

Going for governance:

Lessons learned from advisory interventions by the Royal Tropical Institute

Authors:

Gerard Baltissen
Petra Penninkhoff
John Belt
Avinash Bikha
Roger Bymolt
Henk van Dam
Marjolein Dieleman
Jan Donner
Martijn Ter Heegde
Thea Hilhorst
Itie van Hout
Chris Hunter
Elsbet Lodenstein
Remco Mur
Nicolas Porchet
Jacqueline Sluijs
Egbert Sondorp
Annemarie Ter Veen
Noortje Verhart
Mariana Wongtschowski
Fred Zaal
Prisca Zwanikken



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Preface

Governance is important in every aspect of sustainable development, as it affects guidance, processes, consistent management, cohesive policies, accountability mechanisms and the right to decide on particular areas of responsibility. This is equally true of all types of organisation, regardless of their purpose and motivation (such as for common goods or individual benefits, profit or not-for-profit) and whether a single individual, a group of people, a community, local government, university or research centre, an enterprise, ministry or even all of humanity is involved.

Worldwide, increasing attention is being given to governance. The way that institutes, authorities and structures of various kinds allocate resources and coordinate or control social and economic activities is determined by their governance; as are the rules that political systems use to resolve conflicts between actors and adopt decisions. In Europe and the US, the financial crisis is considered to be caused by poor governance of the banking sector. A broad appeal has been done to strengthen governance of banks, notably from a public interest perspective. Other calls for good governance consider international trading companies, who are more and more kept responsible for their local impacts in developing countries. Improving governance is a prominent issue in emerging economies and developing nations: how does economic growth affect governance, such as through an emerging middle class that claims more citizens' rights?

KIT deals with governance issues in many ways: by supporting administrative and democratic decentralisation; through sector approaches (health, agriculture) and service delivery; by promoting corporate social responsibility and efficient organisational management in universities, research bodies and museums; through (intercultural) training on organisational management, value chain development, agricultural innovation and land governance; and through rights-based, gender and citizenship approaches.

This publication is the result of an inter-departmental project that analyses and showcases KIT's experience in dealing with governance-related issues. It describes advisors' experiences in promoting governance and documents its importance in efficient decision-making at various levels in countries and organisations around the world.

The 15 cases presented in this book display a pragmatic way of approaching governance issues allowing KIT advisors to advise on context-specific and appropriate policy measures.

I hope that you will enjoy reading this book and that it may inspire you to reflect on your involvement in governance, what your angle or sector may be.

Bart de Steenhuijsen Piters
Interim Director Development, Policy and Practice
Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam

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Acronyms

AA	Action Aid
ADB	Asian Development Bank
APKN	Africa Parliamentary Knowledge Network
BTC	Belgian Development Agency
CEGOV	Capacity Building in Public Administration and Local and Municipal Governance (Mozambique)
CESSD	Communication for Effective Social Service Delivery (Pakistan)
CID	Chemical Industries Development
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CNTB	Commission National des Terres et des Biens (Burundi)
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GES	Gender Equity Seal
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
HRH	Human resources for health
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
ILS	Information and Library Services
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
IP	Innovation platforms
IPCC	International Panel on Climate Change
KIT	Royal Tropical Institute
KP	Khyber Pashtoonkwa (Pakistan)
LGO	Local Governance Ordinance (Pakistan)
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoGo	Mobile governance
MoH	Ministry of Health
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NICT	New information and communication technologies
NUFFIC	Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education
PTC	Parent teacher committee
REDD	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RISD	Rwanda Initiative for Sustainable Development
SAI	Social Accountability International
SAP	Structural adjustment period
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation
SRC	Swiss Red Cross

UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
VDO	Village Development Organisation (Pakistan)
VNG	Association of Dutch Municipalities
VRS	Voice response system
VU	Free University of Amsterdam
WDR	World Development Report
WHO	World Health Organization
WSC	Women's sub-committee (Pakistan)
WUC	Water users' committee (Pakistan)

1 Introduction

Governance advisors aim to support governments, universities, libraries, civil society organisations, private sector bodies and NGOs around the world in their efforts to improve governance. In a globalized context of limited resources, poverty and inequality, sustainable and equitable development will remain a pipe dream without concerted efforts to build institutional quality and governance. When we talk about institutional quality, we mean the extent to which organisations are able to make decisions and act in a way that fosters sustainable processes and outcomes. The government's role in providing services and creating an enabling environment for innovative reforms where multiple actors can work towards more sustainable and equitable service delivery is of key importance in building institutions. Organisations are directed by formal rules, laws and regulations and informal institutions that may facilitate or hamper governance processes and outcomes (through the modification of formal rules, socially and culturally sanctioned behavioural norms, gender relations, traditions and values). Governance advisors have a key role to play in revealing these institutions and advising organisations on strategies for addressing them.

Advisors from the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) deal with governance issues in many ways: by supporting administrative and democratic decentralisation; in sector approaches (health, agriculture), human resource development and service delivery; by promoting efficient organisational management in universities, research institutes and museums; strengthening corporate social responsibility; in value chain development, agricultural innovation processes and land and natural resource management; and in rights-based, gender and citizenship approaches. Our advisors work in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe, in both fragile and stable states.

KIT's role is to support stakeholders in assessing governance and considering the sustainability and equality dimensions of service delivery. This is done through participatory action research, capacity building and consultancies. Besides a specific sectoral focus on agriculture and health, KIT also provides policy advice on governance as a crosscutting issue, and guidance on incorporating a governance perspective into policies and investment plans, with a particular focus on the involvement of local institutions, smallholders and vulnerable groups (women, pastoralists, etc.) in these policies. All of our programmes focus on the experiences and potential of organisations and institutions.

How do we define 'governance' in our advisory practice?

Governance has many definitions. It is a concept that encompasses complex issues and an ambiguous term for complex social phenomena, linked to other terms such as 'the State', 'institutions' and 'government', which also elude universally agreed definitions. There are

multiple schools of thought with different perspectives on governance, and varying hypotheses about the links between governance and general development.

We could have tried to define governance in a way that suits the objectives of the development programmes that we are involved in as advisors. In fact, when we started documenting our experiences with governance advice, many KIT advisors asked for a definition that they could use to frame their activities. The process of writing this book showed that the definitions that come closest to KIT's governance advisory practices centre on stakeholders (people): The EU (2003) defines it as *"the rules, processes and behaviour by which interests are articulated, resources are managed, and power is exercised in society"*;¹ and the UNDP (1997) as *"the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a nation's affairs, and the complex mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights and obligations, and mediate their differences."*²

Regardless of how it is defined, governance for KIT is ultimately about people and the way they interact in order to ensure that their needs are met. So, whether it is perceived as a process, a set of functions within a system or relations between actors, governance relates to decision-making processes where multiple actors with different roles and interests interact.

A book about advising on governance

One of KIT's responsibilities as a knowledge institute is to share experiences and ideas. This book documents the experiences of KIT's advisors in promoting improved (or good) governance as a common and cross-cutting approach, and its importance in efficient and effective decision-making at various levels in organisations and countries around the world. The aim is to provide ideas and inspiration for anyone who is asked to advise on governance issues in any development programme or sector. Each of the case studies can be used as reference materials in training courses.

The writing process started in May 2011, with a call for cases that elicited 20 positive responses and preliminary submissions. This was followed by a write workshop in July 2011 where participants drafted their cases, and subsequent rounds of editing and improvement to prepare the final version of this book about advising on governance.

Three of the chapters present case studies of KIT's governance advisory practice at three levels of intervention. Chapter 2 deals with multi-level, national and local governance, Chapter 3 focuses on organisational governance, and Chapter 4 describes KIT's experience in building governance advisory capacity.

¹ Definition adopted by the EU in the 2003 Communication on 'Governance and Development'. COM (2003) 615, page 3.

² United Nations Development Programme (1997). *Governance for sustainable human development*. UNDP policy document, New York.

Advising on multi-level, national and local governance

Multi-level governance can be defined as an arrangement for making binding decisions, in which numerous politically independent but otherwise interdependent private and public actors at different levels of territorial aggregation are involved in more or less continuous negotiation. Multi-level governance has changed over the last two decades. In particular, decentralisation has made local and regional governments more powerful and increased their capacity to formulate and deliver policy. These trends have made governance of public policies more complex and more demanding, bringing in multiple public and private actors and requiring a rethink of the way that central and sub-national governments should collaborate. Multi-level governance is characterised by the changing relationships between public and private sector actors situated at different territorial levels.

Multinational development agencies sometimes call national-level governance local. In talking about 'local' governance, KIT is referring to sub-national, regional, municipal and district or community level governance that involves local stakeholders such as civil society organisations, NGOs, community-based organisations and private and public service providers.

The eight cases in Chapter 2 deal with national and local governance in different contexts and sectors. Annemarie ter Veen and Egbert Sondorp describe how knowledge gaps can be addressed to strengthen health governance in fragile states, and how aid mechanisms can weaken governance by diluting the local sense of ownership of government processes and products.

In her case study, Thea Hilhorst discusses land governance systems in Burundi and describes a way of working that contributes to strong partnerships and dialogue, better accountability mechanisms and an emphasis on the importance of integrity and transparency in procedures.

Governance in food commodity value chains and pro-poor development is the topic for Fred Zaal, Jacqueline Sluijs, Roger Bymolt and John Belt. They describe how value chain advisors can learn from new models to help empower small-scale producers in value chains and improve equity, inclusion and social responsibility.

Next, Remco Mur and Mariana Wongtschowski explain how innovation platforms can be used as mechanisms to improve the governance of agricultural innovation through advice on internal governance and power issues, and by including the powerless and ensuring more transparent and equitable processes.

Climate change and local governance is the theme for Martijn ter Heegde, who shows how governance advisors can support innovation and learning that improves local understanding of climate change, and assist the most vulnerable groups with their adaptation strategies.

Elsbet Lodenstein discusses the importance of governance as a factor in determining performance in the health sector. In this case, the work done by governance advisors led

to the adoption of principles and approaches that can be used for more effective governance and generate concrete measures to improve health service delivery.

In the following case, Chris Hunter describes how a project in Pakistan helped strengthen social accountability and make services work better for poor men and women. The revised accountability triangle used in this study highlighted the gaps that had the biggest impact on citizens' capacity to demand better services.

Finally, Nicolas Porchet argues that mobile phone innovations will have a significant influence on future local governance processes, as they can be used to promote political participation and allow marginalised groups to better organise themselves and make their voices heard. Mobile phones also enable citizens and civil society organisations to put more pressure on institutions to develop better accountability mechanisms by reporting cases of corruption and misuse of public resources.

Organisational governance

Organisational governance refers to the governance instruments that organisations deploy to persuade their members and other stakeholders to contribute to organisational goals. It is a set of processes, customs, policies, laws and institutions that affect the way people administer or control an organisation. In today's world organisations are increasingly called to account for their actions. Their governance arrangements need to be tailored to take account of their mission and other factors such as people, culture, traditions and relationships.

The four cases presented in Chapter 3 cover advice on organisational governance in universities, museums and libraries, and advice to strengthen corporate social responsibility. Jan Donner discusses university governance and poses the academic question of whether universities should centralise or decentralise decision-making. Governance advisors need to tailor their responses to this question in accordance with local conditions, legislation and the objectives and culture of the university in question.

Itie van Hout discusses museum governance in the Kapsuas Raya museum in Sintang, Indonesia. In this case, establishing a long-term partnership with a regional government and civil society groups resulted in a heritage institution whose success will depend upon the actors concerned sharing authority and knowledge.

Next, Avinash Bikha and Henk van Dam argue that advisors need to address visioning and strategic planning, effective leadership, an ICT governance policy framework and inter-institutional cooperation mechanisms in order to strengthen governance mechanisms in university libraries.

Finally, Noortje Verhart describes corporate governance for gender equality in Egypt, showing how the Gender Equity Seal contributed to better awareness of gender issues within companies, and how these issues can be addressed. The Seal can help make companies more socially responsible towards their employees and wider society.

Building capacity to advise on governance

Capacity building is an essential pre-requisite for governance. Improving the quality of public services and promoting local development requires effective local institutions with the capacity to formulate and implement policies and manage public services in accordance with citizens' aspirations. KIT focuses on creating the capacity for governance. In this context, 'advice' involves working closely with an organisation and continuously providing suggestions, comments, proposals and support in order to help the client organisation achieve its objectives. Such assistance may include guidance on processes, specialist advice, training and coaching, networking and linking, facilitating access to development information, advocacy and lobbying, and support for programme and financial management. An important characteristic of good advice is that it leaves the client with final leadership and control over the change process.

Chapter 4 presents three cases that show how KIT trainers have strengthened the governance advisory capacities of their course participants. Marjolein Dieleman and Prisca Zwanikken discuss the way that governance is addressed in human resources for health courses. Gerard Baltissen explains the reasons for setting up and choosing the content for a training course on rural decentralisation and local governance, and Petra Penninkhoff describes how provincial capacities for training in local governance and public administration are strengthened in Mozambique.

The fifth and final chapter attempts to draw some key lessons from the cases presented in this book. Having seen the variety of cases and situations described in the book, it will come as no surprise to find that there is no one-size-fits-all solution or golden bullet when it comes to advising on governance.

2

Advising on multi-level, national and local governance

conflict resolution
oversight accountability
value chain regulation
policy development equity
knowledge sharing
stewardship transparency
responding to local needs
voice power relations
institutional innovation
inclusion land rights
partnerships
oversight democratization

2.1 Governance of the health sector in fragile states

Annemarie ter Veen and Egbert Sondorp³

“Governance, whether in health or other sectors, depends upon the operational capacity of government institutions to function effectively in providing public goods and services, and in responding to citizens’ needs and demands.”

Derick Brinkerhoff⁴

A state is considered fragile when governance is weak or absent, and the national government is unwilling or unable to provide essential services for the population. Improving governance in fragile states is therefore not only vital, but also extremely challenging. Over time the combination of various factors such as weak or absent political will, insecurity, lack of human, material and financial resources, high levels of corruption and dilapidated infrastructure results in inefficient and ineffective government processes. The central authorities cannot or do not take sufficient care of the people they are supposed to serve, and the ‘social contract’ that gives a state the legitimacy to act on behalf of its citizens no longer has any value.

People living in areas with high rates of disease need essential services in order to increase their chances of survival. In fragile states, which have the poorest health indicators in the world, these are often provided on a temporary basis by new actors. Humanitarian agencies and local communities try to provide key services such as education and health care. For example, in southern Somalia, where most of the educated elite have fled the country, public systems are virtually non-existent. United Nations agencies, donors, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and technical consultants provide critical support for domestic leadership and governance in the health sector, but are unable to meet the basic needs of the entire population due to insecurity and lack of access. Communities in remote and unstable areas are left to organise themselves to ensure that they survive.

Health governance in fragile states

Most of the work on governance in fragile states is done in post-conflict situations. Wide-ranging national and international demands for improved governance in such contexts usually include the rapid (re)expansion of social services and setting and achieving health targets. Such demands often need to be balanced with donor requests for improved governance and public administration reforms. Delivering equitable, high quality, affordable and sustainable health services requires a strong health system that is capable

³ Senior Advisors on Health, Royal Tropical Institute. E-mail: a.t.veen@kit.nl, e.sondorp@kit.nl.

⁴ Derick W. Brinkerhoff (2008). *Health governance: concepts, experience, and programming options: Interventions to improve governance in health systems*. Health Systems 20/20, Washington DC.

of addressing challenges in oversight, service delivery and 'good governance'. Creating such governance capacities is known as institution building. This entails dismantling and reforming old organisations and institutions – legal, administrative, economic and social – improving the efficiency and effectiveness of existing institutions, restoring damaged institutions and enhancing the authorities' professionalism.⁵ Another facet of governance is improving voice and accountability at the community level.



Bill board in Juba, South Sudan (Photo: Egbert Sondorp)

At the institutional level, KIT works with central and peripheral governments and communities in post-conflict states such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan. Work in these countries includes technical support to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation in Sierra Leone to develop and roll out the Reproductive Health Strategy and Plan, and joint research projects with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in Liberia to support the development and implementation of national health sector strategies at county and community level. Many participants from fragile states attend our training programmes, and governance is a prominent cross-cutting theme in short courses such as 'Analysing Disrupted Health Systems' and our Masters in Public Health.

⁵ Adhikari B (2004) *Building capacity of national human rights institutions: The case of Nepal*. Right to Education Foundation (RTEF), Nepal.

This paper considers the role that institutions such as KIT can or do play in helping strengthen local governance of the health sector in fragile states. Which dimensions of governance should be targeted in order help develop local ownership and capacity within the health sectors of these states?

Dimensions of governance

Governance in the health sector can be described as “those processes, mechanisms and institutions through which the local political leadership ensures sustainable and equitable delivery of quality public services to the communities they serve”.⁶ Box 1 below shows one of the many frameworks outlining the dimensions of governance.⁷ We will highlight aspects of a few selected dimensions in order to explore the processes, mechanisms and institutions through which governance can be strengthened, and their possible strengths and limitations.

Box 1 The four dimensions of governance and their corresponding components

Performance

- Efficiency and effectiveness, capacity to implement
- Ethics and respect (including for citizens)
- Intelligence, information, evidence, monitoring and evaluation
- Policy objectives vs. organisational structure's capacity to implement decentralisation
- Strategic vision, leadership, direction, decision-making processes

Equity and equality

- Fairness, equity, inclusiveness, responsiveness

Partnerships and participation

- Consensus, orientation, coalition, partnerships
- Legitimacy, voice, participation

Oversight

- Accountability
- Regulation
- Rule of law, enforcement (including corruption control)
- Transparency

Source: Dieleman *et al.*, 2011.⁸

Actors in health governance

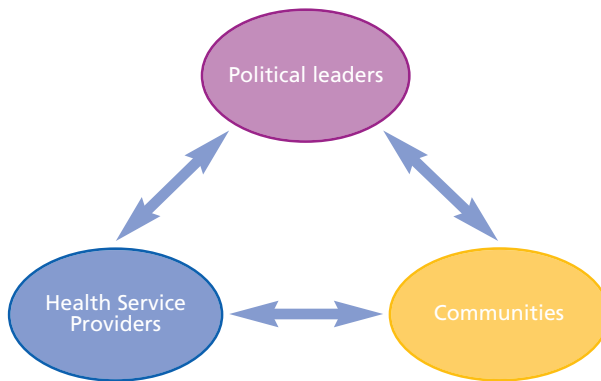
The main actors included in our definition of governance are represented in Figure 1 below. The lines linking them represent the dimensions of governance outlined in Box 1, such as performance (leadership, information) and oversight (accountability and transparency).

⁶ United Nations Development Programme (1997) *Governance for sustainable human development: a UNDP policy document*. UNDP, New York. <http://magnet.undp.org/policy/chapter1.htm>.

⁷ Siddiqi S., Masud T., Nishtar S., Peters D., Sabri B., Bile K., Jama M. (2009) *Framework for assessing governance of the health system in developing countries: Gateway to good governance*. Health Policy, Volume 90, Issue 1, pages 13-25.

⁸ Dieleman, M., Shaw, D.M.P., Zwanikken, P. (2011) *Improving the implementation of health workforce policies through governance: a review of case studies*. Human Resources for Health, 9:10.

Figure 1 Governance of the health sector



Although they are often discussed as a single ‘actor’, political leaders represent several levels of governance:

- national level: where over-arching national policies and plans are formulated (central government)
- central level: where health sector policies and strategies are formulated (health ministries)
- peripheral level: where health sector policies and strategies are implemented
- local level: where communities’ needs are voiced and higher levels of governance have to account for themselves.

Political leadership

Given the contextual constraints inherent to fragile states, simultaneously tackling the provision of humanitarian assistance, reconstruction of health services and restoration of governance is a complex undertaking. Therefore, advisory activities aimed at restoring governance need to have realistic aims and mainly try to achieve that which is necessary. Newly established systems can then gradually grow as services expand. Ambitions should not be too high, as trying to achieve ‘good enough governance’ to implement basic services is a sufficiently ambitious task in itself in post-conflict states.⁹ It involves striking a balance between working towards that which is possible without losing track of that which is desirable. Specific technical support and tools such as the methodological framework for assessing readiness for a sector-wide approach in fragile states can then be crucial forms of support.¹⁰

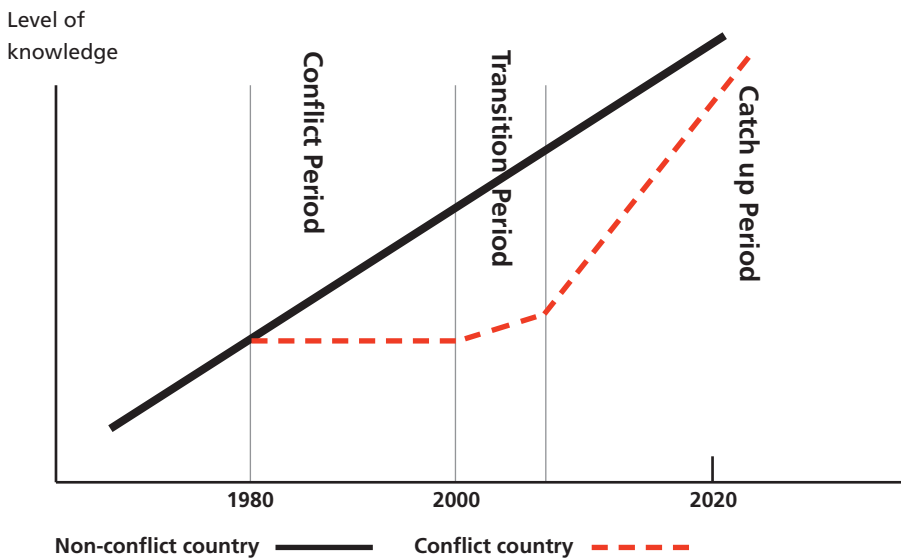
Improving governance of the health sector in fragile states is further complicated by the fact that a large proportion of health workforce has often left the country or migrated to cities. This results in overall shortages of human resources and imbalances in the distribution of remaining civil servants and workers, and may limit the extent to which

⁹ Derick W. Brinkerhoff and Ronald W. Johnson (2008) ‘Good enough governance in fragile states: the role of center-periphery relations and local government’, in *4th International Specialised Conference “International Aid and Public Administration”* (International Institute of Administrative Sciences, Ankara, Turkey).

¹⁰ Rothmann, I. and Canavan, A. (2009). *Assessment of readiness for a sector-wide approach in fragile states: A methodological framework*. KIT publishers.

health services can be rolled out in fragile states. Little is known about successful policies and practices for retaining human resources for health in rural and post-conflict settings, but efforts are being made to address this information gap through workshops, case reports and research projects. The deteriorating skills and capacity of accredited training institutions can also lead to the development of different cadres of staff whose competence for safe practice is not easily demonstrable.¹¹ Limitations in the governance capacity of both the political leadership and the health workforce are often overlooked in the rush to scale up the delivery of health services during the reconstruction phase. The international community tends to expect all civil servants to operate at 'current' levels of knowledge, but often fails to appreciate that it takes decades for a country to catch up on knowledge gaps created by prolonged conflict (see Figure 2 below). These gaps can be addressed through training, as with the tailor-made training courses for Ministry of Public Health officials in Afghanistan.

Figure 2 Levels of knowledge over time for conflict and non-conflict countries (courtesy of Joyce Smith)



Even where non-state providers continue to provide the bulk of health services, the state should still play an active role in establishing the four dimensions of governance – ensuring that equity and equality are paramount, monitoring the performance of health activities and providing oversight of its activities. Mapping the resources that are available and the main difficulties affecting health service delivery can facilitate decision-making and help identify key priorities. This is an important exercise, as severe lack of resources will render other interventions irrelevant if there is no capacity to implement them. In Papua New Guinea, a Human Resources for Health (HRH) assessment was used to help the Ministry of Health develop a strategic HRH plan.

¹¹ Smith, J. M. et al. (2008) *Establishment of an accreditation system for midwifery education in Afghanistan: maintaining quality during national expansion*. Public Health 122, no. 6.

Efforts to strengthen national capacity for governance are more likely to succeed if the basic components of a health system are in place and functioning.¹² States need both political and technical support to address competing demands for limited resources. Governance of the health sector can be supported at every stage of the continuum from humanitarian assistance to sustainable development in which many governments of post-conflict countries find themselves operating. INGOs, consultancy firms and development agencies can help strengthen governance capacity by independently implementing one or more capacity-building tools to support institution building, advocating and/or participating in suitable mechanisms for multi-stakeholder collaboration and coordination, and encouraging public participation in health systems.

Mechanisms for partnership and participation

Partnership and participation mechanisms are a key dimension of governance. The most effective forms of leadership and governance are implemented through coordination mechanisms such as consultative and technical advisory groups, but these require strong and dynamic leadership from a single agency (or individual), supported by clear terms of reference and time-bound targets. It is essential to include a wide variety of actors in these bodies, such as ministry staff, NGOs, technical advisors and, where relevant, representation from other ministries. At the local level, health and/or development coordination committees may operate at the district, provincial, county and possibly even village level.

An increasing number of fragile states are using decentralisation as a measure to promote governance at local levels. It is thought to be conducive to appropriate and demand-oriented social services, and has been promoted as a source of greater political legitimacy. At times it is driven by local discontent with central government legitimacy, or prompted by the need for the central government to rebuild services in specific weak or fragile contexts. Decentralisation can range from the partial delegation of decision-making powers to a local (health) authority to the granting of full autonomy.

A minimum level of stability is usually required for decentralisation, although preparatory steps can be taken in more humanitarian interventions by establishing multi-stakeholder coordination committees at the provincial, district or facility level. This has been done in Afghanistan, where committees headed by the Ministry of Health were tasked with planning and monitoring health services.

In business literature, governance and ownership are generally mentioned in the same breath. For the public sector this link is less apparent, and the focus of this literature tends to be on governance. Yet for governance to be effective, especially in the context of fragile states, local ownership is a key factor that needs to be achieved and sustained at all levels of governance, from national level all the way down to local communities.

¹² Enrico Pavignani (2005) *Health service delivery in post-conflict states*.

Advising health service providers

Low levels of education and knowledge among service providers have a major impact on service provision and the capacity to contribute to governance at the local level. Poorly educated and trained staff who are used to working with outdated materials may suddenly be expected to perform clinical and management tasks at a level for which they are not adequately prepared. Workforce training in post-conflict settings often consists of short courses to address urgent short-term needs, with little guidance for trainees who are expected to take their newly acquired skills and knowledge forward without proper support. The underlying assumption that the training messages have been understood and pitched at the right level of knowledge is seldom verified.

In addition to this, governance rarely features in local-level training on service provision. Although basic healthcare packages in fragile states such as Liberia and Somalia increasingly include a clear objective of 'community ownership and participation', it is often unclear what this encompasses. Field-based research in Liberia found that local health service providers who were expected to facilitate and support local governance processes often lacked clear direction and understanding of what was expected of them.¹³ As a result, local governance relied heavily on charismatic individuals who had the drive and incentive to promote greater community involvement and ownership. There are in-house training courses that deal with governance at every level, but these only reach a limited number of participants in senior positions. More operational research is needed to develop a toolkit to train facility-level workers on leadership and governance

Linking levels of governance

Governance of the health sector is also about the communities and individuals that use health services. A responsible and responsive health system should consider engaging with civil society and the public and building their capacity in order to improve leadership and governance from both the bottom up and the top down. Greater citizen involvement is expected to increase public confidence in the system. In fact, many donors currently work on the assumption that strengthening health systems can contribute to peace building in post-conflict countries, even though there is no clear evidence for this.

Community-level governance can be well developed in fragile states, as communities need to survive in the absence of a functional government during times of crisis. Existing community structures are often challenged by the introduction of new national or sectoral policies and strategies, and may need to be revised. There have been a number of 'new' initiatives (or old initiatives with new names) to strengthen governance at the community level, such as the GoBifo project in Sierra Leone, which focused on trust, collective action, gender and social inclusion, local groups and networks, and information and communication to strengthen the social capital needed for improved local governance.¹⁴

¹³ Vahanian, A., Coolen, A., Shannon, F.Q., Dunbar, N., Ter Veen, A. (2011) *Community resilience and participation in post-conflict Liberia*. KIT, Amsterdam.

¹⁴ Sesay, S. et al; G. Baltissen and M. Manjey (eds.) (2010). *Strengthening social capital: The GoBifo Approach in Rural Sierra Leone*. KIT publishers.

At the village level, village health (or development) committees are increasingly used to support local health structures and strengthen citizens' voice and accountability. These committees often consist of a mixture of health facility staff and village representatives. In Afghanistan efforts have also been made to ensure that women, and in some cases children, are given a voice on such committees.¹⁵ In post-conflict states it is important to be aware that the membership of individuals with clear links to the military and/or other parties to the conflict can result in the agenda being hijacked for political purposes. Because public health staff and committee members in rural areas of fragile states often lack the skills and knowledge to support the planning and implementation of devolution or deconcentration, capacity building at the sub-national level is essential for such decentralisation processes to succeed. The aim of strengthening citizens' voice and accountability is to allow provinces and districts to determine their own priorities - although the central level usually plays a key role in ensuring that the plans arising from these decentralised processes remain in line with national strategies.

Communities may also have formal mechanisms for voicing their demands, receiving information and otherwise participating in governance through their local members of parliament. A small research project in Afghanistan found that parliamentarians were generally unaware of the role that they could play in the health sector, as was the health ministry.¹⁶ Parliamentarians in post-conflict countries are often tasked with conflict resolution and peace building, and their potential contribution to health governance remains an untapped resource. If their selection is based on a truly representative process, their systematic involvement in health sector coordination bodies could result in greater community ownership of and support for governance processes.

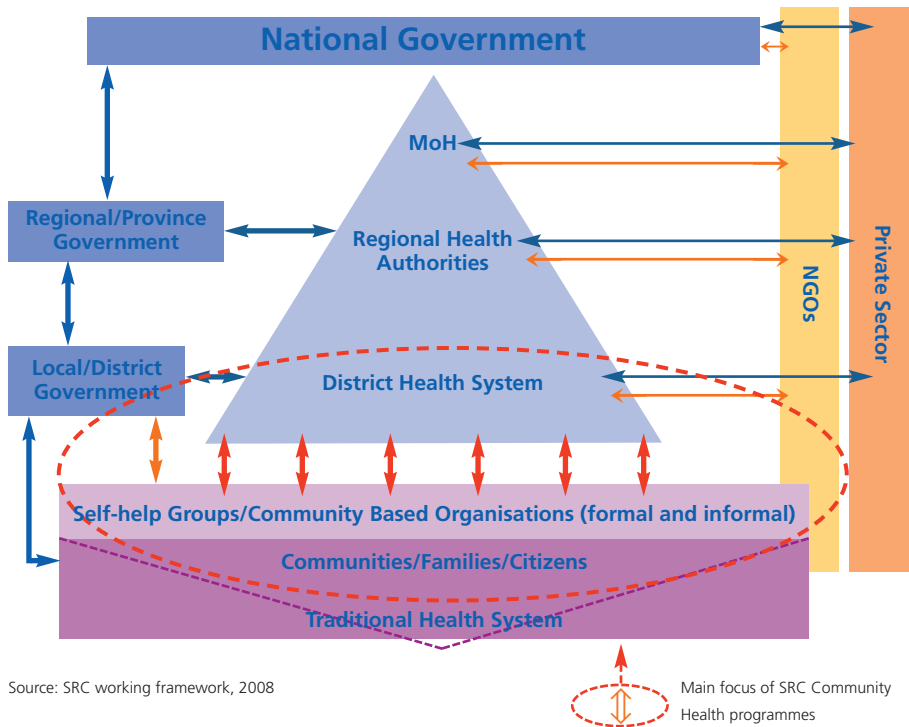
It is widely recognised that community-level governance needs to complement and interact with governance mechanisms at peripheral and central levels in fragile states. What is less well known is the significant impact that this can have, and the mechanisms by which it can be achieved. A research project conducted by the Swiss Red Cross found that the most successful forms of governance in fragile states were those with effective lines of communication between the various actors in the health sector (figure 3).¹⁷ As a result, their community health programmes now not only focus on the community level, but also include clear interventions to improve communication between the different levels of governance. In a complementary initiative, a unique joint research project conducted by KIT and the health ministry in Liberia in 2011 explored the interaction between central, county and community levels of governance, in order to apply the lessons learned to local institution-building processes.¹⁸

¹⁵ Annemarie ter Veen, editor (2009) *Health systems strengthening in fragile contexts: a report on good practices and new approaches*. Health and Fragile States Network, London.

¹⁶ Kabul Medical University (2010) unpublished data.

¹⁷ Swiss Red Cross (2008). *Sharing Experiences in International Cooperation - Issue Paper on Health Series. No. 1 - When Beneficiaries Become Agents: The Experience of SRC in Community Empowerment and Action for Health*. Berne: SRC.

¹⁸ Lodenstein E., Coolen A. (2011). *Decentralization in the health sector in post conflict Liberia Evolution of policy and practice 2003-2011*. KIT, Amsterdam.

Figure 3 Framework for Swiss Red Cross interventions in primary health care and health promotion

Source: SRC working framework, 2008

Conclusions and recommendations

So how can a lack of political will be addressed when there is no political will to support change, or the lack of qualified human resources be rectified without qualified human resources to train them? There are three key gaps that need to be addressed in order to improve governance in fragile states. These are knowledge, linking levels of governance, and fostering ownership of governance processes.

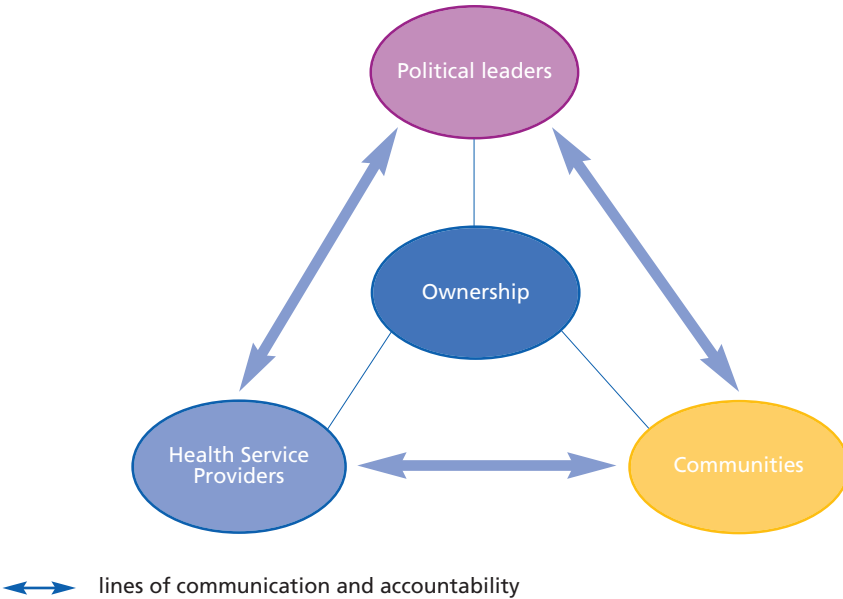
Addressing the knowledge gap

Knowledge gaps need to be addressed in order to strengthen health governance in fragile states. At a basic level this can be done by improving national education systems, but other initiatives are also required, such as training or using the media or village volunteers to disseminate essential and/or new information. Addressing knowledge gaps at every level from the political elite all the way down to communities requires considerable financial resources. Experience has shown that financial support to fragile states usually comes with specific requirements, such as the use of external technical consultants, agency-specific approaches, and short time frames to produce results. As such conditions further constrain local involvement in reconstruction processes, this kind of external support could end up diluting any sense of local ownership of government processes and products, and further weaken governance. These limitations in aid mechanisms need to be clearly addressed.

The role of KIT

The framework presented in Figure 1 could be expanded to include the points raised in this discussion, so that ownership becomes central to governance processes, and communication the process by which it is achieved, as shown in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4 Governance and ownership of the health sector



A sense of ownership is much more difficult to achieve in fragile states than in more stable countries, as the multiple constraints facing governments in transitional contexts often leave the State without the capacity to address them. Efforts to achieve governance and ownership should first and foremost address knowledge and capacity, in the broader sense of these words, and reverse the downward spiral where lack of capacity contributes to a loss of ownership and weak local governance.

As an institution, KIT tends to operate at the interface between communities and central levels of governance. Our key contribution in fragile states could be to strengthen governance by supporting institution building at every level, providing technical support and capacity building, and supporting and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions to strengthen governance and foster a sense of community ownership and action. We are planning to test innovative media approaches and conduct further research and evaluation on strengthening health governance processes in fragile states.

2.2 Land governance policies in Burundi

Thea Hilhorst¹⁹

In agriculture-based economies, there is usually a correlation between secure access to land and food security and rural livelihoods. This is the situation in Burundi, where there are few alternatives to agriculture-based livelihoods and little prospect of substantial alternative employment opportunities emerging in the near future. Urbanisation is low and land availability is dwindling rapidly. As the population continues to grow in an already densely populated country, many fear that they will end up with little or no land.

Conflict over land in Burundi

Burundi endured a long period of civil war that formally ended in 2000 following the signing of the Arusha peace agreement. A new government was elected in 2005. In such a post-conflict setting, reducing the causes of tension and conflict is crucial in order to consolidate the peace process.

Competition over land is high, and the main cause of conflict. In a way, conflict over land as such is 'normal' because it is a valuable resource. It becomes problematic when mechanisms for resolving conflict do not function well, as this makes it more difficult to arrive at mutually acceptable arrangements. Continuing conflict is costly to all parties involved, may reduce investment in land, undermines social relations and can provoke violence. A number of studies on Burundi were published around 2005.²⁰ All point to the importance of land conflict and the urgent need to address land governance issues to prevent future outbreaks of violence.

Most smallholders in Burundi hold land under 'customary rule'. Land is mainly accessed through inheritance. Family members can only sell or lease land with permission from the family as a whole, which has to be involved when land is to be alienated. Perceptions of tenure insecurity are higher in areas where refugees are returning and reclaiming land that they or their families used to work. At the community level, the main causes of conflict are disputes over boundaries, transactions, rights to fields and inheritance. The people most at risk of having their rights challenged or denied are sisters, widows, orphans, illegitimate children and the *Batwa* ethnic minority group. Traditional law in Burundi excludes daughters and wives from inheriting land. They may be assigned a plot on their father's land that they can cultivate, but they will not be allowed to lease or sell it, and a

¹⁹ Senior Advisor on Decentralisation and Local Governance, Royal Tropical Institute. E-mail: t.hilhorst@kit.nl

²⁰ Kamungi et al. (2004) RCN-Justice et démocratie; CED-caritas (2005); Global Rights; Kamungi et al. (2005); Leeuwen, Mv., L. Haartsen (2005); Ntampaka (2005). There are few recent studies on land governance in rural areas based on actual fieldwork, as most focus on evolutions in land policy development (see Kohlhagen, 2010).

brother will inherit it when their father dies. Women may also be assigned a plot of land by their husband. They are still not granted rights to inherit land under formal law (Kazoviyo and Gahungu, 2011), and their access to land has been further compromised by repeated displacement in Burundi's conflict and post-conflict environment.

At the local level, conflicts may be mediated by elders such as the *Bashingantahe*, or leaders in local government structures (*sous-colline*, *colline*) who sit in formal courts. The majority of cases presented to both types of mediator relate to conflict over land.

Improving land governance

Land governance is the process that is used to make decisions about access to and use of land and natural resources, the way in which these decisions are implemented, and how conflicting interests are reconciled (UN-Habitat, 2008).²¹ Land governance systems are managed by formal and informal authorities. Good land governance systems are accessible, effective, equitable, predictable and transparent; weak ones fail to protect tenure rights and lead to corrupt practices. Tenure insecurity has adverse effects on investment, economic growth, the environment and social stability (FAO, 2011).

Existing land governance systems in Burundi have difficulty coping with the growing level of conflict over land rights and boundaries, which have escalated following the return of refugees and the spread of land markets. Formal regulations regarding land registration are only relevant for securing urban property. They are also expensive and prone to irregularities. Land titling and registration are not a tool for preventing and resolving conflict in rural communities.

Land rights need to be better documented, boundaries systematically demarcated and transactions recorded in order to enhance tenure security, facilitate land transactions and reduce the risk of conflict. This is starting to happen in Burundi. More decentralised land governance systems are being introduced, with local initiatives to formalise land rights and transactions (*petits papiers*) and encourage people to apply to the municipality for an affidavit (*acte de notoriété*).

It seems clear that more support should be given to the systematic formalisation of land rights. However, the history of land titling programmes in Africa is not encouraging, as poorly conceived approaches have been shown to create even more land conflict. Many lose out in the titling process when titles are only issued in the name of chiefs or heads of families, and the rights of more marginalised and vulnerable groups are often ignored. Enhancing tenure security requires 'mass' formalisation, which means that land administration services need to be available all over the country. This raises serious capacity issues in a country where the ministry in charge of land titling only has three offices (in Bujumbura, Gitega and Ngozi).

²¹ United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-HABITAT, 2008) *Secure Land Rights for All*. Available at: landportal.info/resource/global/un-report-secure-land-rights-all

Subsidiarity is therefore essential to ensure sufficient capacity and help adapt systems to the local context. One way of expanding services that contribute to better land governance is to work through local governments, which have existed for decades in Burundi. They operated as deconcentrated entities of the central administration until 2005, when the new constitution introduced devolution and the first local government elections took place at the *colline* and *sous-colline* levels.

Another option for securing rights to rural land could be to use certificates as an additional tool alongside land titles. Certificates offer comparable security but are less demanding in terms of land surveys, and are being introduced in many other countries that are decentralising their land administrations.

Piloting decentralised land administration services

Burundi decided to review its land code in 2005, but did not plan any initiatives to develop tools for improving land governance. As part of its efforts to contribute to conflict prevention, the Swiss Development Cooperation decided in 2007 to develop a pilot programme on decentralised land administration that focused on local governments. It opted for a pilot approach due to the sensitive nature of land tenure. Moves towards formalisation need to be developed with great care, with regular stakeholder consultations and intensive monitoring to identify problems and risks, and an open mind to deal with unexpected outcomes.

The pilot programme, which was inspired by an ongoing initiative in Madagascar, aims to develop appropriate, accessible, affordable and sustainable land administration services in rural areas. This is done by opening local land offices (*guichet fonciers*) to issue the certificates that are being introduced as an additional form of land title.



Public display of land certificate demands, Ngozi, Burundi (Photo: Thea Hilhorst)

The aim of the pilot is to design and test a transparent public procedure for identifying and confirming local rights and boundaries, and determine what information is needed to issue a certificate and how to collect this efficiently. Staff in the local land offices are assisted by *comités de reconnaissance*. These committees are composed of respected local men and women who are selected by the public and approved by the municipality to work as volunteers, and possibly play a role in conflict mediation. The pilot programme has also developed procedures for selecting, training and monitoring these committees and setting up *guichets fonciers* (legal aspects, staff selection and training, working practices, financial sustainability, etc.).

A review of the legal and institutional framework was planned at the start of the pilot (Arusha peace agreement), as it needs to be aligned to the national land policy and legal framework if it is to be scaled up. A first draft of proposals for a new Land Code was prepared in 2005, but has not taken further by the new government.

While the *guichets fonciers* are legal entities grounded in the policy and legal framework on decentralisation, the certificates are a new land tool that was not mentioned in the Land Code of 1986 or the draft proposals of 2005. The pilot project has been accompanied from the outset by parallel assistance to support the development of a new land policy. This has been done in close collaboration with key stakeholders. The pilot itself was developed in close consultation with the authorities, particularly the key ministries in charge of land governance. Two steering committees were created, one at the provincial level and one at national level.

There have been major changes in Burundi. The decentralised land administration and land certificates were incorporated into the land policy (*lettre de politique foncière*) formally adopted by government in 2010, and the certificate was 'legalised' with the adoption of the revised Land Code in 2011. The relatively swift approval of the revised Land Code was partly due the engagement of a range of government and non-state actors through the steering committee and the *lettre de politique foncière*, and donor funding of the process. After the revision of the land law restarted in 2007 with support from USAID, other organisations and development partners (like SDC) funded technical expertise to help draft the code, and NGOs worked with parliamentarians to inform them about the code. A new government was installed in 2010, and the new code was approved surprisingly quickly in 2011 (April 2011 in Parliament, June 2011 by the senate).

Donors have also been working to harmonise their approaches in this area. A programme funded by the European Commission that started in 2007 included pilot *guichets fonciers* in another part of the country. CTB and FIDA are now testing this approach based on the experience of the SDC and EU pilot programmes, and other donors have supported the drafting of a new Land Code (USAID) and the modernisation of the land titling and cadastral system (SDC).

Advising on land governance

The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs became involved in securing land rights in Burundi in 2005, when the minister of development cooperation attending the inauguration of the newly elected president of Burundi was asked for assistance in reducing conflict over land rights (and setting up credit systems). Collaboration was established with the FAO, which commissioned a study on land tenure in Burundi (Ntampaka, 2005). Because FAO Burundi was mainly engaged in emergency support and did not want to implement an additional programme on land tenure, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs approached KIT in 2006 with a request to explore the need for more support on land governance in Burundi, using the FAO study as point of departure.

A first scoping mission took place in September 2006. In consultation with the embassy, it was decided to start with concrete activities around the issue of returning refugees and land conflict ('low-hanging fruit'), with a parallel assessment of the need for a larger programme of work. This mission coincided with the start of the *Commission Nationale de Terres et autres Biens* (CNTB), which the government of Burundi had set up to facilitate access to land by returning refugees and to mediate in conflicts. Although three previous commissions had failed to fulfil this mandate, and had sometimes even led to the 'grabbing' of public land, expectations for the CNTB were very high. However, it soon became clear that the CNTB needed urgent assistance become operational, as it was working out of a large, mainly empty building with top-floor offices for the newly appointed president, vice president and secretary, but hardly any staff, facilities or experience. It also needed support in communicating and engaging with non-state actors who were already active in conflict mediation and helping refugees return home. This was very important because tensions between the government and NGOs were running high in 2006. NGOs were highly critical of the government, which was set up by former rebels who had little experience of running a government and were themselves suspicious of NGOs because they saw them as representatives of the political opposition parties.

Having consulted with resource persons identified with support from the embassy and Dutch NGOs active in Burundi, it was decided to help the CNTB organise its first workshop with Burundian stakeholders. This was an important opportunity for the CNTB to present itself, and for NGOs to receive and discuss information with the CNTB. The workshop was successful in its own right, and also increased the visibility and credibility of the CNTB (and the Netherlands). As a follow-up step, the CNTB received assistance in developing a more strategic plan and log frame, which it needed to qualify for support from various donors. In 2007, it succeeded in obtaining support from the UN peace-building fund, and has since become more operational.

When work began on the design of a fully-fledged programme to help secure land rights in 2007, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked KIT to facilitate the process. Although the issue of refugees dominated the political agenda and work of many donors, it was suggested that this should not be the only focus of the programme, as recent studies indicated that land-related conflicts were a general problem in Burundi. Therefore, a

more structural approach was required to reduce land conflicts. The first step was to make an inventory of ongoing initiatives regarding land governance and conflict mediation. As Bujumbura is a small town it was relatively easy to determine which projects and programmes were supported by donors (bilateral, multilateral INGOs) and government staff. However, contacting the Burundian authorities and decision-makers proved to be much harder due to lack of capacity, limited staff and complex formalities. Appointments with higher-level officials required intermediaries (assistants in ministries and the presidency) and approval by the so-called '*protocole*' in the case of the vice-presidency. The embassy was understaffed, with just one person in post in 2007, and government officials were busy receiving international actors (including the UN) or occupied with national security (rebel groups). Although the country was officially at peace, safety and security were still unresolved issues in Burundi.

SDC's pilot programme was one of the activities that was identified as having considerable potential. Slowly but surely a programme was developed that harmonised with national objectives. One of its departure points was strengthening the capacity of both government and civil society, since land policies are supposed to be the product of societal dialogue implemented by government. While solid land policies require governmental capacity to judge studies and proposals and facilitate inter-ministerial coordination,²² it is equally important to strengthen non-state actors' capacity to analyse and participate in the process.

The programme's core activity was supporting the SDC pilot, institutionalising it through the government and civil society, and delivering a capacity-building component for these actors. The project document was clear on the expected impact (securing land rights in order to promote welfare and food security and reduce conflict) and outputs (an institutionally and financially transparent and sustainable system). It did not include a detailed log frame with activities, to allow the organisation responsible for implementation to tailor interventions to the situation. Draft versions of the proposals were discussed with Burundian authorities, embassy representatives and the Ministry in The Hague.

KIT contributed on content and approach. With respect to content, a more systemic and long-term vision was promoted: firstly, working on all conflicts, not just those linked to refugees, which should be a temporary problem; and secondly, using the design of a land governance system that is sustainable and respected by the local population to promote collaboration with existing local entities (local governments at the *colline* and *sous-colline* level). In terms of approach, it was important to promote a multi-stakeholder process to ensure that civil society was involved in the programme. Working towards more transparent governance is a central aspect of the programme, which was developed in consultation with all stakeholders. Its overall structure revolves around strengthening networking, information and capacities within government and amongst civil society organisations; and its constituent components and indicators are based on multi-stakeholder approaches and building accountability mechanisms.

²² In 2005 most research was conducted by NGOs, and the government had limited capacity to analyse their findings.

The programme treats the pilot as an initiative for 'institutional innovation'. Building societal dialogues around land governance is an integral aspect of the programme, which has also considered the implications for sustaining and scaling up the process from the very start of the initiative.

In 2008 the programme was approved by the authorities of Burundi. It is funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the embassy decided to set up a 'silent partnership' with SDC, which has integrated the programme into its work. SDC asked KIT to help adjust the programme proposals to SDC criteria, and then undertake a mid-term review and join the preparatory committee for a seminar on land governance in the Great Lakes. These visits also provided an opportunity to keep the embassy in Burundi informed. Because it is a new, expanding embassy in a post-conflict country staff turnover is very high. In 2011, the embassy decided to make securing land rights a component of the food security programme in the new multi-annual strategic plan.

Some results and lessons learned

The pilot has proved to be a real laboratory for designing tools, methods and approaches for improving the security of rights and certification. A key activity in the approach is the *reconnaissance collinaire*, where a local committee publicly confirms field boundaries and checks if there are any conflicts. It is probably the most important step for conflict prevention.

The preparations for issuing certificates for each plot are probably still too time-consuming, as they involve boundary surveys. Calculations showed that the initial approach assumed that a local land office can issue about 1000 certificates a year, which is not many, given that there may be tens of thousands of plots in one municipality. The pilot team is now designing methods to achieve economies of scale without creating new conflicts.

At the national level, the imprecise nature of surveying is hotly debated. Government agents in charge of titling and registration continue to demand full surveys even though this contradicts the reasons for introducing certificates. There is also a potential conflict of interest between the deconcentrated and devolved land administration services that needs to be addressed to ensure that the pilot is institutionally sustainable. It is particularly important to promote collaboration between the various agencies involved and to manage these conflicting interests and resistance to the initiative.

There are also broader issues relating to the scale and sustainability of the service, the *guichet foncier* approach, and the need for a national support structure – which presents new governance challenges in protecting the integrity and quality of the procedures followed by the local land offices, committees and support structures. It is important to develop oversight systems and ensure that *guichets* are accountable to the council and the population (presenting annual reports in public, etc.).

This initiative shows that small assignments can lead to long-term engagement. A quickly organised visit to Burundi in 2006 led to an undertaking that is still ongoing, with spinoffs to other activities related to decentralisation, peace-building, health systems and food security. This assignment required the ability to facilitate institutional innovation and build coalitions from a change management position. Governance was not only a central aspect of the land governance systems assignment itself, but also of the work to strengthen partnerships and dialogue, improve accountability mechanisms and emphasise the importance of integrity and transparency in the procedure. It will be interesting to see what else can be learned by engaging with the process, looking at the research findings, and monitoring the *guichets* for expected and unexpected outcomes.

2.3 Going local: Governance in food commodity value chains and pro-poor development

Fred Zaal, Jacqueline Sluijs, Roger Bymolt and John Belt²³

‘Historically, the Fair Trade model has relied on exports driven by a strong demand from North America and Europe; however this trend has begun to shift, to focus on domestic markets in the South.’

Representative of Fair Trade South Africa

The quote above sums up the market shifts that we discuss in this paper and the role of governance therein. The comment was made at the end of a writeshop documenting recent experiences with value chain development projects that deal with food commodity and other bulk products for local and regional markets. This event was jointly coordinated by KIT, MS-TCDC (Tanzania), Action Aid (AA) International, AA Denmark, AA Zimbabwe, Fair Trade Africa and various case owners. A number of cases were discussed, including Fair Trade Africa’s response to shifts to local and regional markets in the South. For centuries the Global South has provided the North with food and luxury products such as coffee and tea. Recently the benefits for local farmers have been boosted with the introduction of organic or socially responsible brands and certificates. However, these specialised value chains affect limited numbers of local producers whose market is mainly in the North. New market options appear with an upcoming middle class in most developing countries.

From exports to local markets

The main question addressed during the writeshop was whether these local and regional value chains, which are oriented towards poor producers, commodity products and local markets rather than export value chains, can achieve other than purely financial and economic aims. Participants looked at the contribution that these value chains make to pro-poor development, infrastructure and governance development, food security and sovereignty, quality and fair prices, innovation, sustainability and gender equality.

Over the years, most value chain development projects have focused on chains that target niche and export markets for limited numbers of smallholders (in the order of a few thousand). The number of other actors in the value chain was also limited, in many cases consisting of only a single trader, wholesaler or processor with a particular interest in sustainable production. In such value chains, sustainability implied both the environmental and social dimensions of the enterprise, although of course profit was the first

²³ Fred Zaal, Roger Bymolt and John Belt are Senior Advisors on Value Chain Development, Royal Tropical Institute. E-mail: f.zaal@kit.nl, r.bymolt@kit.nl, j.belt@kit.nl. Jacqueline Sluijs is Information Specialist Sustainable Economic Development. E-mail: j.sluijs@kit.nl.

pillar underneath each business case. The crops that were usually targeted were those to which value could be added through improved growing and harvesting, processing, packaging, branding and marketing; and high-value crops that were necessarily restricted to niche markets. In most instances, public funds were found to cover the high cost of identifying these value chains and actors, setting up the necessary infrastructure, developing capacity, and monitoring progress towards sustainable chains. After a number of such value chains had successfully been supported, many questions remained. How relevant is this type of project? Does it engage sufficient numbers of small-scale producers and local processors to make a difference to the local economy? Does it focus on poorer producers, or on the well-to-do who can afford to produce cash crops for export markets? How financially sustainable are these efforts when external donors withdraw their support? Can this type of project be scaled up?²⁴

Individual farmers are not always in a very powerful position in relation to processors or traders because their production for markets is small. In addition to supply-side interventions like building capacity for increased and better quality production, most projects therefore also aim to improve the negotiating position of these producers, usually by organising producer groups that enlarge their market footprint and strengthen their negotiating position. It remains to be seen whether this is possible without external funding. In cases with minimal external funding, such as a programme/project to improve maize and dairy value chains in western Kenya, there has been limited but persistent impact. Without external support, it has proved hard to build up a strong farmers' organisation in Kenya that can successfully lobby against established forces in the market.

Instead of doing more work along these lines, a new approach to Value Chain Development was tested, based on real experiences with local and regional value chain development projects. In the course of the writeshop it became increasingly clear that a major factor explaining the outcomes and impacts of value chain projects was the governance situation within the value chain: the interaction between the various chain actors and, more particularly, whether and how influence was exerted by major actors dominating the chain.

Most value chain projects have a very limited vision of governance: usually there is consensus on what to do in the chain to improve its efficiency and effectiveness, and who should do it. If any difficulties crop up, public funds provided by supporting NGOs or governments are usually available to iron out the problem. This could be called 'governance by financial management'. However, there is little public funding for (food) commodities for local and national markets in the South, and few means available to fully address any tensions that may exist within the chain.

There is often a strong focus on farmer organisations to make an impact with on-farm effects on individual members and their households (economies of scale and innovation, but also social-psychological goals). Farmer groups are also supposed to be engaged in higher-level activities within the value chain, upgrading procedures to control trade, processing and retail sales. Within farmer organisations, the processes used to establish them, improve members' productivity and increase the control that these organisations have on the later stages of the chain can be problematic or controversial. Competition begins to be a concern and complicate the situation when producers are upgrading towards higher stages of the value chain. In one example of horticultural value chain development in Tanzania, this situation seems to be internalised: larger farmers who export and small-scale farmers who rely on their processing and export channels belong to the same organisation, but despite a clear policy of supporting all members, the large farmers have a stronger position in the organisation than the smaller-scale farmers, and dominate policy, activities and proceedings.

²⁴ Arnoldus, M. (2013) *A guide to impact investing*. GIZ/ Sense/ KIT, Frankfurt/ Amsterdam.

Further study needs to be done on the *type* of value chain, and whether an adequate focus on *governance* issues could address the varying and potentially *competitive* and *conflicting relationships* between stakeholders in those types of value chains.

In one case involving female groundnut farmers in Senegal, the processors' traditional strong position, which dated back to the government's parastatal involvement in the markets, also constituted a potential threat. The market was dominated by the biggest company and a number of large trading houses, which offered prices that were too low for farmers to recover their costs. In a national round-table discussion the government agreed to support the price offered to farmers by 30%, to kick-start the sector after it had ground to a halt following liberalisation. An Action Aid Senegal project played an extremely important role in providing the impetus for farmers to organise themselves and get their organisation recognised. This initiative involved a delicate balancing act between the farmer organisations, their supporting service providers, the government, the oil industry and the traders to allow all parties to recover their costs, make a profit and continue the value chain.

Governance in value chains

The concept of value chain governance that was used for case descriptions during the Going Local writeshop has its theoretical roots in the work of Gereffi, Humphrey and Sturgeon.²⁵ They explored possible models for the organisation of value chains, and identified three sets of variables to develop a framework for analysing relationships between actors within a value chain:

- The complexity of the transactions between chain actors. More complex transactions lead to a closer relationship between the parties concerned.
- The degree to which transactions can be modelled or codified determines the type of relationship. Relationships may be less close when transactions can be codified (standard packaging, processing, etc., which depend on the type of product).
- The suppliers' characteristics and capacity to conform to these requirements determine the need to control them, and thus the degree of integration between supplier and client.

This framework appeared to be applicable to a range of products and sub-sectors, from bicycles to horticultural exports. The concept of governance is thus used as a descriptive concept, but focuses on more than just the power relations between parties in the value chain. It also deals with the characteristics of the products involved. When using this framework, however, there is always a need to adapt to the specific circumstances, as local marketing systems can be quite different to those of the model, even when they extend to exports to neighbouring countries.

Governance as a positive normative concept concerns the management of:

- Efficiency (coordinating production capacity and timing with the absorption capacity of the trading community and processing industry)
- Quality (sharing information about the quality requirements of consumer markets with processors and producers)
- Effectiveness (costs and benefits at each stage, leading to low cost and reliable supply for the market).

²⁵ Gereffi, G., Humphrey, J. and Sturgeon, T. (2005) The governance of global value chains. In: *Review of International Political Economy* 12:1 February 2005: 78–104. Routledge Taylors & Francis Group.

Governance as a deductive concept concerns the analysis of conflicts of interest:

- Between actors at each stage of the value chain
- Between stages in the value chain
- In terms of the actors' dominance in the value chain (key processing industries, etc.).

Competition takes place between producers and producer groups who may compete for the attention of the same traders and processors, or between processors competing for the same markets. Processors are often large players in the chain. Companies that had a state monopoly in the pre-structural adjustment period (SAP) still operate in many countries, and may still dominate the market even if they have been privatised.

This means that in addition to the concept of governance *supporting* chain goals, we also need to consider the concept of governance *threatening* chain goals. In many cases competition and conflict could threaten the basic ideas that underlie many value chain projects, as they lead to inefficiencies rather than efficiencies, and monopolisation and ineffectiveness rather than an efficient and effective value chain.

Failure to address power issues within a value chain may result in the removal of producers (larger-scale production) or increase the importance of plantation-type production controlled by a processor or wholesale trader. In the typology developed by Gereffi *et al.* (2005), the value chain develops from a market-type chain towards a captured or integrated type of value chain. Advisors and chain facilitators need to be aware of these possible consequences when working in value chains where processors do not have a positive attitude, there are no public funds to address constraints, and no policy support to stimulate these chains.

Governance in smallholder-based regional (food) commodity value chains

Transactions involving food crops and small-scale producers in local markets and regional value chains could be expected to be relatively simple and well codified, and the actors to have high supply capability. One would expect to find large numbers of producers engaged with numerous, similarly sophisticated traders and processors in a 'market-based' (or spot market) value chain. Many of the case studies described in the writeshop followed this pattern, although the number of traders, processors and well-organised farmers groups were sometimes rather limited.

The Gereffi theory does not easily accommodate this setup as its models are based on a situation where there is only one turn-key supplier (except in spot markets). Because situations are more diverse in agricultural chains, new theories need to be developed to deal with their local (food) markets and regional value chains. There may not only be many consumers dealing with numerous producers (or traders or processors) on a spot market, but also large numbers of active traders or processors with varying degrees of control over the chain. The cases discussed at the writeshop also showed that there is a systematic difference between chains that purely focus on food and those that are more focused on cash crops.



Eggplant and pepper produced for the local market, Arusha, Tanzania 2011 (Photo: Jacqueline Sluijs)

Value chain development facilitators

The cases discussed during the writeshop showed that when NGOs assist value chain actors, they mainly focus on those levels of the chain where little value was added before their intervention. These usually involve the less powerful, small-scale producers at the start of the chain.

Since 2002, NGOMA ('beating drums') in western Kenya has helped form over 1,000 autonomous farmer groups, cooperative societies and farmer federations. On average, these farmer groups have 25-30 members, although some have over 200 members. As a result of forming associations, farmers managed to revive two dairy co-operatives and thus get better prices for their milk.

NGOMA has positioned itself as a smallholder-focused social movement and placed the interests of small-scale dairy and maize farmers on the political agenda, lobbying to ensure that small-scale producers' voices are heard, strengthen their economic power and upgrade their position. After it put their representatives in touch with primary duty bearers in the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Livestock Development, farmers received technical support and capacity building from ministry officials.

Small-scale producers do not dedicate all of their fields to commercial commodities, as they also grow food crops for domestic consumption. Individual farmers are not in a very powerful position in relation to processors or traders because they do not produce much for the markets. Therefore, most projects have worked on improving their negotiating position, usually by organising producer groups to enlarge their market footprint and strengthen their position.

Initiatives to support value chain development often expect farmer groups to engage in higher-level activities within the value chain in an effort to control trade, processing and retail sales ('chain upgrading'). The processes of establishing farmer organisations, improving members' productivity and increasing their control over other chain functions can be problematic or even controversial (if they lead to competition), and often appear too complex to continue without external technical support and funding.

So what role should advisors play in a food commodity chain? What is needed to ensure the empowerment of small-scale producers and lead to sustainable value chains? One view is that that external support should focus on achieving:

- A sustainable business model where the chain is independent of public support, from the producer to the market;
- Inclusion, so that smallholders will become able to meet market demands;
- Equity, so that the economic gains of a value chain are fairly distributed and women and other disadvantaged groups are able to participate in it;
- Social responsibility.

ActionAid Senegal (AAS) has supported groundnut farmers in the Fatick and Kaolack regions since 2002. It helped a groundnut farmers' association formed in 2001 (the '*cadre concertation des producteurs d'arachide*', or CCPA) launch a seed multiplication scheme to revitalise the groundnut sector. This resulted in the CCPA being recognised as a certified agent to produce seeds in collaboration with the national agricultural research institute and the agriculture technical services. The project's other achievements include helping the farmer association participate in determining the price of groundnuts; persuading the government to provide subsidies that enabled the CCPA to become a credible farmer organisation with access to credit from the national agricultural development bank; and changing the lives and livelihoods of female smallholders by using groundnuts to add value to various products. Women increased their incomes by selling groundnuts and derived products such as groundnut oil, cake, soap, paste, flour, etc. Their participation and inclusion in decision-making contributed to a change in power dynamics and their empowerment in economic and social relations.

Intermediary organisations and advisors can adopt two possible intervention strategies in order to achieve these results: one entails helping producers improve their chain activities, the other enhancing their role in managing the chain.

Conclusion

The cases discussed and recorded during the writeshop clearly demonstrate that some value chain projects are striving for goals beyond purely financial and economic gains, and that they are showing some promising results. While they have to deal with the complex issues raised by wanting to have larger numbers of smallholders produce food or bulk commodities for domestic and regional markets, these projects know and understand the smallholders' realities and strive to help their organisations upgrade their position in the value chain. It seems that facilitators have had an effect, albeit on a small scale, and that organising farmers has helped make their voices heard, their participation in policy-making count, and improved prices for better quality products.

It is useful to have a theoretical basis when considering the impact of these interventions. The power asymmetry/supply chain governance model developed by Gereffi *et al.* is a good starting point, although it was designed to describe governance in industrial value chains and based on a situation where there is only one turn-key supplier (except in spot markets). The question is whether it can still be used to compare or describe governance in food commodity value chains.

Gereffi's theory does not seem to easily accommodate the more diverse situations found in agricultural chains, where there may be many consumers dealing with numerous producers (or traders or processors) on a spot market, and large numbers of active traders or processors with varying degrees of control over the chain. There is a need to develop new theories and models to address local (food) markets and regional value chains. In the

meantime, local producers will have to do the best they can to upgrade their positions in the complex, multi-stakeholder system in which they operate. Sharing their experiences and stories can provide new insights for value chain advisors and other actors. The cases discussed in this writeshop show that in addition to leadership, accountability and transparency – concepts that are usually associated with governance – the main ingredients for the sustainable empowerment of small-scale producers in value chains are equity, inclusion, social responsibility and a sustainable business model.

2.4 Innovation platforms: mechanisms for improving the governance of agricultural innovation

Remco Mur and Mariana Wongtschowski²⁶

“Everything becomes a little different as soon as it is spoken out loud”

- Herman Hesse

Smallholder producers in Africa face the challenge of securing their livelihoods and remaining competitive by increasing productivity in a sustainable way and taking advantage of emerging market opportunities. To do this, producers need to have the capacity to self-renew and continuously adapt to changing socio-economic, political and ecological circumstances. The same holds true for traders, agri-business operators, processors and other actors directly engaged in smallholder agriculture. This ability to adapt and self-renew is known as the ‘capacity to innovate’.

In recent decades, approaches to agricultural research and development have changed according to the (dynamic) understanding of how such capacity to innovate comes about, and who plays a role in this process. This includes the way that agricultural innovation and development is governed. In this article, governance refers to management processes, the rights and responsibilities of decision-making, and accountability mechanisms. Governance therefore reflects levels of participation in decision-making, especially by minorities, women and other excluded groups.²⁷ In the case of agricultural development, particular attention is paid to the way that smallholder farmers (men and women) participate.

A brief historical overview of agricultural research for development

The linear, technology transfer approach to agricultural research and development that dominated in the 1960s and 1970s still exists in a large number of programmes and institutes around the world. Such approaches, typified by the ‘Green Revolution’ and the Training-and-Visit system, look at the development and application of knowledge as separate activities, respectively carried out by researchers and farmers. Researchers are in charge of producing knowledge and technologies, extension agents are expected to transfer this knowledge to farmers, and farmers to adopt it. Decisions on research priorities are made by government policy-makers and researchers, and are highly influenced by donor agencies. Accountability mechanisms are largely directed upwards (donors) and potential local contributions are mostly ignored (knowledge, ideas from farmers and other local actors).

²⁶ Senior Advisors on Rural Innovation Systems, Royal Tropical Institute. E-mail: r.mur@kit.nl, m.wongtschowski@kit.nl.

²⁷ See Hemmati, M. (2002) *Multi-stakeholder Processes for Governance and Sustainability*. Earthscan.

Alternative approaches began to emerge in the 1980s and subsequent decades. This change was triggered by the insight that farmers are able to actively adapt and come up with new ideas and solutions to local problems. More participatory and holistic approaches to research and development came into vogue, such as Farming Systems and Participatory Technology Development. With these new approaches, responsibility and voice shifted from researchers to other stakeholders, and there was much greater emphasis on collaboration between research, extension, smallholders and other stakeholders.²⁸

Slowly, it became clear that technologies were not the only bottlenecks in improving the situation for rural farmers, as organisational and institutional constraints made it difficult for farmers and other intended beneficiaries to use these technologies to improve their livelihoods. One way of tackling such bottlenecks is to look at the bigger picture and include local government, traders and other stakeholders in research and development projects, as well as farmers, researchers and non-governmental organisations.



Governance of Innovation, farmer participation (Photo: Geneviève Audet-Belanger)

A large number of agricultural development projects and programmes are now applying such multi-stakeholder approaches. These approaches involve a variable mix of actors who jointly identify problems and opportunities and develop and implement locally appropriate solutions (innovations) that make a difference to people's lives. In this context,

²⁸ Nederlof, S., Wongtschowski, M., Lee, F. van der (2011) *Putting heads together: agricultural innovation platforms in practice*. Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam.

agricultural research for development focuses on enhancing systemic learning and building adaptive capacities. Farmers, extension agents, researchers and a range of other stakeholders work together to define and address their priorities and aspirations for change. This new way of working requires new mechanisms for decision-making and accountability; in other words, new modes of governance.

KIT's experience and expertise

KIT has longstanding experience and considerable knowledge of agricultural development. It helps build agricultural systems that have the capacity to innovate by working together with researchers, universities, farmer organisations and agricultural advisors.

"The success of programmes that support innovation lies in the ability to stimulate institutional change and to learn lessons about how such changes can be stimulated and supported. The logic behind this is that innovation is about changing a cluster of habits, practices, rules, norms, routines and policies – i.e. institutions – that govern the effectiveness and direction of a wide range of processes associated with the way that information and technology is demanded, created, transferred, adapted and put into use."

(Andrew Adwera et al., 2011)

KIT's work is based on the premise that technology (hardware) alone is not sufficient for agricultural innovation; a specific set of skills and knowledge (software) is also needed. Also, that organisations need to change and institutional arrangements need to be put in place to enhance collaboration between people and organisations (orgware).

Innovation requires effective collaboration between policy makers, service providers and other actors in the agricultural chain. One of the main challenges in this respect is collaborating on equal terms, so that farmers and other local stakeholders play an active role and take a good deal of responsibility for the innovation process. There are several mechanisms that claim to allow agricultural innovation to become more 'farmer-governed', such as Innovation Platforms.²⁹

"Innovation platforms are mechanisms that help stakeholders to interact in a concerted manner. The idea is that they serve a set of stakeholders who are linked by their interest in a common issue (be it a challenge or an opportunity), and help them work together to improve livelihoods, enterprises and/or other interests. Such stakeholders co-operate, communicate and share tasks to carry out the activities needed for innovation to take place."

(Nederlof et al., 2011; FARA 2007).

²⁹ Wongschowski, M., Triomphe, B., Krone, A., Waters-Bayer, A. and van Veldhuizen, A. 2010. *Towards a farmer-governed approach to agricultural research for development: lessons from international experiences with local innovation support funds*. Paper presented at the Innovation and Sustainable Development in Agriculture and Food (ISDA) Conference, Montpellier June/July 2010.

KIT and its partners have been involved in a series of pilot and learning trajectories to determine how effective these Innovation Platforms are in giving local voices a greater say in decision-making on agricultural innovation.

Innovation Platforms and governance

Innovation Platforms (IP) are increasingly seen as a way of facilitating systemic learning and enhancing the innovative capacity of farmers and other stakeholders in agricultural systems. As defined above, they can be regarded as a space where stakeholders are able to interact, where decisions about the priorities of agricultural innovation and development are negotiated and translated into concrete actions, and where accountability mechanisms become operational. They are mechanisms for governing agricultural development and innovation processes.

Participants at an expert workshop on Innovation Platforms organised by KIT in July 2011 jointly analysed and documented experiences with several local and national IPs in sub-Saharan Africa.³⁰

They found that the aim and focus of Innovation Platforms is often directly related to the level at which they operate. Local platforms are mostly concerned with improving production and processing practices and looking at specific value chains. They count on active participation by farmers and other local actors. Higher-level (provincial, national) platforms ultimately aim to create an enabling environment for innovation. At this level, the focus is more on institutional changes (policy, collaboration between organisations, regulations, behaviour) that are considered essential for effective innovation within the sub-sector.³¹ Experience and evidence from local platforms feed into higher-level platforms and inform policy advocacy and dialogue. By allowing local voices to influence decision-making and policies, platforms are also changing the way that agricultural innovation is governed – both within the platform itself and in the wider agricultural sector.

The platform for improved maize-legume production systems in Nigeria described in Box 2 below is a good example of how platforms provide a space for local actors to interact and address certain problems in an agricultural system or sub-system. This example shows that helping actors recognise the benefits of working together is essential for platforms to be effective.

³⁰ The writeshop results and conclusions are documented by Nederlof *et al.* 2011, op. cit.

³¹ Van der Lee, F.M., Wennink, B. and Mur, R. 2011. *Innovation platforms in Sub-Sahara Africa: Moving towards a new way of organising agricultural advisory services?* Royal Tropical Institute, paper presented at the GFRAS Annual Conference, Nairobi, November 2011.

Box 2 Innovation Platform for improved maize-legume production in Nigeria

The International Center for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development (IFDC) coordinated the process of setting up an Innovation Platform in the Ikara local government area of the Northern Guinea savannah of Nigeria, as part of the sub-Saharan African Challenge Programme managed by FARA.

The platform was established in 2008 in order to improve maize-legume production systems, and thus farmers' livelihoods. It brings together farmers, researchers, organisations supporting capacity-building activities, national extension services, the private sector (input dealers, agro-industries, marketing associations) and the local government council of Ikara. Together, these actors prioritise and set up training programmes, joint experiments and support potential links between farmers and input providers and other market actors.

A management committee was set up to facilitate participation by different stakeholders. It consists of one farmer representative elected by farmers from five pilot villages where the platform operates, and a representative from each of the research organisations involved, including extension services, the private sector and the local government council.

To allow direct negotiation between farmers and private companies (such as seed and fertiliser providers), the platform instigated an apex farmers' organisation. This was not without challenges, as the farmers needed clear incentives to keep working as a group. Innovation platform facilitators helped them organise bulk purchases and participate in marketing negotiations in the hope that this would clearly demonstrate the benefits of working together.

The Innovation Platform encourages interaction between members and provides opportunities to share experiences, problems and solutions. Participating in capacity-building activities on multi-stakeholder collaboration and team-building enabled platform members to work as equal partners in catalysing innovation. In this process, it was very important to take account of feedback from different platform members, continuously adjust the partnerships and platform activities accordingly, and use flexible planning procedures to accommodate different needs and respond to emerging problems.

Source: Dangbegnon *et al.*, 2011.³²

Besides being a mechanism for managing relations between their members, platforms also facilitate interaction with external stakeholders. The Cowpea/Soybean Innovation Platform in Nigeria is an example of this (see Box 3 below).

Box 3 The Cowpea/Soybean innovation platform in Nigeria

The Cowpea/Soybean Innovation Platform is one of three platforms in Nigeria created and supported by the Research Into Use (RIU) programme funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

The platform's immediate objective is to address selected practical problems relating to supply and demand in the soybean and cowpea value chains, in order to improve the productivity and efficiency of linked activities. As a group, platform members have a stronger convening power, enabling them to meet with banks, policy-makers and other stakeholders who were previously inaccessible to them. For example, a widows' group that was previously unable to access any land uses the platform as a formal entity to acquire land for cultivation.

The platform enables farmers to gain access to improved seeds and related inputs, learn about improved post-harvest storage methods and skills, and have face-to-face meetings with policy-makers. The cowpea/soybean platform thus provides a mechanism for traditionally powerless groups to exercise power and access services.

Source: Ugbe, U. 2011.³³

³² Dangbegnon, C., Tarfa, B.D., Mando, A., Amapu, I.Y., Ezui, S.K., Ahmed, B., Saleh, M.K. and Abu, S.T. (2011) Improved maize-legume production systems in Nigeria. In: Nederlof, S., Wongschowski, M., Lee, F. van der (2011) *Putting heads together: agricultural innovation platforms in practice*. Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam.

³³ Ugbe, U. (2011) Cowpea and Soybean in Nigeria. In: Nederlof, S.; Wongschowski, M; Lee, F. van der, 2011. *Putting heads together: agricultural innovation platforms in practice*. Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam.

The challenges ahead

The cases mentioned above (and others documented at the same time) provide examples of how platforms can enhance interaction between stakeholders within and outside the platform.

They show that Innovation Platforms are potentially effective mechanisms for changing the way that agricultural innovation and development is governed. They provide opportunities for stakeholders to interact, jointly orient possible actions and jointly decide on and implement concrete actions for innovation.

In principle, the concept of Innovation Platforms assumes that all actors participate on an equal basis. However, while the case studies provide initial insights on the way that they are internally managed and how decisions about priorities and the use of funds and other resources are taken, a number of questions remain unanswered. For example, what are the boundaries of the platform, who is included and who is not? Who decides on these boundaries? How are stakeholders represented in the platform, given that one cannot expect all producers of a particular crop in a certain geographical area to participate, as it would not allow for effective decision-making? How are platform leaders held accountable for their actions and the use of funds and other resources? How do stakeholders exercise their power, and how are power imbalances dealt with? These questions need to be further explored and properly documented.

What is clear is that the internal governance and underlying values and issues need to be addressed when setting up Innovation Platforms of any kind, if they are to really make a difference. Power issues play a crucial role in these spaces. Therefore, including relatively powerless groups and striving for gender equity will continue to present major challenges. Analysis has shown that effective facilitation and brokering (bringing individuals and organisations together) is a good start in ensuring a transparent and more equitable process. Interaction within and beyond multi-stakeholder platforms requires specific capacities and competencies: facilitation, mediation, and willingness to collaborate, share and support joint learning. Building such capacities is a task for the platforms and their supporters and champions. Admittedly, not an easy task, but very likely a rewarding one.

2.5 Climate change and local governance

Martijn ter Heegde³⁴

“Africa is one of the most vulnerable continents to climate change and climate variability, a situation aggravated by the interaction of ‘multiple stresses’, occurring at various levels, and low adaptive capacity (high confidence).”

International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 2007

Climate change will result in the loss of much agricultural land in Africa, shorter growing seasons and lower yields. Given the IPCC’s argument that “Africa’s major economic sectors are vulnerable to current climate sensitivity, with huge economic impacts, and this vulnerability is exacerbated by existing developmental challenges such as endemic poverty, complex governance and institutional dimensions”, addressing governance issues must then be at the heart of any response to climate change.

However, policy-makers have yet to integrate local governance into the climate change arena (UNFCCC, 2007). The problem extends beyond the spheres of national and local governance, as few internationally developed climate change policy instruments identify the need to work closely with local institutions (UNDP, 2010). These instruments therefore fail to take account of the fact that national initiatives are dependent on significant sub-national engagement and the development of equivalent strategies at the province or district level (UNDP, 2010).

The situation

Research by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change shows that agriculture accounts for 14 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂), and forestry and deforestation for 17 per cent. The UN combines these three activities into the single category of Land-use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF), which is responsible for around 20-30 per cent of all anthropomorphic CO₂ emissions.

So a significant part of climate change is about development choices and natural resource governance. Most conversion of forests into pastures takes place in developing countries. As around 90 per cent of terrestrial carbon is stored in soils rather than vegetation, the use of soils for agriculture is a significant determinant of CO₂ emissions (Hodge, 2011).

While rural communities and institutions may contribute to climate change, they also can play a role in mitigating its effects. Firstly, local communities have always tried to cope with climatic variability by experimenting with adaptation to variations in their climate. Their capacity to do so and adapt to climate shocks is strongly determined by access to re-

³⁴ Former Senior Advisor on Land and Natural Resource Governance, Royal Tropical Institute. Currently WWF Director of the Campo – Ma’an National Park in Cameroon. E-mail: ajmterheegde@hotmail.com.



Slash and burn agricultural plot in Cameroon. Villagers near Nkolenyeng have cleared the forest cover for farming. Deforestation linked to farming has serious consequences for carbon storage and is a big contributor to climate change. (Photo: Martijn ter Heegde)

sources, effective institutions and governance (Huq and Ayers, 2008). Secondly, local institutions have been engaged in conserving and maintaining forests, wetlands and other ecosystems, which has helped further global carbon sinks and build resilience (UNDP, 2010).

While policy-makers acknowledge these experiences and the contributions made by local communities, they often do not realise that they may be of significance for further policy development (UNFCCC, 2007). The neglect of local institutions (especially customary bodies) in climate change policy can partly be ascribed to the fact that climate change is a new (national) policy issue. More importantly, the existing portfolio of local government activities, which is often an integral part of climate change issues, is rarely seen through a specific climate change prism (UNDP, 2010).

What has been done so far?

Understanding of the local impacts of climate change and ways that local governments can respond to such challenges is gradually growing (UNDP, 2010), along with the recognition that existing environmental management by local governments is actually part of climate change policy (UNDP, 2010).

Global efforts are now being made to address the effects of climate change (adaptation) and reward actions to reverse it. This is mainly done by maintaining or increasing carbon (CO₂) storage or reducing carbon emissions (mitigation, and Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation, known as REDD) under the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, which was adopted in 1997 and came into force in 2005.

Initiatives to support adaptation, mitigation and REDD have focused on supporting national actions and providing technical advice. However, recent field visits to Mali revealed that limited attention is paid to integrating climate change policy into parallel actions on decentralisation or access to land and natural resources.

What more could be done?

Involving smallholders and local institutions

The interplay between resource access, institutions, governance and climate change needs to be better understood. This would not only help determine the overall effectiveness of climate change interventions, but also provide a platform for smallholders, who stand most to lose from climate change.

Smallholders and the institutions that represent them should participate as partners in efforts to help arrest climate change. Local planning and regulation could be used to enable or prevent certain types of activity that have direct, indirect, deliberate or unintended impacts on climate change issues (UNDP, 2010).

Rural communities are especially vulnerable to climate change. It is essential to include them in climate change policy and compensation schemes in order to establish the equitable basis that the UNFCCC believes is needed to effectively protect the climate system. However, this will raise questions about the way that the interests of citizens and various groups are managed, their legal rights exercised, and differences mediated.

While it is acknowledged that local institutions contribute to the conservation and maintenance of forests, wetlands and other ecosystems, their role in balancing users' conflicting rights and priorities also needs to be recognised (UNDP, 2010).

Strengthening local government capacities

Research by UNDP (2010) shows that local governments can engage in climate change mitigation and adaptation actions by:

- Helping their constituents cope with and adjust to changes in their climate regime or natural resource base through targeted poverty reduction, asset building, early warning planning and disaster response planning.
- Helping their constituents reduce GHG emissions through forest management or energy conservation interventions.

In order to do this, local governments need to strengthen their institutional, organisational and individual capacities (UNDP, 2010). Innovative solutions may be required for rural local governments, involving approaches that embrace every tier of the local government system (UNDP, 2010). These solutions could include crosscutting work with groups of local administrative units, or providing appropriate institutional arrangements where government agencies offer different but complementary services (UNDP, 2010).

A capacity assessment exercise might be a useful starting point in addressing capacity issues, with a particular focus on policy-setting capacity and the delivery of specific services (UNDP, 2010). Local institutions would have to develop their own capacity-building strategies, and would probably require national-level programmes and toolboxes.

Innovative payment schemes for local communities

Emerging funding mechanisms for climate change could be used as incentives for good environmental stewardship by local communities. Local institutions would need to be identified to implement such schemes and ensure that such funding reaches the groups that are likely to be most affected by climate change.

At present payments for carbon sequestration through trees, soil or vegetation require secure land titles. However, smallholders operate in a context of complex and often limited tenure security (Quan and Toulmin, 2004). Resource tenure is embedded in formal or informal systems that influence who controls land and who can use land resources for how long and under what conditions (Hilhorst, 2011). Understanding the linkages between institutional tenure arrangements and land and resource rights, and addressing discrepancies between the different regimes would strengthen smallholders' capacity to deal with climate shocks. It is essential to engage with local institutional actors in order to increase local tenure security (Hilhorst, 2011).



Sacks of charcoal made from burning trees in Likasi, DRC. Charcoal production and use emits large amounts of CO₂. (Photo: Martijn ter Heegde).

There is a need for appropriate models to encourage carbon sequestration by smallholders, which may or may not be linked to secure land titles. Efforts to identify appropriate types of incentive could also inform policies to strengthen good environmental stewardship by smallholders and local institutions.

Experiences with Payments for Environmental Services to smallholders have raised various challenges, such as the importance of social cooperation, local norms and religious beliefs in influencing behaviour, and their relation to payments (Deci and Ryan, 1985; Heinrich *et al.*, 2001; Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005). Positive incentives for effective environmental stewardship other than payments should be considered, such as addressing tenure legitimacy (Sommerville, 2010).

The role of institutional actors needs to be understood so that their potential involvement in future carbon sequestration compensation schemes and mitigation initiatives may be further explored. Any rewards and compensation offered through these initiatives would not only be an incentive for local institutions to ensure good environmental stewardship, but also recognise their important role in this domain.

Governance innovations

Climate change policies and strategies are still evolving. The decentralisation of land and natural resource governance in several West African countries provides important lessons for climate change responses (see Box 4 below, on the situation in Mali). It is therefore vital that emerging initiatives support the advancement of such reforms, rather than focus exclusively on technical responses.

Box 4 Climate governance in Mali

Mali is situated in the Sahel, on one of the frontlines in the fight against climate change. It has benefited from considerable international assistance in this field.

Although Mali has a National Action Plan on [climate change] Adaptation (NAPA), much of its information is outdated, it does not touch upon land tenure arrangements, and is of limited use to donors because it does not align with sectoral strategies. Despite these shortcomings, it is the only existing framework for climate change adaptation in Mali, and is widely used as a guideline.

The Malian government agency coordinating work on climate change is by its own admission limited by its access to expertise and information. Malian NGOs report that there is little interaction between civil society projects on climate change and the government. Much needs to be done to link action on climate change to broader land and natural resource tenure reforms, and create an interface between such sub-national initiatives and national efforts to address climate change.

Ultimately, climate change will involve changes in the use of natural resources. Therefore, a thorough understanding of the motives and rationales underpinning resource use by smallholders and local institutions is essential. Over the years it has become increasingly clear that land tenure and tenure institutions are significant for smallholder investment in land and sustainable resource use (Hilhorst, 2011). Several countries have used this information to plan and implement significant land tenure reforms, which should be fully integrated into climate change policy.

Ongoing decentralisation processes should also be considered in climate change policy. In Mali, decentralised units monitor and record the local impacts of climate change. Targeted capacity building for decentralised administrations could increase their contribution to efforts to tackle climate change, ensure broader participation in these efforts, and contribute to more equitable climate change actions.

The interface between local and decentralised institutions and climate change actions can be understood and developed through:

- Local planning and regulation and land use planning and zoning;
- The delivery of goods and services that impact on climate change adaptation through investment choices and the management and execution of public expenditure (planning, budgeting, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation);
- Taxes, fees and charges that can be used to encourage or discourage certain types of land and natural resource management (UNDP, 2010).

Local institutions should be consulted on these governance issues, in parallel with their efforts to stimulate involvement by local communities and develop and implement payment schemes. Climate change action would thus contribute to ongoing and necessary reforms, setting the stage for equitable rural development.

What role should governance advisors play?

The different types of intervention described above indicate that advisors on climate change governance need to play a crosscutting role, and that they will be most effective if they can work on a range of sectoral policies at various institutional levels.

A first step would be to provide advice and guidance to improve local understanding of climate change, and inform local institutions about climate change in concrete and practical terms, focusing on the risks faced and identifying the types of action needed to address them (UNDP, 2010).

The more specific the information provided, the more appropriate the strategies for addressing climate change are likely to be. Advisors could help develop suitable tools and approaches to enable local governments to identify the groups most vulnerable to climate change.

On a more general level, they can support a process of innovation and learning about appropriate institutions for ensuring good environmental stewardship, the drivers for decision-making by land and natural resource stewards, innovative incentive models to further good stewardship, and developing effective links between national and decentralised authorities.

Although it is easy to overlook the linkages between these issues, identifying and clarifying them is an important step in enabling more effective climate change policies and strategies (UNFCCC, 2007).

2.6 Addressing governance in the health sector

Elsbet Lodenstein³⁵

"It is difficult not to equate going to give birth at a public health facility in Uganda to going to war. As with combatants in war, here too, there is no way to tell whether one will come out alive."

The East African, July 2011

A recent progress evaluation on the Millennium Development Goals reported that 27 out of 74 countries are making little or no progress on achieving MDG5. The general explanation given is that women still lack access to quality services and skilled health workers. Similar trends are observed in the field of child health, where mortality rates for under-fives are declining, but rising for newborns. The report stresses the need to better understand the factors associated with different coverage levels and trends in different countries, in order to provide better guidance for governments and their partners.³⁶

In a newspaper article on maternal deaths in Uganda, a journalist describes different views on the reasons for the crisis in maternal and child healthcare. Some users believe that disrespectful and negligent health staff cause unnecessary deaths. Financial accessibility is another key issue, in particular the unofficial payments that users are expected to make for treatment, which make them delay seeking healthcare or avoid using public facilities. For their part, senior health staff blame the government for not prioritising healthcare, saying that hospitals cannot perform due to lack of drugs and personnel. In the end, the journalist blames citizens for re-electing the government that is causing all these problems.

One particular article challenges the perceptions of donors, practitioners, users and civil society. This article, and many others we have come across in African countries, portrays health services as a battle ground rather than a system for maintaining the population's health. Service delivery is often characterised by unethical practices, mutual blame, conflict and frustration. This is particularly marked in relations between health workers and patients. On a more general level, health systems suffer from different forms of poor governance. For example, the WHO estimates that 10-25 per cent of public procurement spending is lost to corrupt practices. Public health services in countries such as Uganda, Cameroon and Burundi are openly criticised and called "small kingdoms of greed" or "cartels of hospital mafia".³⁷

The general public and many health workers feel powerless to do anything about the way that health services function. When they can choose between providers, patients tend

³⁵ Senior Advisor on Decentralisation and Local Governance, Royal Tropical Institute. E-mail: e.lodenstein@kit.nl.

³⁶ Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (2012). *Accountability for maternal, newborn & child survival; an update on progress in priority countries. Countdown to 2015 report.*

³⁷ Lodenstein et al., (2012). *Governance diagnosis of local health service delivery in Cameroon.* Study report for the World Bank.



Women discussing with healthworker, rural Cameroon (Photo: Elsbet Lodenstein).

to avoid public facilities and attend private clinics or consult traditional practitioners. Some individuals that have experienced abuse in urban facilities have taken their cases to court or, in more extreme examples (cited in the newspaper article), taken matters in their own hands and used their own means to ‘sanction’ health staff. These are obviously not sustainable solutions. They not only have a devastating impact on the nation’s health, but also show that the legitimacy of government institutions and public trust in them is severely eroded.

The WHO and other institutions are increasingly focusing on the societal and political factors that contribute to the lack of progress in achieving good quality healthcare for all (gender discrimination, levels of education, governance in the health system). They acknowledge that recent increases in donor and public funding and the introduction of health reforms do not seem sufficient to reach the MDGs. Tackling the inequitable distribution of power, money and resources, and combating corruption should be a priority.³⁸

The question is how this can be done. Where to start in an environment where actors blame each other for service failures, and where resources are scarce and inefficiently used or intentionally diverted? How does one ensure that actors fulfil their responsibilities, and rules and agreements are enforced? In other words, how can governance be made to work?

³⁸ WHO and Unicef (2010) *Countdown to 2015 decade report (2000–2010): taking stock of maternal, newborn and child survival*. Geneva, WHO press.

After many years working on strengthening health systems, decentralisation, governance and patient-provider interaction, KIT has recently developed approaches that analyse health service delivery from a governance perspective. These approaches are based on principles such as multi-disciplinarity, partnerships, facilitating change from the bottom up, and using the windows of opportunity provided by new legislation and policies. The lessons learned in applying these principles and incorporating a governance perspective into action-research, evaluations and capacity development programmes in four countries (Mali, Burundi, Cameroon and Liberia) are described below.

Developing approaches to work on governance

A multi-disciplinary perspective

Governance in the health sector is approached from different perspectives. It is one of the building blocks of health systems, incorporating important concepts and functions such as leadership, stewardship, management, design and regulation. From a political perspective, governance is seen as an accountability relationship between actors who need to be accountable to each other to make a system work (mainly providers, users and policy-makers).³⁹ From a human rights perspective, it starts with securing rights to access services and holding public officials accountable for their performance.⁴⁰ From an aid perspective, governance is defined in the context of the 'good governance' agenda that measures elements such as the rule of law, transparency, participation and corruption as they apply to the health sector.⁴¹

Although important work has been done to strengthen these different elements of governance, it is still one of the least understood aspects of health systems due to the complex nature and inherent difficulties of defining and measuring governance. Many governance studies on the health sector focus on parts of the system such as pharmaceuticals, finance or human resources; or attribute performance issues to the *supply side* (policy-makers, providers) or *demand side* (users, citizens) of the system. There are few examples of crosscutting assessments that take a more comprehensive view of the different components and levels of the health system in question.

When considering how to tackle governance in the health sector, it seems useful to combine different viewpoints in order to obtain a more holistic picture and better understand the complexity of governance. Three important principles of this approach are: 1) combining perspectives by using a multi-disciplinary team (social, medical, economic sciences); 2) applying multi-disciplinary approaches in all the work undertaken, for example by bringing together medical and non-medical practitioners and researchers (see Box 5 below); and 3) assessing factors on both the supply and demand side.

³⁹ Brinkerhoff, D., Bossert, T. (2008) *Health Governance: concepts, experience and programming options*. USAID Health systems 20/20, Occasional Paper.

⁴⁰ Nelson, J. (2007) Democratic politics and pro-poor social services. Unpacking the concept of reform. In: *The politics of service delivery in democracies: better access for the poor*, Shantayanan Devarajan and Ingrid Widlund (eds). Expert Group on Development Issues (EGDI).

⁴¹ Siddiqi, S. et al. (2009) Framework for assessing governance of the health system in developing countries: Gateway to good governance. In: *Health policy* 90 (2009) 13–25.

Box 5 Challenging the power of information in Mali

The health sector in Mali was managed by Community Health Associations (CHA) and line agencies in the Ministry of Health until 1999, when elected local governments became responsible for the provision of public health-care (which accounts for 90 per cent of care in Mali). Changes in governance arrangements introduced from 2003 onwards created a number of critical challenges for health centres.

There was considerable resistance to the appearance of a new, relatively inexperienced local institution. The Ministry was reluctant to transfer resources and decision-making powers to local governments because it was concerned about the communes' lack of human resources and their technical capacity to handle these devolved powers. Health departments also questioned their legitimacy and representativity, and emphasised the risk of political interference. Some saw the policy requirement to open up the health sector to non-medical actors as an opportunity to 'democratise' the health system, but many CHA members and staff in community health centres (CSCOMs) were confused about their role and relationship with the public administration when local governments officially took charge. Instead of reporting to the district health department, community health associations were now to be accountable to local government.

Despite their shared objective of providing universal access to healthcare, the different actors in this field did not get off to a good start due to a combination of old habits, mutual prejudices and lack of information about the new decentralised health policy. As a result, the first years of decentralisation were characterised by a lack of coordination and poor use of the meagre resources available. Some infrastructures were duplicated, and there were conflicts of competence in the recruitment and evaluation of health workers.

The Ministry of Health asked KIT and SNV for advice on implementing the decentralisation policy. One strategy that was tested, advocated and later scaled up was establishing multi-disciplinary teams composed of medical, non-medical, governmental and non-governmental representatives to lead policy implementation. These teams were responsible for ensuring that information was shared, as equal access to information about services, treatments, prices and policies would empower CHAs and enable local governments to better assimilate their new role; while increased information from community-based organisations would allow the Ministry of Health to design more appropriate and responsive health programmes. Greater transparency would be also be the first step in building collaboration and trust between different actors.

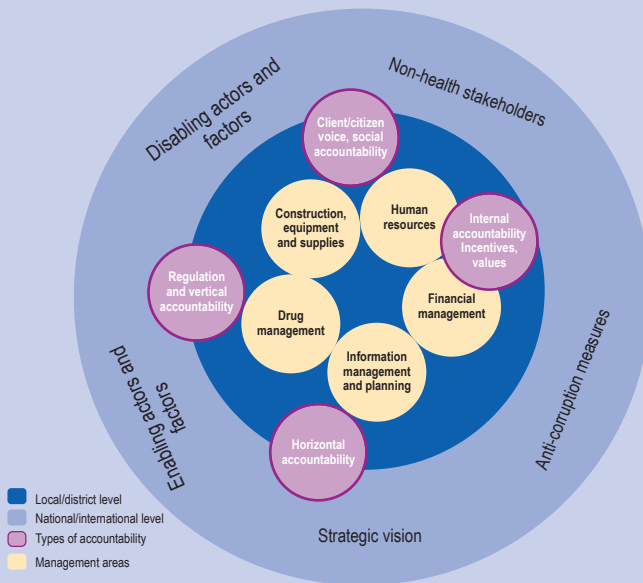
From policy to operational level

General governance assessments and measurement tools already exist and are being applied at the national, regional and international levels. These assessments certainly increase understanding of governance, but they have yet to provide practical methods for dealing with it (Siddiqi *et al.*, 2009; Lopez *et al.* 2010). There are not only huge challenges at the policy level; practitioners also need concrete tools to address governance at the local level, where implementation and service delivery actually takes place and where innovative solutions can be found. Therefore, it is important to identify and develop approaches and instruments that actors at the operational level can use to improve governance. The implementation of decentralisation policies provides a useful entry point in this respect (see examples in Box 6 next page).

Box 6 Addressing governance challenges at the operational level

- Mali - decentralisation as an opportunity for change: an action-learning programme to progressively identify the dos and don'ts of decentralised health service delivery resulted in several practical guidelines and tool-boxes.
- Liberia - a set of studies on re-establishing the post-conflict health system took decentralisation as an entry point for analysing current governance arrangements and identifying required changes. Their findings were fed into the Ministry of Health research agenda.
- Cameroon - qualitative, participatory research on governance in district-level health service delivery, including a political economy analysis component. Particular attention was paid to internal, vertical and social accountability (see Figure 5 below). The report provided practical recommendations for improving accountability mechanisms at the operational level, and was used as a discussion tool by donors and MoH officials.
- Burundi - a longer-term operational research programme aims to develop interventions to improve downward accountability and develop more responsive maternal health services. The results are expected to translate into actions and adapted health policies.

Figure 5 Elements of governance analysis at the operational level



Is the glass half empty or half full?

Many governance assessments are problem-oriented. They aim to map governance challenges, and often end up describing the symptoms of poor governance and identifying areas that are vulnerable to corrupt practices. But they could also approach the issue from a different perspective – that of excellence – and analyse how good governance can emerge and opportunities be seized (particular reforms). The terms used in governance assessments determine their outcomes: identifying the symptoms and risk of corruption in the health sector is a very different matter to considering whether sustainable health systems are more likely to occur when institutions are efficient, accountable and transparent. Experience in the field has also shown that interviews that focus on the control, enforcement and management of governance mechanisms generate different results from those that discuss incentives and enabling environments for performance (see box 7). The choice of terms and approach are crucial when formulating advice.

Box 7 Improving governance through incentive-based approaches in Cameroon

Policy documents in Cameroon equate governance with 'anti-corruption'. Recent interventions focus on the fight against corruption and introduction of control mechanisms, but this is administratively onerous and does not encourage more incentive-based approaches. A more nuanced perspective that takes account of positive incentives and enabling conditions (decentralisation, balanced accountability mechanisms, incentive-based payment systems, etc.) would be more helpful in reducing vulnerability to poor governance.

Action learning for change

Governance analysis approaches are often one-off exercises undertaken by external actors to establish a 'governance profile'. However, participatory analysis is thought to be more effective in promoting change as it not only helps enhance capacities at the local level, but also generates recommendations that focus on realistic options and innovations and gradual change. Action-learning processes (see box 8 below) can foster an enabling environment for governance from within the system, and are more likely to encourage appropriation of the results.

Box 8 Operational research Mali

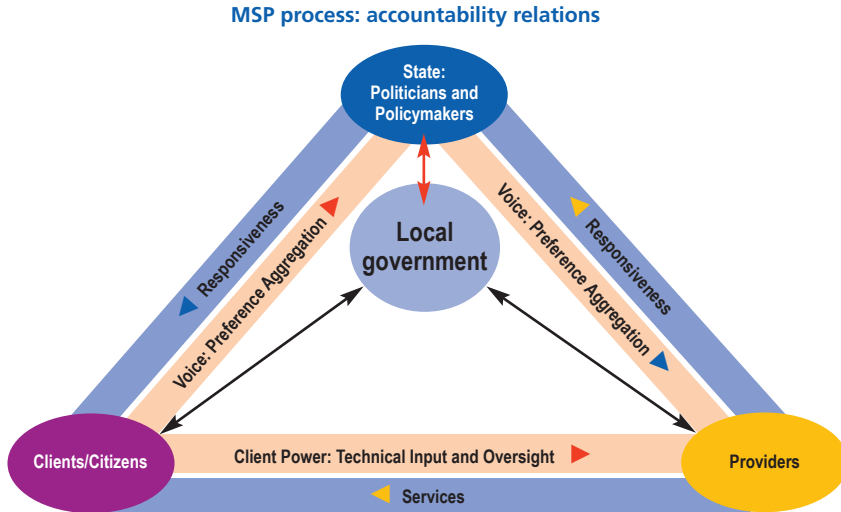
Little was known about establishing decentralised healthcare partnerships in 2005. This was still a new field, and supply-side (MoH) interventions remained separate from demand-side (CHA) interventions. The SNV/KIT team suggested starting an action-learning programme in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, to explore the opportunities and options for partnerships and test tools and approaches in the field. After leading participatory diagnoses in a number of districts, the team developed a conceptual framework and identified practical steps for developing effective partnerships. Programme implementation involves experimenting with tools and collecting and analysing findings and, if this proves successful, sharing best practices with other districts. Along the way, assumptions are challenged and new issues are discovered. A national steering committee provides a platform to discuss the findings at policy level.

Accountability as an entry point

Actor mapping can be an important tool in analysing governance challenges. A first step towards understanding governance challenges in health service delivery is mapping the formal and informal roles and responsibilities of the actors concerned. The 2004 World Development Report, *Making Services Work for the Poor*, provides an insightful framework for this exercise, and states that successful services can emerge from institutional relationships in which the three key stakeholder groups (users/citizens, policy-makers/politicians and public/private providers) are accountable to each other, and where there is a balance between the key governance functions of regulation, provision, consumption and oversight.

Figure 6 and box 9 below shows a simplified diagram of the accountability framework for actors involved in the health system at the operational (local) level. It applies to any country that has introduced some level of decentralisation at this level.

Figure 6 Local accountability framework in the health system



Box 9 Accountability framework

In the logic of the accountability framework, health systems are most fair, efficient and effective when **policy-makers** (central ministries, decentralised departments and civil servants, in this case district health services) define and implement policies, regulations and rules that are approved or enacted by **politicians**. Policy-makers have agreements/contracts with providers, and set and enforce the official rules for service provision (regulation). **Health service providers** have frontline staff who deal directly with users and sometimes organisations or associations (health associations or committees) that manage frontline providers and ensure that goods and services are delivered. Citizens make their voice heard by politicians through a '**long route of accountability**'. Individual citizens or organised groups, coalitions and civil society may use elections, lobbying, information campaigns and other forms of social accountability to monitor and sanction elected leaders. Finally, individuals and communities exercise **client power** with frontline providers through a '**short route of accountability**', where providers are held to account for their actions by the clients to whom they are supposed to deliver a service.

The assumption is that service delivery performance is enhanced when both the long and short routes of accountability are employed; when politicians and policy-makers are accountable to citizens, and service providers are accountable to both clients and policy-makers.

Source: adapted from the 2004 World Development Report for use in governance analysis in Mali.

The advantage of this framework is that it visualises key actors and their relations and is easy to discuss with stakeholders in the field. Using this model as an analytical tool can help people understand the complexity of governance by translating it into accountability relations. It is also useful in identifying appropriate actions for individual actors, and mechanisms to facilitate transparency, communication and collaboration between different actors.

Nevertheless, it is a simplified ideal model that does not represent reality. Relations differ from country to country, depending on the actors involved at different levels, the overall

governance environment (enabling or constraining), financing arrangements, and the general functioning of the public sector.

This framework was adapted and used in governance studies in Mali, Liberia, Cameroon and Burundi to map actors and their responsibilities and relations. This was done through policy and desk studies (formal roles and responsibilities), and interviews and participatory analysis in focus group discussions (see box 10).

Box 10 Accountability analysis in Burundi

KAB studies have revealed that Burundians know a good deal about family planning methods but have one of the lowest contraception use rates. One of the reasons given for this is the competition between public health and confessional institutions, which send contradictory messages about birth control and the use of contraceptives.

What does this have to do with governance and accountability?

A discussion with different stakeholders revealed that several attempts have been made to come to a joint understanding or compromise on how to deal with this problem. Failure to do so means that women still endure unwanted pregnancies and are unable to utilise health services. Participatory analysis revealed that the main problem in this respect is the Ministry of Health's limited authority to enforce policy, and the ability of strong voices from society (churches) or providers (and their unions) to overrule public policy. As a result, (potential) service users are unable to make decisions regarding their own health. Stakeholders identified the strongest accountability gap at the policy-making and enforcement level. Further research on this issue has been commissioned.

Drivers of change

The starting point for governance analysis and recommendations or proposed actions for change should be analysis of the drivers of change. In this context, it is important to distinguish between proponents and opponents of change (those who see the bottle as half full and those who see it as half empty). The action-learning programme in Mali was largely driven by a few key people in ministries, local government and civil society who saw the decentralisation reform as an opportunity to deliver more responsive, better quality healthcare. In addition to identifying individuals, it is also important to identify more systemic and structural enablers and disablers of change.

Lessons and conclusions

Rather than attempting to define governance, KIT has developed an approach to its health and governance work that allows practitioners to assess organisational and institutional challenges in health systems. Whether it is perceived as a process, a set of functions within a system or relations between actors, governance involves decision-making processes where multiple actors with different roles and interests interact, and should be recognised as an important factor in determining performance. Over the past few years certain principles and approaches have been developed to help improve governance and introduce concrete measures to improve service delivery. These practical approaches can help advisors provide appropriate, context-specific guidance, and stakeholders to build the governance of health systems from the bottom up.

There is still room for improvement and areas where these approaches could be more comprehensive. Learning could be broadened to include other sectors, like education, as it can be instructive to compare health and education in a particular country and determine what makes for successful decentralisation in each sector.

Participatory approaches such as critical incident and ranking provide a wealth of information about people's perceptions of governance and performance, although evidencing and measuring change are still a challenge, as is measuring levels of transparency and accountability.

Actor mapping helps identify stakeholders and the constraints to their collaboration. It is rooted in systems thinking, but takes insufficient account of the power dynamics and the political economy of governance. Analysis from Cameroon⁴² has shown that all decisions may be influenced or challenged by individual interests, and that governance analysis should include some analysis of the political economy.

Although governance thinking in health is not new, it is taking time to incorporate it into health policies and practices. This is partly because more practical approaches need to be developed and disseminated, and partly because it involves negotiations over power relations and sharing responsibilities between actors within and outside the health system. In short, it is a multi-actor process that involves a good deal of thought, understanding and consideration of different perspectives, and which therefore requires facilitation. The lessons learned through studies and action research should be translated into capacity development programmes in this field.

⁴² Lodenstein *et al.*, (2012), *op. cit.*

2.7 Making services work for the poor in Pakistan

Chris Hunter^{43,44}

Men in a village in Pakistan were concerned that their sons were receiving a very poor education. Teachers at the boys' primary school were often absent, and when they were present they did not follow the curriculum. The men could not see a way to address these issues. They worked long hours, often far from the village, so they could not monitor what was happening in the school or participate in the Parent-Teacher Committee (PTC), and mothers could not go to the school because all the teachers were male. The men felt unable to make a formal complaint about the teachers, who were from the same village and were politically well connected. Some parents switched their boys to the girls' school where they felt the teaching was much better. The women on the PTC for the girls' school were proud of what they had accomplished with the support of the head teacher, but they struggled to get family support for their participation and few community members came to them to discuss issues. One member's husband was quoted as saying "These women know how to wash clothes and milk cows; what do they know about education?"

Another village decided that they could improve their water services by managing the scheme themselves. Their Village Development Organisation (VDO) took responsibility for regular maintenance, paying electricity bills, collecting tariffs and monitoring the quality of the service. Every household had a member in the VDO. Heads of households attended general meetings to vote on major decisions, and could check the account books or complaint records at any time. A women's sub-committee (WSC) was established, but they were not represented on the executive or in general meetings even though women are usually the first to identify problems with the water system. When they have no water they have to walk to a distant well or borrow water from other women to make sure there is enough for the family's needs. Some women had been able to get timely repairs by calling relatives or family friends who were executive members of the VDO. Women without these contacts tried reporting their problems to the VDO bill collector when he came to collect the tariff, but he told them it was not his job to deal with repairs or run errands for them.

These stories highlight some of the challenges of making services work for poor men and women in Pakistan. The 2004 World Development Report (WDR)⁴⁵ argues that failures to deliver basic services to poor people are failures of accountability. Therefore, the key to ensuring effective and pro-poor services is to strengthen accountability between poor

⁴³ Former Senior Advisor Social Development and Gender, Royal Tropical Institute. Currently Country Representative for UN Women Bangladesh. E-mail: chrishunter@fastmail.net.

⁴⁴ The author would like to thank Adeel Bahadur, Gerard Baltissen, Evelien Kamminga and Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay for their comments on a draft of this case study.

⁴⁵ World Bank, 2003; *World Development Report 2004: Making Services Work for Poor People*, Washington, DC: World Bank. Available at <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPCENG/1143372-1116506152959/20542171/sdn81.pdf>

people and providers, between poor people and policy-makers, and between policy-makers and providers. The ideas about accountability proposed in that report have been very influential in Pakistan and elsewhere.

However, a gender and power analysis shows that this approach does have certain limitations. Although the WDR talks about ‘accountability relationships’ between individuals (as citizens or clients), policy-makers and service providers, there is very little consideration of the power differences in these relationships. The emphasis on citizen voice puts poor people who need services in the position of demanding a response from those who have the power to decide if and how they will deliver those services. Despite repeated references to ‘building client power’, there is little acknowledgement of this core issue. There is even less recognition of power differences *among* poor people. Women are generally subordinate to men at home, as well as in the community, which limits their ability to assert their needs or claim their rights. They have limited decision-making power in the household, and their relationship to the public sphere is often mediated by men.⁴⁶ Many women in Pakistan need their husband’s permission to leave the house, and many communities find it unacceptable for women to attend meetings with men who are not their relatives.

A second issue is the emphasis on creating choice in the supply of services. Applying market theories, the WDR suggests that competition among services will provide incentives for service providers to perform better. Poor people are seen as clients (rather than citizens) with the option to ‘vote with their feet’. In practical terms this focus on choice is unrealistic for many poor or marginalised people whose only option may be ‘choosing’ not to use any service. This focus on choice also obscures the fact that basic services – such as education, health or water – are human rights that the government has a duty to deliver.

The WDR also gives insufficient attention to informal channels of influence and how these affect accountability. The 2009 Pakistan State-Society Analysis talks of the “patron-clientelist character of politics” in Pakistan”,⁴⁷ and suggests that “informal forms of accountability, through which elected officials and civil servants are held ‘accountable’ to bend the formal rules in favour of their own patrons or influential clients’ are more effective than formal rules and procedures and often seen as more legitimate.”⁴⁸

This lack of consideration of power relations and informal social processes, combined with an emphasis on ‘direct accountability’ (methods for citizens to raise issues directly) has led to a focus on tools such as complaint mechanisms. These tools are primarily means for individuals to express concerns or take action. But as Joshi points out, “there is little evidence to suggest that *individual* citizens in poor communities are effective agents in holding

⁴⁶ UNIFEM (2008) *Progress of the world’s women 2008-2009. Who answers to women? Gender and accountability*, UNIFEM, New York. Available online at <http://www.unifem.org/progress/2008/publication.html>

⁴⁷ Mezerra, M. and S. Aftab (2009) *Pakistan State-Society Analysis*, p.18. Initiative for Peace-building and the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael. Available online at http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2009/20090300_cru_pakistan_mezzera.pdf

⁴⁸ Ibid, p.27.

either public or private providers to account, and securing greater responsiveness.” She suggests that collective action is critical in promoting accountability to poor citizens.⁴⁹

Creating formal opportunities for participation through citizen or client committees can facilitate a form of collective action that may increase citizen voice in policy-making and oversight of service delivery. However, these committees are often established by governments or service providers rather than created by citizens. As a result, their terms of reference often prioritise the requirements of those that the committee is advising (setting up the committee so it fits most easily with the service provider’s operating procedures, for example) rather than the people they are supposed to represent (other citizens). Despite these limitations, citizen committees can help build awareness of citizens as rights-holders, increase the information available to citizens, and increase the capacity of community members to voice demands. To be legitimate and effective in the longer term, committees need to be representative of the groups that are supposed to benefit from services, including poor women and men, and account back to their constituency.

Introducing CESDD

Communication for Effective Social Service Delivery (CESDD)⁵⁰ is a bilateral project funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) that works on social accountability in the Pakistan province of Khyber Pashtoonkwa (KP).⁵¹ The first phase of CESDD began shortly before the Local Governance Ordinance (2001) was enacted by General Musharraf, creating an elected government at district level with a senior administrative officer responsible to the elected mayor (*Nazim*). District governments were made responsible for delivering a number of public services, including education and health services; while sub-district municipal governments (*Tehsils*) were given responsibility for water supply and sanitation.⁵² The LGO of 2001 went further than previous reforms⁵³ in guaranteeing that the necessary funds would be transferred from the provinces to local governments. However, a significant proportion of district expenditure went on items over which the district had no say, in particular the salaries of many personnel (including

⁴⁹ Joshi, A. (2007) *When do the poor demand better services? Accountability, responsiveness and collective action in service delivery in the politics of service delivery in democracies. Better access for the poor*, Devarajan, S. and Widlund, I. (eds) pp. 78-79. EGD Secretariat, Stockholm. Available online at <http://www.accountabilityindia.in/article/document-library/510-politics-service-delivery-democracies-better-access-poor>

⁵⁰ The Communication for Effective Social Service Delivery (CESDD) project is now in its second phase. The first phase, which was implemented between 1999 and 2007, was a governance and institutional development project intended to build provincial and local government capacity to deliver decentralised social services and increase community participation in those services. The second phase began in 2008, and is scheduled to end in 2013.

⁵¹ Formerly known as Northwest Frontier Province

⁵² Asian Development Bank, Department for International Development and World Bank (2004) *Devolution in Pakistan: An assessment and recommendations for action*.

Available online at: <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Studies/Devolution-in-Pakistan/default.asp>

⁵³ Pakistan has a history of decentralisation initiatives that are followed by recentralisation. Three different military regimes have implemented local government reforms, and been followed by elected governments that either recentralised power or ignored local governments (Cheema *et al.* 2006). The LGO of 2001 is the most recent decentralisation reform. It expired in 2009 and a new local government law has yet to be introduced.

all school staff) who continued to be provincial government employees.⁵⁴ The Local Government Ordinance expired in 2009, and the powers and tasks of local authorities are now being legally redefined. In the absence of any law, the districts have continued to operate basic health and education services, although management of water supply has reverted to the Public Health and Engineering Department (PHED).



A school taken when CESSD started work in Haripur district, Pakistan



The same class room 4 years later.

The second phase of CESSD began in 2008, with the goal of improving the quality of basic social services in Pakistan and increasing access to and use of these services, particularly by girls and women. The project intends to achieve this by increasing citizen involvement in the planning and delivery of services on the one hand, and supporting government responsiveness to citizens and building capacity to fulfil its responsibilities for effective services on the other. Establishing sustainable mechanisms that support transparency and social accountability⁵⁵ contributes to both strategies. KIT has supported CESSD's work on social accountability since 2010.

The project currently works in 11 districts in Khyber Pashtoonkwa. Stakeholders in each district were invited to select basic education, health or water services as a priority for the project.⁵⁶ In collaboration with local partner NGOs, CESSD began to reactivate citizen committees for each of the prioritised services: Parent Teacher Committees (PTCs), Primary Health Care Committees (PCMCs) and Village Development Committees (VDOs) or Water User Committees (WUCs).⁵⁷ The details of the committees vary according to the sector, but share the same aim of strengthening the relationship between local community

⁵⁴ Cheema, Ali, Asim Ijaz Khwaja and Adnan Qadir (2006) Local government reforms in Pakistan: Context, content and causes. In Bardhan and Mookerjee, *Decentralization and Local Governance in Developing Countries: A Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge MA: MIT. Available online at www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/akhwaja/papers/Chapter8.pdf

⁵⁵ 'Social accountability' refers to accountability to citizens regarding the delivery of public services.

⁵⁶ The project recently took on a second service area in several districts.

⁵⁷ VDOs were established to manage village water schemes. Their duties included regular maintenance of the scheme, collecting tariffs and paying the costs of the scheme. After the LGO (2001) expired PHED decided not to continue devolving water management to local communities. A few VDOs continue to be responsible for water services, but in most cases these services are now managed by PHED. In this context the project is establishing Water User Committees whose role is similar to that of PTCs and PCMCs.

members and service providers, and providing a means for citizen priorities to influence the way that services are defined and delivered. However, CESSD recognises that re-establishing these committees was only a first step in making services work better for poor women as well as poor men. Strategies are needed to ensure that the committees themselves are accountable to less powerful members of the community, and have the capacity to represent the interests of diverse citizens.

In addition to supporting citizen committees in each sector, CESSD had previously encouraged the use of 'social accountability tools', establishing complaint centres and public information boards, exploring the use of citizen report cards, and supporting public events or media programmes that provided opportunities for direct interaction between individual citizens and provincial government ministers.

The impact of these tools and high-profile events on increasing accountability and improving services was mixed. While a complaint centre in one district led to the successful resolution of several issues, and is still operating, others were not well used by the community and systems for reviewing and responding to complaints broke down. Televising budget debates in one district led to significant citizen response and improved decision-making, but it was not possible to repeat this process in subsequent years or replicate it in other districts.

The project concluded that tools are not sufficient to build citizen voice and create genuine accountability, and recognised that further measures are needed to help ensure that citizen committees are accountable and effective. KIT was invited to support the project by developing sustainable mechanisms for social accountability that would work for poor women and men, and were tailored to the local context and sector concerned.

Diagnosing the problem

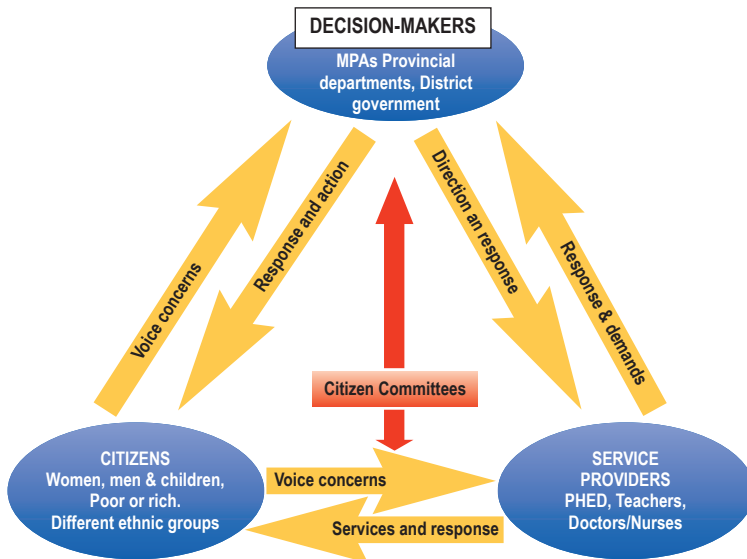
The KIT advisor facilitated teams of CESSD staff and NGO partners, which undertook a rapid assessment of existing accountability and transparency mechanisms in one community per sector. Their findings were used to consider what other processes were needed to give voice to poor women and men and promote a helpful response.

This rapid assessment was guided by the 'accountability triangle' first proposed in the WDR and revised by KIT to address its aforementioned limitations (see Figure 7 below).⁵⁸ The teams used interviews and focus group discussions to map how each set of actors had

⁵⁸ The World Bank model proposes a 'long route' of accountability that operates in one direction: citizens voice their demands to decision-makers who in turn give directions to service providers. The revised triangle recognises that decision-makers need to be directly accountable to the citizens they represent because they make decisions that affect what services can exist, as well as having responsibility to direct service providers. Similarly, decision-makers need to respond to demand from service providers and ensure they have the resources and support they need to do their work. Finally, the revised model highlights citizen committees as a means of bringing citizens into service delivery and demonstrating their obligation to be accountable to the broader community.

attempted to resolve problems, and how successful they had been. For example, individual citizens and citizen committees were asked how they had raised concerns with decision-makers or service providers in the past, and what responses they had received; while service providers and decision-makers were asked about the type of issues that citizens brought to them and what action they had taken to address them.

Figure 7 Revised model for social accountability



The most widely recognised way for individuals to make their concerns known was to use their political contacts to put pressure on decision-makers or service providers. Elected members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs) were seen as a channel for demanding responses rather than as decision-makers with some responsibility for the problems being experienced. The study teams concluded that this approach was occasionally effective in resolving issues for men with higher social status, but that it did not generally work for women. It also had some negative consequences. District officials gave many examples of decisions being overruled by politicians, political interference in processes such as the recruitment or posting of teachers, and of being unable to meet the expectations created by political promises. Over time this approach may further damage trust between the community and government offices, and undermine good public management and accountability. Nevertheless, many citizens expressed more confidence in politicians than in other methods. For example, men from a marginalised community that was receiving almost no water services (despite paying their water bills) thought approaching members of parliament was their best option, although they acknowledged that they had received more promises than action from the politicians, and wondered out loud if these promises were only intended to secure their votes.

The short-term effectiveness of using political contacts also poses a dilemma for projects such as CESSD, whose ability to produce results is partly due to the political credibility and

networks of their staff. In fact, several community members cited CESSD itself as channel through which citizens can resolve problems. It is to be expected that projects will use these networks to achieve outcomes when they operate in a political culture that is based on social (and kinship) networks; the challenge is doing this in a way that builds a platform that can be used by a wide range of citizens.

More formal processes for citizen participation and accountability often rely on the goodwill of individual 'power brokers'. In schools, head teachers (HT) are the most likely point at which parents raise issues about a school, and they are also gate-keepers for information between PTCs, teachers and the education administration. This works relatively well in resolving problems when head teachers have the requisite skills and motivation, but limits the role of PTCs, making them advisors to HTs and reducing their visibility and potential effectiveness as citizen committees. In the VDO described above, the executive facilitated community participation in decisions and ensured that decision-making and accounting procedures were transparent. Yet women, who are the main water users, were denied the benefit of these processes, partly as a result of the actions of the one executive member that women could access because he came to their house to collect bill payments.

Community members believe that the situation could be improved if decision-makers regularly monitored services. Some district officials agree with this, but cite the sheer number of facilities and the distances involved as barriers to monitoring. Others claim that monitoring happens and problems are followed up, despite citizens' experience to the contrary.

Overall, there was a lot of mistrust between citizens, government officials and service providers. Community members generally did not believe that anything could be accomplished by contacting decision-makers. Citizens and teachers alike talked about the 'cold' response they got from managers in the Education Department, and many people chose not to make complaints about poor service delivery for fear that providers would retaliate by punishing them or their family members or further reducing services. Decision-makers did not regard citizen committees as capable of taking effective action; while other community members were either unaware of them or thought they only worked in the interests of the services concerned (because PCMC members were appointed by the Basic Health Unit). PHED often discounted the concerns voiced by citizens, and emphasised that citizens' rights to water had to be balanced with fulfilling their responsibilities to pay bills and conserve water.

Piloting solutions

Through a process of collective analysis facilitated by KIT, CESSD staff used these findings to propose sector-specific mechanisms for improving social accountability. Different interventions have been piloted in the education, health and water sectors. Some focus on building the capacity of different actors, and others on facilitating relationships between citizens, providers and decision-makers.

Building the legitimacy of citizen committees

Citizen committees need to be credible so that community members will join them, and able to raise concerns and be taken seriously by service providers and decision-makers. In the health sector a first step was to create a 'general body' that represents community members who use Basic Health Units (BHU). This body was given the authority to elect PCMC members rather than having them appointed by the doctor in charge of the BHU, which increased the legitimacy of the committee and created avenues for citizens to hold their representatives accountable.

In the education sector the official terms of reference for PTCs called for members to be elected by a general body, but in practice the committee's links to the community were very weak and most community members were unaware of what it did. This lack of visibility translated into a lack of status. Families did not value women's participation in the committee and imposed limits on them, only permitting them to attend events at the school. This made it difficult for them to meet people or take concerns forward outside the school. As one woman explained, her husband said that since the PTC work was not paid, she would do better to spend her time looking after the housework. Increasing the credibility of PTCs involved raising their profile by helping them host general community meetings attended by head teachers and/or the departmental staff responsible for educational matters. Capacity building has also been important (improving understanding of the PTC's role, increasing its ability to review budgets, etc.). The next steps will include having women's and men's PTCs host occasional meetings with high-profile decision-makers such as the Education Minister, and creating opportunities for PTC members to participate in district-level meetings.

Strengthening government capacity to fulfil its roles

Parents felt that the quality of education would be improved by more regular monitoring of schools and teachers. Given the number of schools in each district, district-level staff can at best make occasional surprise visits. Assistant District Coordinators (ADOs) are government staff whose role is to supervise and support a small group of schools known as a 'circle'. They work from offices that are more convenient to their schools, called 'local circle offices' (LCOs). The field assessment found that most LCOs were not functional, and that many ADOs had unofficially taken over classrooms to use as offices. This reduced the facilities for students, and meant that parents and teachers did not know where to find them. They had to go to the District Office if they wanted to raise issues beyond the head teacher – which was effectively not an option for most parents. In addition to this, most ADOs did not actively monitor schools or take action when problems were identified. The education sector team prioritised making the LCOs functional so that ADOs can be expected to be available in their offices and monitor the schools in their circle. Next steps include capacity building for ADOs (report writing, etc.), posting information boards and establishing complaint procedures in each LCO. These efforts will be strengthened by the opportunity to work with a new cadre of ADOs who have been trained in management as well as education.

Agreed service standards

Accountability is usually understood to include answering for performance and taking corrective action where necessary. The UNIFEM report *Who Answers to Women* adds 'authorisation' as another aspect of accountability. This relates to processes where citizens give decision-makers or service providers a mandate to act. The government of Khyber Pashtoonkwa listed 33 quality health standards that BHUs are required to meet. The health team helped PCMCs and their communities select five to seven priority standards so that BHUs can focus on what is most important to their community and set criteria against which citizens can hold them accountable. The next step (currently under way) is to post the agreed standards on large information boards, along with contact details for PCMC members and facility staff, and directions on how to make a complaint.

The Public Health and Engineering Department (PHED) is developing a computerised water billing system that will send regular bills to all households in the province. CESSD proposed that the back of the bill be used to explain what services citizens can expect in exchange for this payment, and PHED agreed to work with CESSD to develop a 'citizen charter' with minimum service standards. Certain challenges emerged when the details were negotiated, most notably PHED's reluctance to commit to timelines for completing repairs on the grounds that its ability to meet them would depend on available resources. There were also debates about the hours of water service that could be guaranteed, for similar reasons. At the time of writing this paper the draft charter stated that clean drinking water will be available for at least one hour per day, that it costs nothing to apply for a water connection, and that applications will be approved within seven days. These standards will also be posted on information boards near each water supply facility, along with information about who to call for repairs and how to make a complaint.

Establishing complaints procedures

Health: Although every BHU is required to have a complaints box, until recently information about how to make a complaint was posted in inaccessible locations on worn scraps of A4 paper, there was no system for reviewing and responding to complaints, and no citizen oversight of how complaints are managed. CESSD worked with the different provincial actors responsible for primary health services to agree on procedures for managing complaints in a timely and transparent fashion. The procedures that have been agreed do not yet include a role for the PCMCs, suggesting that further work is needed to strengthen their legitimacy and increase awareness of the importance of citizen oversight in complaint processes.

Water: A complaint centre for water services has been operating successfully in the Nowshera district office since July 2011. PHED has used this experience to develop complaint management processes that will apply to all district offices, although they do not yet include any citizen oversight, as with the health example.

Inclusive accountability: overcoming barriers to women's participation

Each sector has set standards for women's representation in citizen committees, and continues to seek ways to create opportunities for women to represent their own interests



Training with one of the women's committees

and claim citizenship. Although a quota for women on PCMCs was established in recognition of the fact that women and children form the great majority of health service users, women are still minority members, and their ability to influence service decisions needs to be monitored. Progress is somewhat easier in education as the entire system is segregated by sex, enabling women to be active in girls' schools. However, both sectors need to make women's contributions and accomplishments more visible in order to build family and community support and enable women to play their full role as advocates. It has probably been most difficult to create meaningful involvement for women in the water services. This may be partly because water is a productive resource, meaning that there is greater resistance to increasing women's access to decision-making; and partly because water-related professions (such as engineering) are almost entirely male, which creates an additional barrier to women raising issues individually or collectively. The team working on water has prioritised women's involvement and is experimenting with different methods, such as women-only WUCs and women's sub-committees that play a formal role in the overall WUC.

Lessons learned and next steps

The process used to diagnose accountability gaps and develop solutions generated several additional benefits. The field assessment had a major impact on the way that the project and its partners understand accountability and (to some extent) citizenship. Focusing on accountability as a power relationship, and using the revised accountability triangle to

explore current strategies for fixing problems highlighted which gaps had the biggest impact on citizens' capacity to demand better services, and suggested opportunities for improving accountability relationships.

Perhaps even more important were the insights that CESSD staff and partners gained into the situation and interests of different social groups. Different teams used the same questions to interview different groups – women, men, government staff and service providers – whose divergent perspectives and priorities emerged during collective analysis of the data. Some team members understood for the first time that different individuals within the same household may have different interests, and that only hearing from the head of the household often means that women's concerns are not reported. It also became clear that real accountability, which leads to changes in services, requires more than tools. Tools cannot create capacity for voice or responsiveness, nor reduce imbalances in power. They are only effective when embedded in a larger process, and when all concerned have the information and capacity to use them effectively.

In addition to these specific lessons, much else was been learned from piloting different social accountability mechanisms. One of the key insights is that exercising rights – citizens taking steps to be heard and demanding responses – helps build recognition and support for those rights. Community involvement in decisions about services raises awareness of citizens' rights to participate. This often generates greater participation, and can also lead to recognition from government. The project will continue to monitor and learn from the initiatives that it is piloting.

Further challenges to be addressed

Transparency: There is no functional right to information in Khyber Pashtoonkwa. Although citizens' right to information is guaranteed under the 19th amendment to the Constitution, the provincial government has not passed any laws or regulations to implement this right. One specific example of this is the fact that PHED has not yet agreed on steps to post information about construction or rehabilitation projects so that communities can monitor whether contractors are completing the work to the agreed standards and timeframe.

'Institutionalising' accountability mechanisms: One of CESSD's assumptions has been that having committees or mechanisms 'notified' (officially recognised by government) is a critical element of sustainability. If a process is not notified, government officials are under no obligation to implement it. However, establishing an obligation on paper does not necessarily mean that it will be implemented in practice. A report analysing relations between the State and society in Pakistan noted that although the country has a fairly comprehensive legal framework for governance, including important checks and balances, the formal framework for government is selectively enforced and lacks legitimacy.⁵⁹ Furthermore, changes in the policy on devolution and water management demonstrate that "Pakistan's legal framework has never been stable".⁶⁰ Even if regulations are enforced,

⁵⁹ Mezerra and Aftab (2008), op. cit.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p.23.

they are likely to change. Having processes notified under current government policy may be important, but other steps are needed to nurture a culture of transparency and accountability within government and support citizen participation.

These steps could include: (1) creating incentives for elected officials and government staff to be accountable to citizens;⁶¹ (2) promoting practices that would hold government officials accountable for citizen engagement and responsiveness (so that they are negatively affected by lack of engagement and responsiveness); (3) building government trust in citizens and their representative bodies; (4) addressing other enabling factors that are critical to social accountability. One important step would be to strengthen the right to information by encouraging policy change, and helping citizens exercise that right by gathering and using information to hold government and service providers accountable, or using it as evidence to recommend service improvements.

Creating community demand is another key aspect of sustaining social accountability. One critical step is to demonstrate to communities that action by poor women and men can lead to better services. Without this belief people have little motivation to give their time to community efforts. Sharing success stories will contribute to this, and linking citizen committees across districts will also strengthen the capacity for collective action.

⁶¹ Government officials are currently most likely to receive recognition or promotion by pleasing their political connections, spending their full budget and following procedures that are important to their superiors. They do not gain in reputation or remuneration by reducing absenteeism among service providers, realigning budgets to better address the needs of excluded groups, or responding effectively to citizens' complaints.

2.8 Mobile innovations for local governance

Nicolas Porchet⁶²

“The number of mobile subscriptions in the world is expected to pass five billion this year (2010). And because it reaches so many people, because it is always with you, because it is cheap and sharable and easily repaired, the cell phone has opened a new frontier of global innovation.”

NY times, Giridharadas, April 2010

Mobile phones are entering people’s lives all over the world, in Africa and elsewhere. Beyond person to person communication, this exponential trend facilitates the rapid expansion of innovative applications for development. Most of these initiatives have been developed in the fields of health, where there are automated advisory services for maternal health (m-health); agriculture, with commodity price consultation via sms (m-agriculture); and finance, with money transferred through mobile phones (m-banking).

In a more marginal but no less interesting development, mobile phone innovations have also started to emerge in the field of local governance. So what value can mobile phone technologies add to efforts in this field? Firstly, they can overcome many of the barriers created by distance, providing opportunities for political participation in more remote areas, where interactive radio debates can be organised with representatives of local institutions and citizens. Secondly, they allow marginalised groups to better organise themselves and make their voices heard. Thirdly, if security issues are addressed, mobile phones enable citizens to report cases of corruption, violence or misuse of public resources with greater confidentiality. This means that citizens and civil society organisations can put more pressure on local institutions to develop stronger accountability mechanisms.

There are various initiatives under way that seek to increase citizen participation and/or improve the accountability of public institutions. Yet the impacts of these initiatives on governance processes have so far hardly been evaluated. The aim of this article is to use the lessons learned from the ‘MoGo’ programme,⁶³ which investigates ways that mobile phone innovations can be used for local governance, to reflect upon critical elements and approaches that need to be taken into account when setting up such innovations or monitoring and analysing their effects on governance processes.

⁶² Former Advisor on Decentralisation and Local Governance, Royal Tropical Institute. Currently Advisor in Sustainable Economic Development at NOMADE - Knowledge Management for Development. E-mail: porchet.n@gmail.com

⁶³ The name MoGo is derived from a contraction of Mobile and Governance, and *mogo*, the word for ‘people’ in Bambara. This symbolises the wish to support citizen-focused rather than technology-driven innovations. For more information on the MoGo programme, see www.mogoinfo.org.

Bridging the knowledge gap

This work was triggered by two initial observations. Firstly, that an increasing number of mobile phone innovations have started to significantly impact on governance processes in Africa. Secondly, that there seems to be little in-depth knowledge about their impacts, which have not been well documented. More specifically, there is limited knowledge about the conditions for greater equity and inclusion, financial sustainability and the possibilities for scaling up, replicating or adapting these innovations. Thus, there is no overview of the lessons that can be learned for other initiatives.



Man with mobile phone, Tanzania (Photo: Gerard Baltissen)

Another striking point is that so far, most initiatives have been developed in East and Southern Africa. There have been far fewer initiatives in francophone West Africa, although new information and communication technologies (NICT) are taking off rapidly this region now, after a few years' delay. The underlying reasons for this regional/language divide have not been well documented, although certain factors have emerged from interviews with experts, literature reviews and experience in these countries (see Box 11 below).

Box 11 Factors influencing the regional divide in the use of mobiles and NICTs

- The general economic context in leading Southern and East African countries is more favourable, with more dynamic entrepreneurship and higher levels of development.
- Education in Southern and East Africa is more advanced, especially with regard to NICTs.
- Leading countries benefit from more government support in terms of investment in NICT infrastructures, education and business.
- Legal frameworks in Southern and East Africa are more conducive for NICT development.
- In Southern and East Africa, stronger competition between phone operators and access to undersea broadband cable has facilitated quicker and cheaper access and boosted BICT-literacy.
- Cultural differences are important: some traditional societies take longer to adopt new technologies.

Language is another barrier to learning between regions. NGOs, local grassroots organisations and local governments are increasingly expressing the need for multi-disciplinary and inter-regional learning. The question is how to conceptualise and understand societal/institutional changes related to mobile phone innovations for local governance, and how to support this collective learning process. The following sections describe one approach that has been developed to tackle these challenges.

Conceptualising mobile innovations for local governance and societal change

There are various ways of looking at mobile phone innovations for local governance. One definition describes these innovations as “novel solutions using mobile phone applications with the aim of empowering (marginalised) citizens to voice their needs and impacting local institutions’ accountability towards citizens. Mobile innovations are meant to improve existing communication and collaboration processes in terms of inclusion, efficiency and effectiveness”. This view of the societal and institutional changes associated with these innovations focuses on their impacts on citizen voice and the accountability of local institutions.

Although increasing citizen voice will have little impact if institutions are not responsive and accountable to citizens’ needs and demands, it can increase pressure to improve the accountability mechanisms of these institutions. These two axes are therefore equally important and mutually reinforcing.

The goal of having responsive, accountable and inclusive institutions is both idealistic and paramount in the struggle against poverty and in efforts to promote the rights of marginalised groups. For instance, the way that public resources are distributed between different groups largely depends on these institutions, and will shape the way that these objectives are pursued.

It is important to note that the way that mobile phone innovations work is highly context-specific. They should not be viewed as a silver bullet, but as a tool that can be used as a powerful accelerator for change, whether for good or for bad. Therefore, they need close attention and understanding to ensure that they lead to greater equity and inclusion rather than political manipulation and ethnic division.

There are certain key questions that need to be considered when assessing and monitoring mobile phone innovations for local governance.

- How are existing mobile innovations used to strengthen citizen voice and accountability relations, and how does this relate to other communication (media) tools?
- How do these mobile innovations impact on local governance processes, citizen voice and (local) public authorities’ responsiveness or accountability towards citizens?
- How do these innovations perform in terms of including or excluding certain groups of citizens (according to their gender, class, age)?

- Which contextual factors help ensure that mobile innovations have a significant impact on local governance processes?
- Which are the most suitable domains of influence and impact for mobile innovations for local governance?
- How are these mobile innovations financed, and what are the opportunities and challenges for replicating, adapting or scaling them up?
- What types of technology or innovation are suitable for particular contexts?
- What are the associated risks and security (hacking) issues?

Box 12 below shows how an NGO in Rwanda addressed these questions when setting up a mobile innovation as part of one of its programmes.

Box 12 Monitoring land registration policy in Rwanda

The Rwanda Initiative for Sustainable Development (RISD) is an NGO whose global mission is to advocate and foster social and economic transformation by Rwandan citizens themselves. It focuses on promoting the sustainable use and protection of natural resources in order to reduce poverty and strengthen social justice. Within this objective, RISD is monitoring implementation of the new land registration policy, which started in 2009. This process is complicated by a lack of capacity and information. Therefore, RISD collects information in the field to identify gaps and provide tailor-made training to overcome these obstacles.

Because gathering information at community level is very costly in terms of human and financial resources, RISD is interested in adding a mobile component to its initiative so that it can increase its reach and better understand what does and does not work at the local level. It also hopes to better understand the problems that different groups still face in relation to land rights and registration.

RISD initially intended to develop an sms-reporting system so that local leaders and other community members could regularly report on:

- Land conflicts between family members
- Information or evidence regarding other issues that are not covered by the law, but which policy-makers should know about to make life better for the community.

However, after careful joint analysis of the specificities of the situation, it was decided to use another technology, the Voice Response System (VRS). This allows for automated responses to pre-defined keywords, and is better suited to levels of literacy in the locality and the nature of the data to be collected. Voice is more reliable than sms for transferring sensitive information, which was an important consideration in this project given the type of information that will be collected through the system. The team also needed to think about how it will be framed to avoid putting contributors at risk.

Different strategies for feeding information back and ensuring continuous participation and accountability towards citizens were discussed (whether to use mobile phones or local radio stations). This is an important task as it must show that increased citizen voice has an impact on institutions, and that there is an acceptable degree of transparency in this process.

Finally, it was decided to test this system in one region of the country and analyse the benefits in terms of reach, costs and inclusion of different social groups. If it proves successful, the ambition would be to extend it to the rest of the country.

Governance of innovations

In addition to analysing the impacts that mobile innovation initiatives have on governance, it is worth reflecting on the way that the initiatives themselves are governed. Who is behind them, and what is their purpose?

Ken Banks, a British entrepreneur who works in Africa and who developed the Frontline SMS text-messaging service for aid groups, sheds an interesting light on this issue: “*There’s*

often a tendency in the West to approach things the wrong way round, so we end up with solutions looking for a problem, or we build things just because we can.”

Initiatives that are driven by specialists in ICT for development eager to test and expand the applications that they have developed will evidently pursue different objectives from those prompted by the needs of citizens on the ground. Experience has shown that ownership and use of mobile innovations is higher when citizens are involved in their design, and that they are more likely to make a significant impact when they are embedded in existing projects or programmes.

Beyond the design of the innovation, the issue of who actually manages the project also plays a major role in its impact on citizen voice. An initiative will have very different consequences depending on whether it is in the hands of a strong and independent NGO, a corrupt organisation or a repressive government.

Understanding who is behind the design, implementation and management of mobile innovations for local governance is key to understanding their internal governance procedures, and thus the various effects that they can have on processes of change.

Knowledge management

We have seen that it is crucial to understand who is behind mobile innovations, as this largely determines their outcomes. All too often it is outsiders who decide on their goals and methods of implementation because local organisations lack the knowledge, resources or networks to set them up.

The approach developed in the MoGo programme fosters learning between regions and disciplines, based on a shared understanding that mobile initiatives should be driven by the needs expressed by citizens, not by the technological innovations themselves. Various activities are under way to enable this exchange, such as bilingual French-English meetings between experts, direct support to project-holders, and a digital platform to collect resources and share experiences. It is essential to build on existing experiences, as too many initiatives have failed or produced unexpected impacts because their initiators lacked access to documented cases or the lessons learned from previous endeavours in this field.

Conclusions and recommendations

This article has considered how mobile phone innovations for local governance and their impacts on society can be understood, and described some of the challenges and critical aspects of this field. In closing, it is worth emphasising some important lessons that need to be considered when setting up, monitoring and evaluating such innovations.

Firstly, despite the technology-driven spirit that dominates the field of mobile innovations for governance, it is essential to understand local needs and specificities in order to embed these innovations in local dynamics or existing projects. This also encourages local appropriation of the technologies and processes, which is the key to sustainable projects.

Secondly, mobile phone innovations usually work best in combination with other media, such as radio. Proper analysis of media and mobile phone penetration rates among target groups is essential in order to generate the highest possible impact. Close attention should also be paid to local context when choosing technologies, since factors such as levels of literacy, access to technology and communication costs will determine whether or not the initiative will fulfil its objectives and be as inclusive as desired.

Thirdly, it is crucial to think about a marketing strategy before introducing mobile innovations into a project. How will the target groups be reached, and why will they be willing to participate? Too many projects fail because it is commonly assumed that if the service exists, the target groups will know about and be eager to embrace it. To ensure that projects are sustainable, there needs to be consistent feedback between the project-holder and the citizens/participants, who will only continue to provide inputs if they receive something in return. This may be the results of polls that they have been asked to participate in, or measures that have been taken following their input. What is important is creating the sense of a two-way relationship.

Fourthly, mobile innovations for local governance come at a cost. This can vary greatly depending on the technology used, the country of implementation or the scale of the project, but it is essential to think carefully about a sustainable business model at the start of the project. Many projects simply stop when the funding allocated to the pilot runs out. They therefore have little impact and fail to fulfil the expectations raised among the target population.

Fifthly, mobile phone innovations raise a number of security issues, especially in the field of governance. To avoid putting citizens at risk, the design of the innovation, choice of technology and kind of information gathered need to be considered, with a clear understanding of the local political context.

Finally, it does not seem unreasonable to assume that mobile phone innovations will strongly influence governance processes in the near future. The challenge will be ensuring that this development supports values such as social justice and poverty alleviation. Experience has shown that practitioners are keen to learn from each other in order to understand what works best in which situation, and to remain critical about the impacts of these innovations. This requires regular exchanges between regions and disciplines, together with consistent management of the knowledge generated. This will be essential in harnessing the enormous potential of mobile innovations to contribute to societal changes, and combating the 'pilot-then-die' syndrome.

knowledge sharing

leadership transparency

visioning

strategic planning equity

corporate social responsibility

consensus communication

accountability priority setting

power relations

decision-making

effectiveness responsiveness

voice efficiency

3.1 The academic question: to centralise or decentralise?

Jan Donner⁶⁴

Universities through the ages

Universities are valuable and complex organisations. The first European universities were created over 850 years ago, and several thousand universities now provide education and research for new generations. Their organisational structure continues much as conceived many centuries ago. They are very enduring, as over 50 of the 85 or so institutions that have survived from the early 16th century – such as the Parliaments of Iceland and Westminster, the Swiss Cantons, and the Catholic Church – are universities.

Through their education and research, universities are responsible for innovation and a better understanding of life, science and human interaction over the ages. Universities seem to have adapted to external changes and influences such as the Paris revolt of 1968, education for the masses, lifelong learning and distance education. Yet the governance of these institutions has received little attention and undergone less change. As organisations, some perceive them as ‘loosely coupled systems’, others as ‘unmanaged and unmanageable’ or as an ‘armada of canoes, each drifting in a different direction’.

The first universities – Bologna, Paris, Oxford, Coimbra and Cracow – were meeting places for learned men who travelled from all over Europe and other parts of the world to cities known to tolerate academic debate. These were places where they could argue with peers, validate or revise their views and opinions and, increasingly, transfer knowledge to a younger generation. Learned men sought to meet with peers to ensure that their ideas were debated and – hopefully – acknowledged by others, seeking to find their own views confirmed. They drifted in and out of institutions with fuzzy structures and little or no organisation. Scientists with the same interests and within the same discipline met with each other more often than they met with others.

While many organisations go by the name of ‘university’, their role in society can be light years apart. Universities in Europe initially trained their students to think independently and then taught them so that they could practice independently; now the focus of the modern university is to teach students to become investigators in their own right. In many universities education and research get equal attention, although they are very different processes to manage.

⁶⁴ Former President of the Royal Tropical Institute. E-mail: j.donner@kit.nl.

In other parts of the world universities cannot afford the luxury of investing heavily in research. If we go back no more than two decades we will see that PhDs were very scarce in most universities in Latin American countries. Higher education was a commercial activity aimed at giving alumni better access to the labour market. It generated little or no intellectual products in terms of articles, books, patents, etc. In developing countries the main and possibly only relevant output of universities is a flow of alumni competent to function as professionals in the labour market.

University governance is about leadership, steering the university organisation towards a vision and ensuring that its day-to-day management is in line with the organisation's goals. It is about guidance, processes, accountability mechanisms and effective decision-making; a set of rules and practices that ensure that the university organisation serves all of its stakeholders, and a set of relationships between management, the board and other stakeholders.

As societies have come to demand more from universities, the academic environment has become more competitive than before. While the academic grass on the other side of national borders always seems to be greener, there is little consensus on which university is doing better than others. Some universities seem to maintain a consistently high ranking on the ever-present rating lists, but this does not mean that every department in these highly rated institutions is doing all that well. Each excellent university has rotten apples that it is trying to address and prima donnas that it is trying to stimulate, but can they really succeed in doing so? How effective is university governance, and to what extent does it impact on the quality of education and research?

Methodology

This is not a universal paper on university governance. Rather, it presents a number of thoughts, guidelines and insights on governance issues that higher education institutions in developing countries have to address. It is based on the Royal Tropical Institute's active involvement in higher education activities in many institutions all over the globe, as well as our own Masters and capacity development programmes. These include European universities in Amsterdam, Barcelona and Lisbon, universities in all Southern African countries, Asian universities in the Philippines, China, Thailand and Mongolia, and Arab and Latin universities. The author was the main driver behind six comprehensive laws to regulate education in the Dutch Antilles and Surinam.

The focus of this article is the mission of the individual university, and the implications of that mission for the university's governance and management structure. The case study aims to illustrate the need for central policies and show the possibility or even desirability of decentralised decision-making, with the requisite competences. The question is how to generate managerial competence amongst academic staff in order to improve university governance without wasting too much of their valuable time. Are there benchmarks for the management of human and other relevant resources? This paper draws on experiences

in universities all over the world to show that no two universities share the same mission. While at least 25 per cent of all universities seem to aim to become one of the five best universities in the world within the next 10 years, no more than five ever realise this ambition. In addition to describing the complexities of academic life and management, it will also show how truly satisfying it can be to function in an academic environment with interesting colleagues, access to facilities, stimulating students and junior staff, and – admittedly – a meagre salary.

University governance

The primary focus of universities everywhere is to stimulate innovation through research and continuously increase professional competence in an ever broadening range of disciplines. University governance meanwhile is given little attention, and ‘management’ is often a dirty word among academic staff. Even today the structure of almost all universities is based on research performance, and therefore the academic standing of leaders amongst their peers. Research and education are two very different processes, but they cannot be separated. Few universities will advocate a strict separation of responsibilities or of researchers and teachers; many excellent researchers enjoy teaching promising and ambitious Masters students and junior scientists. A good teacher can ignite the spark in young students, kindle their curiosity and set them on a career path to academic eminence. But the fact is that they have to deal with growing numbers of increasingly demanding students, dwindling academic budgets and an academic rat race that uses excellence and quality assurance as threats rather than incentives.

The rectors of the early universities (frequently called ‘*rector magnificus*’) were chosen from the overall group of researchers or professors. The post circulated, with each faculty (group of professors working in the same discipline) taking turns to nominate a rector for the next year, and the successful candidate appointed by the collective body of professors (the senate). The appointment was an honour, but a heavy burden as well. The bursar (*pedellus*) acted as the administrator and was paid by students just before or after passing the requisite exam (there was only one). As faculties gradually developed into larger entities, a dean would be appointed to head each faculty.

The small *universitas scientiarum* has evolved into a large organisation, sometimes involving 500,000 students (as in Mexico and Thailand) or, more reasonably, between 10,000 to 20,000 students. The University of Coimbra in Portugal was originally accommodated in a single building where each door gave access to a different faculty. Nowadays we see vast campuses with laboratories, huge lecture halls and university medical centres with 1,000 or more hospital beds. These universities and organisations have to be run professionally and be accountable to their students, to society, the government or their owners. The degrees that they award represent valuable entrance tickets to the labour market or even – preferably with the aid of a doctorate – to the close-knit academic guild itself. The events in Paris in 1968 started a movement to replace traditional professorial universities with universities for the masses. Yet they continue to be ambiguous organi-

sations: they focus on both education and research, consist of faculty and administration, staff and students, operate within the framework of science but are strongly linked to society, participate in international networks but aim to feed local knowledge, and use reason but cherish culture.

While primary and secondary education are the backbone of any nation's development, adequate popular access to higher education and prestigious universities is an indicator of their quality and economic relevance. A university is a critical and binding factor in this equation, and often a source of immense pride. Four elements are vital for a successful university: academic prestige and quality, autonomy and independence, performance or efficiency, and funding. The problem is that these key elements seem contradictory and difficult to integrate into one comprehensive governance system.

Universities were initially meeting places for academic staff, but their growing success and size stimulated the development of a professional body of support staff. Academic staff are usually referred to as 'faculty, while professional support staff in a wide range of disciplines are collectively called the 'administration'. An ongoing and very academic question is which is more vital to the well-being of a university: faculty or administration? What has been added to this academic backbone of the average university is a substantial administration – sometimes bigger than the academic staff. Since both are indispensable to make the university work, the question is slightly nonsensical. While education and research are the core functions of any university, these very complex organisations need an administration to function properly.

Every university wrestles with its governance structure. The rector and deans belong to the faculty, but have not been prepared for the very demanding responsibilities of running a department, faculty or a university. What is even worse is that their primary interest is not the management of these units. They want to be sure that they can effectively pursue their academic ambitions and may be eager to provide academic leadership, but their hearts are unlikely to be in governance, the efficient use human and financial resources, or promoting accountability and transparency in university operations. If academics cannot possibly avoid dealing with university governance issues, they will certainly want to spend as little time on them as possible. Another problem is that the average academic who tries their hand at it tends to get lost in micro-management and be a hindrance to fully centralised decision-making.

The trick is making academic staff better able to meet the demands of university governance while not wasting too much time on a job that is not their first choice anyway. There seems to be a universal need to incorporate management skills into the curriculum in many disciplines. There is a very reasonable chance that at some point in their professional lives the average medical doctor will have to face up to managerial responsibilities in general practice or in a hospital. So why not face this fact and include some capacity building on university governance and management in the medical and other curricula? The idea is to get some structure into universities, to make sure that the curricula and programmes have a logic to them, and avoid duplication wherever possible. While academic

freedom is a key asset in any academic environment, it does not entitle the academic staff to act, teach, research or (effectively) spend money as they like without being accountable. Academic vigour goes hand in hand with a certain discipline and hierarchy, with performance and accountability. Each of these competences should be developed by the university and become part of its culture, management style and governance. In developing consistent governance universities occasionally need to consult with their peers, with those they admire and who have travelled that route before them. They should not wait until student numbers start to drop or academic output starts to negatively affect income generation and their accreditation comes under threat!



Educational inspection, Lake Brokopondo, Surinam (Photo: Jan Donner)

A training programme on academic governance and management for senior academic staff developed in Amsterdam (VU) in the 1990s was adapted for introduction at several universities in Africa and Latin America. Attending such programmes has now become a standard requirement for any appointment or election to senior posts in many universities, and has boosted the quality and transparency of university governance. With the help of a few peers (in the guise of external consultants) the leadership of many universities have had to face existential questions about their own and the university's performance. How much of the institutional budget is spent on salaries? (Anything over 70 per cent is too much; yet in some universities it is 90 per cent or even more). What percentage of the total university staff are administrative staff? (Over 35 per cent calls for a very critical look at operations). What is the average number of refereed publications per head of academic staff? These are the types of question that need to be asked to induce university presi-

dents, rectors, vice-chancellors and others to examine their university's efficiency as an academic organisation. There are now several training programmes that include faculty from all disciplines, stimulating inter-disciplinary exchange and sharing of experiences, and focusing attention on important management issues within universities (see Box 13 below).

Box 13 Management issues in universities

Hierarchy:

- Who are good leaders?
- Who have received training on leadership?
- What competencies are required?

Accountability:

- Leaders are accountable
- They must motivate and justify decisions
- Decisions can be overruled

Human resources management

- Selection of competent staff
- Management of staff
- Evaluation, salaries and administration

Financial management

- Competent book-keeping
- Administration of income and expenses

The aim of these programmes is 'to get things done through other people.' In many universities tailor-made solutions have been engineered to efficiently structure the institution in accordance with its mission.

Centralisation or decentralisation?

All universities contain different departments and faculties that work together on a broad range of inter-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary activities. Law students have to study a module on economic science, economics students need to be familiar with the law, and medical students need a basic understanding of biology, chemistry and physics. Therefore, faculties provide education for students from other faculties; raising the question of how they can do this efficiently and cost-effectively. How can departments interact effectively with each other? And how can unnecessary duplication and ineffective bureaucracy be avoided? There are essentially two ways to address the issue: through centralisation or decentralisation.

The essence of *centralisation* is that all important decisions are taken at the highest level. The consequences at central level are that university leadership is overburdened and a huge bureaucracy is put in place, raising the question of whether university leadership is really competent to decide on all issues. One of the consequences of centralisation at the faculty and department level is that decision-making takes a long time. This can lead to frustration as the leadership is perceived as unable to take adequate and timely decisions ("we can do better!").

With *decentralisation*, only the really important decisions are taken at the highest level. The consequences at central level are that there is less bureaucracy, and the university leadership has more time to reflect and to monitor the faculties and departments. At faculty and department level this increases the need to motivate people to make decisions that have to be in line with institutional policies. It also means that deans and directors are accountable for, and need to be competent to make these decisions.

Decentralisation processes within universities therefore require deans to be empowered to make decisions. In order to do this, decision-makers need capacity-building and well-structured accountability mechanisms.

University rectors or presidents and deans need to agree on various matters:

- Firstly, on shared values as a collective starting point, and levels of empowerment.
- How to structure institutional 'accountability': how open can the university be about the percentage of students who do not finish their first year, and how can this issue be addressed? How do they explain the relevance of their research programmes and curricula to society when they are perceived as nothing more than 'money-makers'?
- If the management is going to be decentralised, which decisions should NOT be taken by the institutional leadership, given that:
 - the quality of decision-making needs to be assured
 - decisions need to be in line with central policies
 - decisions should not be improvised
 - decisions in different departments need to be comparable.
- To ensure the homogeneity of decision-making at different levels:
 - the rector and deans should share the same values and perspectives
 - deans should support central leadership policies
 - central policies should be predictable.
- To avoid unpredictable and surprise decisions:
 - the central leadership needs to know what faculty is planning
 - faculty plans should be approved by the central leadership
 - faculty plans require financial stability.
- To ensure the quality of decision-making:
 - management competences and skills are required at all levels
 - open communication within the university is required at all levels.

Modern university governance

Every university has its own culture and concepts of governance. Each university needs to clearly define its own degree of decentralisation and the level of empowerment needed to manage scarce resources and teach increasingly demanding students. The classic 'armada of canoes all paddling in a different directions' is or will soon be a thing of the past, as even the richest and most powerful universities understand that they are only as strong as their weakest link. This creates interdependence between faculties and departments, making hierarchy and accountability highly relevant issues.

Coherent decision-making at every level requires decisions to be motivated, alternative options to be considered, university policies to be taken into account, key staff to be consulted and procedures meticulously followed. It also means that the university leadership may ask deans to revise their decisions, that decisions can be overruled, and even that deans may be asked to step down if a wrong decision or a series of poor decisions have been taken. Transparency and monitoring of decision-making processes are thus part of modern university governance. This involves many individuals, as the average university will have over 10,000 students and its academic and administrative staff will easily exceed 1,000 or many more. Governance relationships should ideally transcend the university itself. Many institutions encourage exchanges between staff and students as this can not only enhance the quality of education and research, but hopefully governance as well.

Modern university governance should be structured in accordance with the aims of each individual university. A university that aims for excellence in research requires different kinds of human resources and infrastructure from a university whose primary aim is to provide excellent higher education for students and other stakeholders from the local community. The latter will be serving local interests and must ensure that it builds close relationships with the public and private sectors of local communities, the business community and upcoming generations. It will need to decide which disciplines will be taught and researched, how it will recruit staff and students, how it interacts or networks with the international world-wide academic community, and how to secure adequate funding.

All these strategic questions need to be addressed to ensure institutional continuity, sustainability and – above all – relevance.

Conclusion

Over the years KIT staff have been involved in trying to answer questions about the most desirable and viable structures within academic institutions, acting as sparring partners for the leadership of many universities. As outsiders they are in the position to raise and ask occasionally awkward questions, and to confront the university leadership with facts and developments that they may have missed. It can be challenging to address such strategic institutional questions related to governance, and very rewarding to help answer them. No two universities are the same. Responses need to be tailored in accordance with local conditions, legislation and the objectives and culture of the university in question. It helps to have been involved in debates and processes all over the world, and to have contributed to the sometimes very disparate (not always correct) diagnoses of the university leadership in faraway locations. An experienced external sparring partner with previous experience in this field can help address and possibly resolve the issues at hand. It is satisfying work, and it may be comforting for university leaders to know that competent support is available for short-term active involvement and occasionally, more long-term partnership. Universities are precious institutions, and KIT loves to work in partnership with them!

3.2 Museum governance: a vehicle for community development

Itie van Hout⁶⁵

It was a festive opening on October 10, 2008. Staff members of the new Museum Kapuas Raya in Sintang welcomed for the first time its stakeholders and guests from Indonesia and the Netherlands. The event proved to be a meeting place for a local, regional, national and international audience stemming from different social and cultural backgrounds. It mirrored present-day political and civil relations and relationships rooted in history. This audience was the first to experience a new institution where traditional and contemporary tangible and intangible heritage is preserved for the present and future generations.



Opening Museum Kapuas Raya, October 2008 (Photo: Itie van Hout).

In 2003, the first elected *Dayak bupati* (district chief) and a local Catholic priest came up with the idea of establishing a heritage institution to support the regional strategy for social, economic and cultural development. This happened amidst the political changes that took place in Indonesia after the resignation of President Suharto in 1998.

⁶⁵ Curator of textiles of the Tropenmuseum, Royal Tropical Institute. E-mail: i.v.hout@kit.nl.

Reform measures between 1998 and 2004 revived a process of administrative decentralisation that resulted in new forms of autonomy at the district level. Decentralisation increased the legitimacy of the local government and enhanced its accountability to the local population, while the simultaneous development of ethnic regional politics in West Kalimantan led to a form of ethnic 'power-sharing'. These ethnic politics were an example of the new civil processes emerging in Indonesia. Another example was the establishment of a heritage institution representing diverse ethnic groups, which acknowledged the importance of culture in the growing self-awareness and emancipation of the Sintang community.⁶⁶

Governance proved to be a key factor in establishing the Museum Kapuas Raya. Participation, transparency and inclusion were the intangible techniques used to create a tangible product - a museum – intended to communicate knowledge about historical processes and cultural heritage.

Sintang

Sintang is the capital of the district of Sintang, one of nine districts in the province of West Kalimantan. The town is situated at the conjunction of two rivers, the Kapuas and the Melawi. In former times this strategic position made Sintang the gateway to the interior regions.

Over time various ethnic groups found a home in Sintang: the Dayak are indigenous to the area, while the Malay and the Chinese arrived later. These three groups have lived together in Sintang for more than two centuries, and have developed a sense of living in a place determined by its unique position on the two rivers. The complex dynamics of the community are reflected in the townscape of Sintang city. The different ethnic groups live rather independently, with the Malay living on one riverbank (replacing the Dutch who lived there during colonial times) and the Chinese on another. The Dayak originally lived in villages along the rivers, and still do, but a fair number now live in or near the city. These communities define their identities by ethnicity, religion and language.

Historical reports reveal strong political and social inequalities between the ethnic groups. The Dayak were routinely discriminated against during the Malay sultanates and Dutch colonialism, and the Chinese also experienced long-term discrimination and oppression. It was not until Abdurrahman Wahid became president (1999-2001) that the Chinese were allowed to revitalise and experience their cultural heritage.

Throughout the 1990s there were several outbursts of communal violence in a number of districts in West Kalimantan. Van Klinken (2007) sees the resurgence of ethnic identity movements as the most surprising cultural development of the post-Suharto period.

⁶⁶ Furtherance of the obligations set out under the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (Paris, 20 October 2005).

Religious identity gained force and there is evidence of increasing self-awareness among indigenous peoples in this post-authoritarian period. People found safety and satisfaction in the communal bonds derived from revitalised ethnic identities and greater religious piety. The Dayak and Malay formed new ethnic associations and revived long-dormant customs, while Indonesians of Chinese descent rediscovered their cultural festivals (Van Klinken, 2007).

Ethnic identity is important in regional West Kalimantan politics. Despite the tensions, the Dayak and Malay negotiated compromises that resulted in ethnic power sharing in key positions at the district chief's offices. This helped prevent further ethnic violence, and Tanasaldy (2007) argues that it is evidence of new democratic and civil processes.

During the decentralisation process the government of Sintang acted in accordance with the new political climate, moving away from the old assimilationist paradigm and towards identity politics. The government no longer focused on how to overcome differences, but rather on how to live with them (Hoon 2008: 27). This policy made it possible to start a museum that aims to provide the local community with a mechanism for inter-cultural communication in which the entire population of Sintang can feel that they are represented in all their diversity.

Involving partners and stakeholders

Although many museums exist across Indonesia, the government of Sintang was not convinced that there was sufficient local expertise to set up a heritage institute. Therefore, in 2004, it entered into a partnership with the KIT Tropenmuseum and the three main ethnic groups in the region. The government of Sintang was the lead partner and was financially responsible for all activities, while the Tropenmuseum financed the activities of its staff.

A project team was formed and an advisory board established. Although the board was kept informed about all major decisions, the process of creating this museum brought inequities in power relations to the surface. These were not only due to unequal political representation and continuing ethnic differences in Sintang, but also to differences in knowledge and expertise between the partners.

The first step in the process was to build sound relationships between stakeholders, bearing in mind the old and new power relations between them. A complex set of relationships was developed in order to achieve the museum's goal. The aim was to use transparent and inclusive working methods to ensure that all stakeholders would feel that they had been able to participate satisfactorily in the process throughout the five-year project. Despite this, the groups participated in different ways and showed different degrees of commitment during the process.

The collaboration with and participation by community representatives proved most intense while the exhibition representing the diverse ethnic groups was being developed.

The groups acted differently, but all collaborated. Once agreement was reached on the subjects, the groups were asked to provide the information needed to tell the story and suggest the objects to be displayed. They were asked to share their knowledge with the project team and museum staff, and their representatives visited the building while the exhibition room was still under construction to share their thoughts on how to develop the exhibition in situ. One group of elders came several times, not only to donate objects, but also to mount and arrange them in the correct way. However, although the groups shared their knowledge, they were not involved in writing the text labels; this appeared to be 'a bridge too far'.

The process of establishing the museum

The circumstances of its creation meant that the Museum Kapuas Raya could only be developed through Indonesian/European collaboration. This made reflection on governance issues and the consequential hybrid nature of the museum a vital part of the process.

It was not meant to be a clone of a western museum, nor a poorly functioning Indonesian institution. The project needed to find a balance that would work for the people of Sintang. The team took note of Welsch's observations of 2004, and his suggestion that the hybrid nature of heritage institutions should be accepted rather than viewed as a problem. Their 'authenticity' is less important than the way that they 'work' for the population and function in different contexts, and whether they are sustainable.

All key areas of the new institution needed to be studied and formulated as the concept of a museum was new to Sintang. Decisions had to be made on issues such as the museum's identity, the best methodology in the given circumstances, the choice of target groups and other visitors, and the training of museum staff. Governance decisions also had to be made regarding the collaboration between the parties involved, their respective roles during the conceptualisation of the museum's content, the acquisition of collections and subsequent operational phases.

As the museum was established, a new phase supporting the regional strategy for social, economic and cultural development was set into motion. A fair amount of local workers were employed in its construction and realisation, and a small team of local civil servants still works there.

New museums need specially trained staff. In this case, staff had to be recruited from government departments because Kapuas Raya is a government museum. Although the process was not helped by the Indonesian governmental system and lack of museum education programmes, an intensive training programme enabled the new recruits to develop the basic skills needed to work in a museum.

Museums also need visitors. While the importance of museums is increasingly acknowledged in Indonesia, most still find it difficult to attract visitors. Therefore, the Kapuas Raya



Schoolchildren are offered educational programs in Museum Kapuas Raya (Photo: Itie van Hout)

project team decided that they should focus on developing educational programmes for school children before organising activities to attract other groups of visitors. These have been developed over the past two years.

Museum Kapuas Raya

Although Museum Kapuas Raya was originally instigated by a few of the Sintang elite, it was clear from the beginning that one of its goals was to maximise community participation. The initiators wanted the exhibitions and different kinds of activities to stimulate learning and encourage active participation, enabling visitors to celebrate and reflect on diversity (Crooke 2011: 181). The museum was to be a place where they sense not only a pride in their culture, but also a 'pride of place'.

New forms of museum are emerging all over the world, along with new labels to categorise them. Yet each and every museum is singular in its own way because of its history, social, political and economic context, its collections, its mission and its staff. One of the first discussions with the Sintang government concerned the role of 'new' museums as democratic, educational institutions in the service of societal development. Issues of voice, authority and control are central aspects of this new model, as is the question of whether museums address contemporary issues and whether or not they flourish.

The museum's stakeholders agreed to take the model of the 'new' museum as their starting point. So the Museum Kapuas Raya became a place of ideas – a place that uses its objects, exhibitions and other activities to build relationships with the community and

other visitors, and increase their knowledge about their multi-ethnic backgrounds. It focuses on communicating local narratives from the past and present by displaying old and new objects, many of which still fulfil their original function.

The museum houses four exhibitions, each of which relates to a topic of interest in Sintang. Two of the exhibitions were mainly interpreted and developed with representatives from the locality, one was developed by a group of local photographers, and the other came out of archival research executed in the Netherlands. These four exhibitions had to meet different conditions, but all aimed to convey knowledge through objects, photos and textual exegeses. An idea-driven and object-oriented exhibition was developed in the room where the different ethnic groups present their cultures, the 'rumah etnis'. This exhibition uses evidence from the material world to show how objects connect with cultural heritage and more universal values. This intangible heritage characterises the culture of every group, and is 'translated' into their stories and objects in different ways. The museum uses this exhibition to help challenge negative stereotypes and promote intercultural understanding.

The challenges ahead

Staff play a crucial role in museums, especially in their post-opening phase. Unfortunately, the bureaucracy and hierarchical nature of the Indonesian governmental system do not provide a particularly stimulating working environment. It is generally characterised by inefficient clusters of largely incompetent institutions with overlapping responsibilities and large numbers of underpaid employees (Schulte Nordholt, Van Klinken 2007: 6).

Another negative factor is the 'rolling system' whereby civil servants are moved to new positions every few years, which leads to a permanent loss of knowledge and skills. Although the Sintang government agreed that museum staff will stay in post for at least five years to prevent this, the system will inevitably affect staffing in Sintang. Discussions are under way to see how it can be adjusted to suit the needs of the museum at this local level.

The fact that working in a museum is seen as a low-status job also makes it hard to attract good staff. They should ideally not only receive training in basic museum skills, but also become acquainted with the theoretical ideas of critical museology.

The key cornerstones of a sustainable heritage institution are ongoing political and financial government support, and museum staff who are willing and able to encourage collaboration with and participation by heritage stakeholders: in other words, all the ethnic groups in Sintang. Only then can the museum function as a 'contact zone' and contribute to the development of civil society.

Conclusions

This initiative to establish a heritage institution by establishing a long-term partnership with a peripheral regional government and civil society in Indonesia took the KIT Tropenmuseum into new territory, and led to a new phase in the collaboration between two departments of KIT (Tropenmuseum and ILS). A proposal has been submitted to the Elsevier Fund to further develop the Museum Kapuas Raya as a Centre for Local and Global Knowledge where students can connect to the worldwide web, and to develop a scholarly library on environmental, anthropological and agricultural subjects.

The project provided some useful insights into the struggles facing a young museum in a not particularly favourable national environment. Even though the circumstances in Sintang make this an ongoing challenge for all project stakeholders, the museum was established, thanks to an approach that focused on sensitivity and respect for those involved, flexibility and shared authority.

The making of Museum Kapuas Raya provides some useful lessons about governance in collaborations between local government offices and local communities. It shows that successful outputs and outcomes require long-term partnerships, and relationships that are defined in terms of shared authority and knowledge. Throughout the process, advisors faced the challenge of deciding where to draw the line regarding their involvement, when to be flexible, when not to accept certain conditions and types of behaviour, and how to respect their partners' and their own integrity.

3.3 Improving access to academic information in Mozambique and Ghana through vision and leadership

Avinash Bikha⁶⁷ and Henk van Dam⁶⁸

“When Leonardo Da Vinci was painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, he drew up a curtain so curious people could not see the process; I play Pope Julius II and expect a similar piece of art, when KIT unveils it and leaves.”



Professor Dr. Couto

These are words of the former rector of the Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM). It was his way of saying that our work is not visible or tangible, but that he trusts it will be sustainable. The metaphor of the curtain also raises a transparency issue.

Libraries are the cornerstone of information technologies. They are uniquely placed to play a leading role in introducing information technologies into academic environments and championing their use among university departments, faculties, researchers, students and other academic stakeholders. However, using information technologies to improve the standards and delivery of (higher) education and library services and enable open (academic) access can be a very challenging exercise. It requires an appropriate policy framework, key decisions and changes in organisational structures that all need to be in place before the technologies are introduced in libraries and classrooms.

Good, productive leadership and effective governance mechanisms are essential in order to create a conducive environment for the introduction and continued development and growth of information technologies, and a reliable and secure technical and operational environment to deliver high quality services and products on a daily basis. The first task tends to be greatly underestimated, while the second is often given more attention because it is more visible and tangible. It is much easier to see (and boast about) a well-functioning institutional repository, a good website or the number of PCs, Wi-Fi facilities and high bandwidth internet.

One of the reasons why less attention is given to establishing a conducive environment is the limited engagement of high-ranking decision-makers with the authority to endorse

⁶⁷ Former ICT Advisor at Information Research and Advisory Services, Royal Tropical Institute. Currently he provides technical assistance and advisory services to parliaments in the Caribbean for the UN. E-mail: abikha@yahoo.com.

⁶⁸ Project Officer Capacity Building at Information Research and Advisory Services. Royal Tropical Institute. E-mail: h.v.dam@kit.nl.

the institutional introduction of technology. This is often due to lack of knowledge or awareness of the importance of information technologies. There is also a persistent mindset that sees libraries primarily as storehouses of dusty books that need to be guarded, instead of associating them with 'modern' ICTs.⁶⁹ Another reason may be the performance and ambitions of existing academic institutional and intra-institutional governance structures, or the complete lack of such structures.⁷⁰

Three factors are considered relevant in helping establish a conducive environment for people, processes and technologies at the policy and organisational levels: 1) intra-institutional governance mechanisms; 2) critical policies; and 3) inter-institutional mechanisms.

Intra-institutional governance mechanisms

The hierarchy of stakeholders within a university is quite straightforward. Basically, there are four levels, each with its own leader: the Rector or Vice-Chancellor, Deans of the faculties, staff (teaching and technical), and (under) graduates. The introduction of library innovations starts at the top, although lack of people or interest at this level may lead to a pragmatic approach where advisors on library information technologies deal directly with technical staff (librarians). What is needed to ensure that such initiatives are sustainable is good communication and adequate provision and integration into the library and university system.

Visioning and strategic planning are useful instruments that can enable (mainly senior-level) stakeholders to constructively reach a shared vision of how information technologies can strengthen an institution or help achieve other goals. Their vision statement, often with an outlook for the next five years, will say something about certain values that the institution wishes to uphold in certain areas; for example, "to provide more user-oriented and widely accessible library services", or "to provide the most recent scientific and research information". The vision statement needs to be a written policy statement so that everyone who is involved in its realisation can refer back to it and align all subsequent strategic objectives with it.

All in all, visioning and strategic planning can be instruments to ensure that initiatives to improve library services include the ambitions and goals of the wider academic environment served by the library. Also, that subsequent initiatives and actions occur on schedule and are appropriately resourced so that the improved services are sustainable.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Van Dam, H., Madzija T., Martinho A., Waete R. (2010) *Knowledge, attitudes and practices with respect to institutional repositories in Mozambique: a benchmark study*. Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), Amsterdam ISSN1876-4142 <http://www.search4dev.nl/document/207883>

⁷⁰ Bikha, A. (2011) ICT Requirements gathering and management in academic libraries: The relevance of the stakeholder community and how to involve them, Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), Information and Library Services.

⁷¹ Africa Parliamentary Knowledge Network, APKN (2010) *Guidelines for Strategic Planning in Parliament* <http://www.apkn.org/lrp/guidelines/guidelines-for-strategic-planning-in-parliaments>.

Leadership, visioning and strategic planning can thus create a conducive environment⁷² for the introduction and continued development of academic-oriented information technologies, which will in turn sustain an efficient and reliable technical environment for the daily delivery of high quality institutional services (see Figure 8 below).

Figure 8 Framework for the introduction of information technologies



Critical policies and operational standards

Introducing information technologies clearly involves more than simply installing a few desktop computers and printers. It calls for a holistic approach where stakeholders' needs and requirements are gathered and documented, and which informs the systems and solutions that are designed, built and eventually rolled out through dedicated training and user support services (helpdesks, etc.). All this requires specialist oversight and management through project implementation methodologies. If these are not in place, introducing and sustaining information technologies can be a very risky undertaking.

A consistent framework of ICT policies is needed to govern the introduction and daily operation of information technologies.⁷³ The procurement of ICT equipment, external services and insourcing and outsourcing of ICT operations should be guided by best-practice policies. At a more technical level, the types of systems and solutions that are introduced should at all times comply with predefined values, so that systems are compatible with the rest of the wider university information architecture.

ICT initiatives should start with proper preliminary assessments (research into open source library systems, internet connections, etc.). They should also be carefully implemented to avoid duplicating expensive hardware and software that can be shared among different ICT departments. Several universities in Ghana and Mozambique discovered the cost of

⁷² Bikha, A. (2011) Strategic Planning & Implementation of ICT in Academic Libraries, Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), Information and Library Services.

⁷³ Ministério de Ciência e Tecnologia (2008) Descrição da Rede Moçambicana de Ensino Superior e de Pesquisa (MoREN).

not following these procedures when their expensive new library cataloguing software ran into conversion problems and incurred extra licence fees. Some initial research would have shown that open source software was a better option for them.

Inter-institutional governance mechanisms

Libraries can gain a huge amount by learning from other universities about best practices in implementation and governance, strategic planning, policy frameworks, etc. This type of dialogue should extend across national boundaries and include regional and international networks where the use of information technologies is discussed from a wider range of perspectives.

In Ghana, the Head Librarian of the Kwame Nkrumah University for Science and Technology (KNUST) has played a critical role in championing information technologies such as institutional repositories, and put them at the service of the entire university. All stakeholders in the consortium established by KNUST, the Association of African Universities (AAU), the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Ghana (CARLIGH) and the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) have benefited from (common) fundraising activities, shared training and exposure.

In this sense, inter-institutional networking and (to a greater extent) partnerships can help rapidly disseminate new ideas and best practices; both horizontally between national libraries and their consortia, and vertically between emerging initiatives and experiences in policy and decision-making spheres.⁷⁴

Another example of successful consortium building is the SABER Repository (www.saber.ac.mz), the first national research repository in Mozambique. Five higher education institutions – the Universidade Pedagógica (UP), Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (UEM), Formação Jurídica e Judiciária (FJJ), Universidade Politécnica and Universidade São Tome de Moçambique (USTM) – decided to cooperate with a clear and definite division of tasks, and have invited other Mozambican universities to join them (Issak, Aissa Mitha interview Maputo 25 April 2011).

Conclusion and recommendations

When we talk about providing access to information in university libraries, we are actually talking about governance, as effective governance mechanisms are needed to ensure reliable, good quality access to academic information in universities, other institutions of higher learning and research organisations. Such access requires:

⁷⁴ World e-Parliament Report (2010) <<http://www.ictparliament.org>

- Visioning and strategic planning
- Effective leadership
- An ICT governance policy framework
- An adequate and sustainable organisational structure for the ICT governance policy framework
- Formal inter-institutional mechanisms to enable actors to cooperate and make progress together
- Adequate and regularly updated levels of technology.

Putting these mechanisms in place makes the introduction and use of innovations in university libraries more visible and sustainable, and ensures improved access to information. Doing so requires unqualified engagement, appropriate knowledge and open-minded managers and decision-makers at senior levels. The key governance issues for successful library projects with information technology components are commitment, transparency, vision and trust.



Discussing library projects with the rector of the University Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo, Mozambique.

In the case of Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique, the former rector's clear ambition and engagement was a significant factor in improving access to academic information and incorporating information technologies into the university system.⁷⁵ The

⁷⁵ Bikha, A and H. van Dam (2010) KIT Mission Report, December 2010. UEM.

process was greatly facilitated by his enthusiasm for these technologies, his understanding of their potential and his participation in (intra) institutional governance structures. However, this level of knowledge and enthusiasm is the exception rather than the norm. Senior management and staff in academic institutions are not always aware of the role that information technologies can play in delivering high quality library services – hence the need for advisors in this field.

3.4 Corporate governance for gender equality in Egypt

Noortje Verhart⁷⁶

“Our company has not the aim of financial growth and profit as a stand-alone, we want financial gains and profits to benefit and fund social development. Working towards gender equality in our company will contribute to that vision.”

Quote from an interview with one of the Egyptian companies granted the Gender Equality Seal (GES)

Introduction

The common umbrella term for business activities that take sustainable development into account is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Businesses with a CSR strategy recognise that their long-term future depends as much on their environmental and social sustainability as their financial sustainability.

CSR is increasingly regarded as an essential element in the search for effective solutions to pervasive social and environmental concerns and the challenges of globalization. According to Barrientos (2009), “There is increasing recognition that business has a key role to play in the reduction of poverty, and that poverty reduction is in the interest of business.”⁷⁷

However, a major problem in this discourse is the diverse interpretations of CSR and variety of regulatory mechanisms that have emerged. It difficult to measure progress without a common understanding of the concept or coherent targets and goals for CSR.⁷⁸

Moving beyond the instrumental nature of many CSR strategies, the discussion has recently shifted towards a better understanding of whether businesses can be held accountable for their social impacts in a less voluntary way, and how this can be done. The literature refers to this as ‘corporate accountability’, a concept that implies answerability and a degree of enforceability, rather than reliance on voluntary mechanisms.

Among other issues, special attention is paid to gender. The Global Reporting Initiative published guidelines on how to address gender within companies, their supply chains and wider society; and McKinsey wrote two reports on the issue, *Women Matter* 1 and 2, in which they show how gender equality at different levels within companies can increase innovation, returns on investment and profit.⁷⁹ The top companies listed in Quote 500 score well on gender indicators.

⁷⁶ Senior Advisor on Social Development and Gender, Royal Tropical Institute. E-mail: n.verhart@kit.nl.

⁷⁷ Barrientos S. (2009) *Gender, Flexibility and Global Value Chains*, IDS Bulletin, 32:3, 83-93.

⁷⁸ Peter Utting (2007) CSR and equality, *Third World Quarterly*, 28:4, 697-712.

⁷⁹ McKinsey & Company (2007) *Women Matter, gender diversity, a corporate performance driver*.

Although gender is recognised as important, there is still a lot of debate about how to integrate it into CSR strategies. It is hard to make the case for gender equality in the present business model, and the impact of current efforts to address gender has been limited by resistance from within companies. Such forms of resistance are specific to the context, the business sector and the way that men's and women's roles and responsibilities have traditionally been divided.

Several voluntary social certification schemes, seals and other measures have been developed around the world to encourage companies to work in a socially responsible way. Although the original aim of these incentives is to improve the companies' social performance, they have also become accountability mechanisms. Companies use them to decide who to do business with, and to show consumers and buyers that they work in a transparent and socially responsible manner. These initiatives include Social Accountability International (SAI) with SA 8000,⁸⁰ ISO with ISO 26000,⁸¹ and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), which developed sustainability guidelines for reporting procedures.

However, these initiatives do not systematically include criteria on gender. To overcome this limitation, the World Bank developed the Gender Equity Seal (GES) as an instrument to help businesses incorporate gender mainstreaming into their processes. Its ultimate aim is to help businesses govern for equity, not only in their own practices, but also in the broader labour market. The GES approaches governance from an accountability perspective, with a critical examination of current business strategies and practices for social responsibility, and their implications for gender equality. It also gathers knowledge about CSR and considers how it can be implemented more effectively in relation to gender. There are many opportunities to work with business on social change because the role of business in the public domain is increasing as public expenditure declines.

The Gender Equity Seal in Egypt

In 2010 UNIFEM introduced the Gender Equity Seal in Egypt. It is granted to companies that work towards gender equality both within and outside their business.

This case study describes the how the Gender Equity Seal is being implemented in 10 companies. It documents some of the initial successes and remaining challenges, and discusses how the seal can potentially contribute to business that is socially responsible in the long run.

⁸⁰ Social Accountability International (SAI) is a global, multi-stakeholder, standard-setting organisation whose mission is to advance the human rights of workers around the world. SAI established SA 8000 as one of the world's preeminent social standards and a recognised benchmark for voluntary codes and standards initiatives that employers (including well-known brands) use to measure their own performance and manage their supply chains responsibly. SA 8000 is based on the principles of core ILO conventions, UN Conventions and an ISO-style management system, and is applicable to virtually all industrial sectors. Source: <http://www.sai-intl.org/>

⁸¹ ISO 26000:2010, Guidance for social responsibility. This aims to be a first step in helping all types of public and private sector organisations to consider implementing ISO 26000 in order to benefit from operating in a socially responsible manner. Source: http://www.iso.org/iso/catalogue/management_and_leadership_standards/social_responsibility/sr_discovering_iso26000.htm



Cairo, Egypt (Photo Noortje Verhart)

The findings are based on interviews held in Cairo with the HR managers and employees responsible for implementing the seal in three of the 10 companies, and with auditors, UNIFEM staff and other actors. The 10 companies were granted the GES in June 2010, and the interviews were held in November of that year.

How the companies implemented the seal

The companies that were interviewed all had their own reasons for participating - the hope that their profits would increase as their company's image improved, or that it could lead to more and better innovations. However, each company also interpreted and implemented the seal in its own way, which has led to different outcomes. For example, the Olympic Group (OG)⁸² introduced a target of 23 per cent of the company to be made up of women. This is 5 per cent more than the current proportion. Unfortunately there is no clear strategy for reaching this target, and little account is taken of the positions that women occupy or the career options they are given, even though this is a requirement for participation in GES.

Chemical Industries Development (CID)⁸³ established a transparent reporting structure and is now collecting gender disaggregated data on essential HR themes such as re-

⁸² An electronics business.

⁸³ A mainly state-owned company.

cruitment, promotion, remuneration, training, etc. These data provide a rich picture of the main gender issues in the company, and give clear insights into differentiations in promotion and discrepancies between the number of men and women in top positions, etc. The next step, which has yet to be taken, would be to use this information to improve internal decision-making and transparency.

SEKEM⁸⁴ recognises that it has a role to play in contributing to a more sustainable society. It already had a comprehensive social responsibility strategy in place when it was awarded the GES, although gender issues did not feature in this strategy. Implementing the GES has resulted in greater understanding and thus greater commitment to gender equality. Women have been encouraged to apply for positions that are currently only occupied by men, and the company now aims to increase the proportion of women on its staff from approximately 20 per cent to 30 per cent, and the number of women in managerial positions from 15 per cent to 20 per cent. Senior management are committed to implementing GES, but also see that it takes time to get everyone on board. It takes a while before people see the need for gender equality in terms of better business performance or a strategy for sustainability.

Discriminatory practices in staff recruitment, retention and career options are often hidden in day-to-day management practices. For example, one business only allows sons of the company's founders to join the board of directors, and did not see this as discriminatory because it had been a tradition since the company began.

The current Minister for Investment is a woman who worked at one of the companies that now complies with the seal. She encourages 'her' company to continue its practices and is an inspiring role model for both employees and senior management. One of the HR department employees responsible for the day-to-day management of the seal went to New York to participate in a meeting on the principles of women's empowerment, and reported that *"It was great to meet with all these people from companies that are committed to gender equality. The whole trip was such an amazing experience and I felt very much supported by my boss here in the company. I'm very proud of the work we have been doing here."*

The lessons learned

The main success of GES in Egypt so far is that it shows how gender can be incorporated into different types of companies in the context of CSR. It reveals the gender issues that companies need to address and the challenges they face in doing so, provides managers with a framework for incorporating gender equality into their businesses, and shows the possible positive benefits of tackling gender inequalities.

⁸⁴ A company that deals with organic foods, chemicals and organic cotton.

The seal also aims to encourage companies to systematically internalise gender equality goals in their corporate structures, but this has yet to happen. Social responsibility targets and GES do not feature in their core business strategies, and HR managers undertake activities associated with the seal in addition to their core tasks, rather than as part of them.

GES initially acted as an incentive for businesses to work towards gender equality, but this did not last for long. Some companies have complained that the seal doesn't generate the new opportunities they expected, such as new market opportunities. Management are aware of the fact that it takes time to organise activities, but are also impatient to see what value the seal adds to their company's operations. They expect the State to intervene and ensure that companies which comply with GES requirements benefit from certain advantages in the market.

Participants in the scheme wonder how gender can improve their existing goals for productivity, returns on investment and profit, and their short-term results. But unless they integrate gender into their core business strategies and goals, companies will not monitor and evaluate whether they are achieving their targets and thus appropriate and build the business case for gender. This means that there are few incentives to get more businesses on board the 'gender agenda', and suggests that other seals may not be particularly interested in looking at gender more closely. In other words, more initiatives and business commitment (beyond profit) are needed to make other seals and certificates interested in gender.

Conclusions

This case study shows the achievements and challenges of implementing the Gender Equity Seal, a voluntary mechanism that aims to contribute to gender equality in companies. It relates the discussion around gender equality in business to the debate about CSR and how business can be governed in a socially responsible way.

CSR initiatives are mostly voluntary, and often consist of single projects whose success depends on the willingness of individual participants. It is hard to compare their results because different businesses have different interpretations of CSR, and because gender is only sporadically included in the CSR agenda.

The Gender Equity Seal has contributed to better awareness of the gender issues that companies need to address, and how they can do so. Compliance with the seal has improved information about gender issues in business, and sometimes also resulted in different policies and measures to address the gender gaps that have been identified. It is too early to say what impact these new measures have had, and whether the seal has made companies more socially responsible in their internal and external affairs.

However, the seal has not resulted in gender being incorporated into business targets. This is partly because of the voluntary nature of the seal and its lack of market value, and

partly because there are no market incentives to perform better on social and gender issues. Without the recognition that businesses themselves are accountable for its social impact, a reward for good performance is needed to make CSR results sustainable. In this context, CSR strategies will only occasionally lead to substantial change (when individual managers are committed to it, for example), and only contribute to gender equality if they deliberately focus on gender.

Developing a new seal is not necessarily an effective strategy in a context where numerous seals and certificates already exist. Therefore, the GES is mainly a way of learning more about what gender equality means in a business context and how it can be achieved. It can also help make companies more socially responsible towards their employees and to wider society. The ultimate objective is to use the lessons learned from the application of this seal to improve existing certification schemes such as SA 8000 and ISO 26000. KIT will continue to contribute to this objective, in collaboration with other organisations currently involved in the development and implementation of GES.

4 Building capacity to advise on governance issues

knowledge sharing
institutional innovation
conflict management
capacity building leadership
inclusion communication
responding to local needs
consensus responsiveness
decision making negotiation
vision development
empowerment
priority setting

4.1 Looking at Human Resources for Health through a governance lens

Marjolein Dieleman and Prisca Zwanikken⁸⁵

Tools, approaches and methods for planning and management of Human Resources for Health abound, but there is limited progress in solving the workforce crisis ... what could be the reasons?

Human resources for health (HRH) play a strategic role in the health systems of low- and middle-income countries, and often absorb much of their health sector budget.⁸⁶ The performance of health systems largely depends on the knowledge, skills and motivation of their health workers.⁸⁷

The widespread shortage of health workers hampers access to care and affects its quality.⁸⁸ In recent years, more national and international attention has been paid to the management of health workers and to planning their inputs. However, this has mainly been geared towards the technicalities of planning. Much less attention has been given to the ways in which decisions are made and priorities set - the governance aspects of HRH.

A course on HRH governance was developed to enable policy-makers and planners to address HRH more comprehensively. This paper describes the course and the process of its preparation, both of which reflect the complexity of governance in HRH

Why do we need to focus on governance in HRH?

Governance is crucial to national development and a catalyst for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.⁸⁹ While more account is now taken of the governance of health systems,⁹⁰ HRH governance seems to have been neglected. This often results in poor HRH policy formulation and implementation. The literature on HRH does cover management issues,⁹¹ but governance is rarely considered, and certainly not addressed comprehensively.

⁸⁵ Senior Advisors on Human Resources for Health, Royal Tropical Institute. E-mail: m.dieleman@kit.nl, p.zwanikken@kit.nl.

⁸⁶ Rigoli, F. and Dussault, G. (2003) The interface between health sector reform and human resources in health, *Human Resources for Health*. See <http://www.human-resources-health.com/content/1/1/9>

⁸⁷ World Health Organization (2000) *Health Systems: improving performance*. WHO, Geneva.

Dussault, G. and Dubois, C.A. (2003) Human Resources for Health policies: a critical component in health policies, *Human Resources for Health Journal*, WHO 1:1. See <http://www.human-resources-health.com/content/pdf/1478-4491-1-1.pdf> [accessed 28 April 2009]

Buchan J (2004) What difference does 'good' HRM make, *Human Resources for Health* 2:6. See <http://www.human-resources-health.com/content/2/1/6>

⁸⁸ World Health Organization (2006) *Working together for health*. WHO, Geneva.

⁸⁹ See, among others, Siddiqi, S., Masud, T.I., Nishtar, S., Peters, D.H., Sabr, B., Bile, K.M. and Jama, M.A. (2009) Framework for assessing governance of the health system in developing countries: Gateway to good governance, *Health Policy* 90:13-25.

⁹⁰ Brinkerhoff, D.W. and Bossert, T.J. (2008) *Health Governance: Concepts, experience, and programming options*, Washington: USAID.

⁹¹ See Fritzen SA (2007) Strategic management of the health workforce in developing countries; what have we learned, *Human Resources for Health*. <http://www.human-resources-health.com/content/5/1/4/>; and Buchan (2004) op.cit.

A study conducted in 2010 found that although 45 of the 57 countries with severe health workforce shortages have HRH plans,⁹² many of their HRH policies do not respond to the local situation or are not well implemented.⁹³ This is largely due to ineffective management strategies, poor management competencies and inadequate governance.

Because policy-makers and planners have little insight into governance-related issues, they have limited understanding of the relationship between governance and the success or failure of health workforce plans. This knowledge gap means that HRH policy formulation and implementation are rarely if ever addressed. Therefore, it is crucial to build the governance capacities of policy-makers and planners in institutions that deal with health workforce issues.

How can 'governance' be taught?

The WHO in Geneva, the National Institute of Public Health in Mexico and KIT realised that a training course would greatly contribute to the process of improving HRH governance. But two questions needed to be answered before the course could be developed: how can the concept of HRH governance be put into practice (given that governance can mean different things to different people, and that it is crucial to harmonise the concept to allow for fruitful discussions), and what governance issues should be included?

Understanding governance

A scholar from the National Institute of Public Health in Mexico spent four weeks developing the course content with an HRH specialist from KIT. Many hours were spent discussing the concept of HRH governance, who it involves, and the role of the government in governance.

The definition of governance that was used for the course clearly centres on the stakeholders in HRH and their interests and influences: "The rules that distribute roles and responsibilities among government, providers and beneficiaries, and that shape the interactions among them. Governance encompasses authority, power, and decision-making in the institutional arenas of civil society, politics, policy, and public administration."⁹⁴

In order to identify the governance issues that need to be addressed, the team consulted the literature, shared experiences, studied the outcomes of a KIT conference on HRH and governance, and contacted the HRH department of WHO Geneva. They concluded that in many countries, the procedures for setting priorities for the health workforce and

⁹² Broek van den, A., Gedik, G., Dal Poz, M., Dieleman, M.A. (2010), *Policies and practices of countries that are experiencing a crisis in human resources for health: tracking survey*. WHO, Geneva.

⁹³ Buchan, op.cit.

⁹⁴ Brinkerhoff and Bossert, op.cit.

allocating resources to related policies and strategies lack transparency; that decision-makers are often not held accountable for their HRH decisions; that some practices, such as dual employment (working in both the private and the public sector) are not well regulated; and that there is rarely a level-playing field for all involved. Poor accreditation and licensing of training institutions and limited regulation of the workforce also leads to problems with their performance. The global dimension of the governance of health workers was also considered important, because of the shortages caused by health workers migrating to 'greener pastures'.

These conclusions enabled the team to identify the core governance issues that would need to be included in the course:

- partnership and participation
- accountability and regulation
- decentralisation and decision-making
- priority setting to improve performance.
- migration
- accreditation and licensing.

The attitudes, skills and knowledge needed to better get to grips with governance and influence governance structures and processes seem to be just as important as these core governance issues. Being receptive to different viewpoints and broad-minded about partnerships and inclusion are essential attributes, as is the ability to critically analyse decision-making processes that may have been in place for many years, but which take little account of the needs of the community or health workers concerned.

With this in mind, the overall aim of the course was formulated: "To enable participants to apply the concept of governance to HRH issues and to develop approaches improving the formulation and implementation of national and regional HRH policies and plans".

Developing short courses

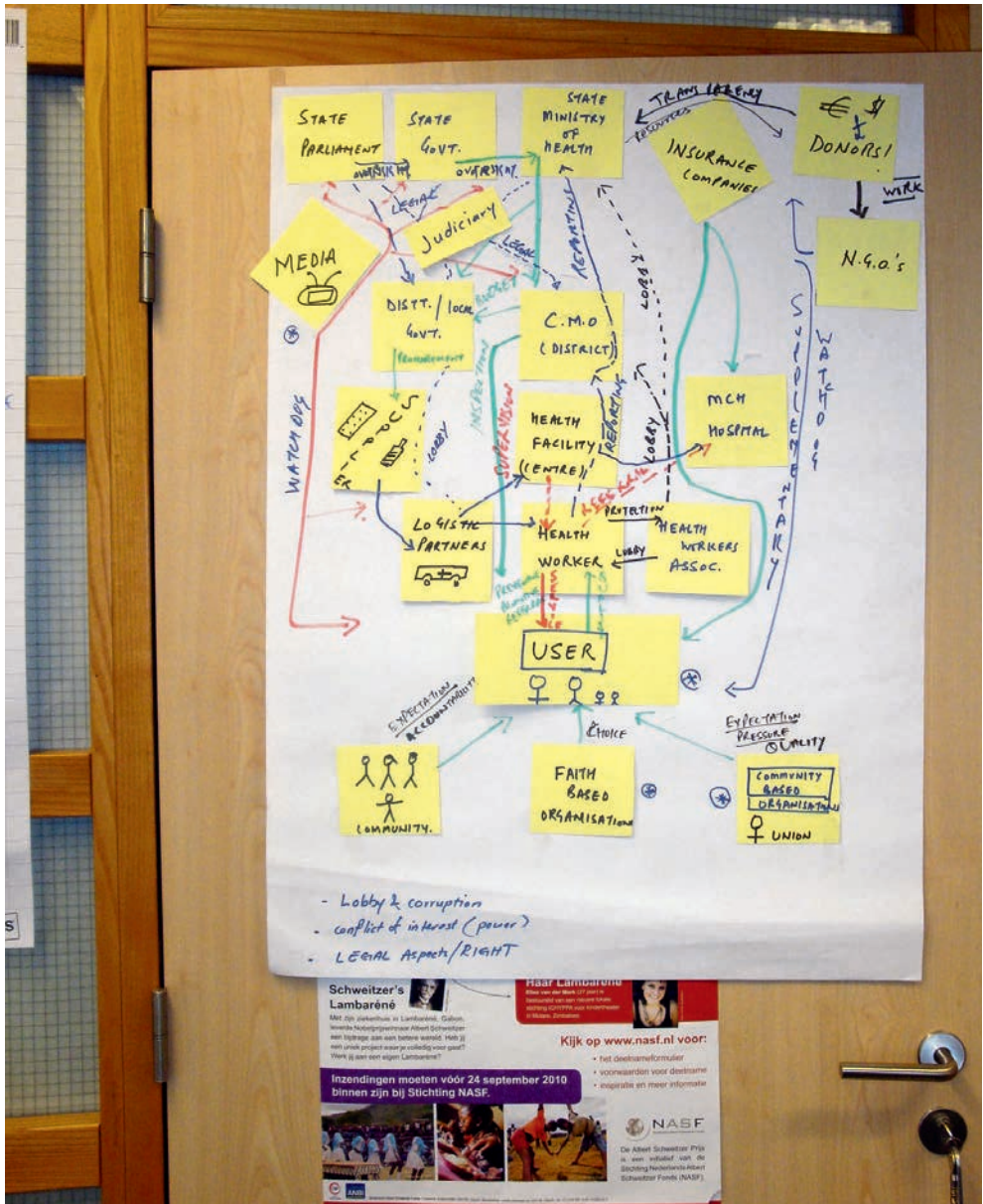
Two main issues need to be considered in capacity building for senior staff:

- the training should not keep participants away from their (often very demanding) jobs for too long
- like all adult education activities, the training should use participants' own experiences and knowledge as a basis for discussions and exchange.

These considerations led to the development of a five-day course for a target group of senior policy-makers and planners, health service and programme managers, experts and academics working in health ministries, bilateral and international organisations and NGOs. The course relied heavily on interactive learning methods to allow exchanges between participants, with facilitators selected on the basis of their knowledge and experience of HRH governance and the core issues covered by the course.

The lessons learned

This pilot governance course was delivered simultaneously in Amsterdam, the Netherlands and Cuernavaca, Mexico, from January 31st to February 4th 2011. Each course was attended by eleven participants from a range of countries: in the Netherlands, two people came from Sudan, one from Oman, one from Jordan, one from Afghanistan, one from China, one from Ghana, one from Trinidad and three from India. There was a good balance between men and women, and between the public and private sector.



Flip Chart Human resources for Health Training Course (Photo: Prisca Zwanikken)

Most sessions used case studies or examples from countries where the participants lived and worked, with different points of view exchanged during lively debates. The most important activities included analysing and discussing aspects of governance and governance frameworks that are used around the world, stakeholder analysis in planning and managing the health workforce, understanding accountability relations, decentralisation and the degree of autonomous decision-making at the local level, accreditation and licensing procedures and practices, and various aspects of HRH financing.

The course allowed participants to gain a broader perspective and understanding of governance in health workforce planning and management, and to practice their analytical skills. It closed with a video conference to allow exchanges between participants on both continents, who discussed stakeholder participation, accreditation and partnership.

Discussions about regulations for HRH

The groups discussed their positive and negative experiences with regulations.

On the positive side, governments in some countries are working with the faith-based organisations that provide most of the services in rural areas to ensure that health facilities have enough workers to deliver services. In Tanzania this is done through formal agreements between the government and mission facilities, and in Zambia by placing government-funded public sector health workers in mission facilities.

On the negative side, there was little or no regulation of private sector practitioners. This allows healthcare providers to work in public clinics in the morning and their own private clinics in the afternoon (dual practice). This can make health services inaccessible to consumers, as health workers refer patients to their own private practice or ask for extra money to provide care.

Exchanges among participants on stakeholder participation in planning

Discussions about stakeholder mapping in mixed-country working groups showed that numerous stakeholders are involved in planning and managing the health workforce. They usually include the ministries of Health, Education and Finance, the Public Service Commission, professional associations, the private sector (private clinics) and private-not-for-profit actors such as international and national NGOs and patient groups.

Participants recognised that Ministry of Health consultations in their countries do not always include all stakeholders. They also discussed the fact that professional associations and the private sector are often excluded from various stages of health workforce planning, and that patient involvement is often limited to patient satisfaction surveys.

The course evaluation showed that participants value the expertise and input from the various facilitators, and the opportunity to exchange ideas with fellow participants on both continents. They were particularly positive about the exercises focusing on analysis of the main governance issues for the health workforce at country level, and existing accountability mechanisms for HRH policy-making and implementation. They suggested that subsequent courses should have additional sessions on emerging practices to improve governance in HRH; and that tools be developed and tested to facilitate discussions about the use of existing tools and interventions that have improved governance structures and HRH policy and implementation procedures. At the end of the course, participants developed action plans focusing on activities that they could implement with their colleagues when they returned to work, such as stakeholder mapping involving different actors in discussions about HRH at the local level.

What this course also highlighted was the fact that the conceptual dimension and theories are a minor aspect of HRH governance. The main issue is how to make governance work. Many participants said they had gained insights into how to conduct a situational analysis of the governance structures and processes in their own countries, but were wondering how to bring about change. While there is no blueprint that can be used in all situations in every country, there are a number of universally applicable principles for addressing the weaknesses in different systems. After discussing different degrees of stakeholder participation in a range of contexts, and the type of qualities and commitment needed to get stakeholders together, participants concluded that while change and improvements have to come from within, external help can be useful in kick-starting the process, since outsiders do not have a stake in it and can therefore act as brokers.

The way forward

The framework for governance in HRH presented and discussed during the course still needs to be field-tested. Participants also indicated that tools for implementation would need more attention in future courses, as putting governance into practice remains a challenge in many countries. There are opportunities to develop tools for analysing accountability, conducting political economy studies and carrying out accreditation in conjunction with other departments in KIT and with partners in the South. It is also important to document and share experiences with such tools and studies between countries and between institutes within individual countries, to facilitate their use in other countries.

Governance advisors could play a crucial role here. They need to be flexible, open to the various situations in different contexts, and have a wide range of tools at their disposal. They may use these tools themselves, or work with local HRH teams to further develop and tailor them to the particular situations and health systems in which they will be used.

4.2 Strengthening capacity to advise on rural decentralisation and local governance

Gerard Baltissen⁹⁵

“It is not easy to build governance capacity at municipality level in my country, the number of municipality staff is very limited, after elections the mayor and almost all the councillors are replaced and you will have to start all over again. Most of the institutional memory on local governance issues remains with us NGOs”

Course participant from Mali (2007)

Since 2004, the Royal Tropical Institute and Centre for Development Innovations of Wageningen University have collaborated on training courses that introduce participants to local governance procedures that support decentralisation and rural development. National and local decision-makers and staff from NGOs, development projects and civil society in Africa and Asia have expressed a need to develop their advisory and facilitation skills and learn about methods and tools that will help them face the challenges presented by public sector reforms and strengthening local governance. They also want to learn what is happening in this field in neighbouring countries, in their region and even worldwide. The course content is flexible, with sessions run in French and English in the Netherlands and in Africa. Some 500 people had completed the course by 2012, and many of these participants continue to exchange knowledge in moderated online portals and discussion groups.

Why organise courses on rural decentralisation and local governance?

The past decade has seen a growing interest in the role that governance can play in stimulating development and reducing poverty. Institutional reforms in public administration have led to new relations in private and public service delivery, with the introduction of decentralisation and deconcentration, fiscal reforms and the outsourcing of public services. The local arena has also changed as reforms have brought new actors such as local governments into play, and created new power relations with existing customary institutions. The increased focus on decentralisation reforms and good local governance in Africa and Asia can also be explained by their potential to help improve social service delivery, natural resource management and local economic development.

Democratic decentralisation and other public sector reforms change governance relations between the central and the local level and between stakeholders at the local level. They also provide opportunities to establish new forms of horizontal, vertical and social account-

⁹⁵ Senior Advisor on Decentralisation and Local Governance, Royal Tropical Institute. E-mail: g.baltissen@kit.nl.

ability. Local governments in rural areas face specific challenges in social and productive service delivery, land and value chain governance, and natural resource management. They need to create an enabling environment where (customary) authorities, service deliverers, community-based organisations, NGOs and the private sector can meet, interact and work together. As this is 'new territory' for most stakeholders, new approaches are needed to facilitate and advise on institutional innovation at the local level, with a specific focus on the inclusion of marginalised groups to make local development outcomes more equitable.

Thinking about the relationships between government, the private sector and civil society has changed considerably. Instead of being perceived as passive beneficiaries, rural populations are increasingly seen as citizens who have the right to demand and participate in good local governance. The role of governments is shifting towards creating an enabling environment, and facilitating development rather than steering it. The private sector is engaging in partnerships for pro-poor development. In the quest for socio-economic and rural development, a new institutional playing field and balance of power is emerging between civil society, government and private parties.

This has led to the understanding that local governance for rural development should be addressed as a multi-stakeholder process that involves interactions at different levels between actors with different ambitions and perceptions. As local governments play an increasing role in development processes, their success is measured in terms of their responsiveness and accountability to citizens, improved service delivery, their leadership in promoting pro-poor economic development, and their capacity to negotiate with the private sector, NGOs, local authorities and central government. These changes require certain actors (our course participants) to develop new 'institutions' to accommodate the new functions and challenges in society (formal and informal norms, procedures and practices, accountability relations).

These training courses are designed for people who are involved in local governance and development processes in rural environments in Africa and Asia. They are suitable for government officials at various levels, project and programme managers, policy-makers, consultants, NGO staff, and staff from federations of community and private sector organisations.

Strengthening local governance facilitation and advisory capacities

The courses cover recent thinking about decentralisation, local governance and participatory and inclusive rural development. The aim is to strengthen the capacity of development practitioners, policy-makers, government line ministry staff and programme managers to advise on, facilitate and engage in complex local governance processes.

Participants develop the capacity to:

- Analyse the institutional context of decentralisation and local governance with a specific focus on rural development, gender and power relations.

- Develop strategies to improve the involvement of different actors in local governance and rural development (including social and productive service delivery, land governance, natural resource management, local economic development).
- Employ a broad range of methodologies and approaches to advice and support for learning, lobbying and advocacy, citizenship and participation.
- Question the impact of their own interventions and identify opportunities to contribute to change.

By relating theory to practice, trainers and resource persons help course participants analyse complex, real-life situations and develop strategies for seizing opportunities and overcoming barriers. The focus is on using multi-stakeholder processes and social learning to make existing strategies more successful.

Participants learn how to deal with the complexities of governance and engage with multiple actors with different ambitions. They work with and learn to reflect on multi-stakeholder and social learning concepts and methodologies for institutional change. The aim is to increase their ability to fulfil their role in advising and supporting local stakeholders by better understanding their organisation's current and desired position, role, and interest in local governance for rural development.

The main course topics are:

- *Defining good local governance*: investigating different perspectives and exploring the underlying development paradigms for local governance.
- *Exploring institutional trends and their implications for local governance*: assessing trends and drivers that impact on local governance, such as public sector reforms, decentralisation and devolution, privatisation of public services, citizenship and civil society, sector-wide approaches, MDGs and global-local relations.
- *Multi-stakeholder and institutional analysis*: exploring the roles and relationships of different actors in local governance, dealing with issues of inclusion and exclusion, civil society participation in decision-making, and rights-based approaches.
- *Institutional change through multi-stakeholder processes*: exploring possible strategies to shape or change formal and informal institutions, social learning and dialogue, negotiation and advocacy, and social accountability mechanisms.
- *Connecting and collaborating with other levels*: exploring changing horizontal and vertical configurations and the implications for coordinated territorial/sector planning.

The courses build on participants' own experiences, cases and advisory practices. Teaching methods include discussions, group assignments, role play and mini-seminars. During fieldwork participants study real-life local governance processes. Stakeholders (problem owners) from municipalities propose research questions, and participants interview stakeholders and present their findings at a restitution meeting. Some of the advice given during these courses has been used by municipalities to strengthen governance. Fieldwork topics include land use governance in the 'Eng' area of the city of Wageningen (Netherlands); local economic governance and stakeholder involvement in the municipality of Asni (Morocco); capacity development, land governance and local financial resource mobi-

lization in Mutimbizi municipality (Burundi); and governance in the education sector in Kajiado District (Kenya).



Course participants discussing land governance issues with a bio farmer, Wageningen (photographer unknown).

Lessons learned on course content

Before attending the training courses participants indicate the specific topic they want to work on during and after the course, and state their learning objectives. Some learning needs have remained constant over the last ten years, such as fiscal decentralisation and local governments' ability to mobilize human and financial resources. This is an ongoing issue because parliamentary votes on public reforms are a trigger for elections in countries that may have the required institutional framework in place, but often lack the accompanying legislation or political will for 'real' decentralisation of resources. Local governments continue to suffer from this lack of political commitment and resources. Another topic that still requires attention after all these years is governance of service delivery. Although participants do come with success stories of local partnerships in service delivery, the use of citizen score cards and strengthening local user committees, governance advisors are still very much needed in the fields of health, education, water and agricultural service delivery.

In recent years, participants have become more interested in advice on the governance of local economic development and natural resources. Municipalities want to create an

enabling environment for local economic development by introducing smoother rules and procedures, reducing red tape, establishing one-stop shops for entrepreneurs, and through PR for local agricultural products and commodities. Local economic development can also be seen as an opportunity to raise taxes or stimulate public and private service delivery and other local development initiatives. More and more responsibilities for natural resources are being devolved to local governments, which have become responsible for community forestry schemes and land tenure (titling) in some countries. Land titling is particularly complex in settings characterised by customary land regulations, land acquisition by (new) local actors and large-scale land grabbing.

The quote at the beginning of this chapter shows that many councillors are not or do not want to be re-elected from one mandate to another. This limits the transfer of knowledge about governance issues from old to new councillors, meaning that most of the content and governance-related knowledge (institutional memory) remains with NGOs, projects and civil society. Another recurring topic in course discussions is ownership of local development: if local actors or local government do not own the process, how can they enhance governance, and who holds them accountable?

Many participants come with cases that reflect the difficult relationship between modern and customary authorities. People with a legal background tend to promote the enforcement of modern law, and refer to legal procedures and responsibilities in dealing with governance issues; while others argue that local realities differ in many African and Asian countries. Although participants question the rule of customary authority from a gender, power and equity viewpoint, it plays an important role in advisory practice as it is part of citizens' everyday life and can inform and protect them.

Course discussions about accountability have also evolved over time, as new experiences and insights into mutual and upward and downward accountability have generated different views on how to enhance stakeholder relationships. For example, 'local accountability meetings' have changed from events where the mayor simply informed citizens about budgets and results to meetings where public and private stakeholders, NGOs and civil society keep each other informed about and hold each other accountable for their activities. Participants agree that local governments should primarily be accountable to their citizens rather than central government. Every year this leads to interesting discussions about municipality performance contracts signed with the national government (as in Rwanda) and the administration's role in overseeing, controlling and supporting local governments (*la tutelle*).

Citizenship is the preferred topic for participants from NGOs. Decentralisation is still a relatively new phenomenon, and citizens in most countries tend to think of themselves as members of a village rather than citizens of a municipality. As village members they are ready to co-finance local activities that might be of direct benefit to them (such as a neighbourhood well), but are less keen to pay taxes to fund activities undertaken by a more 'remote, higher-level' local government, especially if it does not account for what is done with their money in a sufficiently transparent manner. Therefore, a standard

course topic is citizenship and citizens' roles, duties and tasks, with plenty of space for debates about gender, equity and power relations.

Stimulating capacity to advise on local governance

Effective advice on decentralisation and local governance requires an understanding of the complex interactions and power relations between multiple local stakeholders, public and private stakeholders, central and local government, service providers and citizens, and between formal and customary authorities. Training on advisory and facilitation skills to strengthen local governance is only useful if it is applicable to the participants' working context. This is why we support participants in developing their own theories of change, while making them aware of the national, organisational and local contexts in which they operate, their room to manoeuvre for change and, even more importantly, whether they consider cultural sensitivities at the input, output and outcome levels of the change process.

Towards the end of the course each participant prepares and presents an action plan showing how they intend to introduce change in their own working environment. The course facilitators and other participants assess and give feedback on each action plan, judging whether it is realistic (in terms of the stakeholders involved, timing, funding, cultural environment, etc.); whether people show that they have learned something from the course and are using new insights, innovative approaches and tools; and finally, whether the person has a mandate to act, the legitimacy and sufficient room to manoeuvre in terms of advice and support from superiors or clients to implement the plan. While they are implementing their plans, participants receive remote coaching and visits from course facilitators who come to the country to discuss implementation with them and their ministry, project or fellow collaborators in NGOs.

Finally, alumni are requested to join an online forum for former participants where they can share case studies, announce interesting seminars and workshops, ask questions and seek out methods and tools. Former participants have been encouraged to set up country networks and meet on a regular basis to discuss decentralisation and local governance topics since 2009, and there are now country networks in Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Senegal and Burundi.

4.3 Strengthening provincial capacities for training on local governance and public administration

Petra Penninkhoff⁹⁶

“Thank you very much for your suggestions. Now it is time for us to digest these issues.”

(Free translation of the director of CEGOV’s standard response to new ideas introduced by the advisory team).

In late 2009, Mozambique formally created Provincial Centres for Capacity Building in Public Administration and Local and Municipal Governance (CEGOV). Their mission is to deliver short-term capacity building and refresher courses for provincial, district and municipal civil servants, local advisory councils, community leaders and civil society organisations.

By 2012, two CEGOVs were in operation. One of them, which is in Namaita, Nampula Province, started its activities in 2006, and has been supported since early 2011 through a project financed by the Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC). This CEGOV organisational enhancement project provides capacity building for (training) staff, develops course programmes and modules, and aims to increase the participation and involvement of women in local development and strengthen CEGOV management. It is implemented by KIT, in partnership with the association of Dutch municipalities, VNG International.

The main challenge in this initiative is balancing staff capacities and mandates against the requirement to identify and meet the considerable training needs of a diverse target group.

The rationale behind CEGOVs

Mozambique’s action plans for poverty reduction (PARPA I for 2001-2005, and PARPA II for 2006-2009) are committed to investing in the provision of public goods and services and redistributing resources in order to reduce poverty. They stress that provincial and local governments are responsible for developing strategies to create enabling environments that stimulate investment, enhance capacities and exploit opportunities for the poor, and for regulating private action and mechanisms for competition while giving more space to partners from the private sector.

Provincial and district departments and municipalities are consequently more involved in development planning than they were before. They are responsible for ensuring good

⁹⁶ Former Senior Advisor at the Royal Tropical Institute, currently working as an independent advisor, and in the process of setting up the L4DHUB in Durban, South Africa. E-mail: petra.penninkhoff@telkomsa.net.

governance and transparency in the provision of services to citizens, popular participation and inclusion in the planning and execution of programmes, and for coordinating programmes and partnerships. This implies that the capacities and competencies of these authorities and the advisory councils, community leaders and civil society organisations concerned need to be strengthened and regularly updated to meet the ever-changing demands of the general public, and properly address the policy issues raised by decentralisation.

Until the creation of the CEGOVs, there were few possibilities for capacity building that provided a harmonised and structural curriculum or short courses on local governance and public administration (CEGOV Project document). Many NGOs and projects provided some of the required training, but their courses were *ad hoc* rather than structural. The nationally oriented Higher Institute for Public Administration (ISAP) and the three regional Training Institutes for Public Administration and Municipal Management (IFAPA) offer full-time Bachelor and Masters courses, but are not involved in practically-oriented short courses.

The real significance of the provincial CEGOVs becomes clear when one considers how the system works. People between the age of 18 and 35 can enter public service as civil servants provided they achieved adequate grades in secondary school and have no criminal record. Usually they stay on until their retirement. Once they are in service they may be nominated for and supported in further academic training, which provides a solid academic foundation but is of little use in day-to-day practice. Moreover, civil servants often get stuck in habits and mindsets that do not reflect their continuously evolving working and general socio-economic environment, new legislation and new development approaches and protocols. The same applies to members of local advisory councils and community leaders. Their education is often limited to a few grades of primary schooling, and many are unclear about what is expected from them and their communities, and what they can and should expect from their local governments.

Provincial CEGOVs are required to offer a dynamic programme of short courses that will ensure that the knowledge and skills of their target groups remain up to date.

The operation and management of CEGOV-Namaita

CEGOV-Namaita has a basic management team composed of a Director, a Pedagogic Director and the head of the financial section. As yet, it only has a small permanent training team and relies on non-resident trainers to supplement their skills. It faces a number of problems, namely:

- The lack of a formally approved curriculum of CEGOV courses.
- The fact that the training manuals that are currently in use do not reflect CEGOV's objectives of providing continuous training and refresher courses that respond to the emerging needs of target groups.
- Current courses and training materials are not adapted to cultural and gender issues

or real demands at district level, and do not take account of local habits and customs. As a result, the impact of CEGOV training on operational procedures has been limited.

- Despite the urgent need for them, CEGOV does not produce its own, more relevant teaching materials (facilitators' guides, participants' manuals, modules, course brochures, books). Those that are available are not pitched at the right educational level, and are not suitable in terms of content.

Therefore, CEGOV Nampula asked for support from the Netherlands Initiative in Capacity building for Higher Education (NICHE), to help strengthen its organisation, build management capacity, assist in the development of gender-sensitive curricula and courses that meet the needs of its target groups, and enhance the course development and facilitation skills of its permanent and associate trainers.

The support project formulated by the Consortium (which is outlined in this document) uses a two-pronged approach to help CEGOV increase its organisational and operational capacity to deliver the programmes and services it is expected to provide.

It aims to build CEGOV's capacity to manage projects, develop high quality training programmes, and design methods and systems to facilitate the sustainable continuation of these programmes (participatory training needs assessment, regular participatory reviews of the curricula and courses, quality assurance and a functional resources centre).

These systems and methods will be developed by training and coaching managers and trainers in organisational management and learning, and by developing and maintaining high quality training programmes. This approach will contribute to the sustainability of the initiative and enable CEGOV Nampula to continue to contribute to the effectiveness and impact of the services delivered by provincial and local governments and civil society organisations.

Inception phase

The Consortium proposed a six-month inception phase, in accordance with the project outline. The first weeks of this phase were used to set up organisational arrangements and conduct a joint review of the logical framework and provisional indicators. The CEGOV/KIT/VNG team also assessed whether the necessary pre-conditions for project implementation were in place, and whether the work plan needed to be adjusted to reflect the risks presented by the situation with human resources and infrastructure. An exit strategy was also developed during this phase.

CEGOV staff, permanent trainers and associate trainers (from the IFAPA provincial database) will be adequately prepared so that they can be fully involved in the main activities for the implementation phase: assessing skills gaps and training needs, developing the curriculum and course modules, and implementing the training quality assurance system. This approach is designed to ensure that the project is sustainable.

Main implementation phase

The capacities and competencies developed during the inception phase will be further strengthened in the main implementation phase, through face-to-face or virtual on-the-job coaching. The main focus will be on skills gaps and needs assessments, curriculum and course development, and the delivery of training. The quality and impact of CEGOV's services will be regularly monitored through a Training Quality Assurance system to facilitate the updating and improvement of training content and methods. An implicit but important by-product of the training development and needs assessments will be the production of training and case materials. Trainers will also benefit from action research, and literature reviews on priority themes relating to Mozambican and international decentralisation and governance dynamics, which can be published for a wider audience.

A CEGOV library and website will be set up in the early stages of the main implementation phase. This will play a pivotal role in the exchange of information.

Proposed strategy

The project's overall and specific objectives are straightforward: to build CEGOV's organisational and training capacity, thereby improving the quality of its training services and ultimately contributing to better, more effective public service delivery with greater impact. A two-pronged strategy was proposed to assist CEGOV in building the organisational and operational capacities it needs to deliver the programmes and services it is expected to provide.

In view of its history since 2006 and the effort invested in engaging the right management and training staff, the main priority will be to strengthen CEGOV's organisational capacities. The ability to manage projects and develop high quality training programmes and modules are the foundation for any sustainable and effective training organisation and resource centre.

Organisational strengthening includes developing systems and methods for assessing skills gaps and training needs, and preparing training curricula and modules. This will be done while training and coaching managers and trainers. Such processes are a pragmatic way of building organisational and training capacity while developing a curriculum that addresses the needs of the job market and takes gender issues into consideration.

The methods used for participatory training needs assessment, regular participatory reviews of curricula and courses, developing modules and case studies, and quality assurance will be documented for further use. These guidelines and implementation manuals will contribute to the sustainable continuation of operations and training programmes in Nampula, and could possibly serve CEGOVs in other provinces. The project outline proposes using the experience in Nampula as an example for other CEGOVs.



CEGOV staff training (Photo: Petra Penninkhoff)

Decentralisation and local governance

Decentralisation refers to the transfer of decision-making powers from the central level to a sub-national authority. The aim is to transfer power and resources to a level that is closer to local people and better understood and more easily influenced by them. This should result in more efficient and appropriate service delivery, as well as better governance and greater accountability. By creating the conditions for more inclusive and transparent operations, decentralisation enhances citizen participation in local governance and enables communities to take responsibility for their own development.

Decentralisation is a complex process, which is accompanied by legal and institutional reforms that change governance relations at every level and determine the effectiveness of pro-poor policies. These reforms provide opportunities to establish new forms of collaboration and accountability between government structures and existing authorities (including customary authorities), community-based organisations and the private sector. In order to build on these opportunities, approaches that facilitate multi-stakeholder processes, learning and institutional innovation are needed.

Both partners in the consortium have ample hands-on experience in advisory missions and training activities for governance and decentralisation. The generic and targeted training materials that they have developed will be invaluable in preparing CEGOV

training modules. After the gender, skill gap and training needs analyses planned for the first eight months of the project, these and other materials (produced by ISAP, IFAPA and other national and regional stakeholders) will be reviewed, adapted to the Mozambican context (and Nampula) and translated into Portuguese.

Assessing skills gaps and developing training curricula and modules

Since their establishment, CEGOVs have been expected to play a key role in providing continuous capacity building for provincial and local government authorities, staff, councillors and community leaders and civil society organisations. Curriculum development is a top priority for the CEGOV Organisational Enhancement Project, as a well-developed, coherent and high quality curriculum is essential for an organisation that aims to strengthen decentralisation through good governance, transparency, community participation and multi-stakeholder processes.

The project outline lists local governance, public administration and community participation as training topics. The specific training requirements of CEGOV target groups and final beneficiaries have yet to be determined, but the intention is to cover issues that provincial, district and local governments will need to tackle in order to implement the national poverty reduction action plans – regulating private action, competition mechanisms, creating environments that stimulate trade, coordinating the planning and execution of programmes in partnership with other agencies. Other topics could include transparency in the management of District Development Funds, and organising participatory economic planning at the district level.

The Provincial Secretary recently conducted a preliminary training needs assessment on the theme of governance, in collaboration with the Universidade Lúrio (UniLúrio) of Nampula. This study will be reviewed by the Consortium together with its authors and CEGOV staff and stakeholders. If necessary, the Consortium will carry out an additional skills gap assessment, disaggregated for CEGOV's range of target groups, and taking into consideration the gender aspects of governance and public administration. As the Consortium proposes to base the curriculum and courses on the outcome/competency-based approach to education and training, the additional skills gap assessment will consider job and function profiles as well as current levels of knowledge and competencies. CEGOV management and selected training staff will be trained and coached in conducting this type of skills gap assessment. It is essential that they have the necessary tools and competencies to regularly update information, as CEGOV needs to stay abreast of changes in the economic, policy and legislation environments

The results of the two assessments will form the basis for further curriculum development. The Consortium will guide CEGOV's general director and Educational Director (if in place) in updating the needs assessments and curricula. This needs to be done frequently as the process involves a wide range of stakeholders: the three IFAPAs and ISAP, national ministries and departments (such as MFP, MAE, MINED, MINAG, MPD and others),

provincial departments (Agriculture, Environment, Industry and Commerce, Education, Health, Women and Social Action, Public Works and Housing), the Nampula Partner Network on Governance, the Nampula Decentralised Planning and Finance Programme (PPFD-Nampula), universities with campuses in the province, the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, (I)NGOs, the private sector and CSOs.

Once the curricula and short course programme outlines have been developed and agreed upon with CEGOV stakeholders, the Consortium will work with CEGOV's Educational Director and trainers to develop modules, facilitators' guides, participants' manuals and training materials such as cases and exercises. Some of these materials will be based on existing ones (see previous section on decentralisation and local governance); others will be prepared from scratch in order to address the specific requirements in Nampula.

Competency (or outcome) based learning

CEGOV's training capacity will be built around competency-based learning, which considers the combination of knowledge, skills and behaviour, and attitudes and values that trainees need to develop:

- Knowledge (cognitive or intellectual development. What do graduates need to know?)
- Skills (psychomotor or physical skills. What should graduates be able to do?)
- Attitudes (affective development, emotions, attitudes and values. How should graduates approach their jobs?).

The main characteristics of this approach are summarised below:

- CEGOV stakeholders help identify and define competencies (the national seminar planned for the inception phase is one of the steps in this process);
- Competencies are clearly defined, understood and accepted by relevant stakeholders;
- Specific competencies are defined in such a way that they can be assessed, leading to certificates of competence rather than certificates of participation;
- Training staff and stakeholders participate in developing and deciding on assessment frameworks and instruments;
- Assessment criteria are directly linked with the learning outcomes for each course, which are themselves directly linked to the skills required in the various provincial and local public departments, NGOs and private sector organisations;
- The results of assessments and participants' evaluations will be used in the Quality Assurance System that will be developed as part of the project, and in critical decisions about strategies to improve learning and teaching.

Gender equity

Gender equity features explicitly in the project outline, and is the first priority niche area. Rather than simply increasing female participation in courses and local government institutes, promoting gender equity ultimately involves ensuring that gender differences

and gender relations are taken into consideration in public service delivery. This means that they need to be addressed in CEGOV training programmes.

The profile attached to the project outline indicates that CEGOV has neither a gender policy statement nor a gender strategy, although it does have clear procedures for integrating gender concerns into the curricula and collects sex-disaggregated data in its courses. CEGOV management would like to improve their efforts in this respect, and are striving to integrate a gender perspective into CEGOV's organisational and pedagogical capacity building, and increase women's participation in courses and local governance. The Consortium therefore proposes the following actions:

- Conduct a gender analysis of CEGOV's immediate target groups and staff, in order to better understand the opportunities and constraints to equitable participation by men and women in local government and local government processes;
- Use this analysis to develop a gender strategy and action plan, and incorporate these into the overall organisational strategy;
- If necessary, provide awareness training for CEGOV staff and trainers;
- Develop a CEGOV information flyer that stresses the importance of capacity building for female civil servants, managers, authorities, councillors and community leaders, to encourage men and women to participate in CEGOV courses;
- If so desired, develop leadership courses specifically targeted at women;
- Conduct a gender analysis of the final beneficiaries of CEGOV graduates in order to better understand their needs and opportunities;
- Use the findings of this analysis to develop modules and educational cases that specifically and systematically address gender issues.

Labour market orientation

The local government sector in Mozambique is dynamic, both in terms of the policy developments associated with decentralisation, and the effects that changing local, regional and international economic environments have on public service delivery. Training programmes that aim to improve the effectiveness, quality and impact of the services delivered by provincial and local governments and civil society organisations need to reflect this dynamism. CEGOV accordingly defined its labour market orientation objective as aligning its services with the needs of provincial and local governments and civil society organisations. It can do this through initial skills gap analysis and training needs assessment, and by institutionalising recurrent assessments.

Organisational learning

Organisational learning is crucial for any agency that wants to stay in touch with the dynamics of the ever-changing environment in which it works. This is particularly true for training organisations such as CEGOV. We have already noted that specific objectives 1 and 2 are complementary, and that changes in the services provided by CEGOV will affect

the requirements for its organisational and training capacities and competencies. Being a 'Learning Organisation' also safeguards the sustainability of the processes to develop strategies, quality assurance systems and market-oriented curricula introduced during the support from NICHE. The Consortium will therefore work with CEGOV on developing and implementing a programme of refresher courses for CEGOV's permanent and associated trainers. Trainers and lecturers will be drawn from partners such as IFAPA, ISAP and the two universities based in Nampula. Organisational learning can also be stimulated by developing methods and systems that facilitate lifelong organisational learning, such as participatory training needs assessment, regular participatory reviews of curricula and courses, quality assurance and a functional resource centre.

5 Going for governance: the lessons learned from KIT's advisory interventions

This book shows the variety of governance topics that KIT advisors address in their daily work. In this final chapter we consider the lessons that can be learned from these advisory interventions in terms of our role and position in dealing with complex governance issues, how we approach these issues, and whether KIT has its own particular way of addressing governance.

The role of KIT governance advisors

These case studies show that KIT does not think about governance in the abstract, but engages in practical facilitation and brokering. It tries to bridge the gap between the needs of citizens, smallholders, women, employees and private sector actors and the services delivered by governments, organisations and institutes in a transparent and accountable manner. KIT facilitates these processes by building capacity, conducting action-research, and developing and sharing knowledge.

In Chapter 2.2, Thea Hilhorst showed how advisors can promote land governance systems by introducing ways of working that contribute to strong partnerships and dialogue, strengthen accountability mechanisms and emphasise the importance of integrity and transparency. This requires the ability to facilitate institutional innovation and coalition building, from a change management position.

For Chris Hunter, promoting real accountability that leads to changes in service provision calls for governance advisors to do more than just provide tools (Chapter 2.7). Tools cannot create capacity for voice or responsiveness, or reduce power imbalances. They are only effective when they are embedded in a larger process, and when all concerned have the information and capacity to use them effectively. Creating community demand is another key aspect of sustaining social accountability. The turning point for advisory practice in this respect is awareness that action by poor women and men can lead to change. Documenting success stories contributes to this.

While they were developing approaches to establishing agricultural innovation platforms, Remco Mur and Mariana Wongtchowski realised that governance advisors need to deal with internal governance issues and underlying cultures and values in order to be able to make a real difference (Chapter 2.4).

In the case of value chain governance (Chapter 2.2), the authors Fred Zaal, Jacqueline Sluijs, Roger Bymolt and John Belt concluded that advice on sustainable value chains should cover sustainable business models and promote inclusion, equity and social re-

sponsibility. Efforts are also needed to help local producers adjust to their new roles and changing positions in complex multi-stakeholder value chains.

Martijn ter Heegde argues that in order to address the complex issues raised by climate change, governance advisors should support innovation and learning processes to encourage good environmental stewardship, and use their potential to combine multiple sectoral policies and tap into different institutional levels (Chapter 2.5).

Her work on health and governance has convinced Elsbet Lodenstein of the need to take account of power dynamics and the political economy of governance (Chapter 2.6). Experience has shown that all decisions are influenced by individual interests, and that these should be considered in any governance analysis. Advice on governance should draw on multiple actors, be based on an understanding and brokering of different perspectives, and include process facilitation.

In Chapter 2.8 Nicolas Porchet concludes that while mobile governance innovations are largely driven by technology, they also need to take account of local needs and specificities in order to encourage local ownership. There is little doubt that these innovations will influence future governance processes; the challenge now is for governance advisors to ensure that they are used to promote social justice and alleviate poverty.

How should advisors position themselves in the governance arena?

It is essential that everyone involved in governance interventions – from KIT advisors to those who they train to improve their governance interventions – understands their own position and legitimacy to act. It is equally important to be aware that external interventions will inevitably trigger change, affecting relationships between stakeholders and power relations, and possibly undermining leadership.

The case studies on museum and library governance presented by Itie van Hout (Chapter 3.2), Avinash Bikha and Henk van Dam (Chapter 3.3) clearly show that advisors often need to draw a line at some point in their interventions. They have to decide when to be flexible and when to intervene in order to improve people's conditions or change behaviour. This raises the question of how advisors respect their partners' and their own integrity, and how they deal with overlapping responsibilities. The first step in instigating changes in organisational governance is to build a good working relationship based on trust and understanding with the leadership of the organisation concerned. To do this, governance advisors need to be open-minded, sensitive, respectful and flexible, and to share responsibility for the process rather than controlling it as authority figures.

Remco Mur and Mariana Wongtschowski ask equally pertinent questions in relation to agricultural innovation platforms: what are their boundaries, and who sets them? Who is included and who is not? Although these may seem to be clear-cut choices, local power relations, ethnic divides and gender issues may prevent meaningful participation by all

stakeholders, and even discourage people from any kind of participation. Governance advisors need to be aware of these underlying, often hidden, issues.

The same applies to work in fragile states. Annemarie ter Veen and Egbert Sondorp (Chapter 2.1) describe the challenges of addressing knowledge gaps in order to strengthen health governance, while ensuring that external support does not dilute the sense of local ownership and further weaken governance. Governance advisors need to know the setting in which they work, understand the situation, strengthen governance by supporting institution building at all levels, and evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions. The importance of employing subtle processes to contribute to strong partnerships and dialogue and strengthen accountability mechanisms, and the need to uphold integrity and transparency is also considered in the chapter by Thea Hilhorst.

In Chapter 3.1, Jan Donner notes that as outsiders, governance advisors are able to ask awkward questions and confront the university leadership with facts and developments they may have missed or chosen to ignore. Therefore, governance advisors need to be experienced sparring partners who can raise issues and help address and resolve them. Responses to strategic institutional questions should be tailored to local conditions and legislation, and the objectives and culture of the organisation in question.

While creating awareness and building capacity is an important element of advisory interventions, it also has its limitations. Noortje Verhart observes that “without the recognition that businesses and organisations themselves are accountable for their social impact, a reward for good performance is needed to make CSR results sustainable” (Chapter 3.4).

Building capacity to advise on governance

KIT uses the lessons learned from past interventions and the approaches and tools developed for its training programmes to build the capacity of governance advisors from all over the world. These courses are designed to improve participants' understanding of governance, broaden their perspectives, develop their analytical skills and emphasise the importance of putting concepts and theories into practice. The case studies in this book show that there is no blueprint for such interventions. So the next question, raised by Marjolein Dieleman and Prisca Zwanikken in Chapter 4.1, is how participants can use the knowledge they take away with them to implement change in their own countries. We teach governance advisors a number of principles that they can apply to all efforts to improve governance, and impress on them the need to be flexible and open to the situation in each context.

The cases presented by Gerard Baltissen and Petra Penninkhoff (Chapters 4.2 and 4.3) show that participants' learning needs change over time, which means that the content of training courses on decentralisation and local governance needs to be flexible. They describe how presentations and discussions are tailored to participants' needs and applicable to the setting in which they work, and how participants develop their own

theory of change within their particular mandate. It is also worth noting that these training courses are not solitary, one-off activities: participants produce action plans, are coached through their implementation, and can continue to exchange ideas through online forums long after their course has ended.

Final observations

This book reflects the many facets of the work done by KIT to support those who see 'going for governance' as the way forward in their particular field. It does not take a specific definition of governance as its starting point, or attempt to define governance in a way that suits KIT's advisory practice. None of the current definitions are comprehensive enough to include all the stakeholders we work for and the sectors that we work in, or explain all the approaches, methods and tools that we use. Our aim in producing this book was to show the breadth of the work done in a range of countries, sectors and organisations by advisors with different areas of expertise.

KIT has a distinctive approach to development that differs from other knowledge institutes and organisations: learning from practice in order to influence policy, and developing and using policies and strategies to influence practice. In doing so we aim to:

- be culturally sensitive (at different national, regional and organisational levels)
- consider governance from a holistic perspective
- work from the bottom up, listening, learning and developing joint initiatives in different situations rather than coming with a predetermined framework
- always incorporate a process of (reciprocal) capacity building in our interventions.

The case studies in this book show that KIT's approach to governance interventions is typically pragmatic and practical, as we feel that this is the most effective way to help build governance from the bottom up and advise on context-specific and appropriate policy measures. Our knowledge and insights into various political and cultural issues and sensitivities enable us to take a holistic view of the countries where we work while zooming in on particular issues; our experience with governance in several sectors allows us to transcend sectoral boundaries and address complex governance issues in different stakeholder environments.

KIT governance advisors take a multi-level approach to governance, providing advice on accountability mechanisms, policy development, partnerships, oversight, voice, transparency and conflict resolution at the national and local levels. In organisational governance we address leadership, visioning, strategic planning, communication, transparency, effectiveness/efficiency, and decision-making processes. We use multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral (or multi-dimensional) approaches at various levels to encourage stakeholders with conflicting interests, complex power relations and unequal gender structures to instigate and promote change in their governance processes.

Our work is people-centred, since governance essentially refers to the way that stakeholders interact, the processes they use and the institutions they approach in order to

ensure that their needs are voiced and met. Our task is not to assess and label governance as good, better, bad, weak, responsible or unaccountable, but to enable the stakeholders themselves to do this, based on their own objectively verifiable indicators.

It is hard to say whether KIT's way of addressing governance issues is unique. Governance advisors from other organisations would be better placed to make this kind of judgement. What we do know, however, is that we do our utmost to adhere to the values described above when we are approached for advice on governance issues.

Colophon

KIT – Royal Tropical institute

The Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) is an independent knowledge centre for international development and intercultural cooperation based in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Its aim is to contribute to sustainable development, social justice, poverty alleviation and cultural preservation and exchange. KIT conducts research, organizes training activities, and provides consultancy and information services. Central to KIT's approach is the elaboration of practical expertise in policy development and implementation. Development Policy and Practice (KIT DEV) is KIT's main department for development cooperation. KIT DEV specializes in four areas: social development and gender equity; health; education; and sustainable economic development.

Royal Tropical Institute (KIT)

Development Policy and Practice
PO Box 95001
1090 HA Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Tel: +31.20.56.88.777
Website: www.kit.nl

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