

TRÓCAIRE



TRÓCAIRE – GOVERNANCE & HUMAN RIGHTS

COMMUNITY MOBILISATION

TECHNICAL PAPER

**Working for
a just world.**

Cover Photo: The Odoot United Youth group: Charles Emonwait (27), Julius Oboro (28), Samuel Odeng (30), Betty Amuron (25), Aleher Augustin (26) and Charles Okwele (20). The group campaign for greater transparency in public spending and have successfully lobbied for an extension to the school in their village in northern Uganda. (Photo: Tine Frank).

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1. Community Mobilisation

1.1 Background

Community mobilisation is central to the impact of Trócaire's work and approach, and underpins our Governance & Human Rights (GHR) programme theory of change. Community mobilisation aims to support social transformation, where citizens, especially poor and marginalised women and men, participate in decisions that affect them. Trócaire's GHR work has a particular focus on challenging the structures and processes of governance that perpetuate and deepen injustice, poverty, exclusion and abuses of human rights. A key strategy to achieve this is to empower people and to support communities to organise.

The purpose of this paper is to briefly describe some of the key features of community mobilisation as it is supported by Trócaire. It begins by setting out some of the characteristics of community groups; it then looks at the practicalities of community mobilisation, and how Trócaire can support the process. Finally, three case studies are provided as examples of community mobilisation in practice in programmes in Liberia, DRC and India. The intended audience for this paper is Trócaire GHR programme officers who are responsible for the GHR programmes in each country.

Community participation is a right. It is the right of every citizen to participate in the conduct of public affairs, to vote, and to have equal access to public life. This right is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and legally guaranteed and protected under Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The UN Human Rights Committee has also set down explicitly the core components of Article 25, how it should be implemented, its importance in a democratic society, and who has responsibility for its implementation. Community participation is also articulated as a right in many national frameworks.

1.2 Community Mobilisation in Practice

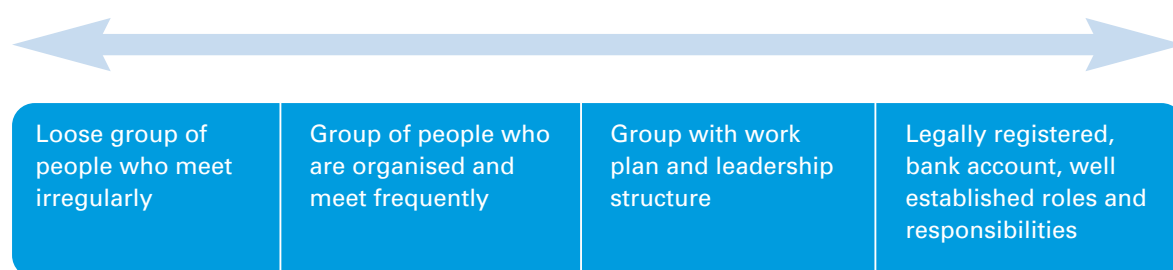
Community mobilisation, or the organisation of collective groups of individuals for action at community level, takes numerous shapes and forms and there is no standard description. Community groups reflect their contexts, the people who form them, and are usually organised around purposes specific to the local situation. As such, community groups are very different entities across all countries in which Trócaire is working. This is how it should be and it is important that groups reflect, and are part of, the community. Trócaire programmes engage and support tens, or sometimes hundreds of community groups in each country and the individuality of each group should be appreciated.

Some examples of community groups in our programmes include: In DRC, Community Based Organisations (CBOs) were set up by the Catholic Church and form part of the Church structures; In India, Village Development Communities (VDCs) were formed and supported by partners as informal citizens' bodies; other more formal bodies have been promoted by the Government and oversee the execution of various schemes in specific thematic areas such as School Management Committees (SMCs) or Health Committees. In Liberia, Community Forestry Development Committees (CFDCs) have been set up as result of new legislation, while in other cases in Liberia groups are a self-formed group of activists.

An important first step in supporting community mobilisation is understanding more deeply the groups that we are supporting. The four characteristics described below: **level of formality, purpose, approach, and sustainability**, seek to provide a brief framework to support analysis or a mapping of the various groups that we are supporting. These characteristics are presented as spectrums or ranges within which there is no correct or incorrect progression. It is for community groups themselves to decide what is appropriate in their situation.

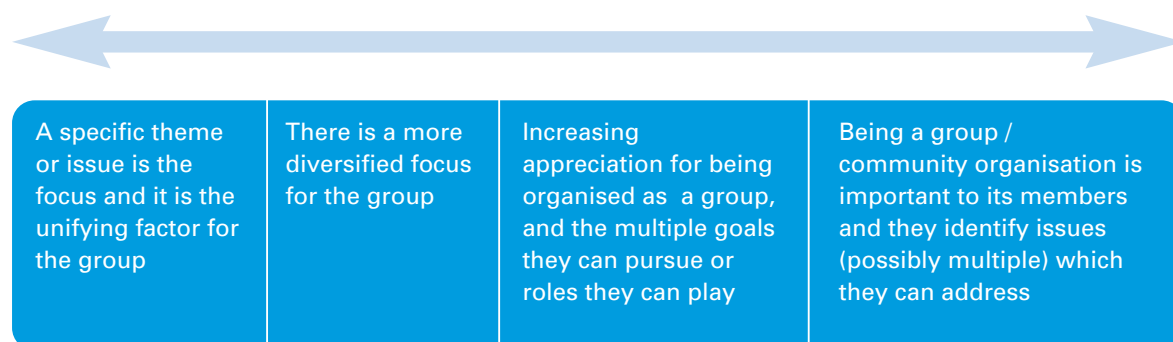
Given the diversity of groups with whom Trócaire is currently engaging, it would be impossible to develop an exhaustive set of characteristics, and there are many issues which are likely to be critically important in a particular context which are not mentioned but should be considered at country level. The characteristics below are presented separately for purposes of clarity, however, there is undoubtedly a strong link between characteristics. And, as the scales are seeking to describe a social dynamic, there are likely to be exceptions.

Level of formality



Many factors inform why a group is organised and the level of formality or organisation which is appropriate. Volunteerism and the amount of time which individuals can give and possibly the literacy levels are likely to be dominant background factors. While it is likely that a community may seek to move from informal to more formal along this scale, the pros and cons of doing so should be weighed up. Formally registered groups may have more legal protection against threats from authorities, they may have access to spaces where they can influence policy, however, they can also lose their sense of volunteerism and can be influenced by external forces.

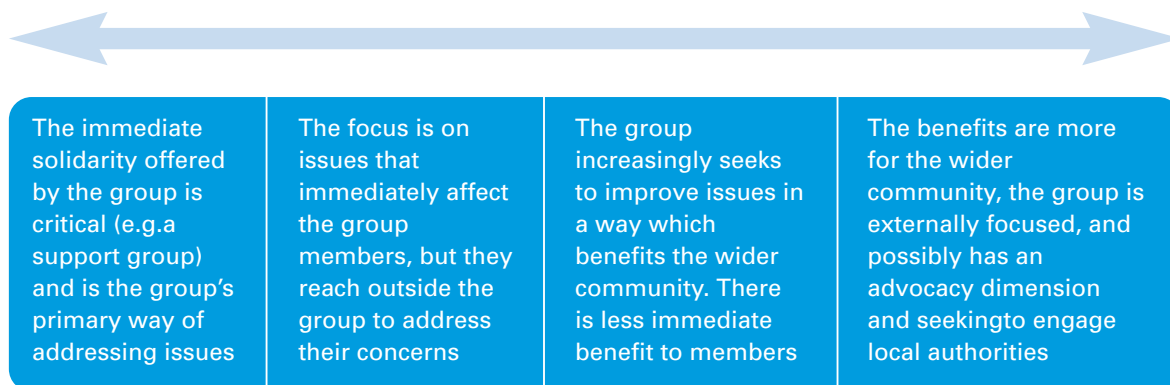
Purpose



At one end of the spectrum, a community may organise for the purpose of responding to a particular issue, often regarding a particular service such as health or education. At the other end of the scale groups may organise primarily for solidarity and because they see the potential of organising (such as a village development committee or local parliament); they then identify the challenges which they collectively experience and take action. In the mid-scale, there is more or less emphasis on a thematic focus/foci, or the importance of organising.

Ultimately, the purpose of all groups is to better their situation. However, depending on the local context, people will organise differently depending on how the community has prioritised issues or, possibly, if there was external support from NGOs to facilitate the community to organise, or government legislation enabling community groups.

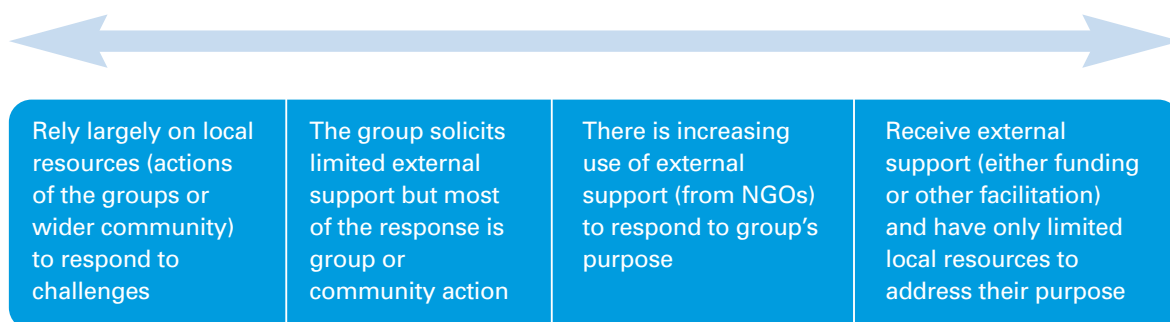
Approach



Participation in 'peace circles'¹ or other forms of solidarity groups often provide a safe environment for members where they can share experiences and learn from each other how to deal with difficult situations – a safe space where the immediate interaction with other members is important. At the other end of the scale, a group could be comprised by citizens who are concerned about their wider community and are motivated to take action – the group is open and activist oriented.

The approach of group members significantly influences (and/or is influenced by) the purpose of the group. For example, a group whose purpose is to support victims of GBV will need to have a safe space and there is considerable benefit from solidarity. Issues such as community development on the other hand are usually discussed more openly and possibly seek to stimulate collective action in the wider community.

Sustainability



Capacity of a group to respond to the challenges which they have identified is largely determined by the resources at their disposal in comparison to the scale of the challenge identified. In understanding the sustainability of the group it is important to look at how funding, individual motivation, time and leadership can directly impact sustainability. For example, funding may be needed for training, meetings, research and advocacy activities, however it is important that groups do not become reliant on external funding.

¹ Peace Circles build on the Principles and values of Restorative Justice and the wisdom of indigenous traditions to create personal transformation and non-violent social change. See Center for Community Peacemaking - www.ccp.org

Motivation can be time bound and apathy can ensue when activities fail or expectation of community groups are not met. It is also important to recognise that individuals may be motivated by material or status benefits rather than the issue they are seeking to address, or they may have other commitments or limited time to engage fully in a community group.

1.3 Trócaire's Role and Added Value

In a majority of programmes Trócaire is working indirectly with community groups through partner organisations/ NGOs/ CSOs. The timeframe for supporting community groups varies significantly in Trócaire programmes. In some cases, such as Malawi and India, partners work with the same community organisations for up to ten years. In other programmes, new groups are being established and supported for shorter time-frames. In general, Trócaire takes a long-term view of the need to accompany both partners and communities through the process of community mobilisation.

During this time Trócaire aims to strengthen the capacity of our partners to facilitate community organising. Key areas of support to partners include the need to strengthen their facilitation skills to ensure that their support is appropriate and community driven. In addition, Trócaire provides technical support on specific thematic issues such as land, budget monitoring and key cross-cutting issues such as conflict-sensitivity, gender or advocacy skills. The programme approach also aims to achieve greater horizontal and vertical linkages to encourage learning among community groups and facilitate greater interconnectedness between our work at community, sub-national, national and international levels.

1.3.1 Capacity Building for Group Formation / Organisation

Determining the purpose of mobilisation: It is important that community groups and partners are clear about why the community group is organising and what they want to achieve. The support provided by partners includes carrying out needs assessments or problem analysis using PRA tools such as social mapping, problem trees, resource mapping etc. Support also includes prioritising issues and developing action plans to address the issues. Priority issues can be determined by the need to address practical issues such as health and education or address social issues such as the need for greater social cohesion, or creating safe spaces. Trócaire can play a role in this process by ensuring that partners have appropriate facilitation skills and tools to strengthen community centred and appropriate processes.

Forming and strengthening groups: Partners play a number of key roles in forming and strengthening community group structures. An important starting point for providing this support is to determine what the key characteristics of the group are, as outlined in section 2, and to assist in determining what progress should be achieved over the life-cycle of the project. When relevant, partners support groups through the process of formalising by capacity building in meeting management, establishing by-laws and bank accounts. A key aim for partners should be to achieve greater sustainability within the group by strengthening their capacity, autonomy and finding ways of decreasing the financial and/or external support. Trócaire can play an important role in challenging and working with partners to critically analyse how their support can influence community dynamics. Partners may be simultaneously supporting and hindering community mobilisation in the long-term, for example, through incentivising participation with per-diems, increasing the status of individuals in the community, facilitating access to information and training.

Results Based Management can also focus on measuring and learning from the process of mobilisation as well as the tangible impact. To facilitate this it is important that RBM tools do not apply a formulaic approach to community mobilisation and allow for diversity.

Strengthening leadership and accountability: Strong leadership is a core element of successful community mobilisation. Support from partners includes leadership training and capacity building for members of the group. Often this support is focused on people who are already leaders in the community such as teachers, priests, or village heads as they may have a level of literacy. This approach can risk creating or concentrating power in the hands of few people rather than benefitting the whole community. Therefore it is important that partners and community leaders also work on strengthening the capacity of people who may be more marginalised in the community, find ways to ensure that skills and information are disseminated more widely in the community, and ensure that accountability mechanisms are put in place between community groups and the community. Trócaire can play a role in working with partners to explore options for creating multiple leadership models and monitoring the perception in communities of the community groups. In addition, Trócaire also works with partners to ensure that they are accountable to the community and that feedback mechanisms are in place.

Ensuring gender is taken into account: Gender inequality is also an issue that needs to be at the forefront when working with community groups. Community mobilisation provides an opportunity for supporting women's empowerment and participation. Partners can support women's participation by setting quotas, and by delivering training and capacity building for women's groups and for women who wish to participate in community groups. However, to ensure that women 'actively' participate in community mobilisation, it is also essential that partners, and both men and women in the community understand and identify the different needs of women. Trócaire can play an important role in strengthening partners' gender analysis by using power analysis tools. Sharing research or experience from other contexts can strengthen their analysis of the opportunities and barriers to women's empowerment, and help them to develop strategies specifically targeted at both men and women to address wider gender inequalities. There is also the need to ensure that women do not become more vulnerable to gender-based violence as a result of their participation in community groups or that project activities do not re-produce gender inequalities. Trócaire should raise these issues with partners to see how they are addressing them and also ensure that monitoring systems can capture both the positive and negative consequences of the support.

Tools and Resources

- The World Bank's Social Accountability Sourcebook – *Good for definition of concept and examples* – www.worldbank.org/socialaccountability_sourcebook
- Civicus Participatory Governance Toolkit – *Good for practical tools* www.pgexchange.org/index.php?option=com_alphacontent&view=alphacontent&Itemid=79
- Capacity building tools for partners working with community organisations - Training for Transformation - www.trainingfortransformation.ie/ - *Good for participatory skills*
- Trócaire Gender mainstreaming toolkit – www.trocaire.org/resources/policyandadvocacy/gender-mainstreaming-resource-pack-practical-programming-guide – *Good to ensure participation of both men and women*

1.3.2 Capacity Building on Specific Thematic Issues

Focus issues: Depending on the focus of the group, capacity building can include training on relevant rights such as the right to participate, the right to education, relevant national policies such as forestry laws, budget processes and entitlements. Trócaire often works with partners to develop training material and methodologies. Results based management can also help to work with partners on verifying that skills and knowledge are gained through the training and that community members are using this knowledge to change attitudes and take action.

Conflict: In addition to addressing key thematic issues, working with community groups also offers potential to address conflict at a community and sometimes a wider level. Conflict dynamics can have a significant impact on community mobilisation. Issues to be addressed can include a sense of fear or powerlessness in society which inhibits community mobilisation and increases political or ethnic divisions within a community. Limited transparency and accountability often characterise conflict contexts, as do limited or non-existent local government structures. Trócaire partners need to understand conflict dynamics deeply to ensure that their activities do not exacerbate conflict. Partners can also play a role by ensuring that their activities are conflict sensitive and supporting a process of building peace and social cohesion. This can include creating 'safe spaces' for community reconciliation, and ensuring that community leaders and groups have the skills to manage and solve conflicts using non-violent methods. Trócaire can support this work by carrying out conflict mapping with partners and training partners in conflict sensitivity and peace building.

Tools and Resources

- Conflict-sensitivity toolkit – www.trocaire.org/resources/policyandadvocacy/conflict-sensitivity-toolkit – *Good for practical tools*
- Power Analysis – Power Cube www.powercube.net/ - *Good for practical tools*

1.3.3 Facilitating Action and Advocacy

Training: Partners advocacy training includes supporting communities to better understand the rights they are entitled to, who the key duty bearers are, the relevant policies, and how they can go about claiming their rights. Advocacy training can also include specific skills such as negotiation skills and training on different approaches to advocacy. Trócaire can support this work by sharing tools, training manuals and experience and learning from other contexts.

Move beyond capacity building: This includes supporting community groups to carry out advocacy initiatives and networking. These activities can include supporting communities to implement social audits and lobby local authorities and companies, helping to organise community marches and protests. Trócaire can support the use of media such as radio, videos, mobile phone, and social media. It can also support or organise community research to document the issues, raise awareness and use as evidence in advocating for change. Mentoring communities through this process and linking community groups with wider networks and associations are also important strategies for support. Accompaniment also includes going with and facilitating communities to access local or national authorities to raise their issues, and creating spaces and opportunities where dialogue and exchange can take place between duty bearers and communities.

Trócaire can play a role in supporting partners in developing skills and ideas for people centred advocacy. The programme approach can also support partners and communities to develop networks outside their community to achieve impact at a higher level. Trócaire's international advocacy work has also enabled the voice of communities to be raised to higher policy levels.

Tools and Resources

- Action Aid HRBA Governance Resources (Democracy, Voice, Power, Budget and Accountability) – *Good for understanding concepts*
www.actionaid.org/publications?theme=12&tags=&title
- Monitoring Government Policies – A toolkit for civil society organisations in Africa, CAFOD, Christian Aid and Trócaire –
www.trocaire.org/resources/policyandadvocacy/monitoring-government-policies-toolkit-civil-society-organisations – *Good for practical tools*

2. Case Study - Liberia²

Sustaining the Role of Community Forest Development Committees (CFDCs)

List of Acronyms

CFDC	Community Forestry Development Committees
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DELTA	Development Education & Leadership Teams in Action
FDA	Forestry Development Authority
FMC	Forest Management Contracts
NFRL	National Forestry Reform Law
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
PMC	Project Management Committees
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation & Forest Degradation
SDI	Sustainable Development Institute

2.1 Country Context

During almost 14 years (spanning from 1989 to 2003) of civil conflict in Liberia, forest resources and revenues generated thereof, played a critical role in financing the warring factions. Liberia forest was unscrupulously exploited and logs sold to individuals and rogue companies in exchange for guns and money. At the end of the war, one of the main tasks government, policy makers, development partners and civil society activists faced, was how to revert the wanton and unsustainable exploitation of forest and other natural resources. Against this background, government and stakeholders introduced wide ranging reforms in the forestry sector. The reforms were meant to address accountability, transparency, participation and equitable benefit sharing in the sector. As a result of sustained civil society advocacy, **the participation of local communities was formalised and forest communities were granted key rights** under the National Forestry Reform Law (NFRL) of 2006 and the Forest Development Authority (FDA) 10 Core Regulations governing the sector.

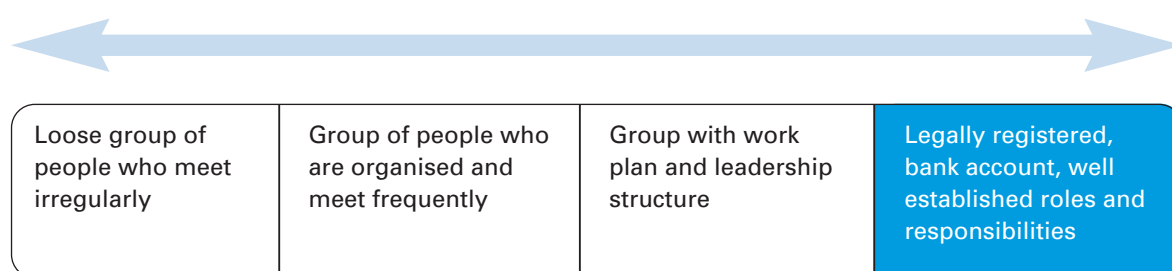
The NFRL and the 10 Core Regulations provide forest-dependent communities the right to establish self-governing bodies called Community Forestry Development Committees (CFDCs), negotiate Social Agreements with logging companies and receive a share of revenue generated from commercial logging. CFDCs represent the interests of communities in relation to/in engagement with logging companies and to the FDA. This was a daunting responsibility for community members who barely have capacities to interpret and implement their newly earned responsibilities. Civil society groups like Sustainable Development Institute (SDI) that had pushed for community participation had to therefore take responsibility for ensuring effective and meaningful participation of the CFDCs on one hand, and their accountability to the communities they represent on the other.

² This case study was written by **Nora G. Bowier and Titus Zeogar** from Sustainable Development Institute (SDI), a Trócaire partner in Liberia.

2.2 Community Mobilisation in Practice

This case study focuses on two forest communities in Liberia in Forest Management Contracts (FMC) Area B in Lofa County and FMC Area B in Rivercess County. These communities are termed “Affected Communities” as they are likely to be affected by the operations of the concession holders. Trócaire’s partner SDI has been working with forest dependent communities in forest sector governance since 2007. The organization launched its Empowerment for Community-based Actions or ACE Initiative in Rivercess County in direct response to local people’s desire to organise and actively engage the FDA and logging companies following the allocation of logging concessions in their areas.

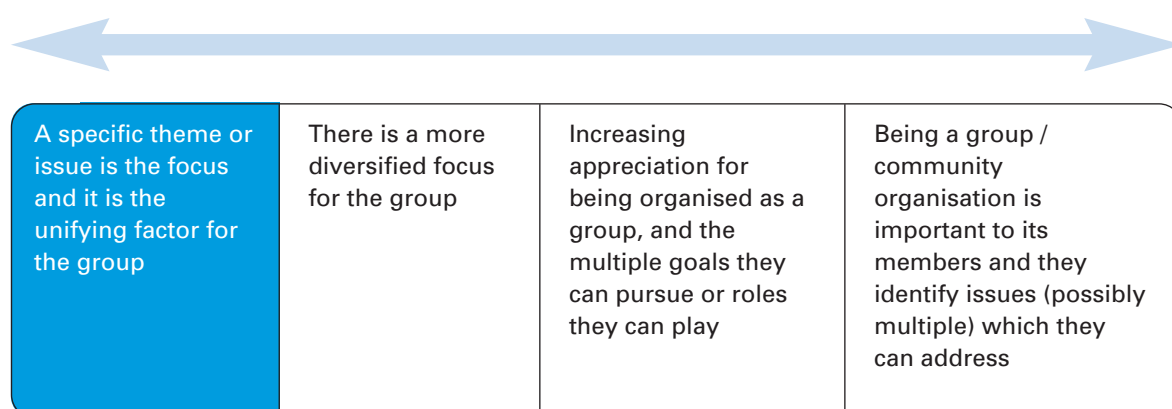
Level of formality



The CFDCs are required to be formally incorporated, to facilitate their communities to develop by-laws that govern their activities, and establish bank accounts to hold their community’s share of logging revenue.

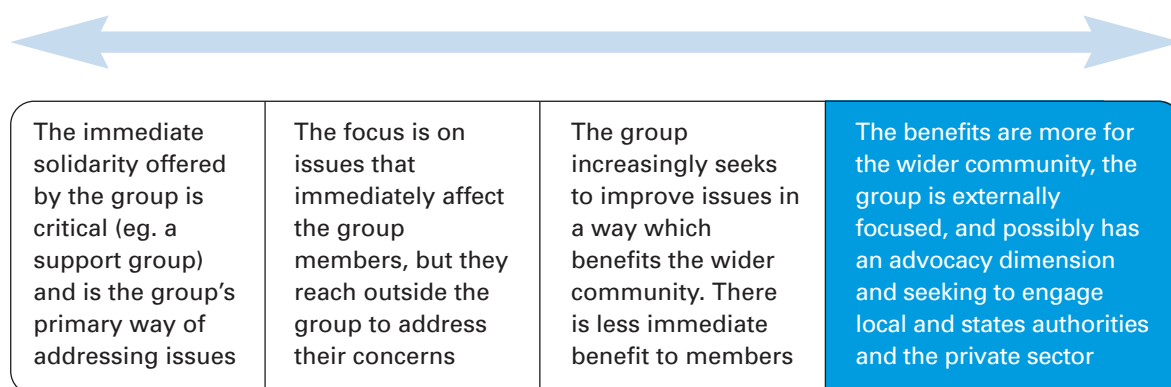
In mid-2011 both CFDCs of FMC Areas B and C were amongst the first to receive direct financial benefits through fees paid by logging companies. The two CFDCs established Project Management Committees to manage development projects to be undertaken with this funding. SDI identified poor management of some funded projects. For example, US\$18,000 each was used to establish two community rubber farms. One was fully established with funding well accounted for and the other has nothing to show even though the money was used and to-date no community member has been held to account for the loss.

Purpose



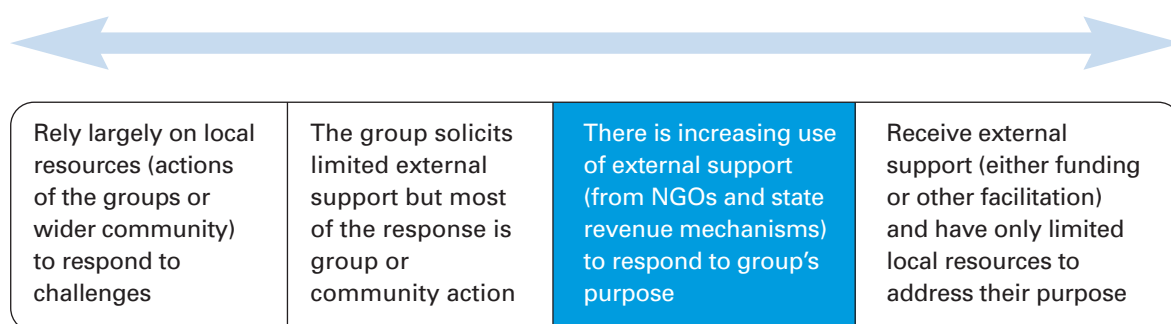
CFDC are expected to represent the interest of communities and to defend their rights with respect to forestry matters. However, CFDCs are also gaining knowledge and are representing the communities on other issues that were not initially in their scope of activities. For example, CFDC are participating in discussions on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD), climate change, land rights, and issues affecting the livelihoods and wellbeing of communities. CFDCs that have been empowered are helping to advise newly formed CFDCs about what is required in facilitating communities’ engagements in forest governance processes and their involvement with FDA and the logging companies.

Approach



While the CFDCs are more focused on representing their community interests, they are also involved in dialogue and advocacy with state authorities such as the FDA and logging concession holders. Many of the CFDCs have identified as an issue the lack of full participation of all members in their respective groups in executing their functions and activities. Some members of the CFDCs are more active and robust in pursuing the work of the CFDCs and the interests of the communities, while others remain less engaged. Out of ten persons on the CFDC in FMC Area B, only four members were said to be actively and fully working. This undermines efforts to develop more inclusive and robust CFDC engagement.

Sustainability



CFDCs manage the share of community benefits provided to them by the Benefit Sharing Trust Board and logging companies, and derived from land rental fees and stumpage fees (cubic meter fees) paid by the concession holders. However, many companies that were granted concession operations have not yet fully begun their operations and therefore have not started providing any form of benefits to the CFDCs and the communities.

This is leading to frustration and de-motivation amongst and within CFDCs and communities. CFDCs have also been dependent to a certain extent on support provided to them by organisations such as SDI in the form of capacity building and seed money to jump start their cooperation.

2.3 Trócaire's Role and Added Value

When the CFDCs were formed, their challenges included limited access to information, knowledge and skills, and the absence of an institutional set-up to build on. In spite of the legal basis of their authority, the CFDCs were established without a programme of support to empower them to effectively function.

2.3.1 Capacity Building for Group Formation / Organisation

SDI support to CFDCs can be grouped into four categories: organising communities; building institutions; training people, and mentoring members. Financial support cut across all of these categories.

Determining the purpose of mobilisation

SDI facilitated regular community-wide meetings to ensure that the community by-laws and Articles of Incorporation were developed with broad community input, and that decisions about signatories to community bank accounts, board of advisors and incorporators were made in a transparent and inclusive manner. Attendance cut across community representatives including women, youth, elders, chiefs and the CFDCs. Selected community members from constituent towns and villages attended and presented the views and interest of their areas. There is now a higher level of participation and transparency in the beneficiary communities. Community members in FMC Area B reported holding regular meetings with their CFDCs.

Forming and strengthening groups

The first element of the institutional capacity building involved financial support to the CFDCs to help them host community meetings, facilitate the development of by-laws and communicate to relevant stakeholders. Providing support to process their legal documents at relevant government agencies has been crucial.

Communities that received support have completed all the legal requirements for accessing their share of forestry revenue. The affected communities of FMC Areas B and C in Rivercess County have already started receiving their obligatory payments from logging companies operating in their area while others are awaiting their shares from the National Benefit Sharing Trust Board. Beyond fulfilling their legalisation requirements, the SDI-supported CFDCs are in many ways stronger and better organised than several others.

2.3.2 Capacity Building on Specific Thematic Issues

Knowledge of rights

Community-wide meetings facilitated by SDI were used to raise awareness about the legal mandate of the CFDCs and about community rights in forest related legislation, regulations and policies such as the National Forestry Reform Law of 2006, the Community Rights Law of 2009, and the Benefit Sharing Regulation. Simplified versions of these laws and regulations were developed and disseminated. Additionally, they provided a platform for communities to discuss, agree and pursue actions related to their rights in the Social Agreements³ and concerns about the logging operations in their areas.

³ Agreement between lodging companies and communities

2.3.3 Facilitating Action and Advocacy

SDI provided financial support for members of the CFDCs to participate in a four week course focusing on developing skills for analysis, advocacy, and group facilitation. Thirty persons from various CFDCs in Grand Bassa, Gbarpolu and Rivercess Counties were sponsored to complete the Development Education and Leadership Teams in Action (DELTA)⁴ training. This provided critical orientation for the members of CFDCs on how to work together as a team, how to manage meetings and provide space for inclusive decision-making, and to develop confidence to engage with stakeholders. In addition, a few selected CFDC members are brought to central locations for training to improve and strengthen their understanding of their role and responsibilities.

Further initiatives include: communities along with the CFDC and other CBOs are actively engaged in government policy formulation processes; CFDCs are engaging with logging companies and advocating for their rights under the Social Agreements and the forestry laws. The communities believe that these engagements are now yielding results as they are beginning to receive their financial benefits. While it is still early to determine the long-term impact, some positive milestones include: the construction of hand pumps to provide safe drinking water; there is an increasing role for communities in forest governance; there are a number of local by-laws which are improving local governance and preventing conflicts.

Move beyond capacity building / Mentoring members

The central element of this support included helping CFDCs to analyse issues related to logging, including their relationships with logging companies and the forestry authorities, and to determine the appropriate course of action. SDI worked with the CFDCs to identify the issues, provided guidance on how to draft letters and how to follow up until the issues are addressed. The CFDC representatives are also prepared before they attend meetings with logging companies and other stakeholders.

To bring more visibility and create space for CFDCs, SDI and other NGOs launched a sustained advocacy campaign in 2011 to secure a seat for CFDCs at the national level. This included supporting selected CFDC members and community representatives to participate in national and international level meetings and processes on forest and community rights.

⁴ DELTA is a collective training event to prompt action for social change. Its roots are in Freirean critical awareness, human relations training in group work, organisational development, social analysis and a conceptualisation of transformation derived from liberation theology. For more information see www.blog.world-citizenship.org/wp-archive/963

3. Case Study - DRC⁵

Community Mobilisation in the Catholic Church Justice & Peace Commissions

List of Acronyms

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CENCO	National Episcopal Commission of Congo
CLGP	Local Committee for Participatory Governance
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
JPDC	Justice and Peace Diocesan Commission
JPEC	Justice and Peace Episcopal Commission
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

3.1 Country Context

DRC has had very few moments of political stability during its 50 years of independence, experiencing years of conflict and dysfunctional government. Historically, state authorities/services were structures for self-enrichment and those in power have usually ascended to their position by means of force. During the Mobutu regime, political opposition was violently repressed, the economy was ruined and corruption became systematic and rampant. The state infrastructure was gradually starved of investment and was eventually used as a means of raising resources, if not completely abandoned. In a country covering an area roughly equivalent to the size of Western Europe, the state is non-existent for much of the population. Apart from the national elections in 2006 and 2011, the majority of people in DRC have never voted and there is significant concern that progress on democracy may be stalling. Citizens have a very low level of awareness of civil and political rights and responsibilities. This is combined with a more general lack of knowledge and experience of democratic systems of governance and what should be expected from elected representatives and government institutions. Furthermore, the population at grassroots level is not well organised in terms of representing their needs and concerns towards the authorities. This lack of capacity also extends to local authorities, many of whom are unaware of the relevant legislation pertaining to decentralisation. After years of authoritarian rule and a traditional system that often requires unquestioning clan loyalty, local officials tend to view the population as something that needs to be controlled rather than consulted and served.

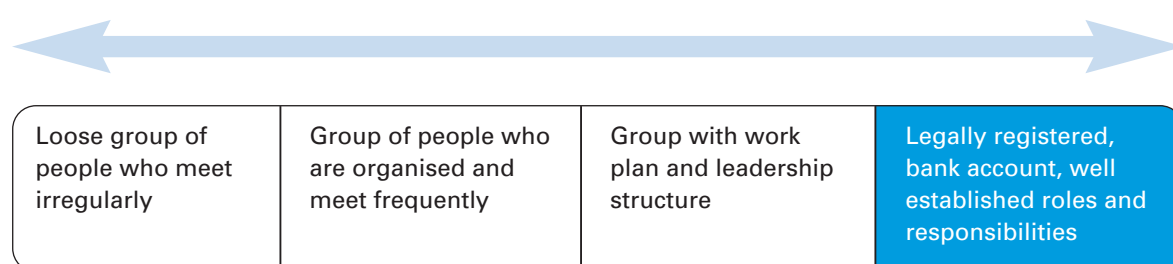
However, community mobilisation and citizens' participation in DRC is enshrined in various legal frameworks such as: the State guarantees freedom of association (art 37, Constitution, DRC), also Art 22 of ICCPR which DRC has ratified; the right to address a petition, individually or collectively, to public authorities who shall reply within three months; and the right not to be criminalised in any form whatsoever, for taking such an initiative (Article 27, Constitution, DRC).

⁵ This case study was written by Lea Valentini, Trócaire Governance & Human Rights Programme Officer, DRC.

3.2 Community Mobilisation in Practice

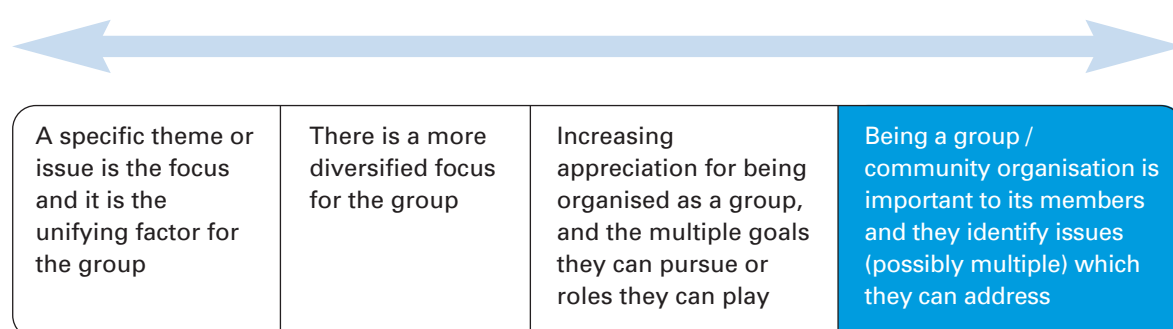
As in many other countries, the Catholic Church in DRC has a dedicated structure of Justice and Peace Commissions. At national level there is the Justice and Peace Episcopal Commission (JPEC) which in turn has structures at diocesan level, Justice and Peace Diocesan Commissions (JPDC). Given the context in DRC, the Church also decided it was necessary to establish local structures called Local Committees for Participatory Governance (CLGP)⁶. The mandate of the CLGP in the words of the Church is: "These participatory structures will enable people to organise around their own projects, promote a freer and more just social life where different groups of people come together, and mobilise to develop and express their views to face their basic needs and to defend their legitimate interests⁷. Democracy at the base will become a reality."

Level of formality



CLGPs are created at parish level and aim to be based on free association following awareness raising by JPDCs on the necessity of citizens to organise. All CLGPs have the same vision, mission, roles and responsibilities which have been pre-established at episcopal level. CLGPs do not require independent registration as they are recognised structures of the Church in DRC.

Purpose

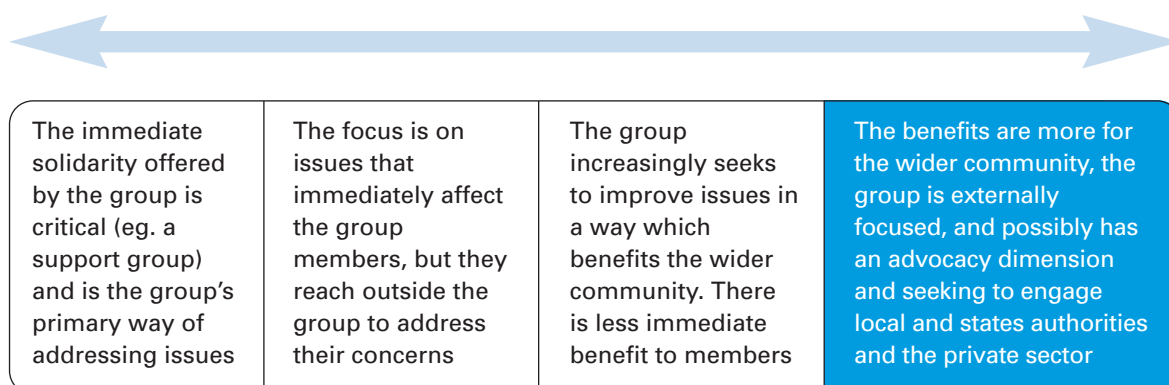


Members of CLGPs have identified being part of a larger group as a key strategy to defend their rights and they are often representatives of other community groups (e.g. farmers' association, representatives of religious community). They identify multiple issues through community consultations. This has allowed CLGPs to be responsive to citizen priorities and therefore no strong thematic focus has been identified. This issue has been discussed among all partners and no strong consensus has been agreed. Being responsive to community needs in the DRC context is key. Community mobilisation is weak and grassroots structures need to be seen to be representing the needs of its constituency to gain support and membership. However the lack of thematic focus makes advocacy work at provincial and national level more difficult as it makes identifying joint issues more challenging.

⁶ From the french 'Comités Locaux de Gouvernance Participative' (CLGP).

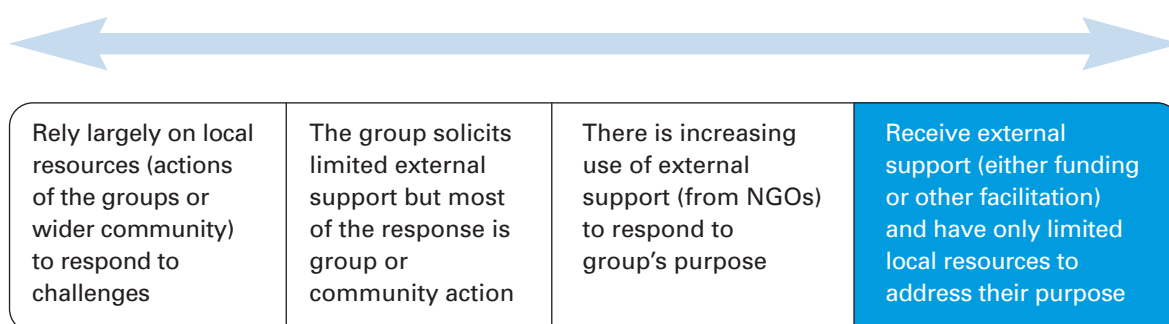
⁷ Compendium of social teaching of the church n°417.

Approach



CLGPs are externally focused and are intended to act as representatives of their community. Following community consultation their key role is advocacy targeting local authorities.

Sustainability



Church structures tend to be sustainable as they are embedded in the social fabric of a community. Their dynamic and success is however often varying depending on the technical and financial support they receive. Even with Church structures it is important for Trócaire to aim at supporting their sustainability. Currently Trócaire provides funding for the day to day functioning of a number of CLGPs. Small funds are given to each CLGP on a monthly basis. But the JPDC of Bunia decided to give all 12 months contribution to their CLGPs at the start of the year. This enabled CLGPs to create some small income generating activities, in turn generating funds for the functioning of their activities (paper, transport of members, tea for their meetings etc.). While this may not be advisable with newly formed groups where trust and transparency have not been established, with longer well-functioning groups it may be a strategy for sustainability.

3.3 Trócaire's Role and Added Value

3.3.1 Capacity Building for Group Formation / Organisation

Support to CLGPs is guided by a Facilitation Guide produced by the JPEC and used by JPDCs. The guide looks at how to create a CLGP (informing citizens on why civic participation is necessary) and its different roles once set up (representation, information, consultation, decision-making, management, networking, M&E and conflict resolution). The JPEC has also developed other tools on Elections, Decentralisation and Taxes all used by JPDCs to pass on further information to CLGP members.

As Trócaire provides support to Justice and Peace structures at episcopal, diocese and parish levels, it has been able to support coordination and linkages between the different levels. For example, the JPEC provides training and accompaniment to CLGPs and JPDCs in Trócaire supported dioceses and that exposure and experience informs the development of tools and strategies at JPEC level.

3.4 Capacity Building on Specific Thematic Issues

Conflict Sensitivity

Given past and current political context in DRC it is important to take a conflict sensitivity approach in all of our work. This is particularly important in the Eastern Province of Ituri which has gone through violent ethnic conflict. Using Trócaire conflict sensitivity tool kit, JPDC Bunia in collaboration with other GHR partners in Ituri undertake a systematic and regular conflict analysis of their context and project work. This has led to project adaptations such as ensuring that members of CLGPs are representative of the ethnic diversity of the community. This can in turn facilitate peacebuilding between communities as they collaborate in obtaining common aspirations. However in time of renewed tensions between communities it can challenge the functioning of CLGPs.

Local elections planned in 2006 and 2011 have not taken place in DRC. This means no accountable governance structures are in place at local level. This makes interaction with government structures and obtaining services particularly difficult for citizens. Since 2009, Trócaire and its partners have informed citizens of their rights, encouraged them to organise, and supported grassroots structures which are now taking actions to claim their rights. In some instances they have obtained small gains but in many cases their demands have remained unanswered. This lack of immediate success has led to people feeling discouraged, which in turn demands renewed effort from partners to convince them to carry on. It has also led to citizens turning to violent actions against government representatives or civil servants. It is unlikely that local elections will take place in the near future, or that government structures will be suddenly become accountable, and it is therefore challenging to ensure that our work is able to mobilise citizens in a peaceful way.

Members of CLGPs engage in activities which are perceived by the State as challenging State authority (as perceived by the state) and personal (financial) interests of powerful individuals. This can create security concerns for members. Both JPDCs and JPEC play an active role in limiting security threats to members of CLGPs. JPDC accompany CLGPs regularly and are therefore informed of advocacy issues emerging. When an issue is particularly delicate, advocacy maybe done by JPDCs, by the Bishop of the Diocese, by the JPEC or directly by the CENCO (National Episcopal Commission of Congo). Trócaire can also play a role in supporting both JPDCs and the JPEC in this matter and has had to do so in 2013. ([see Partners at Risk toolkit](#))

Gender: Women sub-committees (Dynamique Femme)

The Church in DRC has recognised the specific marginalisation of women in most spheres of society and the need to create specific strategies to encourage and support women's civic participation. The JPEC created a dedicated programme for this work. A rights-based literacy programme has been set up (supported by Trócaire) in recognition of the high illiteracy rate among women and the barrier it presents to civic participation. Within CLGPs, sub-committees called 'Dynamique Femme' have been set up. They aim to provide a safe space for women to discuss specific issues affecting them. They then share their analysis with CLGPs members. Some women are now both part of CLGPs and Dynamique Femme while other have so far chosen to only be active in the Dynamique Femme.

4. Case Study - India⁸

Empowering CBOs as Active Citizens' Collectives for Social Actions, Transformation and Change

List of Acronyms

CBO	Community Based Organisation
HDI	Human Development Index
PESA	Panchayat Extension to the Scheduled Areas
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
RPDC	Regional Peace and Development Committee
VDC	Village Development Committee
VPDC	Village Peace Development Committee

4.1 Country Context

India, the world's largest democracy, is a vast and diverse country of over 1.3 billion citizens with various religious, caste, linguistic and ethnic identities. Since independence and especially since the 1980s, India has made great strides in economic development and is now seen as a global power. However, rapid economic growth and poverty reduction rates mask another story, that of hundreds of millions of people who have been left behind by a very inequitable development process. India's inequality has distinct regional and social characteristics, with the poor highly concentrated in India's central and eastern states, predominantly rural and composed primarily of historically marginalised groups such as tribal people and 'untouchables' (Dalits). Women from marginalised groups are uniquely disadvantaged and evidence shows they have benefited the least from India's economic advancement. Odisha, Trócaire's focus state in India, has the lowest Human Development Index (HDI) of any Indian state. South Odisha, where Trócaire focuses its work, is the poorest region in India.

Due to corruption, lack of institutional resources and lack of experience of participation by the rural poor the many potentially transformative laws and policies which are in place have little positive impact on poor rural communities, denying them the right to participate in local governance institutions and processes.

India has an exemplary legal framework for citizens' participation in decision making processes. Article 40 of the Indian Constitution established village structures⁹ which guarantee a form of self-governance. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts of 1992 empowered local governance institutions¹⁰, and the Panchayat Extension to the Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act 1996 extended these institutions to traditional tribal regions. To support the functioning of these institutions the state established the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in May 2004. The PRI were designed as true participatory democracy institutions, with citizen participation in design, implementation and review of development and social protections schemes central to their functioning. However, the gap between policy and practice is such that in many places, especially in poor States with weak governance systems such as Odisha, the institutions are either weak or entirely dysfunctional.

⁸ This case study was written by Gitanjali Jena, Trócaire's Governance and Human Rights Programme Officer in India.

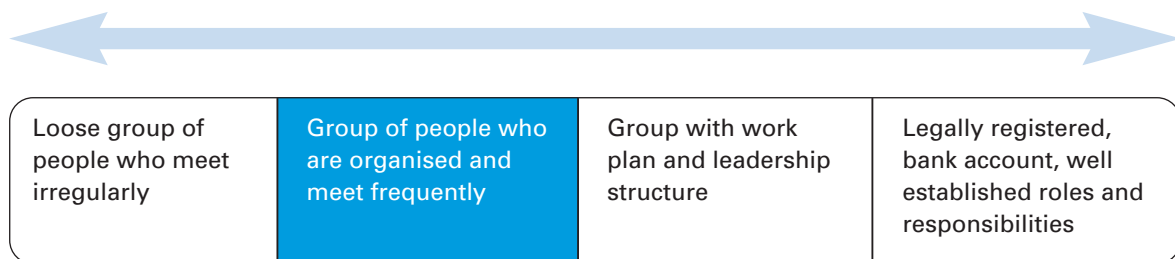
⁹ Village Panchayats is the village level governance body of the three tier decentralised local self-governance institution system (Panchayati Raj Institutions) in India. It comprises of different villages/wards represented by elected ward members.

¹⁰ Panchayati Raj Institutions – PRIs.

4.2 Community Mobilisation in Practice

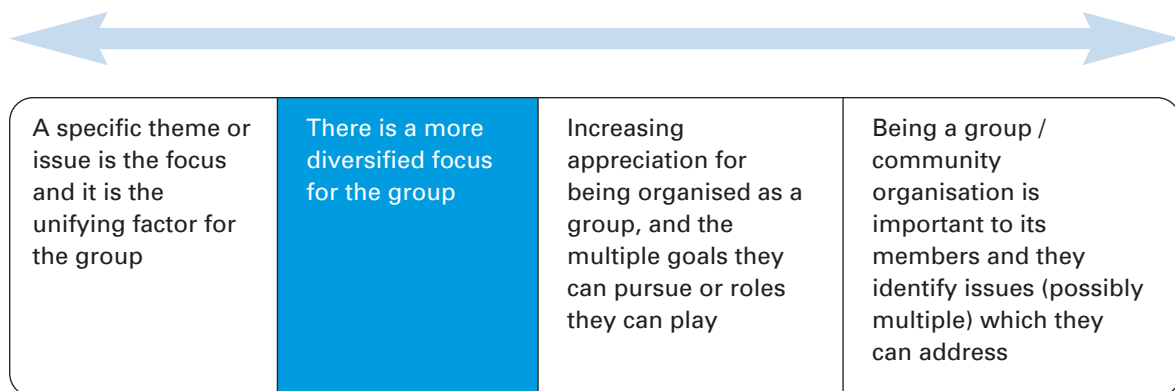
All partners work through CBOs, supporting them at different levels. At the village level CBO structures called Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Village Peace Development Committees (VPDCs) have been established and supported by partners. Partners also support CBOs to move beyond the village level and engage with PRI at Panchayat, Block and District levels, as this is where decisions are made that impact on local communities. To this end, Panchayat level CBOs have been supported along with Block and District level forums.

Level of formality



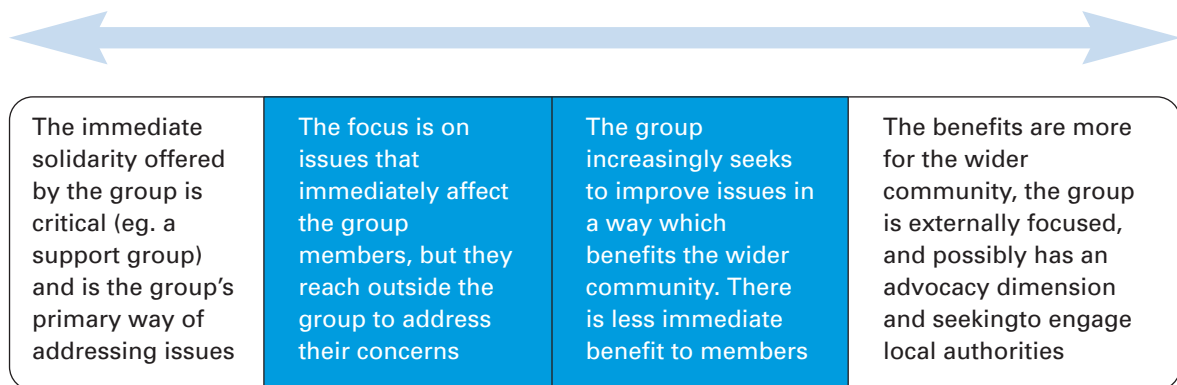
CBOs have provided a space for Dalits, tribals and women to come together and take collective leadership. CBOs have executive committees. These committees are informal and mostly executive members are selected or nominated by the community. In some cases, these committees are promoting rotational leadership. Committees are involved in identifying and prioritising the needs of the communities and work plans flow out of this.

Purpose



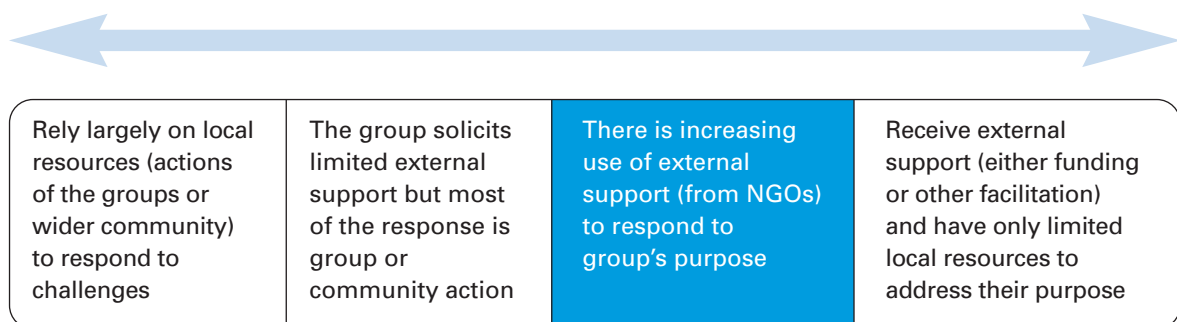
The CBOs are not organised around a single issue but are focused on addressing the needs of the community as a whole, and the needs of specific vulnerable sub-groups such as women or children. CBOs are engaged in identifying and prioritising the needs of the community. As such, the focus changes from group to group, and within groups over time. It may be access to education, health care, improved housing, forest produce, land or work grantee schemes.

Approach



In general, the CBOs are engaged with issues that affect their communities as a whole. Of course the elected members of the groups are sometimes engaged with issues that they themselves face, because they are also poor members of the community. However, we have found that if the number of issues a CBO has to deal with is high, and some do not directly impact the CBO committee members, this can lead to sustainability problems. Committee members have limited time and there is sometimes a lack of motivation if they are not directly affected by the issues at hand. In response to this some partners have promoted sub-committees within CBOs that are composed primarily of people within the communities that are affected.

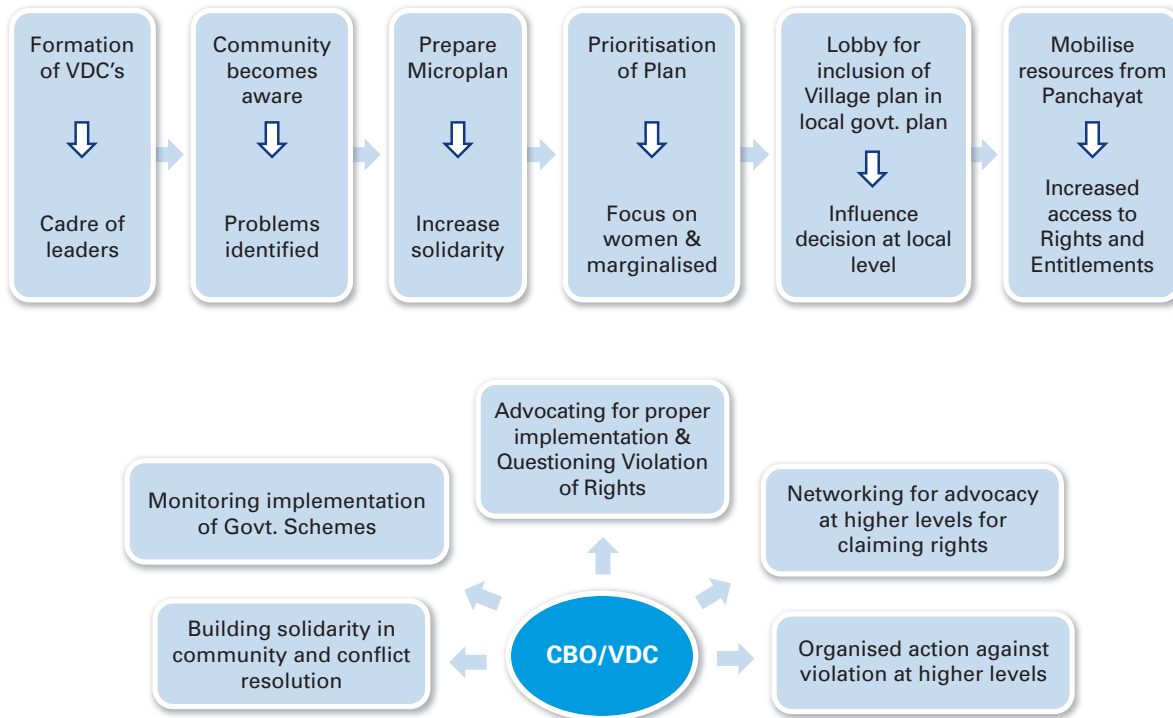
Sustainability



The sustainability and independence of CBOs varies to a great extent. These variations arise from a number of factors including the length of relationship, the strength of support provided by partners and the underlying capacity of the communities. Some of the communities we work with are very remote tribal communities, who are up to 100% illiterate and have no previous experience of interaction with the state or state service provision. Whereas some CBOs are self-directing and independent, the majority require partner assistance in facilitation and direction. Developing people power that moves from externally facilitated community action to community initiated action aimed at claiming rights and entitlements in a more sustainable manner is an ongoing challenge.

4.3 Trócaire's Role and Added Value

4.3.1 Capacity Building for Group Formation / Organisation



In India, these CBOs are promoted by partners as informal citizens groups. The key supports provided by the GHR programme include: sharing information related to different government schemes and rights; trainings and awareness-raising on these schemes and rights; building their capacities to take leadership and to prepare Micro-plans. Partners also provide detailed support for the advocacy initiatives led by CBOs, inclusive of road maps for actions as well as facilitating their meeting with local and district authorities. Some partners also support and encourage CBOs to generate their own funds for sustainability.

A tool was developed during the baseline to monitor CBO performance along three dimensions. The three dimensions assessed by this CBO Performance Tool are:

- 1. Gender and inclusiveness** – awareness of / acting in the interests of women as well as men including the interest of marginalised castes and religious groups
- 2. Influence** – relationship between important people / institutions and communities
- 3. Management** – internal governance, leadership, transparency and degree of participation facilitated/afforded to target population.

The length of a partner's relationship with CBOs varies between 3 and 7 years and CBOs are at different stages of maturity in their project cycles. As such it is hard to assess how far these institutions are ready to deliver on the above mandates.

4.3.2 Capacity Building on Specific Thematic Issues

Gender: Partners and communities recognise the need to create space for women's participation in CBOs. Many partners and CBOs have tried to realise this by creating gender quotas on the executive committees of the CBOs and encouraging women to take up leadership roles within the executive committees. It has been observed that through these leadership roles, women have gained confidence and are now taking many leading positions. Many women members of CBOs were elected during local government elections last year. However, focus and specific strategies are required to encourage women's participation in decision-making processes.

4.3.3 Facilitating Action and Advocacy

Both baseline and midline studies highlighted the need for a more focused engagement with CBOs in order to strengthen their capacities in representing communities. Examples of good CBO actions are reported on by partners but the overall impact on people's access to rights and entitlements as a result of CBO interventions have been evident only in a limited way at community level.

Inclusive collective Leadership:

There has been improvement in the visibility of the CBOs in the villages since the programme baseline. A single tier of effective leaders have emerged in some CBOs and the collective action that has been successful in general flows from their work, with the support of our partners. More work needs to be done however, to develop a second tier of leaders and to mobilise the communities as a whole.

Working for a just world.

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