

4. Impact



The five strategies or output areas above, collectively contribute to the purpose for which the Trust exists:

To enhance the capacity of civil society sector to pursue pro-poor change in the region.

The success of the Trust in achieving this purpose is measured by three indicators:

1. Mechanisms for public participation in poverty focused policy development processes established in SADC and at least four member countries

In the three-and-a-half years since the Trust has been active, significant progress has been achieved to create opportunities and mechanisms for civil society organizations representing the voices of poor people to participate in regional poverty focused policy development.

With the Trust's multi-pronged support at a regional level, there is a decision to set up a SADC Regional Poverty Observatory from the SADC Summit in 2008. The development of the SADC regional poverty reduction framework will provide a guiding policy tool for the work of the SADC regional poverty observatory. A multi-sector advisory group comprising of SADC, UNDP, the Trust, and representatives of business, NGOs (represented by the SADC-CNGO), trade unions, and international cooperating partners has been established to guide the scoping process for the establishment of the Observatory. This will be the first regional inclusive mechanism for public participation in poverty focused policy development – representing a major advance in the region.

The Trust's work with the regional civil society apex bodies ensures that civil society representation in this mechanism is wider – inclusive of NGOs, faith based organizations, social movements, business and trade unions, as well as newly created thematic platforms that give regional voice to interest groups made up of poor constituencies themselves, such as informal cross-border traders. With the Trust's support, all five regional civil society apex bodies now have more capacity and have improved linkages with their national membership. Drawing on this membership base almost 1,000 civil society organizations engaged in consultation processes towards the SADC Poverty and Development Conference that resulted in the drafting of a SADC regional poverty reduction framework and the decision to establish a SADC regional poverty observatory – a massive advance on the 15 organizations that reported engaging in regional policy development in the baseline survey. A minimum of 30 organizations engaged in this process in each country, with as many as 300 in Mozambique.

The depth of civil society participation has also increased significantly. In the past participation by most civil society organizations was limited to a few representatives attending a meeting as observers without voice. However, in recent regional policy dialogue forums, civil society organizations had met beforehand to agree on a common agenda, the issues being tabled were supported by research commissioned, regional representatives have had an opportunity to hear the views and concerns of their membership, and a common perspective and position was negotiated – all strengthening the voice and impact of civil society organizations in the policy development. The regional policy agenda is beginning to reflect concerns placed on the agenda by civil society organizations representing voices of poor people.

At a national level the Trust has advocated for national poverty observatories or similar mechanisms that facilitate the structured participation of civil society organizations (including business) in the policy development process. In addition to supporting work to strengthen poverty observatories in Mozambique and Mauritius, work has begun in the DRC, Madagascar, South Africa, and Malawi towards the establishment of poverty observatories or equivalent national forums for civil society participation. In Mozambique the Trust has supported the G20, the civil society sector in the national poverty observatory, to deepen the level of participation of poor people by supporting engagement in local districts. In South Africa a different model is being pursued through the Presidency, in the form of a national social contract against poverty. The Trust and its partners are working to strengthen this mechanism and formalise the participation of civil society organizations. All taken together, the Trust is well on track to exceed its target indicator in this area.



The work at national and regional levels is further strengthened by the thematic policy dialogues facilitated by the Trust. These are discussed in more detail below.

2. Regional policy statements on poverty reduction are based on evidence and informed by the active participation of partner civil society organizations

One of the assumptions that informed the design of the Trust was that creating spaces for hearing the voices of the poor combined with dialogue will result in changed policies. Therefore the purpose of the participation detailed above is to inform the development of regional policy statements with voices of poor people. In the Trust's view, this requires research informed by evidence from the experience of people living in poverty.

Since the Trust was launched there have been significant changes in regional policy statements. One such example is the statements on trade which have, in the past, focused on issues of the protocol on trade, trade negotiations and tariffs. In the draft SADC regional poverty reduction framework recently adopted by SADC, the issues of informal cross border trade, which is overwhelmingly undertaken by poor women, was included in the agenda. Below are some extracts from the draft regional poverty reduction framework that talk to the concerns of informal traders:

"SADC should develop a simple document and procedure to cater for small-scale (informal) cross-border traders who trade in relatively low values of goods ... It is recommended that there is a need to streamline trade policies in SADC so that they make favourable provisions for SMEs and ICBT operators ... SADC should build the capacity of various stakeholders ... for them to work in harmony and remove the criminalisation attitudes and mistrust, and to protect the rights of ICBTs as citizens of SADC."

All five thematic areas that the Trust focuses on in partnership with civil society organizations across the region were included in the SADC regional poverty reduction framework.

3. Increased reporting of civil society engagement in poverty-focused policy processes in country reports

Several countries have recognised the importance of engaging civil society organizations in poverty focused policy processes and have publicly stated this either in their national strategies, MDG reports, or in reports prepared for regional forums. The table below provides a summary of several new country commitments to civil society participation in policy development in the SADC region.

Table 4: National reports of increased civil society engagement in policy development

Country	Snapshot of national reports of increased civil society engagement in policy processes
South Africa	Civil society engagement recognised as one of the pillars in the national anti-poverty strategy. Civil society organizations invited onto the platform when the draft strategy was launched (through the Trust's facilitation), on the basis of the national poverty hearings supported by the Trust. New process launched to establish a national social contract against poverty between the government and civil society organizations, with the Trust facilitating this dialogue,
Mozambique	Civil society engagement formalised in the Poverty and Development Observatory and civil society delegations are part of national delegations to all regional and international meetings. SADC national committee has made a commitment to deepen civil society engagement in national regional integration strategy, with the Trust's support. National poverty observatory reports deepened district level citizen engagement, through support of the Trust.



Mauritius	Government accountability for poverty reduction through civil society engagement recognised as critical in the new national poverty observatory model. This is reflected in statements from the President. Ministry of social development requests signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Trust to support deeper and wider civil society engagement and leadership development at national and regional levels.
Madagascar	Civil society engagement recognised and multi-stakeholder platform has been established. Government declared support of the Trust's work to strengthen national civil society coordination for policy engagement in poverty reduction strategy development and implementation.
DRC	Civil society engagement recognised as a high priority. Ministry of planning declares support for Trust's role in bringing together 16 thematic civil society platforms into a coordinated structure for policy engagement. National poverty observatory adjusts model to include better civil society engagement in the process. SADC national committee requests Trust's support to strengthen civil society participation.
Zambia	Civil society organizations have engaged in the PRPS process through the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) platform. Civil society organizations are regrouping and re-strategising for how they can participate more effectively in the second generation poverty reduction strategy.
Malawi	Plans underway to set up a national civil society platform for action towards a national poverty observatory, with support from the Trust. The government is increasingly championing participation of civil society organizations in poverty reduction strategies.
Tanzania	The Trust cooperates with the Foundation for Civil Society which is credited by the government for increasing the level and quality of civil society engagement in poverty reduction strategies.
Namibia	There is no platform for civil society engagement in policy development but civil society organizations have requested the Trust's support to develop a national engagement strategy towards the establishment of a national poverty observatory. Civil society engagement endorsed by the minister of information who launched the Trust's Drivers of Change awards in Windhoek in 2009.
Angola	Efforts are underway, with support from the Trust, to establish a national platform for civil society engagement. High level government officials in the Presidency declared support for the Trust's work to build civil society capacity for meaningful policy engagement.

As this report demonstrates the Trust has delivered substantive progress in all of its planned strategic output areas and made significant progress towards the achievement of its planned outcomes, with clear progress in achieving its overall purpose. It has worked to increase the knowledge base and capacity of the sector, making civil society organizations more effective in their regional policy work. It has created platforms for dialogue that allow civil society organizations to be active in regional policy processes. It has commissioned and funded research that is evidence based and informed by the experiences of poor people as part of informing the positions of civil society organizations and, in turn, regional policy statements on poverty. It is working to improve the legislative and broader enabling environment in which civil society organizations work. And it has provided significant resources into a sector that has been faced with funding cuts as donor strategies shift.

Through its work the Trust is contributing to the achievement of the MDGs, in particular:

- **Goal 1:** Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger – through its policy and programme work to end poverty in the region
- **Goal 3:** Promote gender equality and empower women – through its gender perspective and focus on livelihood, economic and social security issues impacting on women and children
- **Goal 7:** Ensure environmental sustainability – through its work around infrastructure in the region, food security and sustainable natural resource management
- **Goal 8:** Create a global partnership – through its work with donors on aid flows and the private sector on access to new technologies

5. Conclusion



Monitoring and evaluation has been integrated into every aspect of the work of the Trust. Managers and the Trustees work with monitoring and evaluation data on a regular basis and use it to inform their decisions.

One of the purposes of a monitoring and evaluation report is to inform management priorities and decisions of what changes are needed to maximise the impact of the organization.

This report demonstrates the significant achievements of the Southern Africa Trust in its first three years of operation. Already the Trust is making an impact in all three of the planned impact areas. However, as with every organization there are areas where the Trust can improve. This section highlights some of these areas identified by the Trust for action in the remaining three years of the initial logical framework plan.

Systematic capacity development

Capacity has clearly been built in the sector as a result of the work of the Trust. This work needs to be further intensified to:

- Broaden the pool of stakeholders equipped to engage in regional policy processes with confidence and credibility;
- Develop a more systematic approach to what a democratic and participatory process should look like;
- Assist projects to link their work more explicitly to regional policy processes. The planned work on civil society leadership development should begin to address this work.

Introduction of specific indicators for each thematic focus areas

With thematic focus areas defined and the huge strides made towards achieving the overarching strategy or output indicators, specific strategies and indicators of progress are needed for each of the thematic and geographic focus areas against which progress in the coming three years could be measured.

Collecting and disaggregating data

The Trust has built up a huge databank of information on civil society over the past three years. The focus in the next three years needs to be on assisting partners to collect and disaggregate data as part of deepening the sector's ability to review the impact of its work. Data on whose voices have been included in each dialogue, gender representation, gender perspectives, tracking of policy inputs, etc need to become more part of the ongoing operational practice of the Trust.

Retention of high performing staff

The staff turnover in the last three years, while not unusual in this sector, is a concern. The work the Trust is engaged in is cutting edge and high level, requiring highly competent personnel. However, staff changes disrupt the work of the organization. It also places more pressure on an already over-extended team. The Trust will have to try to find the balance between attracting and retaining suitably qualified and high performing personnel while allowing those who are not suited to its work ethic to move on.

Funding

The Trust has been very innovative with its change4ever campaign but, as the figures reveal, Southern Africa does not have an established culture of philanthropy. Therefore in the short and medium term, the priority must be on securing additional multi-year donor commitments.