors of the NPO sector was equal to 343,495 (2002:4).

However, while the survey states that the nonprofit involvement in housing and development is particularly high in South Africa, it also notes that “issue-based and value-driven organisations in the environment and civic/advocacy sectors (including civil rights organisations and political parties) are also relatively important (i.e. 5 and 14 percent respectively of the nonprofit workforce)” (2002:5).

It should also be noted that the CIVICUS survey indicates that many CSOs operate across sectors: 80% of those organisations surveyed work in HIV/AIDS; 78% in education; 75% in welfare; 74% in health; 73% in human rights; 70% in



women's rights; 65% in democracy; 62% in transparency and governance; 44% in land; 43% in housing (2001:14). From this perspective, it is clear that a high proportion of CSOs combine service provision with human rights and advocacy based work. Where there has been a specific focus on South African CBOs, the same trend of combining development and rights-based work also emerges (SCAT 2000). The combining of development and rights-based work has significant political implications for the role of CBOs, and their capacity building potential in southern Africa, a point that will be explored in more detail later.

Given the numbers of CBOs in the region, it is surprising that there is so little literature on their particular capacity building needs, suggesting that such needs have not been adequately evaluated. In a paper assessing the evaluation of long term CBO capacity-building in South Africa, Jeremy Seekings has drawn attention to the tendency for such literature to be generic and to focus on CSOs in general rather than CBOs in particular, and for much literature on the area to remain unpublished (2001:7). Seekings argues that there is a significant lack of materials generated either by donors or by NGOs and CBOs on evaluating capacity over the long term (2001: 5).

In order for capacity-building to be effective, it needs to be sustainable over the long term, yet donors, NGOs and CBOs have only recently begun to invest in the evaluation of their work; methodologies for doing so remain primitive, and the available literature is thus practically non-existent (2001:5). The dearth of investment in the evaluation of capacity building over the longer term in turn reflects a funding agenda that is driven by short term contracts; therefore project evaluations also tend to reflect outcomes related to 'intermediate' variables (such as the number of training workshops held), rather than on longer term impact and sustainability trends. Moreover, Seekings suggests that neither donors nor NGOs may have an interest in longer-term evaluations, since this may lead to the exposure of the assumptions behind current funding of capacity building - and of what it consists - and the degree to which such assumptions are largely failing to deliver successful development (Kaplan 1996:?). Such difficulties also have a historical dimension, since views about capacity building and development have changed substantially in South Africa since the mid 1980s, and thus the evaluation criteria applied to such views have changed too. Yet, both a reluctance to engage in long term evaluations of capacity building effectiveness, and shifts in ideas about what capacity building itself is supposed to achieve, reflect the degree to which the stated aim of both donors and recipients: of long term civil society sustainability, is also a source of conflict.



It is exactly these kind of tensions: between the agendas of donors and organisations, and over the ways in which capacity should be defined and implemented that are the subject of a wide range of work on capacity building in the CSO sector by Deborah Eade (1997), Alan Kaplan (1995, 1996, 1999), Rick James, and others. Again, while little of this literature focuses specifically on the capacity building needs of CBOs, it does place the issue of capacity building and organisational learning and effectiveness directly within the wider context of “development” and the social and political assumptions that underpin it. As most of this work emphasises, organisational capacity building is not a narrow enterprise, confined to the imparting of training and skills in limited frameworks, but a process that fundamentally challenges the dominant assumptions embedded in the development discourse itself. We will return to this literature, and explore its implications for the capacity needs of Southern African CBOs, at the end of this paper.

Understanding and changing the contexts in which CSOs operate therefore requires placing any capacity-building initiatives firmly within the political agendas to which such capacity building is generated and geared. As we shall see, this is especially the case with CBOs, as given their grassroots nature, they are the organisations within civil society least likely to set the agenda in terms of funding and development priorities, but also those - potentially - closest to the beneficiaries of any intervention. The paucity of literature on CBO capacity building and the inability to differentiate between NGO and CBO capacity needs are themselves a reflection of such political contexts and agendas, and the wider failure to clarify the political issues relating to organisational structures and networks, or to develop effective evaluation of capacity building indicate the lack of resolution about these issues within mainstream development discourse, and its application in policy. One of the reasons why our knowledge about CBO capacity building in southern Africa is still so limited is because CBO capacity is overwhelmingly a political rather than a technical issue. Therefore an adequate exploration of the roles and needs of CBOs can only occur within an exploration of the social and political contexts in which CBOs operate, alongside an explicit focus on what is meant by capacity building: as Jeremy Seekings puts it, capacity building for what?

CBOs: the historical and political contexts of capacity building

Seekings has documented the changes in the aims of CBO capacity building initiatives in South Africa, and procedures to evaluate such initiatives from the mid eighties to the late nineties: ie from the township revolt and the overthrowing of the apartheid regime to the role of CBOs in post apartheid



South Africa today. This analysis indicates that tensions between CSOs, donors and the state in establishing post independence African societies not only have a historical dimension, but continue in an unresolved form today, and moreover, that such tensions facilitate the establishment of a development agenda largely on the terms of donors, and to a lesser extent the state, rather than on the terms of civil society itself.

If neither donors nor NGOs have had a vested interest in evaluating capacity over the long term, it is also true to say that, in South Africa, the aims of capacity building initiatives have also changed significantly since the mid eighties. During the mid eighties, funding was largely directed at organisations working to overthrow apartheid; little attention was paid, either to longer term capacity needs, or to accountability in relation to funding (2001:7-9). During the late eighties, as the struggle became potentially more violent, international donors sought to use funding of CBOs, not only to further the struggle, but also to direct opposition into peaceful and democratic forms of activity - and thus to contain it (2001:10). While funding for civic and advice groups thus rose considerably, there was still little emphasis on training and evaluation for the longer term sustainability of these groups.

The really big shift in the role of CBOs came about with the onset of transition and the establishment of democratic government in South Africa. Between 1990-4, CBOs and other CSOs realised that the onset of democracy would mean a shift in their roles: away from purely advocacy and advice based work, towards a concern with development, social reconstruction and a 'readiness to govern' - in other words, to meet those areas of need the new state could not (2001:13).

Attention thus also focused on the capacity of CSOs to fulfil this role, and it was at this point that capacity building really emerged as a concept. But simultaneously, it became clear that:

Different players had differing rhetorical and practical understandings of capacity-building, ranging from a more technicist emphasis on 'training' to a more politically radical emphasis on 'empowerment'. Discussion and debate over capacity-building was thus not a matter of only whether 'capacity' should be 'built' but also concerned what kind of capacity should be built, how and to what end? (2001:15)

By the mid nineties a variety of umbrella organisations working with CBOs, such as the Kagiso Trust and the Social Change Assistance Trust (SCAT) in South Africa had begun to identify criteria with which to evaluate the capacity needs of CBOs, including an emphasis on the 'culture' of the organisation.



However, as the perception of the role of CBOs changed, away from a purely advocacy based role, towards one of promoting and sustaining local development, CBOs began to be increasingly positioned in relation to a variety of other agendas, including those of government as well as of donors (2001: 19). Many organisations began to find that the new service-oriented criteria were now essential in terms of donor funding. Large numbers of advice offices closed across South Africa during this time, and those that survived often did so by emphasising the developmental side rather than just the paralegal and advice side of advice office work (2001: 19-21).

A similar process took place in the transition to independence for many countries across the region. In Namibia, for example, the CSO sector both expanded hugely after independence, but also had to negotiate a shift in its role, away from a position of protest, towards one of community development, in which meeting donor requirements for funding and facilitating the capacity to meet such development needs, became central priorities (LARRI 1998:6).

The reluctance of many on both the donor or CSO side to engage in the evaluation of longer term capacity may well reflect a reluctance to expose the nature of the relationships that exist, not only between donors and CSOs, but also between CSOs and the state. The CIVICUS Index survey for example, indicates that South African CSOs believe that relationships between the state and CSOs are largely, although not completely cooperative (2001:26). However, these findings may disguise complex tensions between the state and CSOs in South Africa. Such tensions are also rooted in this historical dynamic: many CSOs emerged in the region in direct opposition to the colonial or to the apartheid state, and continue to remain critical of the state, for a variety of reasons. However, the development of the post-independence/apartheid state has resulted in the emergence of new relationships between the state and CSOs including CBOs, with their own tensions, and the state as well as donors has put southern African CSOs under increasing pressure to shift their roles away from advocacy and advice towards increasing involvement in development work. While this has been seen by many as crucial to the strengthening of CBO capacity, to their ability to effectively become involved in delivering services to the community, and thus to their survival as organisations, such an emphasis has two major implications. The first is that it reiterates the tension between advocacy and development work as reflected in the World Bank definitions of CSOs. The second is that it has occurred within a framework in which, because the relations between the state, donors and CBOs are not equal, the nature of that 'development' is largely determined by funders and by government. Consequently, funding agendas are geared primarily towards the interests of



the state, or donors rather than those of community organisations on the ground (see for example CDRA 2001; Kaplan 1999; Seekings 2001: 22-4).

This has led to something of a Catch-22 for many CBOs. On the one hand, it has meant that the state and donors remain in control of the developmental agenda, whilst on the other that they retain great influence over what kinds of work gets passed onto CSOs, and what kind of evaluations they can insist on in relation to such work. This state/donor power clearly emerged out of the shift from civil society resistance and activism in liberation struggles, to the perceived need on the part of donors to co-opt post-independence CSOs into development responsibilities in the region and thereby neutralise their agendas.

The need to direct activist activity into essentially cooperative strategies with donors and states might also, however, be driven by a set of interests that in fact seeks continuity with, rather than a break from the colonial past, since such a dynamic has been consolidated, not only by the poor performance of many African states in delivering sustainable or people oriented development, but also by the intense pressure on African states to privatise and decentralise under Structural Adjustment Programmes. By passing the responsibilities for a reduced state involvement directly to CSOs on the one hand, and by controlling and therefore neutralising criticism of what forms of development are acceptable on the other, funding agencies effectively maintain control of how development is played out at local levels, and ensure that it directly incorporates the macro-terms in which donors and states may wish to see post-independence development occur.

Sophie Oldfield has shown how states and donors effectively keep control both of the ways in which resources are deployed and the conceptual framework that justifies the deployment of such resources through a study of the implementation of the DFID Local Government and Sustainable Livelihoods Program in the City of Tygerberg in the Cape Metropolitan Area (2001). Oldfield argues that on the one hand there has been a promotion of concepts that are explicitly de-politicised, and on the other how in fact it is the politics on the ground that determine which organisations get a place at the table. Those concepts that have been de-politicised include the decentralised locality; the power of which, Oldfield argues has been romanticised by both left and right, without any reference to the wider political contexts in which such a locality may be positioned; as well as concepts such as social capital, the “thickening” of civil society and ‘development’, again which are deployed without reference to the political contexts in which such definitions are made, re-made and played out (2001: 1-3; see also Siisiainen 2000).



The de-politicisation of all these terms is critical in the context of understanding and furthering CSO capacities, since their uncritical usage maintains a set of particular assumptions. The uncritical use of the term social capital, for example, neglects to locate the geographic and political contexts in which the networks that represent social capital are generated, or the ways in which social or symbolic capital are sources of, or sites for conflict, while an uncritical use of the term development fails to address the differences between those agendas - whether of donors, states or CSOs - that seek to bypass the state in the provision of services rather than those that critique the state, and related agencies, in the provision of such services, or with those who would seek to use the term “development” in more radical ways. Thus, those CBOs that seek to maintain a critique of the status quo, and pursue a socially radical advocacy agenda, may find themselves marginalized in terms of broader, top down development initiatives: in the case of the World Bank, as we have seen, such CBOs are not even included in donor typology; perhaps because they challenge assumptions embedded in mainstream development discourse.

Oldfield demonstrates how such power relations are those that get played out on the ground. In her study of the implementation of the DFID sustainable livelihoods scheme in Tygerberg - a particularly impoverished part of the Cape Metropolitan Area, Oldfield argues that although CBOs in this area have been able to organise themselves, “incapacity surfaces instead in a shortage of external linkages, relationships crucial for gaining access to technical, financial and institutional resources in the state and elsewhere” (2001:1).

Because of the historically complex and often conflictual local relationships between the state and municipality, donors and CBOs, Oldfield shows how the DFID initiative acted to reproduce rather than transform local government structures in the area. Those CBOs that were already well supported, or whose leaders were already networked into wider local elite networks, were far more likely to be co-opted into the implementation of the DFID programme than those CBOs without access to such resources and that were not already part of the social capital of the local area (2001:6-18).

Oldfield makes clear then, not only that the most important form of capital an organisation can possess are intangible forms such as social capital, but that there is a direct linkage between such intangible capacity and the wider political structures and ideologies in which it is embedded. Those organisations that are already well resourced and networked are far more likely to experience continued success than those that lack such resources. Moreover, organisations that buy into mainstream development agendas are more likely to be included in such social and financial networks than those that are explicitly critical of such agendas. Thus, those CBOs that remain outside such networks



are vulnerable to remaining marginalized; and this is especially the case if they wish to pursue a vision of development that is critical of existing practices and seeks to argue for wider social transformation.

If CBOs are positioned within a series of structures that are highly politicised, that are about defining and controlling what sort of 'development' takes place, then the capacity building needs of CBOs are not only constrained by such an agenda but also directly engage it. As CDRA, Eade and others have demonstrated, there is clearly a need to enable CBOs to think through their own position in relation to wider development agendas, and to increase their capacity to engage with such agendas on their own terms, as well as to co-opt into them, if they so wish. Capacity-building therefore includes increasing the capacity of CBOs to set and articulate their own vision in terms of wider 'development' discourse and practice, as well as the provision of tools that will enable them to successfully argue for, and realise it. The remainder of this paper will therefore focus on the capacity needs of those CBOs working directly in a human rights or advocacy-based capacity in southern Africa. This is because it is arguable that a rights-based approach to development is one that has the most potential for both communities and the organisations that represent them, to define the development agenda as much as possible in their own terms, and thus perhaps why the tensions we have highlighted around defining development within a wider political context focus especially on rights or advocacy-based rather than on service-provision development work.

A Rights-Based Approach to Development

Despite the huge advances in human rights doctrine, law and activism in recent decades, taking a rights-based approach to development is not neutral, but a highly politicised issue. Rights-based discourse itself is not univocal, but contains complex and in some cases differing views of the implications of the application of human rights law and norms, especially in the developing world.

In particular, there is an anxiety that human rights discourse and practice emanates from, and incorporates Western liberal ideals; therefore its imposition on the rest of the world represents a new form of Western cultural imperialism, while at the same time claiming for itself a universalism in its values that ignores important social and cultural differences between societies (Ignatieff 2001; Cox 1998). However, as Diana Cox argues, anxieties that human rights practice represents an attempt to impose a universal set of values on societies with their own sets of norms and traditions itself makes the assumption that it is possible to have a universal human culture that transcends both the historical and geographical specificity of its own value system, and is



therefore beyond partiality, flux, fluidity and change (1998). Thus, while it is clear that at a formal level, human rights discourse and practice emanated from European traditions, it is arguable that the wider project of establishing a global rights-based set of values is far from complete. This is true at both the theoretical and practical levels: human rights discourse remains partial, as does its application, in the West as elsewhere; therefore, the space for non-Western participants to shape rights-based approaches, and thus to claim ownership of the project - especially in the context of development - remains sizeable.

This is perhaps illustrated through two interconnected examples: the issue of social and economic rights and the issue of rights for women. As several commentators have pointed out, there are competing traditions in relation to the promotion of particular types of rights: Western political traditions tend to emphasise individual civil and political rights, whereas Eastern political traditions have tended to emphasise collective social and economic rights (see for example, Butegwa 1995; Sane and Manji 1996). Thus, while it remains formally arguable that both traditions still have a European origin, nonetheless, Eastern traditions have more resonance with non-Western collective-based traditions - and thus real potential to be influenced by indigenous ideas of rights - and perhaps more importantly, such competing claims complicate the non-ideological and moral value system upon which human rights discourse and practice are supposed to be founded. Thus, far from being the preserve of a specifically Western discourse or set of interests, rights-based approaches are a site - and perhaps in terms of development the site - for ongoing struggle and clarification.

The agendas of international donors often have specific interests in terms of their own position on human rights. Frequently, the initiatives of Western donors such as USAID focus on the development of human rights in the context of good governance, and insist that economic aid can only be given if African countries develop good governance and anti-corruption measures. But they appear to display no comparable understanding of, let alone commitment to principles that enshrine peoples social and economic rights: the right to health, the right to be free of poverty, for example. Consequently they have, as yet, failed to acknowledge how Western driven international economic policies have consistently denied people such rights over the last two decades. Moreover, Western academic literature on human rights discourse still appears to be overly concerned with issues relating to cultural universalism and cultural relativism, and it too has yet to show sustained concern in pursuing the moral and legal implications of a rights-based discourse focused specifically on those needs in the developing world that capacity is geared towards: ie on social, economic and cultural as well as civil and political rights.



Yet, the absence of such a focus, either at a Western theoretical or policy level renders Western government demands for civil and political rights in Africa highly suspect. On the one hand, such demands - for multi party democracy, for example, can be seen, less as a concern with the establishment of good governance itself, as an attempt to prevent African politics becoming dominated by agendas that may seek to undermine Western economic interests. Such Western insistence on civil rights therefore smacks strongly of a continuation of the geopolitical manoeuvring of the Cold War, in which denying socialist and communist regimes any legitimacy, in Africa as elsewhere, and maintaining Western hegemony in terms of social and economic as well as political interests, was of paramount concern to Western governments. On the other hand, the perpetuation of macro-economic policies that continue for example, to allow over 2 million people a year to die of AIDS in Africa, without such policies being scrutinised and revised in the light of rights-based claims renders Western authority in determining the range of rights-based - let alone development-based - discourse highly partial, and leaves open significant room for strategies that seek to rehabilitate such claims within an indigenous and within the non-ideological, morally based - and therefore universal - value system that human rights discourse and practice is supposed to represent and embody.

The issue of the status of women's rights more directly reflects the ways in which Western theorists' concern with cultural relativism is a concern with the ways in which rights-based approaches are articulated and implemented at local levels. In Africa, national governments as well as international donors may be resistant to economic and social rights-based development initiatives, since they are likely to be direct beneficiaries of international funding programmes, and may have a vested interest in adhering to, and promoting international donor agendas in relation to the nature of economic development (McCormack and Mendonca 1997:10; 20). Moreover, as McCormack and Mendonca point out, the values and laws of a society usually reflect the values of dominant groups within society; thus, in addition to those power structures associated with international agencies, the values of a society, and practices of discrimination will also reflect those groups who are locally and nationally dominant: men, clan-based groupings, race or class-based constituencies and so on (1997:16). Thus, those groups that are vulnerable are excluded from local decision making processes and their weak capacity to influence society and their low social status are mutually reinforcing.

As Florence Butegwa has demonstrated, many of the rights demands that women make are social and economic, as well as political in nature: the right to property, employment, education and credit for example, and moreover,



women also demand rights that are exclusive to women, including the right to be free from violence, including sexual violence, from men (Butegwa 1995). As a result, the status of women's rights are afforded a low priority at international law, and are even relegated in some interpretations to 'third' or 'fourth' generation rights; and procedures for individuals to take up cases at an international level are not in place, as they are for political and civil rights. The lack of real clout afforded to women's rights at international law reflects and is reflected at national level, where several states have chosen to opt out of international agreements that protect women's rights, on the grounds that they may threaten traditional family values.

Similar arguments can be made about the status of other groups, locally, nationally and internationally who demand economic and social rights as well as greater influence over policy and decision making processes: the poor and the sick, for example.

The status of women's rights therefore directly highlights how rights-based forms of development need to be undertaken and strengthened at local, national and international levels. It reveals the need for coordinated strategies in these areas, in which organisation - or capacity building - on the ground is linked very directly to lobbying for changes in law and practice at national and international levels. Moreover, there is also a need to do this:

In a manner which is consistent with the standards prescribed in the international treaties, while accommodating constitutional particularities and the extraordinarily disparate challenges posed by local conditions and cultures -- thus respecting ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity in a more informed and sensitive manner than any regional or international body (quoted in Cox 1998).

In these different ways, then, the possibilities for non-Western people in general, and for Africans in particular to shape and influence a rights-based agenda on their own terms is - at least potentially - substantial. In terms of capacity building, it is arguable that the need for capacity building is greatest in relation to those groups that are most vulnerable, and least able to directly influence wider social values. It is also arguable that without effective intervention by these groups, societies, in southern Africa as elsewhere, are unlikely to change; and perhaps most significantly, it is the changes that these groups are capable of bringing about that are likely to bring social transformation - or development on their own terms - in its most enduring form (McCormack and Mendonca 1997:14-5). But it is also precisely for these reasons that such groups remain marginalized, and their capacity building needs remains a politicised and unresolved issue.



Capacity in a Rights-Based Context

The 2001 CIVICUS survey has a range of generalised questions relating to the capacity of CSO organisations in South Africa. It states that CSOs receive funding from a variety of sources, including fees for service provision to other CSOs, to government and to business, and from South African and international donors, with a significant minority of organisations receiving funds from publications and other products (2001a:17-9). Organisations in the survey expressed some concern over the increasing dependency of CSOs on government funding, and over the mismanagement and corruption involved in the establishment of intermediaries to disburse government and donor funding. In terms of financial sustainability, only 22% of CSOs considered themselves sustainable over the long run; 20% had average prospects for sustainability over the next five years; 27% said they had only fair prospects for short term sustainability; and 23% said they were on the verge of closing (2001a:19). It is likely that those organisations most vulnerable to closure are also those that are less well organised, both structurally and in terms of fundraising capacity, and that informal CBOs in impoverished areas may form a significant proportion of this group.

In regard to organisational accountability, the CIVICUS survey recorded that most CSOs have a board of directors, trustees, a governing body or elected executive, and most have a constitution or articles of association governing their organisation (2001a:30). A number of, although by no means all, organisations make a variety of documents available to the public, but there was a general perception that CSOs are more accountable to their donors than to their beneficiaries (2001a:27). Target groups are also well represented on CSOs governing boards, and in the planning, designing and evaluating phases of project work (2001a:28-9). However, issues were raised in terms of the consistency between the promotion of human rights, diversity and openness within CSOs and the work they promote externally - a crucial issue in terms of the development of organisational capacity, and one we will return to in more detail later (2001a:30).

However, it is also worth noting that:

Women and black people play a leading role in the NPO sector. In contrast to the gender profile of the public sector and the gender and race profile of the private sector, black women lead and manage the non-profit sector. 59% of the managerial level of all NPOs surveyed were women and 73% of managers were black. In addition, 60% of all full-time employees were women and 81% were black. Obviously these figures are aggregated out across the sector as a whole and therefore may reflect a



pattern that is dominant in the more community-based organisations (The South African Nonprofit Sector, 2002: 4).

Moreover, women may have a comparative advantage in mobilising grassroots participation and resources, as well as being more action-oriented towards community needs. However, because such surveys do not distinguish between particular types of CSO organisation, it is impossible to isolate information that would clarify the links between formal internal structures, the ability to secure funding and the impact of the work of the organisation, and thus where capacity building efforts in terms of specific organisations need to be focused.

Paralegal and Advice-Based Organisations

The complex position of a rights-based approach to development is perhaps most clearly highlighted by the position of paralegal or legal advice-based organisations in southern Africa. As we have seen, in South Africa the history and role of paralegal groups was integrally bound up with the struggle against apartheid, and the anti-establishmentarian position of paralegals continues to be reflected in the struggle to get paralegal work recognised, both in post-apartheid South Africa, and in the region more generally. In a recent survey of paralegal organisations in South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe, the Paralegal Alliance of Zambia found that paralegal groups continued to have significant difficulties in establishing their work and in building capacity (2000).

In South Africa it found that despite the work of well organised and established groups such as Black Sash and the Legal Resources Centre, who are now organised under the National Community Based Paralegal Association (NCBA), standards for paralegal work and training remain haphazard (2000:2-6). For example, there are no standardised conditions of service for paralegals across the sector; no formal standard of training methods or materials used to train paralegals; no formal accreditation of paralegals at law and no standard code of conduct for practising paralegals.

In Namibia, there is only one organisation that offers paralegal services - The Legal Assistance Centre (2000:6). LAC was set up in 1989 and offers education and training, advocacy and research and litigation and advice services, through a combination of local legal advice centres and specialised units such as the Gender Unit and the Juvenile Justice Unit. While successful, there is clearly a real need for paralegal services in Namibia to expand and diversify further. In Zimbabwe, the PAZ survey focuses on the work of the Legal Resource Foundation, which was set up in 1984 after legal experts held a workshop to discuss ways to meet the need for legal advice and education (2000:8). LRF has



a national office, through which it coordinates four legal project centres, which are further decentralised to the community through legal advice centres. LRF has a total of 5 LPCs in the major cities, 20 legal advice centres spread throughout the country and has a total staff of 92. Each LPC has a number of lawyers who are in turn responsible for a number of paralegals, providing advice and taking up cases that go to court. LRF also offers a paralegal training programme, and an education and publications programme (2000: 8-10). LRF is also a member of the southern African legal aid and legal advice network (SALANGO) established in 1995.

Capacity building identified by PAZ for this sector thus includes the need for:

- ◆ Continuous training for paralegals across a wide range of legal areas to kept up to date on developments
- ◆ Certain institutions to offer accredited training programmes
- ◆ Well developed curricula and other training materials
- ◆ Recognition and support of paralegals from governments
- ◆ Greater diversity in organisations offering paralegal services
- ◆ Greater involvement in community oriented areas such as womens rights, child rights
- ◆ Minimum education for paralegals
- ◆ Standardised codes of conduct
- ◆ Greater encouragement of community involvement in paralegal work
- ◆ Greater networking and publication in the sector

Womens Groups

As we have already seen, the issue of gender in relation to the capacities of local communities in Africa to secure self determination, and to thrive in a range of ways, is not marginal but central. As Mackenzie demonstrates, any deterioration in social and economic conditions hits women hardest at the household level, whilst at the same time, women continue to be discriminated in terms of education, in decision making structures in traditional communities, and in terms of opportunities for more general social and economic empowerment (Mackenzie 1992: 1-32).

Women remain among the poorest in poor communities in southern Africa, rates of illiteracy are significantly higher among women than men, and women are more highly burdened with the provision of resources for dependent family members - especially with the current HIV/AIDS pandemic, which has also hit women far harder than men. For all these reasons, therefore, the issue of female empowerment is a critical issue within the wider context of the empowerment of local communities; moreover, the range of issues - social, political and economic - that have the role of women at their centre strongly



indicate the need for multi-sectoral strategies in terms of the building of capacity among community-based organisations.

If, as Mackenzie argues, the issue of women's empowerment - or women's rights - challenges entrenched power structures within communities rather than between them, it is also clear that women are themselves also divided by class, race and political affiliation. In Namibia, for example, those women's organisations that are run by black middle class women tend to be far more successful organisationally, and in terms of lobbying the government than those without the same degree of professional input. Among women's groups in Namibia there is an identified need for training and capacity-building across a range of areas, including financial management, administrative skills and fundraising, as well as training in lobbying, advocacy and research skills (LARRI 1998).

There are also particular issues of motivation and capacity that, while common among many CBOs, may have particular relevance for women's organisations, who are working with some of the most impoverished sectors of the population. These include the issues of language and literacy: many poor rural women are non-English speakers, and many are illiterate. Thus there is a need for strategies and for materials that will effectively reach these most marginalized of people, and for training in how to develop them. Namibian women's organisations also face an issue common to many CBOs: the problem of volunteerism. The LARRI study states that: "Unlike many countries within the SADC region, Namibia has a very poorly developed, almost non-existent, tradition of voluntarism" (1998:11). But in fact, the problem of dependence upon, and motivation of volunteers is a recurrent problem for CBOs across the region (see for example, Milimo 1993, for problems associated with volunteer motivation among CBOs in Zambia). The problem of dependence on volunteers is also a gender issue, since many volunteers are women, many of whom are often poor and poorly educated. Volunteers may frequently feel that the lack of remuneration for their services, or their lack of involvement in training is demotivating in terms of fuller involvement in the work of CBOs, and there is a real need to address the issues of training and participation at a grassroots level, as well as ensuring that CBOs and NGOs have adequate staff in place to carry out their work.

Perhaps most importantly, women's groups need to address the issue of consistent and coordinated lobbying. In Namibia for example, there is a strong need for a women's lobbying group, that is able to pull together the variety of issues women face and to lobby for changes in government policy. Here, as in other sectors, therefore, capacity needs reside in the combined challenges of



raising awareness about the range of issues that face women, and coordinating these efforts in order to exert real and sustained influence at national level.

Farmers Groups

If gender is an issue that cross-cuts many others, so too is rural development. Southern Africa is still overwhelming rural: 80% of the Sub-Saharan population are small farmers, while in places like Zimbabwe - arguably one of the more developed nations in the SADC region - 60% of its population is still rural based. Thus, as with gender, the issues that affect these communities are central to the development issues facing Africa as a whole, and thus frame the implications of the relationship between rural communities and rights-based capacity building among rural community organisations.

There is a voluminous literature on rural development and rural organisations in southern Africa, and a range of organisations whose work focuses explicitly on the relationship between human rights, capacity building and rural development in the region - for example, the Centre for Rural Legal Studies in South Africa. However, rural people face a variety of complex and often intractable problems, including the ongoing historical legacy of land distribution across the region; the macro-economic context of food production, rural incomes and poverty; local power struggles in relation to gender, ethnicity and class; social and economic breakdown related to conflict and more recently, the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS. The needs, both for capacity building, and for specific rights-based approaches to such capacity-building of rural community-based organisations therefore is great.

In Zimbabwe for example, throughout the 1970s and 80s, the state supported collective organisation, the pooling of local resources and the mobilisation of local capital in rural areas with remarkable success. However, it did far less to address the historical legacy of the colonial distribution of farming land, such that, as Zinyama has demonstrated, patterns of rural wealth and poverty have largely been reproduced, despite some limited land redistribution and resettlement (1992:33-57). Moreover, the present crisis in Zimbabwe, typified by human rights abuses in land redistribution and in the management of food production threaten to completely undermine any earlier gains in the capacity of rural populations to survive and prosper. Moreover, the issue of land reform is unlikely to remain contained within Zimbabwe, with the prospect that the violence and repression that characterises Mugabe's regime will also spread further. If the issue of land reform has not been satisfactorily addressed in the region, the issue of increasing rural poverty in the face of crippling, externally imposed macro-economic policies is also currently reaching a crisis, as a series



of droughts, combined with chronic mismanagement of food production policies has lead to famine and starvation for millions of people in the region (ActionAid Malawi 2002).

Regionally, National Farmers Trade Unions are among the better organised and well funded organisations working for rural communities. In Namibia, for example, The Namibia Farmers Union engages in lobbying and advocacy work at a national level, as well as offering training and educational services to its members (LARRI 1998: 59-60). It also works with umbrella groups such as SNAFU and RISE, who have good national and local organisational structures, from national and regional offices down to local cooperatives and village level representatives. RISE in particular, works to facilitate the interests of local CBOs, and to strengthen their capacity to collectively bargain and participate in development.

However, as was the case with Namibian womens organisations, problems remain in effectively reaching local populations on the one hand, while on the other, coordinating policy and lobbying strategies at a national level (1998: 75-8). Again, this may be indicative of the ideological as well practical approach taken to development and capacity-building strategies - a point we will return to in more detail later.

The Social Change Assistance Trust (SCAT), based in South Africa - an umbrella group working specifically with rural CBOs - have drawn attention to the difficulties in evaluating their own work in relation to capacity-building for advice offices, and in determining what criteria should be used, and how success can be measured (Seekings 2001:20). Weaknesses that have been identified in CBO capacity include: a lack of accountability; a lack of development-oriented rather than para-legal skills and insufficient professionalism (2001:21). Criteria have also been established to assess the operational performance of advice offices, and there is a recognition that if the political culture of the organisation is not healthy, investment in training can lead to the withdrawal or flight of new skills. SCAT have also developed effective funding strategies, that involve CBOs fundraising for a proportion of their own income, and although it is largely accepted that such CBOs will never ever be fully self-supporting, fundraising and financial management skills remain an important area of capacity building needs for such groups. However, while communities report that SCAT-supported advice offices have had a positive impact, SCAT have also shown how difficult it is to objectively assess the most important criteria for CBO success - the impact or outcome of the work and the quality of service provided to the community itself (2001: 24-7; 29).



HIV/AIDS Organisations

The onset and development of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has had a significant impact on rights-based community organisation and mobilisation in recent years in southern Africa, and it is also this area that has perhaps seen the most explicit development of multi-sectoral and multi-issue strategies, combining rights-based and service-based interventions. The multi-sectoral approach needed to deal with HIV/AIDS is explicitly obvious because the effects of the disease not only demand service and medical based interventions around treatment and care, but also raise a wide range of issues around gender and sexuality, discrimination issues and rights to treatment, questions around the social and economic causes and effects of the disease, and ways of educating and mobilising against the spread of infection.

Regional organisations and programmes that have successfully identified the capacity-building needs of organisations dealing with HIV/AIDS issues include The AIDS Law Project, based at the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa and The Southern African AIDS Training Programme (SAT), based in Harare, Zimbabwe (Patterson 2000). The AIDS Law Project focuses primarily on offering legal advice, litigation and research in relation to HIV/AIDS based discrimination, while SAT is engaged in a whole range of activities that includes building capacity for local organisations involved with HIV/AIDS (2000:3-4).

SAT's work includes offering training and education around rights issues and health, and attempts to bring together a range of rights-based issues that are often marginalized in mainstream approaches to health and HIV/AIDS: women's rights, sexual abuse and child abuse, and the social as well as the medical dimension of AIDS. SAT partners with a wide range of CBOs, and the project is a response to their identified needs for capacity building in relation to HIV/AIDS discrimination and human rights abuses. The workshops that SAT runs not only involve placing HIV/AIDS issues within broader rights-based training, but also equip participants with advocacy skills to enable them to lobby for law reform. A number of SAT partners have been involved in landmark cases, including the introduction of the Sexual Offences Act in Tanzania, as well as successful lobbying for increased land rights for women in Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Zambia (2000:4).

However, despite significant advances in rights-based approaches associated with the onset of the AIDS pandemic, the capacity needs in the region around the disease remain enormous. Southern Africa is the worst affected region in the continent. A recent UNECA report on gender and AIDs in the SADC region makes clear the scale of the disaster:



The pandemic presents serious constraints to economic, social, cultural and political development of the sub-region. For example, the infection rates are 1 in 3 for Botswana, 1 in 5 for South African adults, and 1 in 4 for Zimbabwe. Based on UNAIDS figures on HIV prevalence rate among 15 to 49 years olds, Zambia for instance in 1998 it was 20 %, Botswana 36%, Swaziland 25%, Zimbabwe 25%, Lesotho 24 % South Africa 20%, Namibia 20%, and Malawi 16%.

A recent survey by UNAIDS for instance, estimates a total of about 12 million people living with HIV/AIDS in 12 countries of Southern Africa at the end of 1999, out of which 6,384,000 were women, and 892,500 were children. During the same period in these countries, the cumulative number of deaths from AIDS was estimated at 973,700. The total number of AIDS related orphans reached 4,652,500 (UNECA 2001).

These figures have since been revised substantially upwards by UNAIDS, to reflect both the relentless spread of infection, and improvements in models used to predict when the pandemic may peak. It had been hoped that the spread of infection may have reached a natural limit in southern Africa. However, the most recent figures indicate a rise in the numbers of infected pregnant women in urban areas of Botswana, from 38.5 percent in 1997 to 44.9 percent in 2001. In Zimbabwe two years ago, one out of four were infected. Today one out of three are infected. In Zambia, nearly two-thirds of deaths among the managerial sector can be attributed to Aids.¹ Moreover, as epidemiological modelling to take account of populations at risk has been revised, predicted saturation rates have also risen further. In Botswana, among 25 to 29-year-old women, prevalence rates are 60% + among pregnant women in the bigger urban areas such as Gaborone and Francistown. UNAIDS are thus now assuming that these kind of prevalence levels may become the norm for these kind of populations in the region².

As these statistics reveal, amongst the generalised disaster: 25% of the region's workforce potentially being lost to AIDS by 2020; 2.5 million AIDS related deaths last year in Africa, HIV/AIDS is also a gender issue, since women - and orphaned children - are being hit far harder by the pandemic than men. As the SADC report makes clear, the factors that place women and especially young women and girls at greater risk to HIV/AIDS than men include: the sexual exploitation of and violence towards women, especially young women by men; women's lack of control in terms of information and empowerment in relation

¹ Defying Predictions, HIV in Africa Has Not Yet Peaked:
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200207020718.html>

² Op. Cit.



to the ways in which the disease is contracted and more general macro-economic, social, cultural and political factors that exacerbate gender inequalities (UNECA: 2001).

Capacity building to tackle the pandemic in the region thus needs to engage with a range of multisectoral approaches, that include: education and training around sexual practices, sexual rights and rights to health, an awareness of the relation between gender roles, behaviour and prevention strategies; training to increase support around care and access to treatment; and sustained lobbying in relation to macro-economic policies that directly impinge on the treatment and effects of the disease. The need for coordinated action to tackle HIV/AIDS at national and international levels is also absolutely vital (Medical Advocates for Social Justice 2000).

In this context, it is also worth noting how far the issues of gender, rural impoverishment and health combine in the most pernicious of ways to prevent African societies from building the necessary capacity to form a fully functioning civil society, able to determine and meet its own needs. All three issues, for example, act in combination to exacerbate and even cause the endemic problems of conflict. In Rwanda, ethnic hatreds were exploited in the face of a breakdown in rural livelihoods caused by the collapse of the coffee market in the early 1990s (Sane and Manji 1996), while the more recent war in the DRC is not only driven by a lawless economic opportunism, aided and abetted by multinationals and by external economic policies that make rural African economies unsustainable, but the overwhelming majority of deaths attributed to that conflict are the result of poverty, malnutrition and disease (International Rescue Committee 2001). Yet, even the staggering statistic of 2.5 million deaths attributed to the most recent DRC conflict will pale in comparison in the coming years by the onslaught of AIDS. It is hardly surprising in these circumstances that African societies have difficulties in establishing civil society. Thus, while it is commonly asserted that the establishment of civil and political rights is necessary for the elimination of poverty, it is worth asking what value political rights have when societies face death by disease, conflict or famine on such a scale, and far more importantly, how people are expected to mobilise for political rights under such conditions. It is therefore arguable that rights to a livelihood and to health lie prior to claims to rights to civil and political freedoms, since without economic security and health (or without the right to life, in fact), the conditions in which political freedoms are built and sustained cannot prevail.

The lack of support displayed by wealthier societies in the world in this respect remains a central and unresolved issue in the context of rights-based capacity building, in Africa as elsewhere. It indicates the degree to which capacity building around HIV/AIDs, as with the issues of gender and rural poverty, needs



to focus on the effectiveness of lobbying at local levels, which can then be fed through into national and international campaigns. The pressure brought to bear by the Treatment Action Campaign in South Africa is a significant example of successful action around establishing legal rights to health. The potential for communities to lobby for the recognition of such rights at international law, and the potential liabilities of wealthy governments and international agencies resulting from macro-economic policies and wilful neglect are forms of 'activist' capacity building that need to be explored as fully as possible.

Capacity Building Rights-Based for CBOs: Recommendations

As Allan Kaplan has argued, and as the current AIDS crisis in southern Africa starkly illustrates, despite the huge scale of the 'development' project, almost all available statistics reveal its failure (1996:1-5). As we have seen, this has led to a proliferation of post-development theory and practice that is explicitly critical of the current definitions, practice and wider conditions of 'development'. It is within such critiques that we can locate, both the need to articulate exactly what is meant by the term capacity building, as well as those attempts to place capacity building within discourses of development that are specifically rights-based. The virtue of a rights-based approach is that it seeks to transform the paradigm of development: away from accedence to the massive political and economic structural inequalities inherent in practically all First World-Third World relationships, towards one that is 'people centred', in which ordinary people, and especially the poor of the world, are enabled to take up their own claims to live resourced and empowered lives, and to have such claims heard.

But how is the capacity to claim these rights to be built? The literature on capacity building makes two important points in relation to this question. The first is that the claiming of rights also entails responsibilities. Building capacity among community level, rights-based organisations in southern Africa therefore means developing the responsibilities associated with the claims to such rights: in particular, the negotiation, management, fulfilment and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of such claims on behalf of their members and constituents. The second is that the capacity to manage such responsibilities is largely seen as a question of having access to intangible assets. Just as many of the constraints to the building of such capacity are intangible, so too are those forms of empowerment that need to be developed. It is in this context that many development practitioners would seek to rehabilitate 'development' and define and practice capacity building; but in a way that radically transforms the meaning and implications of such processes from the dominant usage of the terms (see for example, Eade 1997; James 1998; Kaplan 1999).



Kaplan (1996) has argued that the current developmental paradigm is doomed to failure, for two reasons. The first is that it is an inherently exploitative paradigm since, although it purports to offer poor countries the chance of comparable development to rich ones, the relationships between rich and poor effectively preclude this from happening, turning all mainstream 'development' practice into a sham. The second is that the entire development project is framed in an economic paradigm that considers development largely to be about the delivery of economic or material tangibles, and excludes any possibility of any alternative perspective that might describe development in other ways. Thus, those world-views or practices that may contain within them the potential for describing and pursuing alternative value systems: traditional cultural or economic practices, or human rights discourses for example, are subordinated to the hegemonic modern Western economic paradigm, and are either co-opted into it or, if this is not possible, excluded from it altogether (see Baxi (2002) for example on the current phenomena of the 'marketisation' of human rights).

Traditional cultures are those who have suffered most profoundly from the imposition of this dominant, Western discourse, since their world views - which "impart meaning and give coherence to the lives of the people" have been marginalized and destroyed, alongside their livelihoods, leaving them with few resources - either material or immaterial - to sustain resistance. However, as Kaplan points out, "power is never simply 'taken' by the powerful, but is also 'given' by the powerless" (1996:116). It is here, then, that many locate the real need for development work. Development, Kaplan argues, is not about the limited transfer of a set of material resources in an unequal environment, but about a process of focus on and transformation of intangible resources, enabling those who undertake and are involved in it to find their 'silenced' - or at least 'muted' - voices, and to much more freely and precisely articulate what their own needs and values might be, and how they realise meet them.

This focus on intangible resources as both the substance and goal of development - or organisational development - not only echoes those critiques of the failure of mainstream development to make explicit the intangible forms of capital through which power relations are established and reproduced, it also begins to formulate how alternative versions of such intangible resources may be developed. It is therefore a vision of development, and of capacity building, as for example the publications of the Community Development Resource Association over the years have repeatedly argued, that runs directly counter to those embodied in donor approaches, since it not only seeks to privilege intangible resources over material ones, but argues for the possibility



that alternative sets of values to those represented by the dominant economic paradigm can be articulated and sustained (see for example CDRA 2001).

In current debates within development practice therefore, a range of criteria are emphasised for the successful capacity building of organisations who are attempting to engage with the development process on their own terms. CDRA for example argue that the capacity of an organisation can be measured against a hierarchical set of elements: at the top levels of the hierarchy are intangible elements like a conceptual framework of the world and organisational attitude. Specific organisational vision, strategy and structures exist in the middle of the hierarchy, while the specific skills of individuals, and sufficient material resources are found at the bottom (Kaplan 1999:16; see also Fowler 1995). INTRAC have developed similar ideas, using the analogy of an onion: with tangible resources representing the outer layers of an organisation's needs, and vision and identity at the inner core (James 1998: 3).

This emphasis on working with the intangible aspects of an organisation: its belief about the world and its sense of mission within the world is generally far more important in terms of building capacity than the provision of specific training skills or material resources, since this is where 'development': of the organisation, of the individuals within it, and of the world it seeks to impact, is really taking place.

Moreover, as Eade points out, not only is it vital for an organisation to have a strong sense of identity and mission, but it also needs to directly address the dynamics of discrimination, inequality and exclusion that exist within the population its members and staff are drawn from and which it hopes to serve (1997: 51;65). Social inequalities and difference structured by gender, ethnicity, age, class and occupation are, as we have seen, of particular importance in structuring the societies within which CSOs and CBOs work; it is therefore important that capacity building addresses ways in which organisations can create the conditions in which people are able to negotiate around ingrained senses of exclusion and powerlessness - within the organisation and within its constituency - especially if its mission directly relates to the enhancement of such forms of capacity within a rights-based paradigm. A focus on openness to the ways in which discrimination may operate should also be complemented by a continued focus on involving all stakeholders in the participatory processes of the organisation, and on ensuring local legitimacy above all else (Hailey 2001: 163-70).

In contrast, just as donors downplay the importance of intangible assets or capacity in their funding and evaluation of capacity building, they emphasise the application of opposite characteristics and insist on work that is largely



short term and project-driven; that delivers tangible assets and outcomes; that is managed by corporate-derived standards of leadership and management; and is subject to homogenised and bureaucratic forms of monitoring and evaluation (Hailey 2001; Kaplan 1999). Yet, this focus on these particular forms of capacity building may actually undermine capacity among local groups, especially if it is tied to service-based rather than rights-based forms of development, since it is likely to increase dependency on rather than independence from donors, it reduces organisational capacity building to little more than the ability to win new service contracts which in turn weakens the resources available for developing capacities of other kinds, it takes little account of the specific needs of individual organisations and fails to address those organisations whose needs may not be best served by conformity to rigid and standardised forms of bureaucracy, and it completely fails to recognise that development is, by definition, an open-ended and unpredictable process. The donor obsession with quantifying logical outcomes - with the application of the logframe - precludes any possibility of spontaneous or unpredictable outcomes; and yet, with people centred development, unexpected outcomes should not only, ironically, be expected, but welcomed (Eade 1997: 18-20; Kaplan 1999).

Thus, Eade and others have argued that capacity is actually built when organisations and their members - especially those that are small and grassroots-based - have as much control as possible over their own monitoring and evaluation procedures. Organisations need to be able to identify their own developmental process, identify their own strategic issues and establish their own priorities, and then be able to monitor and evaluate their own achievements, and their strengths and weaknesses within an evaluative framework that has significance for them (1997: 125-9). Echoing Kaplan, Eade describes evaluation as a “thinking process”, a process of reflection, rather than a standardised administrative procedure.

Again, engaging in these kind of processes is likely to have particular significance for CBOs who are working within a rights paradigm, since reflection on practice, and the achievements of that practice is critical for a wider rights-based consciousness to develop within communities.

Rick James defines organisational development as including the following features: that it is a participatory approach; that it is geared towards strengthening capacities to solve problems in the future as well as the present; that it helps organisations become more able to ‘learn’; that it focuses on organisational culture; that it is about conscious change; that it sees people as more than physical resources; that it is an ongoing process and that improvement in organisational effectiveness should be defined by the



organisation itself (1998: 16-20). Capacity building, James argues, therefore includes interventions to facilitate evaluations on the criteria outlined above, as well as training in technical skills, in relationship development, and funding itself (1998: 21).

INTRAC undertook a survey of a range of organisations that had participated in organisational development programmes in Eastern and Southern Africa, including among others, the Fellowship of Churches and Christian Organisations, the Community Resource Centres, and the Triple Trust Organisation (TTO) in South Africa, and the Namibian Rural Development NGO (NRDN) in Namibia (James 1998). These organisations demonstrated many of the capacity weaknesses facing CSOs in the region identified earlier in the paper: issues around defining a role and identity for the organisation; issues around changing roles with the transition to independence; increasing pressure to deliver services and conform to donors frameworks; and difficulties in mobilising impoverished communities. All of the organisations had been precipitated into an evaluation as a result of some crisis, and while for many of them these evaluation processes were more painful and more difficult than anticipated, nonetheless almost all reported improvements in capacity. Improvements in capacity were especially significant around organisations being able to think through their core beliefs and vision; in implementing new strategies and structures; in allowing staff to feel real ownership of the organisation - often leading to a vast improvement in staff morale; and involving beneficiaries in the planning process. In some cases, these evaluations were long term, where they were clearly making up for the lack of decent education among staff, where moves to organisational independence were slow, or where there were real problems with the leadership of the organisations, creating difficulties in the negotiation of change (James 1998:46-114). But in terms of the primary aims of such evaluation procedures: allowing NGOs and CBOs to define their own identity and mission, as well as strategies to help them achieve these, such evaluation processes were highly successful.

John Hailey argues that the problem with current donor-driven development practice is that it does not actually address this central issue - of allowing organisations on the ground to set and determine their own agenda - and thus fails to facilitate the development - the mobilisation of local populations for better conditions and more autonomy - it claims to seek (2001). In this context, Hailey and others argue that it has become even more important for CSOs to articulate their core vision, especially in a rights-based context, since that is the only way in which third sector organisations can reclaim the project of development back for the people they represent.



Thus, the regeneration of a radical grassroots sector is even more vital in an age when CSO culture is increasingly caught up in a corporate-derived managerialism (Murphy 2001:80). At an organisational level, Allan Kaplan argues that the entire capacity building project is in essence about enhancing the capacity of value-driven community based organisations, since these are the organisations attempting to effect change directly within the communities with which they work (1996:89). It is thus what the development project is also about, since in a very real sense, development is about helping individuals and organisations “come to consciousness” (Kaplan 1996:71).

However, as Kaplan points out, such processes are not easy; they require, not only the development of confidence to confront the conflict inherent in such processes, but also the responsibility to manage such conflict: the balancing of the huge number of tensions that will arise between donor expectations and client needs; between principle and strategy; between delivery of product and dependence on clients’ ability to act; between service provision and empowerment, and between freedom and constraint, and the individual and collective (Kaplan 1996:71-9). Organisations thus need a certain level of capacity in order to facilitate further capacity building; as James puts it, “sick organisations tend to resist help” (1998:127). Responsibility for such tensions is also played out and confronted at the macro level, since while local empowerment may come out of the need for coping strategies to deal with hostile and adverse conditions, it contains the seeds of far wider radical action:

In the transfer of consciousness from [coping mechanisms to actions of strategic significance], the transition to the ‘macro-arena’ will indeed challenge the interests of those in power both within the local community, and at wider levels of social organisation (Mackenzie 1992:31).

The risks, as well as the potential gains of such forms of empowerment are thus considerable, since conflict needs to be managed and addressed, not only within communities but between them, and not only between people but between ideologies, world views and assumptions of value. Thus, while the aim of a rights-based form of development may be to move beyond narrow economic determinations of its meaning and purpose, nonetheless, if this is to be effective, it is important not to assume the self existence of forms of “trust” that operate according to different rules to those imposed on materially based forms of value, and thus which can be simply taken for granted by the third sector. The anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu - who invented the term social capital - critiques the American ‘pluralist’ school, from which much of current development and capacity building theory derives, on this basis. Bourdieu argues that there are in fact three forms of capital: material,



social and symbolic; and each is governed by comparable rules concerning power over resources of value (Siisiainen 2000). Thus, attempts to shift towards a form of development that is based on values other than the material is not only a site of struggle itself, but precipitates forms of struggle over the meaning, ownership and control over those - other than material - forms of value.

As Kaplan, Oldfield and others argue, the process of development should be to make overt, rather than just reproduce, those social and symbolic - intangible - forms of value within which it is set, since like INTRAC's onion, intangible resources lie prior to, and direct the flow of tangible resources.

The power of using non political-economic paradigms to formulate approaches to development lies in opening out possibilities for discourse and practice in terms of rights, development and social justice. In this context, poverty is a function of wealth; therefore it is the values given to wealth that need be challenged. But in this process, 'wealth' also needs to be continually redefined. Bourdieu's assertion that conflict is inherent in control over all forms of capital, whether tangible or intangible therefore appears to reiterate Kaplan's observation that development, coming to consciousness, is an endless process of coming into and balancing conflict and change. It certainly implies that what we value is at the heart of our strategies for empowerment: thus any development process has to engage with the full range of social, symbolic and material impediments - investments in the current order - that prevent its realisation.

Rights-based CBOs are in a unique position within this wider situation. They are simultaneously those organisations likely to be least empowered in terms of current development parameters, but also those with the greatest potential to transform such a paradigm. As such, while we can trace the general historical and political contexts in which such organisations exist, and the constraints they face, we clearly need to know more about rights-based CBOs in southern Africa: where they feel themselves to be positioned in terms of the complex web of relationships that make up social capital in development networks; what areas of their capacity they feel need addressing and improving; and most importantly, what sense they have of their identity and their mission - and how this could be developed more effectively - in relation to the communities in which they serve.



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About Fahamu

Fahamu is committed to serving the needs of organisations and social movements that aspire to progressive social change and that promote and protect human rights. We believe that civil society organisations have a critical role to play in defending human rights, and that information and communications technologies can and should be harnessed for that cause. We are committed to enabling civil society organisations to use information and communication technologies to promote social justice.

Established in 1997 as a not-for-profit organisation, Fahamu has played a pioneering role in using the new information and communication technologies to support capacity building and networking between civil society and human rights organisations. Fahamu SA was established in 2002 in Durban, South Africa as a separate registered trust under South Africa law.

Fahamu seeks to enable civil society organisations to use information and communications technologies to influence social policy by disseminating information about their work; managing effective websites; making their information available on online databases; receiving news and information on development and social justice; and engaging them in debate and discussion on social policy. Fahamu also uses information and communication technologies to provide distance learning courses aimed at strengthening the capacity of human rights and civil society organisations to be effective in achieving their goals.

In short, Fahamu seeks to enable movements in Africa to use information and communications technologies to make a difference to the lives of ordinary people so that they become active citizens determining policies on the basis of their own priorities.

Fahamu comprises a small core of highly skilled and experienced staff based in Oxford (UK), in Durban and Cape Town (South Africa), working with a wide range of international partners. The organisation has a network of some 20 associates located in Africa, the UK and elsewhere, who regularly undertake work for Fahamu, assisted by committed volunteers and interns (for further details see: <http://www.fahamu.org/>).

In addition to publishing Pambazuka News, Fahamu works in the following areas.



Innovations in distance learning

Fahamu has developed, in collaboration with the University of Oxford, a range of distance learning courses on human rights and capacity building that have benefited more than 300 people from nearly 160 organisations in more than 30 countries in the past two years, including human rights and civil society organisations, human rights commissions, paralegal workers, and African diaspora organisations.

The courses Fahamu has developed include:

- ◆ Introduction to human rights
- ◆ Investigating, monitoring and reporting on human rights violations
- ◆ Advocacy and campaigning
- ◆ Campaigning on freedom of information
- ◆ Role of media in the Rwandan genocide
- ◆ Gender, violence and conflict
- ◆ Using the internet for research and advocacy
- ◆ Leadership and management for change
- ◆ Practical financial management for NGOs
- ◆ Fundraising and resource mobilisation
- ◆ JustWrite: effective writing skills

In a recent evaluation of the programme, the Cambridge based International Research Foundation for Open Learning, stated:

The materials are genuinely innovative in the field they seek to serve. They provide, taken together, an excellent menu of materials designed to strengthen the functioning of civil society. Given all that is known about 'conventional' training approaches, particularly in relation to the ineffectiveness of one-off training events/workshops, it is quite clear that this approach breaks new ground. The evaluators are not aware of any other such comprehensive approach to both personal and organisational professional development. The key word describing the response of individuals to the courses is 'empowerment'.

The technology and methodology used has been adopted by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Association for the Prevention of Torture, UN Staff Systems College, Article XIX and by the Africa Program of the UN-affiliated University for Peace in collaborative courses developed with Fahamu.



Online databases, websites and newsletters for social change

Fahamu has been involved in the development of several online databases, providing a web interface to databases of research, news and publications. These include:

- ◆ An annotated bibliography of selected research on civil society and health developed on behalf of the World Health Organisation and the Zimbabwean Training and Research Support Centre (<http://www.tarsc.org/WHOCSI/search.php>)
- ◆ The Zimciv website - developed to enable people and institutions to access information produced by and about civil society in Zimbabwe; and to strengthen the dissemination, analysis of and debate on issues and positions taken up by civil society (<http://www.zimciv.org/>)
- ◆ Annotated bibliography and publications database on equity in health - developed for EQUINET, the Network for Equity in Health in Southern Africa (<http://www.equinetafrica.org/>)
- ◆ Portal website for partners in equity and health (<http://www.equityinhealth.org>)

Social policy research

Fahamu undertakes social policy research including research on the role of NGOs in development; the information, communications and training needs of human rights organisations; information and training needs of community based organisations; the evaluation of IDRC (Canada) social policy programmes; and healthcare training and internet connectivity in sub-Saharan Africa. Copies of relevant publications are available on request.

Ongoing course development

Fahamu is currently working with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Association for the Prevention of Torture, and the UN Staff System College to develop distance learning training materials on the prevention of torture, conflict prevention, and establishing effective human rights commissions. Discussions on the development of courses on HIV/AIDS are currently taking place with OHCHR and UNAIDS.

Fahamu is developing, in association with the UN-affiliated University for Peace, pilot course materials on gender, conflict and violence, which will be continued as additional funding becomes available.



Our current funders

Since its establishment, Fahamu has received the support of:

- ◆ AOL Community Innovation Awards
- ◆ Article 19
- ◆ Australia Aid
- ◆ Commonwealth of Learning
- ◆ Commonwealth Secretariat
- ◆ DANIDA
- ◆ British Department for International Development (DFID)
- ◆ European Union
- ◆ Ford Foundation
- ◆ Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- ◆ Foundation for Human Rights
- ◆ Geneva Foundation
- ◆ Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
- ◆ JG & VL Joffe Charitable Trust
- ◆ New Field Foundation
- ◆ NOVIB
- ◆ Office of the High Commission for Human Rights
- ◆ Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa
- ◆ Oxfam GB
- ◆ SIDA
- ◆ TrustAfrica
- ◆ UnLtd Millenium Awards
- ◆ University of Oxford
- ◆ University for Peace
- ◆ and many individual donors.

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