

ACCESS

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**CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING PROGRAM – IMPACT EVALUATION
REPORT**

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IMPACT EVALUATION OF ACCESS CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING PROGRAM

1 Civil Society Strengthening program – purpose, history of program development and implemented activities

1.1 Purpose of the program:

This program is aimed to facilitate improving good governance and good quality public services in the ACCESS work regions.

This strategic aim was determined based on the idea that a nation that has good governance (and democratic) is able to uphold human rights, provide access and control to the poor and marginalised groups (particularly women) in development, and provide the community with good public services.

Good governance can only be achieved when citizens through their organizations have the capacity to engage systematically and successfully with the government (both legislative and executive bodies) to create positive demand. This component of the ACCESS program complements the community development work of empowering communities to solve their own problems by equipping communities and CSOs with the ability to lobby and influence government at a more strategic and expansive level.

The ACCESS strategy was to engage with as broad a cross section of civil society organizations in each district to strengthen their capacity, increase and strengthen their networks, and improve their capacity to engage with government on issues of locally determined strategic importance.

1.2 History of the program (1)

the civil society¹ strengthening component was added to the original ACCESS design at the beginning of the third year of ACCESS.

The Civil Society program effectively started in March 2004 while the other programs (Community Development and Capacity Building for Local CSOs) had been running since the middle of 2002.

In the first year of ACCESS, an advisor was engaged to assist AusAID in the development of a program of support to Indonesian CSOs. After extensive consultation with a wide variety of civil society organizations (including unions, NGOs, farmers organizations), the government and AusAID itself, it was agreed that any civil society interventions and support should be Kabupaten based, geographically focussed and centred on capacity building for CSOs to engage creatively with government and the private sector. The Kabupaten based

¹ ACCESS used the CIVICUS definition of civil society *An arena outside of the state, market and family, where people group together to pursue their interests together.*

CSOs needed as well to develop links with national CSOs to support their learning and increase effectiveness and for the national organizations to develop a deeper understanding of the reality of a decentralized Indonesia. It was proposed and eventually agreed by AusAid to integrate the CS program into the ongoing ACCESS program. After a long preparation process, ACCESS- in a report to AusAID – recommended that the civil society strengthening program should be integrated into the ACCESS program.

The reasons behind that recommendation were: a) the decentralisation process initiated since 2001 in Indonesia had increased the position/power of local governments and as a result civil society organisations at the district level need to be strengthened to maximise their role, b) there is a need to apply a holistic approach to assist marginalised groups (women and the poor) develop so they can have a suitable living standard, c) the impact at the district level will be significant and provide an opportunity to mutually utilize the resources developed by each program component. In addition the integration of the program will also open up opportunities for local civil society organisations to develop networks at provincial and national levels.

1.3 History of the program (2): implementation of the CS program

Just like in other ACCESS programs, implementation of the civil society strengthening program began with an assessment of the local conditions. In this program, the assessment was in the form of the Civil Society Index (CSI). The CSI was designed by CIVICUS, and international membership organization for civil society strengthening and had been used in Indonesia by Yappika in 2002.

The index provided an excellent tool to introduce concepts of civil society, assess the relative health of civil society in the areas of enabling environment, structure, values and impacts upon marginalized groups especially the poor and women. While the national CSI provided a great deal of information on civil society across the archipelago, it was less successful as a tool for action in Indonesia due to the vast geographical spread and diverse cultural, religious and economic aspects of the nation.

ACCESS (together with Yappika) refined the index to provide a more specific focus and locus for action i.e. the Kabupaten. The tool was used again in early 2007 to provide an opportunity to reflect on the progress made over the past 2 years and to develop modalities for future action.

The section below describes the main activities of the civil society program.

1.4 Major Activities

In achieving the above goals, the initial program design included a number of activities that were implemented collaboratively by ACCESS, YAPPIKA and Civil Society Networks. Just like all other ACCESS programs, the civil society strengthening program followed the process of: assessment - planning - program implementation - monitoring - evaluation.

Activities included in the initial design are as follows:

	Activities	Schedule
1	Assessment of Parties who are Trusted by Marginal Groups in the District	24 May-7 June 2004
2	Facilitator Training, Civil Society Strength Level Assessment Workshop	26-30 July 2004
3	Civil Society Strength Level Assessment Workshop (Civil Society Index Workshop 1) in West Lombok and Central Lombok	22 August-2 September 2004
4	Facilitators Meeting (learnings from the CSI Workshop in West Lombok and Central Lombok)	3-4 September 2004
5	Civil Society Index Workshop in West Sumba, East Sumba, Jenepono, Bantaeng, Buton and Muna	6-16 September 2004
6	Facilitators Meeting on Developing a Civil Society Action Plan Process	27 September-1 October 2004
7	Developing an Action Plan Workshop in each District (WGAPP).	5-16 October 2004
8	Action Plan Implementation	1 March 2006-28 February 2007.
9	IMS-2 Workshop	27 March-14 April 2007
10	Impact Evaluation of the Civil Society Strengthening Program	1 February-31 May 2007.

In the actual implementation of the program, there was only one additional activity. It was recognized by ACCESS after the Action Planning workshops that there was a strong need for further clarification of roles and consolidation of the working groups. Thus, a short duration program, called “Bridging Activities” after the Action Planning Workshop was implemented. The problem was that the development of the Action Plan was slow, the focus was not sharp and consolidation and participation of local civil society organisations was very weak in supporting the implementation of the Action Plan. In all the districts, the District Civil Society Working Groups (CSWG) – who were chosen by the CSI Workshop participants to elaborate further on the workshop recommendations in the Action Plan draft form, had difficulty in finishing their work even though they were provided with intensive support throughout. The delay in their work was further caused by the following reasons:

- The local civil society organisations are not used to using results-based management methods or approaches in arranging a program. What’s more, from the beginning, the logical framework analysis that was the distinctive feature of this approach, required certainty of what changes (impacts and outcomes) were actually hoped to be achieved in the program, while, in general, it can be said that civil society organisation programs are not planned systematically.

- The civil society organisations concentration was broken by power struggles over network and CSWG management positions.
- The capacity of local civil society organisations to run research based advocacy activities is still very weak. This was the conclusion of ACCESS from their field monitoring.
- YAPPIKA's resources were depleted from running their programs in Aceh related to the tsunami.

Based on the above, the Bridging Activities were launched to try to overcome the obstacles. ACCESS hoped that Bridging Activities would be able to provide the minimal capacity that is needed by local civil society organisations to run their Action Plan. Stakeholders support is also important for the Action Plan as is an increased consolidation within civil society.

The Bridging Activities program was implemented in eight ACCESS target districts from 1 July 2005 until 28 February 2006. The work team, who was the motor of the program, consisted of members from several local civil society organisations were called the District Civil Society Working Groups (CSWG). Only six CSWG were able to compile a clear Action Plan. These six groups demonstrated improved consolidation in civil society, gained the support of marginalised groups, developed better cooperation with other key stakeholders in the district and developed important skills to do research-based advocacy work. As evidence of improved consolidation and participation, the local civil society organisations changed the CSWG to become a formal network. Due to this, at the end of the Bridging Activities, only those six groups (West Sumba, Central Lombok, Bantaeng, Jeneponto, Buton and Muna) received funding from ACCESS. In general, their Action Plans ran for 11-12 months (from 1 March or 1 April 2006 until 28 February 2007) and only one network, JMS Buton, implemented theirs for eight months (from 1 July 2006 until 28 February 2007).

In West Lombok and East Sumba The CSWGs were unable to complete their Action Plans despite support from key several stakeholders and thus, were unable to receive support from ACCESS.

In addition to the above activities that ACCESS designed together with YAPPIKA, ACCESS also agreed to independent proposals from ICW and PATTIRO to run advocacy programs in six district target areas (ICW in Buton, Central Lombok and West Sumba; PATTIRO in Jeneponto, Bantaeng and West Lombok). In particular, ICW worked on education issues by using the Citizen Report Card (CRC) method and PATTIRO worked on providing a mechanism for complaints against public services at the district level. Through this cooperation, ACCESS hoped that:

- ICW and PATTIRO could sharpen their local civil society network advocacy capacity by providing tangible examples and direct support in the field so that the network could influence government on district policies that support marginal groups.
- The network could apply the knowledge and skills they obtained from implementing the above specific advocacy issues (education and complaints mechanism) – beginning with assessment of the community's opinion on the strategic problems

they face, formulating the issues into a research reports and position papers and then continue on to a public consultation phase, lobbying and negotiating with policy makers- to work on other issues based on a research based advocacy approach.

- The methods and techniques used by PATTIRO and ICW could be tested in different and difficult areas and lessons learned could be used in other Kabupatens supported by ACCESS

2 Impact Evaluation Background, Design and Implementation

2.1 Purpose of the impact evaluation:

The general purpose of this evaluation is:

To assess the effectiveness of the ACCESS Civil Society Strengthening Program and local CSOs in ACCESS target areas in encouraging district governments to implement good governance and provide good quality public services to marginalised people in their respective districts.

On an operational level, the general purpose is broken down into four specific purposes, as follows:

- a) To examine the extent that the district network development approach was relevant and effective in increasing the capacity of civil society organisations to have an active role in dealing with poverty and gender equity in each district.
- b) To examine the performance of ACCESS, YAPPIKA, ICW and PATTIRO support/mentoring and services to the district network.
- c) To examine to what extent the district network achieved the outcomes from their respective program plans (whether on advocacy work or network consolidation and involvement of the wider public community), including their strengths and weaknesses in the process.
- d) To compile valuable lessons learned and recommendations that are needed for strategic change and improved performance (ACCESS, YAPPIKA, ICW, PATTIRO and the district network) for the future.

2.2 Design , approach, and methodology

This report writing evaluation process was done through a “desk review.” This review was based heavily on the CS evaluation conducted from January to march 2007, the CSI workshops conducted in March and April 2007, field reports from staff, working group reports and reports from the key service providers.

2.2.1 Evaluation questions and assumptions,

Evaluation questions:

Questions that were hoped to be answered by the evaluation are as follows:

- 1) Program legitimacy and network legitimacy, to examine; (a) Was this program design (including processes that have been run) an appropriate strategy to overcome the problems of poverty and gender inequality in the ACCESS district target areas, particularly seen from the emergence of good governance indicators in each district; (b) Was policy advocacy a good choice in the program to overcome problems of poverty and gender inequality in the ACCESS district target areas; and (c) did the network get wide support from stakeholders in running the program?
- 2) Program relevance, to examine; (a) Was development of district networks a suitable approach for local needs; (b) Did ACCESS and the service providers (Yappika, ICW and Pattiro) provide a significant contribution in strengthening district civil society organisation networks, whether institutionally or through program developments ; (c) To what extent were the theme issues (education and complaint mechanisms on quality of public services) able to strengthen district civil society organisations advocacy work?
- 3) Program impact, to examine; (a) to what extent the civil society organisation networks influenced changes in local government policies; (b) how far the civil society organisations increased the capacity of the local civil society concerned; (c) to what extent was the consolidation in the district civil society organisation networks, between fellow network secretariat members and between the networks with other member institutes.
- 4) Program effectiveness to examine; (a) was there a total transformation of concepts from ACCESS to the service providers (Yappika, ICW and Pattiro); (b) was there a transformation of concepts from the service providers (Yappika, ICW and Pattiro) to the district civil society organisation networks; (c) was there coordination between the service providers (Yappika, ICW and Pattiro) in providing support to the district civil society organisation networks; (d) what was the relationship between basic work and policy advocacy work that the district civil society organisation networks did; (e) how far was the networks member program integrated into the networking programs?
- 5) Program sustainability, to examine: (a) the capacity level of networks in sustaining a long-term program and in planning and implementing new programs after ACCESS financial support has finished and; (b) in relation to that, the level of public and various other third party support regarding the district civil society organisation networks work; (c) to what extent did the consistency and the internalisation of good governance principles extend into regulations for the networks and their members; (d) to what extent did YAPPIKA, ICW and PATTIRO utilise local resources in district civil society networks capacity building activities; (e) and how far did district civil society organisation ideas go for further program developments.

2.2.2 Assumptions

This evaluation report was compiled on the assumption that ACCESS had sufficient information from the above mentioned reports to answer all the key questions. Information provided by Ersula database is included.

2.2.3 Data recording, review and analysis process

The data recording, review and analysis process was applied to all of the information provided at ACCESS. The data mostly came from the most recent report titled, “Evaluation Report on Civil Society Organisation Capacity Building in Central Lombok, West Lombok , West Sumba, East Sumba, Jeneponto, Bantaeng, Muna and Buton Districts Program “, which was finished by an EvaluationTeam in the middle of last May. This report was then compared with the outcomes of the IMS-1 (2004) and IMS-2 (2007) workshops and reports from ACCESS, YAPPIKA, ICW, PATTIRO and the district civil society networks since 2004.

2.2.4 Limitations of evaluation and links with other M&E mechanisms in ACCESS (CDST, monitoring reports, Train Track)

This report does not provide detailed information on developments that occurred in each network over three years that the ACCESS Civil Society Strengthening Program was implemented. A detailed report per Kabupaten is provided in the Civil Society Strengthening Program Evaluation Report that was done by evaluators who were appointed by YAPPIKA, ICW and PATTIRO. Besides the evaluation report, the Quarterly Progress Reports compiled by each service provider (YAPPIKA, ICW, PATTIRO) and local civil society networks also analysed developments that occurred in each network, and the ODST reports in Buton Civil Society Network, Muna Civil Society Network, Jeneponto AMST, Central Lombok CSWG and ACCESS’ Ersula and the TrainTrack databases.

3 Summary and Analysis of Evaluation Results

3.1 Program Legitimacy

Program legitimacy and network legitimacy, to examine; (a) was this program design (including processes that have been run) an appropriate strategy in overcoming issues of poverty and gender inequality in the ACCESS district target areas, particularly seen from the emergence of good governance indicators in each district; (b) was policy advocacy a good choice in the program to overcome problems of poverty and gender inequality in the ACCESS district target areas; and (c) did the networks get wide support from stakeholders in running the program?

After just over two years of running their programs, the evaluation team found that each civil society network had improved its program legitimacy (or advocacy issues that they championed) and that the legitimacy of the network had improved further. This was acknowledged not only by the network members themselves but also by key network stakeholder (for example, local and regional governments, marginalised village communities, mass media etc.).

The programs developed this legitimacy from being based on an inclusive and participative assessment. Assessment of the issues that civil society and the district face began with the “Assessment of Parties Trusted by the Marginalised Groups in the District” activity and climaxed at the Civil Society Index Workshop. There was also the Action Planning process and the Bridging Activities. While this process took a long time, the network members felt that the time was well spent to ensure a high level of cohesion among members and good relations with key stakeholders. In addition, the Action Plan was refined by the Working Groups throughout the Bridging Activities and this plan was cross-checked via a mini workshop, involved various key interest groups such as village representatives, women, district civil society organisations and even local and regional government representative. Finally, the plan was submitted to ACCESS. These processes designed to develop cohesiveness and trust among the network members were deemed successful in building the legitimacy of the networks themselves.

Furthermore, the evaluation team found that the advocacy issues and the approaches used by the local networks were relevant to local needs. Changes at the district level were created through several strategies. In the view of the district civil society organisations, at least those organisations that were part of the network supported by ACCESS, the policy advocacy strategy that was proposed by the networks was an appropriate program choice. The advocacy strategy has supplemented community development activities facilitated by local civil society organisations through the Community Led-Assessment and Planning Process (CLAPP) methodology at a village level. The evaluation team and local participants

in the evaluation acknowledged that the advocacy strategy was a suitable choice and verified that the overall ACCESS CS program design was an appropriate at the Kabupaten level.

The success of the networks in developing and running the inclusive and participative Action Plan themselves has increased their legitimacy. Organisation legitimacy is considered something really remarkable in other civil society organisations or NGO's in Indonesia. Civil society organisations do not often get community support because community participation is often just rhetoric. However, many civil society organisations, particularly like West Sumba, Jenepono, Bantaeng and to a lesser degree – Cental Lombok are very capable of getting that support. Through the inclusive and participative processes, the support for the above mentioned networks has further strengthened. The opposite also can occur as it did in Muna and Buton. (Also see Changes in the Program Relevance below.)

3.2 Program Relevancy

Program relevancy, to examine; (a) Was development of district networks a suitable approach for local needs; (b) Did ACCESS and the service providers (Yappika, ICW and Pattiro) provide a significant contribution in strengthening district civil society organisation networks, whether institutionally or through program developments ; (c) To what extent were the theme issues (education and complaint mechanisms on quality of public services) able to strengthen district civil society organisations advocacy work?

The choice to run civil society strengthening using a strategy that empowers networks was seen as an appropriate strategy for most ACCESS target areas. The civil society organisations in the ACCESS district target areas felt that other meetings previously held between them never enabled them to work collaboratively on program implementation. The civil society organisations clearly realised that social transformation at a district level is really determined by their capacity to forge cooperation by including as many wide-ranging stakeholders as possible with the wider problems that marginalised groups face. However, there is a problem: civil society organisation social circles have low levels of mutual trust, to the point that these organisations are unable to push collectively for social change in their respective districts. The most obvious example of this is the shift from the principle of participation to mobilisation in the work carried out by some civil society groups. (One of the IMS-2 workshop participants said, “in the old days, mutual cooperation used to be voluntary work for the interest of the whole community but now people expect that same work to be paid by the government or donor institutions). The ACCESS Civil Society Strengthening Program tried to deal with the low level of mutual trust by developing strong networking between civil society organisations and with communities.

This networking required the civil society organisation community to have clear divisions of duties in three advocacy work areas: (1) ‘ground work’ (work at a community based level), like critical education activities, empowering community economy and organisational mentoring; (2) ‘front line’ (work at local policy making levels), like lobbying and negotiating; (3) ‘supporting system’, provision of services to support community based and policy making level activities, like research, member capacity building development of

information and study centres. This division of work was not yet a common model for social transformation work when the Civil Society Index Workshop identified the low level of collaborative work among local civil society organisations. Most civil society organisations still worked individually and, in general, had not established a support system with civil society organisations at a national level.

The civil society evaluation team found that a strong trend developed through the ACCESS support (both funding and capacity building) to networking among district civil society organisations. Field observations and discussions with various civil society organisations showed that work division and cooperation between organisations had rapidly improved. The realization that pressuring the local and provincial governments ('front line' work) can only be successful when both of the other areas – 'ground work' and 'supporting systems' are worked on systematically and simultaneously, further developed internalisation of this working model within civil society organisations.

This positive trend was acknowledged recently when local policy making bodies acknowledged that civil society organizations possessed a strength that is difficult for the local and provincial governments to obtain. This was most evident in Jeneponto, West Sumba, Central Lombok and Bantaeng and was verified when two Local Regulation drafts proposed by the local civil society network *Aliansi Masyarakat Sipil Turatea* (AMST) which the Jeneponto regional government approved.

Besides the relevance of networks in developing a civil society social model, (which was severely damaged by the Suharto administration), the relevance of this network development can also be seen from local civil society organisational resource capacity /preparedness to run advocacy programs on good governance (and on improved public services). In many regions in Indonesia, finding civil society organisations that have the capacity to do advocacy work is somewhat difficult. This is a legacy from the Suharto era, which did not provide space or freedom to citizens to express their voice and concerns. The aspirations of civil society had to be delivered through channels that were determined by the government, like local through to national government representative institutes and the majority of "official" mass organisations were appointed by the government. Anything that was seen as a political activity, including discussion meetings on civil rights or organising communities through interest groups were really restricted. Those who were courageous enough to do so were often punished by the government. The outcome of those restrictions was that civil society organisations, particularly in the districts, were less inclined to develop knowledge, skills and experience in advocacy work throughout the Suharto administration. Advocacy work was more dominated by civil society organisations in Jakarta or civil society organisation networks with good capacity or an established history, such as WALHI (*Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia*) or YLBHI (*Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia*).

The conditions in the ACCESS district target areas were much like the above when the Civil Society Strengthening Program was first launched. In addressing the situation, ACCESS in cooperation with YAPPIKA, ICW and PATTIRO used this network media to develop the advocacy capacity of district civil society organisations. YAPPIKA contributed in

increasing generic advocacy capacity (Advocacy Training, Comparative Studies, Gender Mainstreaming in the Development of Public Policies Training, Social Marketing Training, and Networking Workshop) and networking, while ICW and PATTIRO worked on two central issues faced by marginalised groups, that is, access to cheap education and the provision of a mechanism for complaints against public services in the area. The outcome of all of this work: in all ACCESS's district target areas – the capacity of the local community organisations in advocacy research, analysing public policies, organising consultations with the community, lobbying and negotiating with policy makers etc. – increased significantly compared to before ACCESS and their service providers worked in the districts. The evaluation team found that ACCESS, YAPPIKA, ICW and PATTIRO provided a significant contribution in developing district civil society networks and increasing their relevance.

3.3 Program Impacts

Program Impacts, to examine; (a) to what extent the civil society organisation networks influenced changes in local government policies; (b) how far civil society organisations increased the capacity of the local civil society concerned; (c) to what extent were the district civil society organisations consolidated, whether between fellow network secretariats or between the networks and other member institutes.

While there were differing levels of progress in each Kabupaten, in general, the Civil Society Strengthening Program has had a significant positive effect on various stakeholders in the districts. In regard to policies, most of the networks were successful in lobbying and advocating for new Local Regulations that support the interests of the community; particularly the poor and women. For example, AMST (*Aliansi Masyarakat Sipil Turatea*) in Jeneponto district, who successfully prepared two Local Regulation drafts (on water management and public services) and then on their own initiative urged policy making agencies to approve them (the local district government for a Local Regulation draft on Water management, and the Jeneponto Provincial government for a Local Regulation draft on Public Services). In Bantaeng, the local civil society network (JARINGMAS) also successfully designed two Local Regulations similar to the ones in Jeneponto. JARINGMAS has not yet organised a public consultation to get community input on the drafts. This is because the negotiation process for the two drafts with Bantaeng local and district governments has not yet taken place (when this report was written). In Central Lombok, CSWG have held intensive discussions with Central Lombok local and district governments related to issues of access to basic, cheap education for women and the poor. Finally, in West Sumba, local government has requested FORMASI (Forum for Civil Society) to facilitate the planning and supervision of the pilot program on utilisation of Allocated Village Funds (ADD) in some villages in their district. This decision was a direct result of the advocacy carried out by FORMASI.

The capacity of the local civil society networks to influence policies that support marginalised groups is greatly supported by the increased capacity of network secretariats and members in running their activities, particularly advocacy research, lobbying and negotiating. Local bureaucracies and legislative agencies have generally seen local civil

society organisations capacity as weak and unable to provide concrete data relating to problems in society. However, due to the training and intensive technical assistance that the service providers provided, the networks no longer give the impression of being weak and incapable. In Central Lombok, for example, the CSWG actually has data that is far more extensive than what the local government agencies have on educational conditions in the area.

The bargaining position of the networks and members has also improved. This is due not only to the increased capacity of civil society organisation network members, but also the strengthened network (members) consolidation, which was also one of the goals mentioned in each network action plan. Through discussions on participation principles, transparency, accountability and gender equity, the local civil society networks have integrated the principles into their network regulations. (For more information on internalisation of principles, see Sustainability of the Program in section 4.5 below). These regulations have provided a significant contribution to the consolidation of the networks.

The networks, however, still have challenges that they need to deal with so they can expand their influence in the districts. Firstly, with the exception of the civil society networks in West Sumba, Jenepono and Bantaeng, the other civil society networks (Buton, Muna and Central Lombok) are not yet capable to work optimally to increase their internal capacity. The lessons learned discussions that follow trainings and workshops still rarely run to plan in the three districts. Secondly, the increased bargaining position can simultaneously be seen as ‘threatening’ for the local civil society organisations/networks. In some areas, there have been attempts to link the activities of the civil society organisations with political parties. Thirdly, the ability to analyse data in some of the networks, especially in Central Lombok and Buton is still very poor. This is very disappointing as they now have very comprehensive data. Finally, fourthly, positioning of the networks’ role in some districts did not go well. In Muna, frontline work (campaigns, lobbying and negotiating) became a work area exclusively for the secretariats, only involving a small segment of organisation network members. In Central Lombok, initially the network was understood to be a network made up of personnel who were appointed by the civil society organisations to become a board as opposed to a network of the civil society organisations in that district.

3.4 Program Effectiveness

Program Effectiveness to examine; (a) was there a total transformation of concepts from ACCESS to the service providers (Yappika, ICW and Pattiro); (b) was there a transformation of concepts from the service providers (Yappika, ICW and Pattiro) to the district civil society organisation networks; (c) was there coordination between the service providers (Yappika, ICW and Pattiro) in providing support to the district civil society organisation networks; (d) what is the relationship between basic work and policy advocacy work in the district civil society organisations; (e) how far was the networking member programs integrated into the networks programs?

Change did not take place in program effectiveness to the extent that it did in program legitimacy, relevance and impact, as explained above. Out of the five effectiveness indicators, only one indicator, the transformation of concepts from ACCESS to all of the service providers, was effective and ran well. The effective transformation of concepts occurred when the service providers put together their draft proposals for ACCESS. Due to ACCESS support in some initial meetings, all of the service provider proposals (and work plans) incorporated program implementation strategies that included the following concepts:

- “Community-led”: issues taken on were issues that were ascertained from the community via a participative process. For example, issues relating to the lack of development of civil society organisational capacity and the types of activities needed to address those issues were all developed cooperatively through data analysis with the district civil society organisations community. It was the same for issues on desired policy changes at the local policy making level. The policy issues were put forth by marginalised groups at the data collection process in the villages.
- “Gender and Poverty Inclusiveness” (GPI): the principle of GPI is that gender equity and the interests of the poor become the driving force in all aspects of the program. It is imperative that the service providers are able to develop strategies and creative work methods that focus on the marginalised so that the goal to empower marginalised groups is achievable in the field. Creative work methods include the use of affirmative action, use of local resources and providing actual models (examples) that directly show the public that women and the poor are a group who have the same capacity potential as men and other dominant groups. Using such methods, marginalised groups can be actors and the main beneficiaries in the process of change.
- Networking: one of the efforts of the civil society strengthening is focused on strengthening networking throughout the district civil society organisation communities. This civil society networking is aimed not to make a new civil society organisation. The network secretariat must also act as a collaborator, moderator and service provider to successfully achieve the changes that the local civil society organisation community strive for.

Activities in each advocacy work area are closely related to each other. Unfortunately, the transformation of concepts only successfully lasted the duration of developing the proposal. It did not continue into other areas, and this was particularly clear when the service providers went to the field to implement the program. Following are a few examples:

There were service providers who prioritised concrete outputs over substantive empowerment and this became the ‘spirit’ of the whole ACCESS program. Due to this, ACCESS requested that service providers focus on capacity building of the networks and its members -in implementing programs in the field and doing networking. However, the service providers did not seriously take it on board. An example was that PATTIRO did not use the network in Jeneponto and Bantaeng in the implementation of the complaint mechanism program. The process of transfer of ideas on social change was also not effective and the service provider facilitators did not have a sound technical capacity to work in districts that have had very little attention in local policy making.

There are service providers that did not work hard enough at applying gender equity principles in their programs, particularly in the most practical and elementary ways, like making sure there is a balance of male and female attendance in activities. This not only occurred in activities that were managed directly by the service providers, (for example, capacity building activities that were attended by all civil society networks), but also in activities that were implemented in cooperation with local civil society networks (including capacity building activities in each network and activities at a community based level). The percentage of female activity participants was generally poor compared to males.

In general, the service providers found that many of the women did not necessarily come up with activity products that had a gender equity perspective. Although that made sense, ACCESS stressed that the quality of gender equity can not only be determined by concrete products, for example, the emergence of public policies that are in support of women and the poor. The quality of gender equity is determined by the program/activity implementation process, starting from the first phase as the empowerment of women, which is participative and inclusive takes place throughout the process.

Similar to the indicator on the transfer of ideas from ACCESS to the service providers, the second indicator, the process of transformation of ideas from the service providers to the local civil society networks did not run perfectly. The main reason was because there were no YAPPIKA, ICW, and PATTIRO staff who fully mentored the networks in the field. The result was that the local civil society networks, particularly in Buton and Central Lombok, were sometimes hesitant to assess the quality of their previous work (whether it met research based advocacy work ‘standards’ or not) and to plan follow-up steps.

Coordination between service providers was also lacking. This directly and indirectly contributed to the lack of flow of transformation of ideas from ACCESS to the service providers (and fellow service providers) and actually created an image amongst local partners/colleagues from both networks and civil society organisations that the service providers only worked on projects that they proposed to ACCESS. ACCESS had already anticipated this beforehand, and so held several meetings strongly emphasising to all service providers to arrange ongoing coordination meetings themselves. In addition, the service providers were also asked to constantly consult with ACCESS Project Officer and Senior Project Officer in each province so that information on program developments and achievements in each district and follow-up on the implementation of activities could be examined and supported together. However, the service providers lacked initiative in responding to those requests and because of that, work coordination in the field did not run optimally. This was most evident in several activity implementation schedules that clashed with each other and so the ‘investments’ of other service providers were not able to be fully utilised.

Finally, the narrow understanding on the role of civil society organisations in social transformation at a district level and the lack of capacity to take an effective role has made local civil society organisations – and their networks – stuck in their daily routine work. They are not yet capable to creatively put the concepts that they campaign for into

operational actions like being able to, for example, independently support the costs of an activity that was determined together as a network program/activity, provide facilitators from within their organisation to support the implementation of a network activity - or even more strategic – cooperatively connecting their work at a basic level with the issues they campaign for. The result is the networking program that was developed together by network members, in general, ran without maximum support from the programs of each member.

3.5 Sustainability of the Program

Program Sustainability, to examine: (a) the capacity level of networks in sustaining a long-term program and in planning and implementing new programs after ACCESS financial support has finished and; (b) in relation to that, the level of public and other third party support regarding the district civil society organisations work; (c) to what extent did the consistency and the internalisation of good governance principles extend into regulations for the networks and their members; (d) to what extent did YAPPIKA, ICW and PATTIRO utilise local resources in network capacity building activities; (e) and how far did district civil society organisation ideas go for future program developments.

Program sustainability is still an issue that is worrying in all of the district civil society networks. From all of the indicators on program sustainability, only the indicator on public and other third party support, in all ACCESS work areas, showed significant change compared to beforehand. However, in the districts there were also differences in levels of support for the networks. FORMASI in West Sumba and AMST in Jeneponto are the two civil society networks who at the moment have the widest public support and JMS in Muna has weak support.

The differences in levels of sustainability were caused by a difference in the commitment that networks and their members have to the issues they were pushing for. Civil society networks that have the ability to demonstrate serious commitment (and empathy) to issues concerning the marginalised community in their area gathered more solid support from various parties compared to those who campaign those issues for the sake of the continuation of the organisation and its workers. Serious commitment must also be accompanied by working methods that are more modest, simple and participative. These two factors were very difficult to find in Muna but Jeneponto and West Sumba had the capacity to do this well.

Moving on to other indicators, the networks' capacity to sustain long-term programs also indicated differences. The provision of funding from donor organisations evidently was not the biggest determining factor. The most important factor was the commitment of the network itself. However, their capacity to design and implement new programs in the future is still untested. What is clear, is if networks successfully maintain their commitment and have the capacity to raise funds from the public, their opportunities to design and run new programs will be good (On the capacity of civil society networks to raise public funding, see the ODSST reports at JMS Buton, JMS Muna, AMST Jeneponto and CSWG Central Lombok).

The transformation of good governance principles into network regulations is an important factor in determining the sustainability of networks and civil society organisations. Network members and secretariats appear to know this well as it was stated in the Impact Evaluation Report and the ODSR Report. Due to this, all of the civil society networks included the activity on developing Network Statutes and Regulations as one of their activities in their Action Plans. The networks regulations incorporated principles of participation, transparency, accountability and gender equity in network management.

Unfortunately, the networks have not been impressive in upholding good governance principles. In other words, although they have been successful in composing Network Statutes and Regulations, they are not yet being applied. Several examples follow:

- There are still secretariats who are not disclosing the network monthly financial reports to the network members.
- In general, the network members also lack the courage to reprimand management personnel or network members who violate principles that are written into the network regulations.
- Mechanisms for applying the regulations remain weak in most networks.

In regard to local resources, it needs to be clarified that the local civil society networks and the service providers do not yet have the capacity to optimally utilise resources available in the region. Actually, opportunities to utilize resources are quite available in the region, particularly for general advocacy capacity building activities that the networks requested YAPPIKA to facilitate. Rather than building up the knowledge and skills of local trainers and facilitators, the service providers tended to use their own staff of resource people from the national level.

The main causes why utilisation of local resources is not optimal are:

- A lack of appreciation of the local civil society organisations regarding the capacity of local resources;
- The civil society networks lack of information on facilitator personnel, trainers and resource people available in their district or other nearby districts.

ICW and PATTIRO both felt that there were not many opportunities for them to utilise local resources in the CRC and complaints mechanism programs. This is because the programs in these two organisations are new and have been primarily developed by NGO's in Jakarta and Bandung. In fact, there are opportunities to utilise local resources on these two programs, but the service providers needed to be more comprehensive in their preparations to run activities long before they start. It was an accepted part of their program objectives to ensure that there was a transfer of knowledge and skills to the local level which would be used for future activities. For example, lecturers from a tertiary institute who understand research methodology could facilitate ICW in the process of developing the CRC questioner; ACCESS trained facilitators at the district and community levels could have been used to conduct the participatory research processes and activities; ACCESS

community groups could have been used to deepen understanding of the work they had been doing and bridging this work (on community mapping for example) to advocacy for public policy.

This does not mean that service providers entirely disregarded the benefits of local resources. In the Gender Mainstreaming in Developing Public Policies Training, for example, YAPPIKA successfully utilised a local facilitator (Makassar) to facilitate the training which was attended by civil society network representatives from the whole ACCESS working area.

3.6 District Civil Society Strength/Health

Based on the information on programs legitimacy, relevancy, impact and sustainability, has the ACCESS Civil Society Strengthening Program contributed to generally strengthening civil society and in particular strengthening marginalised groups (women and the poor) in the ACCESS work target districts?

The outcomes of the Civil Society Index Workshop (Workshop IMS-2) indicated an increased score for all of the civil society index dimensions in 2007 compared to 2004. Several of the dimensions in all districts improved their status from ‘poor health’ to ‘reasonable health’. Only in Buton did most of the dimensions remain in poor condition.

From this, it can be concluded that the level of strength of civil society in the ACCESS target areas has experienced a significant development compared to the first indicator in 2004. A complete list of the changed scores in all of the ACCESS target areas can be seen in the table below:

<i>District</i>	<i>Dimension</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>Inclination</i>
1 West Sumba	Structure	1.58	1.77	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
	Values	1.97	2.23	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
	Environment	1.72	1.75	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
	Impact	1.91	2.00	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
2 East Sumba	Structure	1.28	1.54	From poor health to reasonable health.
	Values	1.53	1.99	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.

3	West Lombok	Environment	1.48	1.72	From poor health to reasonable health.
		Impact	1.49	1.80	From poor health to reasonable health.
		Structure	1.10	1.61	From poor health to reasonable health.
		Values	1.52	1.92	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
		Environment	1.26	1.52	From poor health to reasonable health.
4	Central Lombok	Impact	1.42	1.79	From poor health to reasonable health.
		Structure	1.37	1.61	From poor health to reasonable health.
		Values	1.80	1.96	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
		Environment	1.57	1.62	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
		Impact	1.62	1.77	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
5	Jeneponto	Structure	1.06	1.60	From poor health to reasonable health.
		Values	1.67	1.90	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
		Environment	1.40	1.78	From poor health to reasonable health.
		Impact	1.36	1.76	From poor health to reasonable health.
6	Bantaeng	Structure	1.44	1.48	Still in a poor condition of health.
		Values	1.86	2.18	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
		Environment	1.72	1.72	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
		Impact	1.61	1.85	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
7	Muna	Structure	1.15	1.36	Still in a poor condition of health.
		Values	1.60	2.00	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.

	Environment	1.40	1.53	From poor health to reasonable health.
	Impact	1.58	1.74	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
8	Buton			
	Structure	1.20	1.26	Still in a poor condition of health.
	Values	1.65	1.81	Still in a reasonably healthy condition.
	Environment	1.38	1.44	Still in a poor condition of health.
	Impact	1.25	1.57	From poor health to reasonable health.
Explanation of the "health" conditions: 0.00-0.75 = "sick." 0.76-1.50 = "poor health." 1.51-2.25 = "reasonable health". 2.26-3.00 = "healthy."				

The most important question here is: Was the increased level of strength influenced by the ACCESS Civil Society Strengthening Program? Looking at the Impact Evaluation and the CSI results, it can be said with some confidence that the program provided a very significant contribution to increasing the strength of district civil society levels. This program was able to *encourage district civil society networks and organisations to work on key dimensions of the index deemed as weak* in 2004 and increase the condition by 2007. Several key elements that led to this improvement were identified by the IMS-2 Workshop participants. These factors of change are related to three civil society internal dimensions (structure, values and impact). The factors were (among others):

Structure Dimension:

The networks improved communication and cooperation between fellow civil society organisations in a district. The networks was seen to be needed to make their campaigns together more effective. The involvement of women in networking management and organisation membership is now accepted as a necessity in many circles, including in the civil society organisations themselves. The intensity and extensive participation of citizens in community and wider sub-district and district activities continue to develop as a result of the participative approach that was applied by civil society organisations and networks. Organisational resources, particularly technology and human resources have progressed further compared to 2004. This is evident, for example, in the capacity of civil society organisations to carry out advocacy work.

Values Dimension:

All of the values of 'democratic governance' (democracy, participation, transparency and accountability) and other values that ACCESS promotes are better understood and applied by various parties in the district who have been working in close cooperation with ACCESS. Gender equity and sustainable environment for example, have become terms that the civil society organisations and the community groups are trying to put into practise. The civil society networks are active in spreading an understanding of these values via activities such

as village forum discussions, focus group discussions, bulletin publications and community radio broadcasts. In West Sumba, there has been involvement of some political organisation management who have even helped to distribute democratic governance and gender equity values. A few of them have integrated these values into organisation regulations at a district level.

Impact Dimension:

In a few of the districts like West Sumba, Jenepono and Central Lombok, the relationship between civil society and the state improved compared to in 2004. It is evident that the increased intensity of dialogue between the two parties and also the continued collaborative work has brought benefits for all stakeholders in the district. Some examples, among others, are the success of several networks that pushed for the Local Regulations drafts and also the request from local government for civil society to be part of the planning and supervision of the Village Funding Allocation (ADD).

The achievements of the civil society network activities are certainly influenced by the 'health/strength' levels of other dimensions, namely, civil society external environment.

Local government work systems lack transparency and are full of corrupt practices. This has made civil society organisations and networks less able to push policy change proposals with local governments, even though dialogue and meetings between the two parties have increased compared to previously. Furthermore, local government practises and politics that lack transparency have created dissension in civil society organisation circles with the emergence of different groups that support and oppose the local officials. Muna civil society network, in particular, still faces problems in consolidation as a result of local political-economic dynamics that were caused by actors outside of civil society. Political-economic dynamics like this are still a very big challenge for district civil society organisations in the short term.

4 Conclusions

4.1 Significant trends and patterns in Civil Society over three years of CS Program 2004-2006

- 1) Compared to the initial implementation of the civil society strengthening program, local civil society networks and their members have developed with a more comprehensive understanding of their role in social change. There are also more civil society organisations that understand the connection between work at a basic level and work for policy changes at a local and regional government level and the relationship between the two.
- 2) The bargaining position of civil society networks and their members vis a vis government is stronger than before. By working in collaboration on issues of real concern to the poor and to women these networks have found a voice that previously was missing at the district level.

- 3) The understanding that civil society networks need to apply and follow good governance principles continues to develop in the districts. However, they still have difficulties in integrating this new understanding into organisation regulations that then become a reference for operational actions.
- 4) The local civil society networks capacity to run advocacy programs has greatly improved compared to previously. The performance of a few networks that developed drafts on Local Regulations is evidence of increased capacity. This is something extraordinary for these regions. (In all of Indonesia, only one or two members of local parliament and government have the knowledge and skills to develop Local Regulations). Other evidence is the capacity to do participatory advocacy research, public consultation and lobbying as well as negotiating in policy making. However, technical advocacy capacity and the outlook of district civil society organisation workers still requires improvement in the future.

4.2 Overall contribution of the Civil Society Strengthening towards project objective

- 1) The Civil Society Strengthening Program, in general, has contributed to an increased strength in civil society organizations in every ACCESS district target area. While ACCESS does not claim to be the only actor contributing to change at the district level, the increased capacity and voice of civil society actors is contributing positively to the needs and aspirations of the poor being heard, acknowledged and addressed. The formulation of district wide regulations and policies that are oriented toward the most marginalized members of society brings the practical changes witnessed at the community level to the entire district population.
- 2) The Civil Society Strengthening Program has contributed to a more holistic understanding on the importance of participation, transparency, accountability, gender equity and environmental sustainability values that are promoted by civil society organisations. The internalisation of these values with practical tools for ensuring their application has contributed to better internal governance of CSOs, increased responsiveness of CSOs to community needs and a stronger platform for advocacy for improved participation, more transparency and accountability of government, improved public services throughout the ACCESS work area.
- 3) The networks formed through the use of the Civil Society Index are better able to identify issues, formulate responses and work together to achieve their common aims.

5 Implications of Civil Society Strengthening Program and Recommendations for Future Programming

5.1 Significant relationships between approach of the Civil Society Strengthening Program and results

On the whole, the ACCESS Civil Society Strengthening Program has successfully achieved its goals. Factors supporting that success include the following approaches that were used:

- Assessment of the current situation using the CSI, following up the assessment with detailed planning, supporting increased accountability and legitimacy of networks representing a broad range of civil society actors and funding support to carry out their self designed actions plans.
- Specific capacity building: Services that were provided by the service providers responded to the specific capacity building needs that were included in each network's Action Plan. This capacity building was carried out in a variety of ways including study tours, exchanges, workshops and on-the-job opportunities.
- General capacity building: Aside from assisting with specific capacity building in each network, YAPPIKA also planned generic capacity building that all the civil society networks needed to initiate their advocacy work. The generic capacity building plan came out of ACCESS and YAPPIKA's monitoring throughout the implementation of the Bridging Activities. The types of capacity building activities were: (1) Comparative studies of civil society organisations and networks in Jakarta that run their programs using advocacy strategies, (2) Gender Mainstreaming in the Developing Public Policies Training, (3) Social Marketing Training.
- Support for women's participation and gender equity: The use of particular strategies has helped provide wider opportunities for village women to be involved in the Civil Society Strengthening Program. The particular strategies included: specific references to women and the poor in program goals, objectives and indicators; specific gender strategies incorporated into all programs as a cross-cutting theme; specific preparation for women and the poor before attending activities; applying affirmative action using female quotas in certain activities and dividing the participants into female and male discussion groups.

However, there are also a few factors that have reduced the level of achievement of program goals:

- Network secretariat personnel: Limited experience in running the network has made some of the secretariats not capable of running the work optimally. This was most visible when the network began their Action Plans. Besides a problem of capacity, differences in understanding between the network members contributed to poor performance of the network secretariats.
- Action Plan: All of the civil society network Action Plan had the same program components, which were: (1) increased capacity of local civil society organisations in advocacy work, (2) strengthened network (3) and increased advocacy work to push for changes to local policies. Although the Action Plan were developed in

rigorous phases, which involved many stakeholders in the district, ACCESS should have spent more time to recheck the suitability of each Action Plan. A manageable Action Plan for one network is not necessarily suitable to be run by another network. The main factor that determines the success of a network in running its Action Plan is good internal consolidation in the network. Most of the Action Plans were too ambitious for the time allocated and often very complex involving many components and activities. The focus of many network became to complete the activities rather than to achieve the desired outcomes.

5.2 Value adding of Civil Society Strengthening program

- Civil Society Index Workshop: The ACCESS Civil Society Strengthening Program resulted in a more comprehensive map on the developments that occurred in each district, involving both civil society internal and external conditions. That many parties were inspired from this workshop was evident in the various recommendations that the participants came up with together. Unfortunately, that it seems all the responsibility to realize the workshop recommendations was placed on ACCESS, YAPPIKA, and civil society network and organisations that received grants from ACCESS community development programs rather than being seen as a collaborative plan of action to be undertaken by any organization or group of citizens.
- Strengthening the network: The Civil Society Strengthening Program has succeeded in encouraging local civil society organisations to work through network. This strategy has not only been beneficial for internal developments of fellow civil society organisations, (increased capacity, cooperative utilisation of resources) but has also pushed for the interests of those organisations' constituents.
- Advocacy on policy changes: In general, the civil society organisations in the ACCESS district target areas did not have a broad view on (1) using alternative strategies or (2) using several strategies simultaneously to increase the living standards of marginalised groups. The Civil Society Strengthening Program has helped to broaden the understanding of civil society organisations that through district policy changes and increased public services the conditions of the marginalised can also improve.
- Increase utilisation of local resources: There have been maximum efforts to use local facilitators from the beginning phase until the end of the program, for example, using researchers, and workshop and training facilitators. However, there were some activities that still used personnel from outside the district. This was particularly evident in the "Legislative Drafting Training" and the "Reading and Analysis of Development Budgets". In the interim, this is still acceptable considering that these districts do not have adequate capacity to provide specific capacity building services.

5.3 Lessons learned and implications for future program design of Civil Society Strengthening program

- 1) Partnership synergy: Experience through ACCESS Phase-1 has showed that the impact of the ACCESS Civil Society Strengthening Program will continue to grow if there is cooperation between fellow ACCESS partners (service providers and

network members). But the foundation for synergy can only be implemented if all parties in cooperation (ACCESS, service providers, civil society organisations in the districts) are in agreement on program goals and principles that they want to campaign in all of the ACCESS target areas. *If the goals and principles become the reference in developing strategies in program implementation, then division of work and coordination between parties can also develop to reach a more significant transformation in districts.*

- 2) **Change of staff and change of vision:** Service providers frequently change staff throughout their contract with ACCESS. A high staff turnover that is not matched with a transfer of information will significantly influence the communication between service providers, ACCESS and local civil society network. As staff leave, the lack of transfer of information results in only partial understanding of what is hoped to be achieved by the Civil Society Strengthening Program. *A complete understanding of the hoped-for program goals and changes in the districts is required in determining strategies, forms, methods and needs to be supported by intensive mentoring by the service providers to the local partners.*
- 3) **GPI:** The implementation of principles that support women and the poor (GPI) need creative strategies and methods that are easy to apply in the field. ACCESS partners can develop their creativity in applying GPI principles if they are sensitive to and have empathy with marginalised groups, are able to analyse political, economic and cultural contexts that cause social injustices and able to continually learn from their own experiences in implementing activities, the experiences of other partners and from the activity monitoring outcomes. *If ACCESS partners develop creative strategies and methods to implement GPI principle and integrate the principles into their organizations and programs, then the benefits from the program for marginalised groups will continue to grow.*
- 4) **Leadership Style:** The working style and network coordinator leadership has a direct influence on the level of participation and consolidation in the circle of network members. *If the network coordinator (and all of the board) are able to provide a democratic leadership style and able to function as a network nucleus and is supported consistently by mentoring, training and modelling of effective leadership, then the level of network member participation will increase which in turn, will further guarantee the achievement of the program goals.*
- 5) **Ownership at the local level:** The level of perceived “ownership” of the action plan is directly related to the eventual success in achieving the outcomes. To the degree in which local partners perceive the program as belonging to ACCESS, the lower the level of success. If all the participating organizations can agree on a common platform for action, identify local assets for achieving the common goals, act collaboratively to achieve these goals, the service providers see their role as supporting the emergence of local networks and outcomes can be achieved with limited outside inputs, then the program

has a greater chance of being owned locally, sustainable and ultimately successful.

5.4 Recommendations

1. ACCESS and all its partners, including the service providers, need to run an ongoing reviewing process on the role of civil society organisations in social change. This is important to avoid civil society organisations working purely based on routine activities and activism without a clear orientation on the changes they want to attain.
2. To maximise the process of the transformation of ideas and provide technical assistance, the service providers need to provide at least one staff member for each province to support and monitor the developments of each network in close proximity. This will support ongoing support and monitoring work, better collaboration with other service providers and with ACCESS staff and will enable the program to be integrated and perceived as integrated by local partners.
3. Utilisation of local resources needs to be increased in the future by using creative approaches and thorough preparation. Local resources do not need to be only limited to resources that the civil society organisations have. In particular, it is important that resources at district tertiary education institutes are used in the future. In line with this, ACCESS and its service providers need to broaden the database of local trainers, facilitators and resource personnel.
4. The capacity of the networks to analyse data needs to be sharpened so that their policy recommendations really do have potential to be applied by local government and civil society organisations in the concerned district.