Civil Society Fund for Good Governance
Programme highlights
July 2010 – December 2014

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Programme Director Tito Farias reflects on the highlights from CSF

The Civil Society Fund for Good Governance (CSF) was established in July 2010 and ended in December 2014. The goal of the donors, UK Aid from the UK Government and the Swedish Embassy, was to empower civil society organisations to promote the voice and channel the interests of citizens, to hold the government to account and to promote good governance in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The premise of CSF is that Congolese civil society is made up of capable civic leaders able to interact with government in order to increase citizens’ input into public decision making and improve government relations with citizens. What is unique about CSF as a good governance programme is that the key actors interacting with government and other stakeholders were Congolese civil society organisations (CSOs) themselves. In this, although there is a great deal more to do in improving governance in the DRC, I am proud to say that CSF has successfully contributed in many areas around the country.

CSF provided opportunities for CSOs to test a wide range of good governance approaches in several thematic areas by offering a competitive grant funding mechanism. Through a transparent and competitive process, CSF awarded 108 grants worth $8.7m to fund initiatives across the CSF thematic areas – education, health, access to basic services, gender and mining. Many of the projects funded by CSF took advantage of previous experiences, training and support that CSOs received through several INGOs or directly from the European Union, USAID, GIZ, CTB, UN Agencies and others. Many of the breakthroughs made locally in governance were also made possible by the good governance programmes and training done by other organizations, including decentralization, legal reform, and other efforts of the Government of the DRC.

As well as providing grant support, CSF has built the capacity of grantees, with training in financial and risk management, ongoing mentoring, and providing opportunities to share experience, replicable models and lessons learnt.

Achieving lasting change

The most successful grantees used a carefully conceived approach in which they first developed training and consciousness-raising modules and materials based on existing Congolese legislation or policies in order to convince both authorities and citizens that citizen input was important to government decision making on resource allocation and policy enforcement. Informing, involving and training government officials as early as possible in the project lifecycle seemed to be best practice. The CSF grantees that did this had the most success in achieving government openness to citizen participation, government accountability, and government action to address citizen concerns in their target areas.

Although much has been written about corruption in the DRC, the CSF experience has demonstrated that civil society monitoring of government performance and citizens’ awareness of their rights are two key elements of effective good governance programming. Sometimes, all it takes is for officials to know that their activities are being monitored and that the public is aware of the resources available for government to become more responsive to citizen concerns. Citizens who are aware of the law and their rights will know, for example, when to refuse to pay illegally charged taxes. Those who have expressed their opinion and know how their taxes are used will be more amenable to paying their taxes, enabling government to better address citizen concerns.

Almost all CSF grantees had previous experience interacting with government and/or engaging in advocacy regarding public policy. Instead of providing comprehensive advocacy training, CSF built on CSO experience and on training provided by several other INGOs and programmes by pointing out the overarching strategic approaches and key relational and communication aspects of effective advocacy campaigns. The most successful advocacy campaigns involved serious research, citizen input, building a broad base of support, and raising awareness of the issue in many ways, including media strategies, strategic relationship-building and constructive information exchange with key decision makers.

The aversion to having politicians take the credit for one’s work is an attitude that obstructs civil society influence and citizen input into provincial and national level decision making. The investment it takes to carry out careful research to support an advocacy case and to garner support for it creates a deep feeling of ownership among the proponents of a cause. However, when a politician takes up the cause and defends it passionately, the advocacy campaign has achieved a key success; this is not the time to accuse the politician of ‘recuperation’. Several CSF grantees working with deputies in their respective provincial assemblies have understood this and are on their way to having their proposed provincial edicts adopted.

Voicing society’s concerns

The original intention was that CSF would become an independent civil society funding mechanism within four years. Following a full third-party assessment, the donors concluded that it was unrealistic for this to happen within the four-year time frame. The donors remain committed to supporting civil
society to carry out good governance interventions. CSF and the work of its grantees have contributed greatly to learning and have provided insight that will be incorporated into DFID’s next generation of good governance programmes.

We could not include all the examples of the valuable work being done in this publication, but we hope that this snapshot gives you an understanding of the achievements of CSF and our partners under the management of Christian Aid and Diakonia, and with the valued support of our donors: UK Aid from the UK Government and the Embassy of Sweden.

Although CSF has made valuable progress and new inroads, good governance work has only just begun. While we do not know yet what the next chapter will hold for the country, thanks to CSF, we know that most of the CSOs that worked with CSF are now better equipped to articulate society’s concerns to the state, and to share their knowledge and experience with other CSOs engaged in good governance work and public policy advocacy. Many of the projects supported by CSF are also still producing results even after their closure. Our hope is that although CSF is drawing to a close, there are still many more stories to be told.

So on behalf of the CSF team and Christian Aid, I wish you happy reading.

Tito Farias
Director of CSF
December 2014

CSF in numbers

The following indicators were not part of the CSF logframe and were not systematically collected or precisely defined. They are the result of a desk review of grantee reports, and CSF monitoring and evaluation reports and evidence does exist to back up these numbers, partner by partner.

- 64,381 men interacted with government officials or parliamentarians at the local and provincial levels.
- 43,971 women interacted with government officials or parliamentarians at the local and provincial levels.
- 6,159 government officials and legislators interacted with civil society.
- 77 CSF grantees created 554 platforms and groups to bring citizens and state together, promoting citizen participation and government accountability. These continue to function as of 1 November 2014.
- 86 budgets were drafted with citizen participation.
- 84 decentralized territorial entities (ETDs) benefitted from an increase in revenue.
- 1,018 accountability forums were organized to ensure continuing interaction between citizens and government officials.
- 149 ETDs allocated resources to respond to citizen priorities expressed via grantee advocacy, lobbying and government/citizen forums.
- 1,280,499 citizens benefited from government action responding to citizen demands, including infrastructure and law enforcement actions.
- 32 committees established to monitor women’s rights conditions and report on cases of sexual gender-based violence in Equateur and Kasai Occidental Provinces.
- 208 committees established or strengthened to monitor conditions in mining sites, manage conflicts, or interact with mining companies.
- CSF grantees helped improve compliance with conflict-free standards in 36 mining sites in North Kivu, South Kivu and Maniema Provinces.
- Education policy monitoring networks or early warning systems were established nationally and in Katanga and Équateur, mobilizing 518 CSOs.
- 12 drafts of proposed legislation were introduced in 7 provincial assemblies.

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108 grants awarded totalling US$ 8,705,316 in value

2,470 project proposals submitted

5 calls for application launched

Training provided:
- Fraud prevention and detection
- Financial management and reporting
- Project management
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Communication
- Advocacy effectiveness
- Consortium management
A key part of CSF has been improving the institutional and technical capacity of grantees to empower men and women, to monitor and hold government to account. CSF has invested resources in equipping the CSOs and consortia with whom we work to improve their effectiveness. Here we provide a round-up of some of the programme’s capacity building activities.

CSF conducted a comprehensive risk assessment of all finalists prior to awarding grants. This identified key organisational learning needs, as well as coaching on project technical design and governance approaches.

‘Usually we have donors who fund you then leave. This is the first time I have seen a donor that builds capacities before the implementation of the project. Anyway, hats off to CSF.’
Jacques Tshimbalanga from CONEPT

Our approach included training workshops complemented by ongoing coaching, advice and mentoring, based on the individual needs of grantees. We provided support both remotely and through field visits. With increased staff capacity in 2014, CSF intensified its engagement with grantees, providing feedback and recommendations with a view to enhance project outcomes and impact, and to improve reporting.

CSF provided training and opportunities for CSOs to share experience, learning and best practice.
Sound financial and project management

Training was delivered to 115 CSOs, covering fraud detection, internal controls, procurement, financial management and reporting, and project management. CSF has achieved a low rate of fraud among grantees, with eight agreements terminated.

CSF provided a one-day training module on advocacy, which was designed to address political economy aspects of the government-CSO relationship and to respond to the perceived politicisation of civil society. The module enabled CSOs to reflect on how to change their behaviour in order to enhance their own credibility and to substantiate the legitimacy of their advocacy. The training has supported CSOs to be more effective in representing citizens’ interests and to think through strategies to gain the confidence and consideration of government officials.

Training in communications supported CSOs to develop communications plans to support their advocacy objectives. Topics covered included visibility, networking and media relations.

‘My organisation has been doing advocacy for many years and we have participated in 11 different advocacy initiatives, all of which have failed. But the module you have presented today clearly points out things that we did not realise were mistakes! Your module will greatly strengthen our advocacy efforts!’

Pastor Dieudonné Kut-a-Kut, team leader of the Katanga Civil Society Thematic Group on the Environment, and Coordinator of the Good Governance Project of the Projet de Développement de Muombe, funded under CSF Call 003.

Working in consortium

The focus of CSF’s fifth grant call was specifically for organisations working in consortia. A total of 11 consortia were funded. CSF developed a self-assessment tool and module consisting of exercises to be undertaken together by consortium members. CSF also provided assistance to Call 005 consortia to reach consensus, resolve disputes and adjust operating procedures to ensure transparency among consortium members.

Sharing lessons learnt, replicable models and experience

Three lessons learnt workshops were held for grantees to share experiences, key learning and best practice. Several organisations identified opportunities for collaboration as a result of participation in the workshops. In July 2013, CSF supported the National Civil Society Forum, a culmination of a series of provincial level forums that brought together reflections and contributions from organisations working across the DRC.

‘I even see how some problems in our CSO have already found a solution. During this training we have been able to make contact with some other NGOs, which strengthens us even more.’

Stéphane Ngoie from Maison Safina, CSO member of Call 005 education consortium SDK in Katanga Province.
Working towards gender justice

Women and girls suffer disproportionately from high rates of violence and extreme poverty during times of conflict. Nowhere is this truer than in the DRC, which has grappled with wars, civil strife and multiple rebellions since 1996.

While peace has been re-established in most of the country, women and girls, particularly in Congo’s eastern provinces, still suffer from gender-based violence and discrimination. CSF has funded 12 projects promoting the rights of women and children. The empowerment of women is a key factor in good governance and democratisation. The positive impact of challenging old-fashioned traditions and customs, empowering women and championing their rights can be seen in the territories of Kasai-Occidental, South Kivu and Equateur provinces.

Public advocacy and consciousness raising

CSF partner organisations used many different ways to raise awareness and channel the voice and interests of their stakeholders. Engaging the media was one approach, but the most common was direct consultation through focus group surveys and various types of participatory meetings. Citizens’ committees were another channel through which organisations monitored and collected information about evolving conditions and the effectiveness of their policy concerns. These committees systematically reported their findings to the CSF partner, which then undertook advocacy initiatives or other problem-solving activities with the appropriate authorities.

One such example is Call 005 partner Observatoire Gouvernance Paix (OGP) and its allies, who undertook a project monitoring the employment of women and children at mining sites in North Kivu and South Kivu. This took the form of a series of focus group interviews with women in mining areas. In this manner, they collected input specifically from women to monitor working, fiscal, security and other conditions in mining areas.

Civic organising and evidence gathering for advocacy

In order to rally stakeholders, REFEDEF compiled a dossier of evidence about the abuse of women in Kasai-Occidental. Working in partnership with the Union Congolaise des Femmes des Médias (UCFM), REFEDEF used this evidence to mobilise support for its cause, particularly among community leaders and provincial-level decision makers.

The work surveyed women and girls in the territories of Dibaya, Dimbelenge, Kazumba, Luiza and Ilebo in Kasai-Occidental. The results revealed that women from the west of Kasai continue to be victims of discriminatory practices based on stereotypes, prejudices and traditional practices and beliefs. The survey found ongoing practice of 50 traditions that are harmful and negative to women and girls. These included a husband squandering the family’s inheritance, women stigmatised for being sterile, the mistreatment of widows, and even women shunned and treated with contempt for giving birth to girls. REFEDEF worked with the Kananga Bar Association and others to identify the practices that were not addressed by existing legislation, and with stakeholders, including the provincial assembly which proposes to end such practices and traditions.

Esperance Nzuzi, coordinator of APROFEL.
Working with traditional leaders

Advocacy carried out by CSF-funded partners has helped end discrimination suffered by women in villages near mining sites. In Mwenga and Luwindi, traditional leaders had forbidden women access to mining sites because they believed that their presence was an incitement to prostitution which caused things to go wrong at the mines.

‘These women met the territorial committees where they condemned the decisions of these chiefs, emphasising that their presence at the mining sites was not linked to prostitution. For the majority of them, the mine site is a market for their small businesses, in particular small restaurants or the sale of manufactured products, water, pharmaceutical products and other items. Some of the women are given jobs transporting gravel and sieving,’ explained Héritier Mukosa, head of the Solidarité Paysanne project.

It was the same for the women living near mining cooperatives in Nyabibwe, in Kalehe territory. The chiefs had stopped women using the road leading to the mine and the quarry at Kalimbi, saying their presence was a curse. The male artisanal miners were no longer finding gold. As far as the women were concerned, these beliefs were simply a smokescreen for discrimination against women aimed at preventing them from competing as gold miners with their male peers.

‘With CSF’s support, Solidarité Paysanne mobilised the [women’s] territorial committees and organised meetings with these women to analyse the situation. Then they organised meetings to inform and raise awareness among traditional chiefs, local authorities and women’s representatives,’ said Héritier Mukosa. ‘It took more than four months to convince the traditional chiefs to review their decisions. Now, the women have access to these mining sites.’

Building coalition support for actions to protect women’s rights

REFEDEF has mobilised 35 bodies, including CSOs and government departments such as the Provincial Ministry of Internal Affairs and the provincial assembly, to introduce coordinated strategies to fight traditional customs and practices that violate women’s rights. They have created local committees to monitor women’s rights and work with traditional authorities to protect them. They have drafted an edict that would prohibit and punish certain practices.

Call 005 consortia Observatoire Gouvernance Paix (OGP) and Solidarité Paysanne, both based in South Kivu, have signed an agreement to jointly accompany the drafting, endorsement, vote and promulgation of an edict that intends to improve working conditions for women in artisanal mining concessions in South Kivu. They have also applied a coalition-building strategy for their advocacy, and are joined in these efforts by four other CSOs – Collectif des Femmes Agissant en Synergie, Collectif des Femmes Agissantes du Congo, Carrefour des Enfants du Congo and Bureau de Coordination de la Société Civile.

Legislative advocacy

Speaking about the work to ban gender-based discrimination, Gisele Fuakanzo of REFEDEF said: ‘We believe that a provincial edict will fill the gaps in national and international law on certain matters in the protection of children and women; and it will be more effective in application. The edict relates to the abolition of traditional practices that are degrading to women in Kasai-Occidental. Thanks to CSF’s funding, we have targeted and worked with important and influential people, including the provincial interior minister. He has influence over traditional chiefs who guard these traditional practices. There is also the president of the administrative, political and legal commission of the provincial assembly who chaired the commission for drafting the edict and he was responsible for endorsing this law.’

In Équateur, Call 005 partner LIZADEEL initiated a draft edict to prevent traditional, ‘amicable’ settlements in cases of rape or other gender-based violence. In such cases, the accused is made to pay compensation to the family and marry his victim rather than being prosecuted. This came after a survey revealed 2,360 cases between January 2010 and July 2014.

‘We hope that the passing of this edict will change things. We are working closely with the provincial minister for gender, women’s associations, officers protecting children’s rights, FARDC and the province’s courts.’

Guillaume Kabeya, coordinator of LIZADEEL.
Transparency in mining

The mining sector is at the heart of the DRC’s national strategy in the fight against poverty. Call 003 of the CSF was aimed at promoting good governance and accountability in the mining sector.

Addressing the paradox: poverty in mining communities

The DRC has vast mineral resources. It is one of the world’s largest producers of cobalt, copper, diamonds, tantalum and tin, as well as several other minerals, giving it the potential to be among the richest countries on the African continent.

However, corruption, fraud, lack of transparency, political interference in partly state-owned mining firms, administrative dysfunction, unsuitable policies and/or ignorance of legislation, combined with insecurity resulting from recurring armed conflicts in the east of the country, all prevent resource wealth from benefiting the majority of the population.

Ensuring a conflict-free supply chain

North and South Kivu Provinces are at the heart of Congo’s production of tin and coltan. Various armed groups have funded their operations by smuggling ore and taxing artisanal miners.

Legislation and frameworks have been introduced in recent years to end the violence and create the conditions conducive to a conflict-free minerals market. The US passed legislation in 2010 requiring companies reporting to the Securities and Exchange Commission to publicly disclose their use of Congolese conflict minerals.

A certification scheme was introduced by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to classify mining areas using a traffic-light code – green for conflict free, yellow for unclear and red for mines in violence-affected areas.

In South Kivu, minerals from Kamole in Idjwi territory and Lemera, Kigungu and Rupango in Uvira territory have now been officially certified conflict free and can be sold on the international market.

CSF-funded OGP was closely involved in the certification process, as part of its ongoing work, supported by various INGOs and donor organizations, to monitor and advocate against mining abuses in an effort to eliminate the human rights abuses and other injustices involved, and help bring about and maintain the integrity of a conflict-free mineral supply chain that will contribute to the socioeconomic development of South and North Kivu.

Tibère Kajemba, OGP project manager, described the process: ‘OGP and its partners were instrumental in having these sites validated. We organised sessions with site inspectors to raise awareness and to provide training on the urgency and the need for mining stakeholders to help in cleaning up mining sites by cutting off sites from armed groups, pregnant women, children, etc. This would give their sites the chance of being certified “green”. The sites were certified green just after our working sessions had taken place there.’

Artisan miners from Lukula, Bas Congo have formed a cooperative with support from APROFEL.
Economic justice for mining communities and poor miners

CSF’s financial and technical support enabled the PRODAEWI-FLEVICA consortium to set up local miners’ committees in 20 sectors of Orientale to focus on identifying and finding solutions to socio-economic problems.

‘The project made it possible for campaigns to be carried out to raise awareness of the Mining Code and make it accessible, to build the capacity of community leaders regarding the Mining Code and to create local miners’ committees and to help them in their advocacy efforts,’ said Pierre Kpadyu, PRODAEWI coordinator.

The consortium also applied pressure through advocacy, supported by the Mining Code, which requires mining companies to support infrastructural projects. One outcome was the construction of a 13-room school in Mongbwalu by Ashanti Gold. In another project, the Chinese company New Minerals Investment donated material for the construction of a three-classroom school in Nizi.

‘I think there’s a big difference between our attitudes and expectations before and after the project,’ explained the president of the Nizi local miners’ committee, Jean Paul Molo Lotsima. ‘Before, I was fearful. It was as if I was going to ask for help. But we now know that mining companies have an obligation to the community to carry out development projects. Now, during meetings with the mining companies, I introduce myself as president of the local miners’ committee and our discussions are based on our legal rights, thanks to the training from PRODAEWI and CSF.’

Promoting autonomy among small-scale miners

APROFEL in Bas-Congo and BACID in Bandundu supported the setting up of miners’ cooperatives as a framework for pooling resources, exchanging information and meeting with local authorities.

Improving tax revenues and social services through citizen participation

Artisanal miners frequently report paying taxes, fees and levies which do not deliver any meaningful services in return. CSF partners have lobbied for increased transparency, accountability and citizen participation in how those tax revenues are used, leading to an increase in citizen compliance with tax payments.

In one success story, CSF grantees RHA, BDC, Caritas Congo and UPKA worked together to successfully lobby for tax revenues to be allocated to the mining communities where taxes are paid in Kalima, Kilo and Punia in Maniema. The provincial government has agreed and citizens have helped decide how funds are used – to build small bridges, public meeting rooms, and guest houses (small hotels). Several Call 003 partners, including CRONGD/Kasai-Occidental and ADEP, have advocated improving tax collection from mining sector operators and to use these revenues to fund basic social services and for mining community priorities.

Tackling fraud in the collection of royalties and taxes

In July 2014, UAID held a public forum in Goma, funded by the CSF. More than 50 people attended this meeting, including members of the provincial government, delegates from the provincial assembly, financial officials, representatives of 18 CSOs and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI North Kivu). Together they pledged to ensure that information on the revenue generated by the extractive sector in North Kivu was made public, establishing a framework for the exchange of information and the responsibilities of all the stakeholders.

‘EITI (North Kivu) was advised to publish the information received from the financial authorities and that declared by the mining companies on quarterly basis. This was intended to promote transparency and good governance of revenues,’ said Aaron Byamungu, UAID coordinator. ‘With the support of the CSF, we organised several public forums in the cities of Goma, Beni and Butembo and the territories of Masisi, Walikale, Lubero and Beni. This allowed us to work towards improving the social climate between stakeholders in the implementation of the EITI and to promote a culture of accountability.’

With support from CSF, APROFEL has adopted a strategy of dialogue with the authorities. Its objective was to persuade state authorities to both reduce and publicise the list of taxes and royalties due – a decision beneficial to both the miners and the authorities. The artisanal miners would be charged less and thus would be more likely to pay their taxes, and the authorities would have more taxpayers. The Governor of Bas-Congo signed this into legislation with order No. 090/BIS/CAB. GOV/BC/007/2014 on 27 January 2014.
Participatory budget planning

CSF funded six projects relating to participatory governance through participatory budgeting, with the intention of giving local people a voice in how and where public resources should be spent in the Decentralised Territorial Entities (ETDs) in which they live.

ETDs are regarded as ineffective at ‘providing public goods and services to their populations’ and have a lack of ‘internal management of resources ... which results in the absence of budgets and financial reports’. ETDs are further characterised ‘by the lack of a structured administrative organization’, such as ‘under-qualified ... staff, weak technical capacity and a lack of infrastructure’ (World Bank, 2011).

This is compounded by the irregular transfer of funds from provinces to ETDs. Within this context, participatory practices are emerging as important innovations in mainstreaming the needs and wishes of the people, giving them a voice in government, resulting in increased tax revenues and compliance.

Citizen empowerment and responsibility

Efforts to empower citizens and their representatives to monitor and hold government to account face formidable challenges in the DRC. Local government officers often lack experience or knowledge about participatory governance.

The population is also largely unaware of its right to hold government to account and express its concerns to government. CSF partners have explained that the cumulative cultural experience with authority over the last several decades is that it dictates, refuses to be questioned, speaks with power, and has often acted menacingly or worse in response to questioning or negative feedback; consequently citizens to have an aversion to holding government to account.

‘We organised radio phone-in programmes on the subject of accountability and participatory budgeting. It was a delicate situation. While there were no physical threats, there was nonetheless a clear sense that some of the speakers were saying that the population and civil society organisations have no place even talking about such a subject. In order to overcome this problem, we organised a TV broadcast with a phone-in. We invited the director general of the head office of the Administrative and State Owned Resources [DGRAD] to take part, and clarify the importance and the implications of stakeholder involvement in managing community resources,’ said Marie-Josée Kadiambu, coordinator of Levain des Masses, CSO member of CRONGD/Bas-Congo.

Other approaches adopted by civil society partners included:

- Training and consciousness-raising of citizens (and citizen leaders) and of local government authorities about citizens’ rights and participatory governance.
- Participatory problem identification and analysis of governance conditions.
- Forums for interaction between government officials and citizens (and CSOs) as consultative mechanisms that allow citizen input into decision making, citizens to hold government to account, and government to explain itself and collect feedback.

According to Call 001 grantees, the most effective confidence-building strategy was to bring local elected officials, other authorities and local communities together. This required involving local authorities as early in the process as possible, informing provincial level authorities and seeking the necessary written authorisation allowing local government leaders to participate, inviting government authorities to the events, including them in the decision making, and providing specific training to government authorities on participatory governance.

Accountability forums organised by CARS, funded by CSF, allow CSOs to interact with local government in the Kinshasa communes of Ngiri-Ngiri, Bandalungwa and Bumbu. This work built on experience gained through support from the European Union.
Citizens from Ngiri-Ngiri, Kinshasa worked together with local authorities to create local plans and budgets.

CARS head, Jean Usseni, stated:

‘Often the local authorities wanted to know if there was a legal obligation to undertake participatory budgeting. Our training sessions were intended to demonstrate that participatory governance through participatory budgeting is at the very heart of our constitution that enshrines the principle of decentralisation. Each Decentralised Territorial Entity is called upon to mobilise its own resources and the principle of participation, transparency and accountability are need to raise awareness of this among the population. We have experienced this in Kinshasa, Mbandaka and Kindu.’

Engaging local authorities for participatory decision making and accountability

In CSF partner project areas, gaining local government engagement in the process was an integral part of the process, with the CSF experience often involving:

- Training government officials as well as citizens about participatory governance, transparency and accountability.
- Obtaining official permission from higher authorities and/or convincing authorities of the benefits of transparency and accountable governance, such as citizen support, esteem and compliance with tax requirements.
- Activities such as joint training that built confidence between citizens and local authorities.
- Encouraging government officials to divulge their budgets and be willing to explain themselves to citizens through public forums and consultations.

These experiences have been so successful that in many project areas government officials are no longer willing to take decisions on their own without first consulting with CSOs or their citizens.
For example, the mayor of Kananga issued a circular note instructing authorities in its DTEs to account for their 2012-13 and 2013-14 budgets to their populations. CSF partners CODHOD, PDFE, CARS and others have collaborated with the Participatory Budget Network (REBUP), RECIC, CEJP (Catholic Church), CLPPs, and others to advocate for provincial edicts requiring participatory budgeting in Kinshasa, Équateur, Bandundu, Bas-Congo, Katanga, and Kasai-Occidental.

‘We identified allies in each province – provincial deputies, provincial ministers and civil society organisations,’ explained Henri Christin Longendja, of CODHOD, a member of REBUP. ‘In Kinshasa the process was championed by Suzanne Mbuluyo Sanzi, the provincial deputy. She endorsed the proposal and submitted it to the office of the Provincial Assembly for debate. In the other provinces, we are also at the stage of endorsement by the provincial deputies. We would not have arrived at this stage of the process of having the edict adopted without the support of the CSF.’

**International civil society networking and advocacy**

CODHOD, a Call 004 partner, has worked with REBUP, a participatory budgeting network and is a member of the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy (IOPD), a network spanning 615 towns across 71 countries. Its association with IOPD allows it to draw on the know-how of other CSOs, as well as exchange information and share the DRC experience of participatory democracy in order to further democracy in municipal government.

‘The IOPD supported our work on awareness-raising and helped us design and conduct training on preparing participatory budgeting documents. We now contribute regularly to the IOPD by providing information on the experiences of participatory budgeting in the DRC,’ said Henri Christin, Coordinator Longendja, CODHOD member of REBUP.

**Budget development, approval and execution**

‘This time [2014 financial year], we drew up the budget differently than in previous years. Firstly, following CSF financing, we started with civil society through organisations that are part of CARS. We noticed that people were interested all the way through the budget drafting process. This encouraged us to move forward. We saw citizens’ genuine participation through CSOs in of Ngiri-Ngiri commune;’ said Benjamin Bonyoma, the deputy mayor responsible for economy and finance in the commune.

As part of this process, CARS brought together representatives to discuss the difficulties and needs of local people.

CODHOD has taken the traditional participatory budgeting methodology one step farther by integrating the use of mobile phones, allowing citizens to vote via SMS on what priorities they would like to see addressed in their community.

‘With the support of CARS and CSF, we identified the needs of the people in their localities, put them in order and presented them to the local authorities as terms of reference. Access to water, electricity, cleaning up the environment and security are the main needs. We succeeded in drafting a community development plan, which we put to the mayor for inclusion in the community budget. None of this was possible before the project. We are now more closely connected to the authorities so that we can find solutions together,’ said Robert Kigotshi, Ngiri-Ngiri accountability forums coordinator.

**Citizen input x accountability = greater tax revenues, government capacity building and citizen satisfaction**

Through the participatory budgeting process, CSF grantees have created a more transparent budgetary process in their areas of operation, leading to increased tax collection as well as to the effective use of these taxes by the authorities that participated.

In the community of Lukonga in Kasai-Occidental, budget monitoring is the responsibility of CSF partner PDFE. On behalf of Lukonga market vendors, it advocated for the construction of stalls for the traders to sell from and for the marketplace to be cleaned up. Some of the resources were to come from taxes on stalls in the Lukonga market.

In a meeting organised in conjunction with the mayor, the monitoring committee raised awareness among stallholders of the need to pay the taxes.

‘The awareness-raising campaign didn’t just include the stallholders but also the tax collectors so as to maximise revenues. Once the process had begun, the average daily taxes from the market of 2,500-3,000 Francs surpassed 9,000 Francs,’ said Gaby Mwamba, PDFE coordinator.

During meetings of the consultation frameworks organised by CARS in three communes in Kinshasa, government now reports to citizens about the use they have made of budget resources.

‘I believe that if, bit by bit, we are going to work with civil society, we’ll be able to increase the budget and our strength on the ground appreciably. The last few years, we have never had more than one billion Congolese francs in revenues. We put the figure at 400-500 million francs and had problems in collecting it. But this time, with the contribution of the people [members of the consultative group], we really increased it and reached more than one billion in revenue. With regard to the realities on the ground, we have chosen to set the budget at 800 million. The main part of the work is still to be done in terms of how to collect the money;’ said Benjamin Bonyoma, Ngiri-Ngiri’s deputy mayor.
Transparency in local taxation

As part of Calls 001, 002 and 004, several projects funded by CSF have been involved in promoting transparency in local taxation. Transparency is a critical factor in reducing corruption and improving accountability.

The experiences of these projects show that the principles of good governance bring together local authorities and local people to improve daily life for everyone.

Citizen empowerment and responsibility

Empowerment for citizens in the DRC means being able to engage on a daily basis with the state, public services, markets and the political system; in a process which gives them participation and accountability in local governance and decision making.

CSF partners involved in promoting transparency in local taxation sought increased government engagement, information sharing and an in-principle agreement to begin the process of participatory decision making in their respective areas of operation. They began by asking citizens about their wants and needs, and creating avenues through which they could exert influence over the political, economic and social processes that determine their daily lives.

Call 004 partner CARS undertook a series of meetings in its target areas of Mbandaka, Kindu and three Kinshasa communes to consult communities about their priorities, before undertaking advocacy initiatives regarding participatory budgeting, participatory decision making, and improvements in basic services, such as water, electricity, security and waste collection.

Levain des Masses, member organization of CRONGD/Bas-Congo ascertained citizens’ priorities in their respective areas through monitoring committees.

‘Local governance had been reserved only for political and administrative authorities. When we started to implement projects related to good governance in the territory of Madimba, Ngeba, we canvassed people’s opinions. We organised radio phone-ins on the subject of accountability and participatory budgeting. We had a lot of feedback especially when we were trying to explain that the budget process was not the preserve of civil servants,’ explained Marie-Josée Kandiambu Mangemba, coordinator of Levain des Masses-CRONGD-Bas-Congo.

Engaging local authorities for participatory decision making and accountability

CSF-supported civil society groups found that engaging local authorities in frank and meaningful dialogue almost always involved training government officials and citizens about participatory governance, transparency and accountability; obtaining official permission from higher authorities and/or convincing authorities of the benefits of transparency and accountable governance; overcoming fear through confidence-building activities such as joint training; and
government officials taking that first step to divulge their budgets and be willing to explain themselves to citizens. The rewards however could be considerable.

In Kasai-Occidental, management of the market in Tshimbulu has been handed back to the city council. This stems from a decision taken by the district commissioner following training on the management of decentralised territorial entities, organised by Caritas Development Kananga (CDK).

‘After the training, Lulua’s district commissioner, who had taken part, signed a decree putting the management of the market in Tshimbulu in the hands of the city council, as required by law. Before the project, management had been split. The revenue from the Tuesday market was kept by the city, the revenue from the Friday market was kept by the district and the revenue from the Sunday market was kept by the territory of Dibaya. The stallholders didn’t know to whom they should address their complaints or who was accountable for managing the market,’ said Dieudonné Kanda of CDK.

Within just a few months of being managed solely by the city council, the market’s revenue was apportioned to address some of the stallholders’ needs, in particular the construction of public toilets. The revenue collectors use printed tickets instead of simple receipts, which helps eliminate fraud. Now, 30% of the market’s total revenue is allocated to improving its infrastructure.

**Budget development, approval and execution**

Taking an evidence-based approach to budget advocacy, partners have conducted surveys regarding access to basic services for all stakeholder groups; others have used public forums, consultative frameworks (cadres de concertation), tribunals or similar events where government officials provide information about their actions and resources, and citizens ask about priorities, the reasons behind certain decisions, and the use of resources.

The experience of CSF partners shows that citizens gain substantially from organising themselves into groups in order to use their collective bargaining power to greater effect. In Kalima, Maniema, Call 004 partner FOMAMA organised forums where citizens not only hold local government to account, but also call on officials of the parastatal company Sakima to explain and improve the way it provides electricity to Kalima.

Similarly, CODER and its consortium partner Association pour la Promotion de la Femme Paysanne du Maniema organised meetings between government officials and citizens in 13 markets in Maniema. They convinced authorities to build latrines as well as sheds and stalls for the markets, improving conditions for almost 17,000 men and 7,000 women.

FFPM organised consultative groups (cadres de concertation) that are representative of 6,300 traders, market managers and authorities from Kenya commune, Lubumbashi. These ensure that traders are now systematically consulted on how revenues from the taxes they pay daily should be used.

**Citizen input x accountability = greater tax revenues, strengthened government capacity and citizen satisfaction**

Cynicism about corruption within the tax system and the allocation of revenue meant that non-compliance with taxation was often an issue, with citizens reporting illegal tax collection and questioning where tax revenue was being spent. But as citizens began to see the advocacy activities of CSF-funded projects result in visible change, compliance with tax payment also increased.

CSF grantee Levain des Masses worked with local organisation Organisation de Défenses des Droits de l’Homme (ODDH) to educate citizens about their accountability as taxpayers.

Maitre Moïse Makengo, ODDH coordinator, said: ‘I was not paying taxes, and before I could convince others to pay tax, I had to start paying myself. People used to pay taxes from hand to hand without any receipt, but taxes have to be paid at specific places like banks. The first thing was to teach people what to pay and where to pay. We had a workshop and moved from one place to another spreading information about different taxes – how to pay and who can come and collect taxes. Before awareness-raising there was ignorance. People used to pay taxes without knowing what to pay or even if they had to pay. You would even find people paying tax collectors with goats and chickens.’

According to records provided by local officials, the efforts of FFPM resulted in a weekly increase of CFR760,000 in tax revenues in a single market in Kenya commune, Lubumbashi. Since January 2014, the market has been equipped with showers, latrines and washstands. These improvements to the facilities were carried out by the market administration team in response to citizen input through the consultative framework put in place by FFPM and funded by CSF. Participants had advocated for 10% of the market’s revenue to be handed over for its daily management and sanitation. This new way of managing the market has also made it possible to improve the market floor with compacted gravel to make it easier for traffic to move around and for vehicles to park. Water pipes have been cleaned. Bins are emptied daily. Maintenance is carried out by a cleaning crew put together by the mayor at the request of FFPM.
Governance within the education system

Education sector governance in DRC is characterised by fragility as a result of the previous and continuing conflict. With support from CSF, CSOs have set up mechanisms for monitoring good governance in the education system, increasing information sharing, enhancing the accountability of local authorities, and helping meet students’ needs. The process has engaged a wide range of stakeholders – local authorities, education officials, teachers’ unions, parents’ associations, CSOs and, of course, the students themselves.

Stakeholder outreach

The DRC’s long history of conflict and transition have placed the power centre for education services at the local levels, de facto already decentralising the system in advance of the government’s ongoing decentralisation reform, but in a manner that exacerbates problems of equity and quality for students. Establishing a relationship between community organisations, parents’ and professional groups, and local, provincial and national authorities, in order to facilitate the sharing of relevant information and lessons learned is critical for the governance process.

In Équateur, CSF’s funding made it possible for the Regional Council of Non-Governmental Development Organisations, CRONGD/Équateur, to set up a provincial observatory for education. In place since May 2014, the observatory is made up of representatives from civil society organisations, teachers’ unions and parents’ associations. It has a registered office and its status is legally certified.

‘Thanks to the provincial education observatory, there is now a framework for dialogue and cooperation between the state and civil society to tackle problems linked to education in Équateur province,’ said Jeanne Ebamba, provincial commissioner for preschool, primary, secondary and vocational education.

With CSF funding, SDK and partners have cooperated with members of the Civil Society Education and Scientific Research Thematic Group to organise 24 education thematic groups and an education early warning network composed of 314 CSOs located throughout the four educational provinces in Katanga. The network identifies problems with the administration of education, reports them via SMS messages, organises public forums to verify the problems and mobilizes advocacy efforts to resolve them.

‘The start wasn’t easy, with local authorities reacting as if they had been brought to court. But because the forums were held time and time again, they understood that these frameworks promoted the exchange of information and discussion for promoting education. For example, the head of primary and secondary education signed off the payment of CDF30,000 to enrol children in the first and second years of school in Bukama,’ said Dieudonné Muzang Masol, head of the consortium.

CSOs are working to improve access to and the quality of education for children.
Strengthening the relationship between community organisations, parents’ and professional groups, and local, provincial and national authorities.
Civic organising and evidence gathering for advocacy

‘This early-warning system has given us information about problems, abuses, violations and bad practices. By 3 September 2014 we had recorded 145 warnings. For example, failure to apply the law decreeing free enrolment for the first and second years of primary school in a Bukama school, combating corrupt practices in an educational establishment in Likasi or even conflicts caused by a misunderstanding about provincial and national responsibilities in the education sector,’ explained Dieudonné Muzang Masol, head of the CRONGD/Equateur consortium.

Similarly, the education observatory in Équateur province collects information from monitors throughout its area of operations.

‘We have recorded information on the illegal claiming of running costs, fraudulent practices in the organisation running the national test for the end of primary education and even the status of street children wishing to go back to school,’ said Gabriel Owanu, CRONGD/Équateur coordinator.

‘We’re getting more information and hearing about problems encountered on the ground, thanks to the work the observatory is doing. For example, those in charge of some schools are starting to be accountable and manage transparently, working alongside parents’ committees,’ said Jacques Ebwa Bambi, interim head of the provincial department of primary, secondary and vocational education in Équateur.

Communication planning

‘We have a lot of challenges in communications. We have difficulty managing communication from the base to the top and vice versa. Our main channels of communication are the internet and mobile phone, but these ways have their limits. Internet connection, especially in Équateur, can be very bad. And you have to use credit to use your phone. We need a way to share information across the consortium,’ said Jacques Tshimalanga, national coordinator, CONEPT.

‘We will do whatever is needed to maintain this position; this is why we acquired a freephone number which enables members of the network to send information via free text message.’

CSF provides capacity building training on communication skills and partners have explored the use of multiple communications channels to engage with their constituencies, members and the public.

‘We provide information to the provincial cluster of partners, both national and international, for education. We will do whatever is needed to maintain this position; this is why we acquired a freephone number which enables members of the network to send information via free text message,’ said Dieudonné Muzang Masol, CRONGD/Équateur.

Strategic alliance building

The three consortia focusing on education – SDK, CRONGD/Équateur and CONEPT – have carried out extensive work to reach out to other CSOs working in the education sector. Not only do they include them in the networking and information-gathering processes necessary to organise national and provincial educational observatories in Katanga and Équateur provinces, Kinshasa and nationally, but they also train and strengthen CSOs on internal governance and education policy.

CONEPT travelled to Équateur and Katanga to strengthen collaboration with CRONGD/Équateur and SDK on their work monitoring education policies, and to coordinate advocacy at the national level. CONEPT has also been consulting with CSOs in Bas-Congo, Orientale, South Kivu and Bandundu provinces.

Lobbying and advocacy

Lobbying and advocacy are the main mechanisms used by the partners to amplify citizens’ voices.

CRONGD/Equateur is presently lobbying authorities in Équateur to respect the agreement between the DRC and UNESCO that all education at primary level should be free. This will help to increase the percentage of children receiving an education. According to the latest report from the department for primary, secondary and vocational education, only 24.8% of children attend school in Equateur, the lowest number of all the provinces.

‘These tools have made it possible for us to take well-targeted action in planning measures for removing fees that parents have to pay over the course of the academic year 2014-2015.’

‘We received advocacy training from CSF as well as technical support. These tools have made it possible for us to take well-targeted action in planning measures for removing fees that parents have to pay over the course of the academic year 2014-2015. The provincial education authorities have made promises. At the start of the new academic year, we are monitoring to check whether the decisions of the provincial department are being respected. If they aren’t, we’re not going to give up,’ said Gabriel Owanu, coordinator of CRONGD/Équateur.
Opportunity for coalition building

Working in consortia has allowed organisations to increase their reach – locally and nationally. For example, Observatoire Gouvernance Paix (OGP) and Solidarité Paysanne, both based in South Kivu, signed a protocol to work jointly on improving working conditions for women in artisanal mining concessions in South Kivu.

‘Our members’ work quality has improved because of our workshops on information collection.’

Similarly CONEPT, CRONGD/Équateur and SDK collaborated to organise education observatories at a national level and in Kinshasa, Équateur and Katanga. CONEPT travelled to Équateur and Katanga to work with CRONGD/Équateur and SDK on education policies, and plan how to coordinate advocacy at a national level.

‘We are really national in terms of representation, and our experience has taken root across the country. Today, we have two or three members in provinces where before we only had one or none. In the same way, our members’ work quality has improved because of our workshops on information collection,’ said Jacques Tshimbalanga of the CONEPT and COASCE project – Towards an Independent Education Observatory.

Selection eligibility and proposal presentations

Civil society groups and the media were invited to a formal launch of Call 005 on 16 May 2013. It was an opportunity for participants to understand what processes and criteria differentiated this call for proposals from the previous four.

The 005 call for proposals for consortium working had a budget of almost $2m. To be considered, proposals were required to focus on improving governance in the areas of mining, health, education and gender in Kasaï-Occidental, Katanga, South Kivu, Équateur or Kinshasa. Concept notes were submitted by 64 consortia and assessed based on rigorous eligibility criteria and project concept. Semi-finalists went through a due diligence assessment of institutional, operational and financial capacity and finalists were asked to submit full proposals. Finalists then had to demonstrate the relevance of their proposal before a panel made up of provincial representatives, UK Aid, experts from the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC, and CSF.

‘This process gave us a platform to really explain to donors the goals of our project and the mechanisms that we have put in place to achieve them,’ said Kenir Kenandi, executive secretary of the consortium Lukibu Centre for Integrated Management/National Council of Health NGOs (CEILU/ CNOS).
Consortium management tools and training

To introduce Call 005 partners to the process of consortium working, CSF developed a training module to help them identify and manage problems they might experience. It was intended to help consortium members understand the challenges and the conditions necessary to successfully achieve the objectives of their project and included sections on the prevention of fraud, procurement, accounting and financial management, communication skills, project management and consortium management.

‘Two capacity building modules in particular greatly helped. One targeted financial management and the other consortium management. This allowed us to understand how the consortium worked, but also how the consortium was not the work of one single organisation. We learned that all member organisations had expectations from the consortium and had a role in the sharing of experiences and lessons learnt,’ said Charlie Patchi of CONEPT.

Almost all consortium partners are using all or most of the approaches presented in the CSF advocacy module – research and evidence collection to support their cause; mobilisation of support from public opinion and other CSOs; strategic alliances with influential politicians and government officials who can support their cause; various means of communication, including the media, to project their cause; and the strategic targeting of specific decision makers with the most leverage to make the desired changes; and strategies for making direct contact and building information-sharing relationships with targeted decision makers in order to convince them of the cause and ensure that proposed legislation will receive support.

At the CSF’s third conference to share best practices and experiences, Gisele Fuakuanzo of REFEDEF explained how CSF’s training helped them involve local authorities in their advocacy to change the way women and girls are perceived in Kasai-Occidental. She said: ‘We are working to encourage the adoption of practices that are favourable towards women and girls. We targeted important and influential figures from the outset. These included, among others, the provincial interior minister. He can influence the chiefs who are custodians of customs. We also invited the chairman of the administrative and legal policy committee of the provincial assembly. By involving influential authorities at an early stage, we were successful without having to jump through too many hoops.’

Working in consortia has allowed organisations to increase their reach – locally and nationally.
Facilitation, consensus building and conflict mediation

While CSF experience indicates that consortium working can achieve good results, these were sometimes limited by internal conflicts. Once projects were underway, CSF provided conflict mediation and facilitation services to assist in the resolution of internal differences stemming from the functioning of a consortium. It also supplied technical support.

‘We all have a part of the responsibility in the consortium. We succeed or we fail together.’

SDK, working in education in Katanga, was best able to manage internal differences by applying good governance principles. Consequently its members largely succeeded in working in unison. It adopted an approach that provided transparency among member organisations on approved projects, particularly sharing the grant agreement and the budget with all members. Additionally, it reported internally on activities and financial management. This openness created confidence and loyalty. Members enthusiastically managed their respective activities, justified their expenses and submitted their reports to the lead organisation on time.

‘We all have a part of the responsibility in the consortium. We succeed or we fail together. This is why we should all work together to guide and orient things towards success. The training on consortium management greatly helped. This is a new experience for us. The responsibility as such falls on us all, be it positive or negative,’ said Kut a Kut, UNEF, member of the REFEDEF consortium.

Lesson learning

Each consortium experienced challenging moments related to internal differences over leadership, funds management, and attribution of roles. Reviewing the process suggests that the following approaches would have improved consortium working in these areas:

- More time for consortia to organise themselves at the launch of the Call for Proposals.
- Limit the number of consortium member organisations.
- Accompany or provide training on the process of organising a consortium.
- Ensure that members participate in the conception and design of the project and that they bring some expertise that will contribute to the objectives of the consortium.
- Assess and strengthen the capacity of all the member organisations, not just the lead.
- Help in developing standards among consortium members, particularly regarding the funds management system.
- Require transparency within the consortium as an obligatory deliverable included in the grant agreement.

Feedback from partners suggested that a more beneficial arrangement would have been to target experienced, pre-existing coalitions, platforms or umbrella groups that already have internal governance structures defined and are legal entities. Since interorganisational relationships, rules and procedures already exist, investing in the capacity of such organisations could be more productive.
The Civil Society Fund for Good Governance (CSF) is a funding mechanism for good governance initiatives in the Democratic Republic of Congo. CSF aims to enable civil society organisations to empower citizens and their representatives to monitor and hold government to account.

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Contact us
Christian Aid
35 Lower Marsh
Waterloo
London SE1 7RL
T: +44 (0)20 7620 4444
W: christianaid.org.uk
E: info@christian-aid.org

Christian Aid
51 Avenue Kalemie
Kinshasa Gombe
Democratic Republic of Congo
T: +243 817 114564
W: christianaid.org.uk/drc

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