CREATING LINKAGES BETWEEN RESEARCH, ADVOCACY AND MEDIA

Pro-Poor Policy
Development and Accountability

Convening Report - Johannesburg South Africa, 7 June 2011
Table of Contents

1. Introduction .................................................................................................................................. 2
2. Background .................................................................................................................................... 3
3. Overview of the Project .................................................................................................................. 4
4. Key Issues Emerging from the Discussion .................................................................................. 6
5. Findings of the Scoping Study ...................................................................................................... 9
6. Findings of the Baseline Survey .................................................................................................. 14
7. Institutional Aspects of the Project ............................................................................................ 15
8. Summary of Outcomes ................................................................................................................ 16
9. Closing Remarks and the Way Forward ...................................................................................... 17
10. Annexure ..................................................................................................................................... 18

Annex 1: Participants List ................................................................................................................ 18
1. Introduction

Neville Gabriel, the Executive Director of the Southern Africa Trust, welcomed the participants and provided a contextual setting for the meeting. He pointed out that there has been a growing sense among development practitioners that Africa is in the process of reinventing itself as a continent. As a result, there are emerging challenges that require a totally new approach to effectively deal with them. Unfortunately, civil society organizations with a good track record and experience are battling to make the necessary transition to respond to the new challenges that are emerging. Even the new ones formed in the backlash of these challenges are unable to achieve the desired impact.

Coupled with these challenges, the financial support to civil society organizations has been subjected to changes that shape the nature of the intervention by the recipient organizations. Implications of these changes on the behaviour and approach of civil society organisations are not understood sufficiently to allow an appropriate response from these organisations that will advance the development work needed to be done.

In the midst of these changes, the challenge of how to hold governments accountable for meeting their Millenium Development Goal (MDG) targets for poverty reduction takes on new meaning, which requires a shift in thinking and strategy of civil society and development organisations. The new environment requires not only greater accountability of government or increased activism by civil society to hold governments to account, but also greater coherence among non state actors in advocating for development impact and results. This demands a stronger relationship among civil society organisations. To ensure greater accountability from government, there is also the need to develop stronger relationships between them and civil society formations. This is the basis of the Trust project that is aimed at creating and strengthening linkages between research, media and advocacy.
2. Background

This meeting was convened to explore how to build greater coherence among research, advocacy and media groups in order to improve accountability of policy makers in getting results from better poverty reduction interventions. It seeks to find ways of getting greater coherence in the pro-poor messaging to policy makers and the public at large about poverty reduction strategies so that better policies are developed and implemented.

A colloquium hosted in 2010 by the Southern Africa Trust and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in Dar es Salaam explored the linkages between the research, advocacy and media sectors in seeking poverty reduction policies in Africa. The discussion explored the current situation, with a specific focus on six countries, and recommended a deepening of this dialogue at multi country and national level. Emerging from this, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation entered into a grant agreement with the Southern Africa Trust to facilitate this work.

An initial activity of this project was to conduct a scoping study and baseline survey in the six participating countries. The organisations present at this meeting were identified during those engagements with civil society, and were widely recommended by respondents as key partners to work with in designing and shaping the programme going forward. This meeting is, therefore, an open discussion to look at the findings of the initial studies, and to develop and agree to elements of a structured relationship for implementation of the project.
3. Overview of the Project

Themba Mhlongo, Head of Programmes at the Southern Africa Trust, provided an overview of the project. He pointed out that while there has been some research into the nature of the relationship between media, research and advocacy sectors, it is not extensive. At the Dar es Salaam colloquium, research was presented on how policy makers access research, and how civil society uses media. However, there is very little knowledge that looks specifically at the linkages between the different sectors and how this impacts policymaking processes.

In Europe and Australasia, there has been some work done on the linkages between research, advocacy and media sectors. The limitation, however, is that this work approaches the problem from the perspective of each sector individually, and does not seek to understand the problem from an interconnected viewpoint. The objective of this project is not just to do an academic study of the relationships from a distance, but also to facilitate the sectors working together on specific thematic issues, and in the process to “learn by doing”.

There is also provision for establishing and populating a mechanism that will allow for linking between countries and between thematic focus areas so that experience and learning can be shared. This is a key objective of the project. One of the outputs will be a learning report to document new and innovative practice in approaching policy influencing in a linked way.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation made the grant available on the strength of the Dar es Salaam Colloquium recommendations for increased collaboration between the three sectors. The Southern Africa Trust consolidated these recommendations into a project proposal that will guide future engagements in this collaborative endeavour. Participating organisations, through dialogue and convenings such as this one, will have the opportunity to shape the process further.

With regard to the desired outcomes of the colloquium, it was pointed out that firstly, such dialogues should be repeated at national level. Preparations are already underway to hold these in the six participating countries.

Secondly, the three sectors should work towards an inclusive working relationship, to find resources to take the relationship forward. As this is new territory, there is a need for resources - financial and technical - not just to facilitate but also to sustain the achievement of the project objective.

Thirdly, this process should create a communication framework / mechanism to ensure that the group
maintains the linkages established at the Dar es Salaam colloquium. Currently there is very limited or no learning from each other. The project must establish the means through which inter-sectoral and cross-country learning is done.

With this as basis, the Trust designed the project with the following objectives:

(i) The undertaking of a situational assessment in each of the focus countries. This was done through a baseline survey and scoping study, the findings of which will be shared with all who participated.

(ii) Convoking of a regional dialogue that includes representatives of the three sectors in all six countries to make input in the design and implementation of the project. This dialogue should emerge with a “coordinating committee” of lead partners from each country.

(iii) Identification of three themes in the proposal design. Accordingly, agricultural productivity and food security, service delivery, and development resource mobilisation and allocation were identified as key, within the overarching framework of governance for development. Already a convening was scheduled for end of June on food security involving partners from all six countries and organisations focusing on food security. That thematic meeting will develop guides on how that thematic group will be coordinated, and the Trust will incorporate comments and inputs for better design of the project.

The expectation was that the lead organisation in each country would assist in convening country dialogues.

Once that initial discussion on the project has taken place, the national partners would need to develop additional evidence based research on the issues facing them. The expectation, therefore, was that targeted research would be undertaken to deepen knowledge or fill knowledge gaps essential for the success of the project.

Very often policy issues are put into public domain for comment. However, the voice of those affected by the issue in that discussion are seldom represented or heard. The project recognises that there needs to be active involvement of organisations of people directly affected by policy.

Finally, it was pointed out that there is need for a strong consciousness and intent to build partnerships with media organisations for better communication of the issues relating to poverty and development.
4. Key Issues Emerging from the Discussion

Mechanisms and support for collaborative way of working

When there are better linkages among organisations doing advocacy, research and media work, there is better policy influencing. However, different approaches to influencing policy results in outcomes that are often discordant and not coherent in impact. Key for this project is to develop a common conceptual framework so that different actors understand each other better. This is not intended to remove independent thought and approach, but rather aimed at developing a common language that facilitates better partnership for greater policy impact.

In addition, mechanisms must be put in place that facilitate this sharing, learning and partnership or collaboration by collating the knowledge and experiences that have been gained, and to use this to inform the way ahead.

In order to facilitate these developments, the project makes provision for small grants towards coordination and further knowledge development. The role of the Trust in this will be to provide financial and other resources that can unlock and support new relations and innovations.

Learning by doing or applied learning

This project is about an applied way of learning. This means that we will learn about how to work together across the sectors - not just by thinking and discussing and exploring the issue - but by actually working together, and in so doing build the relationship.

This working together will happen within the scope of the three (plus one) thematic areas covering the following:

- food security, specifically at smallholder / household level,
- service delivery under MDG banner (health, education), and
- financing for development with a focus on mobilising national resources and how that links to global and international initiatives.
- A fourth crosscutting issue is to provide a development focus on governance – how does participatory governance contribute to development.

Playing to the strengths of African civil society

Generally, there is a sense among influential donors that African civil society is not strong enough to hold their governments accountable. Increasingly, Civil society is not seen as capable of delivering tangible results, so many donors are investing in governments for service delivery. The basis for many donors’ support to civil society has been an expectation that individual organisations can be funded to develop capacity to do everything in the policy change value chain. This is bound to result in failure as no one organisation can do everything. Rather, relationships between different types of organisations should be developed in order to bring varied and diverse expertise to create a chain of value that leads to an impact.
People affected by policy are currently not present in these discussions, so the Trust’s role as the intermediary is to bring platforms of people affected by policy at national level into the centre of the initiative (with some grantmaking support). There will need to be engagement with policy makers as well. Therefore, the Trust will continue to facilitate the voice of poor being heard, and by working with governments to make the policy makers more receptive to that voice.

**Sustainability of the project**

It was pointed out that relationships are sustainable beyond the project and do not depend on financial resources only. If the project is focused on demonstrating impact and results and is well executed, it will be attractive to donors. The design of the project should not aim at just creating precedent, but rather to institutionalise participatory policy making over the period. There is then take-up from other role-players.

At national level, this project takes on great importance, and successful implementation will strengthen the case for greater technical and financial support to national level initiatives.

The ever-shifting reality of combating poverty challenges participating organisations to look at what is being invested in building the relationships. Much more important than financial resources is commitment, knowledge, and getting the process of dialogue and learning among the three sectors into practice. The discussion should be about changing the frame of mind to one of collaboration, and understanding the value chain of policy influencing and the different contributions to it.

The project is about the linkages between the sectors. So when the issue of food security is tackled, it is not about the issue itself, but how different organisations work together to improve the impact on policy influencing. It was reiterated that the need to build a strong foundation for the project should not be based on potential access to funds, but on the working relationships among participating organisations. The basis for starting the project is that collaboration should be continued beyond the three years and if the right chord is struck in shaping the thinking now, there will not be so much a concern with money in the future.

**Strategic leadership for maximum impact**

With the need to move faster from design and conceptualisation to implementation, it was agreed that leadership was crucial and should come from national organisations.
The establishment of a leadership grouping from the six countries to oversee the initiative and to develop the learning into messaging that can be taken into regional and global platforms was essential and can result in significant changes in the way poverty is addressed.
5. Findings of the Scoping Study

Barry Smith, an independent consultant who was part of the team undertaking the study, presented a summary of the outcomes of the scoping study.

Key advocacy issues being addressed

The following is a summary of the issues and themes identified (grouped by thematic areas):

Agriculture and food security

The scoping study revealed a wide and varied set of advocacy and policy issues around agriculture and food security with specific reference to the following:

- The right to food, food security and adequate nutrition
- Securing sustainable livelihoods for small scale farmers and producers groups
- More equitable terms of trade that favour small scale farmers and producers
- Building an enabling infrastructure and environment for sustainable agriculture
- Strengthening small scale farmer and producer associations and organizations

Work on this cluster of issues featured significantly among organizations surveyed in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda and Tanzania, but somewhat less so among South Africa-based respondents. Some of the concerns that emerged include the interests of pastoralists in countries like Kenya and Tanzania as well as the diverse regimes relating to access to land, increasing commercialization of agriculture and the growing impact of climate change on the agricultural sector.

Financing for development

With regard to financing for development the key emerging issues commanding attention and priority were:

- Advocacy around key government development and growth strategies
- Monitoring and influencing government budgets and resource allocation
- Advocacy focused on aid effectiveness and financing/implementation of the MDGs
- Harnessing development resources from the exploitation of new petroleum and mineral extraction

It was striking to note the relative lack of issue focus across all countries on private sector development financing, corporate social investment and public/private financing mechanisms. Even more striking was the lack of advocacy around private philanthropy and accessing resources from the small but growing classes of wealthy, entrepreneurial and professional people.

Delivery of basic social services
On the delivery of, and access to, basic social services, particularly in the areas of health and education the issues in all countries were:

a. Realizing socio-economic rights to education, health and other basic services (water, sanitation, shelter, etc.)
b. Strengthening social protection systems, with particular reference to vulnerable groups like the rural poor, women, children, people affected by HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB, and people in conflict zones
c. Access to quality basic education
d. Building stronger, more equitable public health systems

It was noted that the survey reflected a fairly strong alignment with the MDG agenda around basic social services, but did not reveal much advocacy work around shelter and housing.

**Governance for development**

Throughout the six countries, advocacy groups are pursuing a fairly consistent agenda to strengthen governance for development, aligned around the following themes:

a. Consolidation and defence of democratic gains
b. Promoting social accountability, transparency and public participation
c. Expanding and defending ‘the right to know,’ access to information and media freedom
d. Protecting civic space and advancing a constitutionally entrenched human rights culture
e. Countering the spread of corruption

In Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania, there was a reasonable amount of optimism about the growth and consolidation of democratic governance, while in Uganda, South Africa and Malawi there are real concerns about looming threats to democracy and human rights – and a closing down of civic or democratic space. Nonetheless, both opportunities and threats in relation to democratic governance seem to provide a potent rallying point for collaboration among advocacy, research and media groups in all of the six focus countries.

**Coalitions and Platforms**

The scoping study canvassed views on the key strengths and assets of coalition and advocacy platforms in the six focus countries. The results are summarized below.

The positive aspects relate to an increase in number of coalitions, their diversity and inclusiveness, thus enhancing their effectiveness in bringing a collective voice to policymaking processes. Increasing use of evidence-
based research to inform policy positions is a notable feature, as is a growing acknowledgement of the need for effective communication strategies.

A number of weaknesses would be characteristic of broader civil society, and relate to institutional capacity and organisational governance. Sustaining leadership is a challenge, and the shortage of long term and predictable funding adds to capacity and sustainability questions. Accountability to communities and connection to the voice of people affected is weak. The credibility of coalitions is also challenged by an over-dependence on donor support, resulting in tendencies to ‘follow the money’. Linkages among specialised groups such as researchers and media are not always strong, and an evidence-based approach still needs more work. Greater coordination among different sectors is also a challenge. Simmering tension between coalitions and policy makers remain, often driven by mistrust and suspicion of each other.

**Receptivity of Policy Makers, challenges facing citizens’ groups, and Challenges for Engagement**

Overall, the perceived climate of access, receptivity and linkages in respect of policy makers is encouraging news for the Trust and should bode well for the potential impact and success of the Trust’s project. However, these positive perceptions must be balanced and tempered by the long and jarring list harvested of challenges for engagement with policy makers. The key areas of challenge identified were daunting:

- A generalized climate of suspicion and mistrust between government and civil society (especially advocacy groups and the media)
- Widely held negative and adversarial mindsets
- Rampant partisan politicization of the policy process (‘you are with us or against us’)
- In some countries, a closing down of democratic space
- Weak public policy frameworks and weak government practices
- Weak civil society policy advocacy
- Major logistical, financial and human resource deficits among civil society advocacy groups

**Receptivity, Capacity and Opportunities for Collaboration**

In general, respondents rated the capacity of organizations for coordination and collaboration less highly than their openness to collaboration, with most organizations rating this capacity as adequate, rather than strong or very strong. Where respondents rated capacity as weak, perceptions of weak capacity were more pronounced in South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda.

Thus, there is evidence of a strong openness and commitment from organizations to the aims and objectives of the Trust’s initiative. There is also a wide acknowledgement of the need for greater capacity and effectiveness for collaboration and partnerships among advocacy, research and media groups. Stakeholders consulted identified various building blocks already in place for collaboration as well some critical opportunities to work together across boundaries, with considerable added value to be gained. The scoping study confirms that there is a firm evidence and support base for underlying assumptions and rationale of the Trust’s initiative as well as
significant demand and/or openness to the process. The scoping study also identified a range of opportunities and building blocks for collaboration, as well as advantages and ‘added value’ that could flow from cooperation and partnership.

**Key Contextual Challenges**

There was not sufficient time, resources or available data to capture the diversity, details and nuances of the contextual challenges in each country.

While all of the countries in focus have experienced and secured major democratic gains over recent years, it should be noted that respondents identified worrying undercurrents and immediate threats to those gains, especially in Uganda, Malawi and South Africa. In all countries, partners are threatened in varying degrees by a toxic cocktail of intolerance of dissent, authoritarianism, over-centralization of power in the executive, curbs on basis freedoms (of expression, assembly, academic and media freedoms), party-political polarization, corruption and a generalized lack of social accountability.

The economic and resource environment for policy advocacy work and collaboration is very challenging in all six countries. The effects of the financial crisis are compounded by a heavy dependence on external donor funding for policy advocacy and a commensurate weak domestic or African resource base. We have mapped a wide range of donors and resource providers who are currently or prospectively supporting policy advocacy, research and media work (see Annex 5).

**Key Observations and Challenges: The Media**

Findings from the baseline study suggest that a majority of organizations surveyed see themselves as having strong linkages with the media. Most organizations interviewed rated the level of openness and receptivity of the media to social development issues as moderately receptive or very receptive. On the other hand, a majority of respondents rated the media’s level of knowledge of pro-poor policy issues as fair or non-existent. Many respondents regard the media’s coverage of pro-poor policy and research work as being only fair or poor.

Most media groups surveyed were positive about more and better collaboration with advocacy and research groups, and they see real benefits in collaboration – such as accessing good stories, writers and credible data/research (the mass media is more desperate for good copy than most civil society organizations realize). However, several stressed the need for some distance between advocacy agendas and the independent media – in order for the media to retain credibility with the public.
Key Observations and Challenges: Research and Research Organizations

As documented in the baseline study, there is strong perception that advocacy organizations are failing to use research to maximum effect. Similarly, nearly three quarters of respondents feel that evidence-based policy research is being conducted only at an adequate or weak level. Most organizations surveyed have some in-house research capacity, but this is often limited by human resource and funding constraints. Responses to a question about linkages with research organizations were mixed with about half of respondents rating their linkages as adequate or weak. When asked to rate the level of media coverage of pro-poor research, about three quarters of respondents rated coverage as poor or only fair.

The evidence from the scoping study suggests a big gap to be bridged between research organizations and both advocacy groups and the media. Relationships are frustrated by the different worldviews, cultures and constraints of these organizations, and a failure to engage and understand each other. Just as advocacy, groups and the media are sceptical about the motivations, work style and priorities of researchers, research organizations are often wary of how advocacy groups and the media use research. Researchers are typically concerned about sacrificing rigour, standards and objectivity for the sake of adapting to advocacy agendas.

The reality is that all of the players in research, advocacy and media have a tendency towards pre-ordained positions and stereotypes, not only in relation to each other, but more importantly in relation to assumptions about poor people affected by policy. Great opportunities exist to move beyond these entrenched views and optimize the use of research and evidence to support pro-poor policy formation.
6. Findings of the Baseline Survey

Philip Browne, an independent consultant who was part of the team undertaking the study, presented a summary of the outcomes of the baseline survey.

Discussion and Analysis of the Findings

The survey was found to be very useful, but it was however felt that here is need to be mindful of consistency in terms of measuring levels / degrees of things.

There needs to be the distinction made with regard to defining the media sector: some are news people who report on events, while others are media organisations that do advocacy and research with regard to issues around media, journalism and related issues.

What has changed? The findings report a high degree of access to decision makers, high evidence-based research, high access to print. At the Dar es Salaam colloquium the participants said something different, that these things are not happening. Can these self assessments be verified as accurate? It could be that the survey involved organisations that are good at these activities.

The question then is why is there not a change in impacting poverty? If all the right ingredients are in place, why do not the necessary results follow? There needs to be an exploration whether what is missing is how a connection to the issues of people affected in order to bring it to the policy table.
7. Institutional Aspects of the Project

Themba Mhlongo presented the institutional arrangements for taking the project forward.

The organisations present will constitute an interim steering committee or reference group for the project.

One national organisation to assist in coordinating country convenings will be agreed in this meeting. The national convening will confirm the lead organisation / coordinator in that country. The proposed organisations are: STAR Ghana, NGO Forum – Uganda, Foundation for Civil Society – Tanzania, CIVICUS – South Africa, MEJN – Malawi, KCFD – Kenya

The national convening will allow the presentation of the scoping and baseline study for that country as part of the feedback process. The convening will have to agree the modalities of implementation, including the agreement on the themes of the project.

The Trust will develop the framework or terms of reference for review by the lead partner in each country.

The national convenings will be brainstorming sessions that won’t necessarily have every single civil society organisation there, but should include those who have participated in the scoping study and those the lead organisations think may add value to the process. The subsequent meetings will, if do decided, extend the participation beyond strategic partners.

Immediately after these national convenings, the first of the thematic convenings has been scheduled for 29 June 2011.
8. Summary of Outcomes

A summary of outcomes can be presented using the following headings:

Purpose
- Reinventing civil society – we have to think differently about how we do things
- There is a stronger call for activism
- Creating a more effective developmental state
- Building relationships towards coherence, a need for that among sectors and with policy makers
- We need coherence at all levels

Product / Service
- Questions about the findings of the baseline survey – what picture is it presenting? Is it true, or are there distortions in the self assessment?

Process / Practices
- There is a need for a common conceptual framework for collaboration
- How do we collaborate? The practice of collaboration needs to be clear as collaboration is the stepping stone
- Issues of design – how will the project be rolled out? Modalities of implementation need clarity.
- Learning from doing – what are the mechanisms to do this?
- There is a need for a more simplified concept note / diagrammatic representation about the project and what will happen in the project.

People
- Recognition that we need to clear up suspicions, assumptions and perceptions of each other
- The role of trust – we need to unlock resources to recreate innovations in the way that work is done between media, research and advocacy
- Leadership will play a key role – how will this happen?
- Sustainability – is also part of the bigger purpose – the nature of the relationships are beyond financial resources
9. Closing Remarks and the Way Forward

The objective is strengthening collaboration between the three sectors, in the three thematic sectors, with the overall governance for development framework. The content of these engagements will be determined by the countries.

In conclusion, we have agreed and confirmed that;

- There is a need for leadership and interim arrangements for organisations to do that,
- There is a need for a steering committee of the lead organisations,
- There must be a fast tracking of the framework for partnership involving lead organisations and Trust,
- Next regional meeting will be thematic convening on food security,
- Reports will be circulated relating to the project. The baseline and scoping still need to be finalised, and still need to be validated by the country convenings and feedback from those who were interviewed.

Themba Mhlongo closed the meeting with an appeal for continued honesty, openness and robustness in our engagements.
10. Annexure

Annex 1: Participants List

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Annex 2: Evaluation Report

The Trust hosted the Regional convening on 7th June, 2011 at the Balalaika Hotel in Johannesburg.

The objectives of the convening were as follows:

- Review the project implementation strategies
- Discuss the findings and the recommendations of the recently completed scoping study and baseline survey
- Inform the preparation of country convenings following this initial regional convening
- Consider recommended potential project partners, including national lead partners

The convening was attended by 24 members including 8 members from the Trust (Graph 1). Of this, 9 or 38% were women and 15 or 62% were men (Graph 2).

Participants then evaluated the event by answering questions such as rating the achievements of the objectives for the convening as well as the content, process facilitation, learning, approach, venue and planning.

The results from the evaluation forms have been captured below are presented in graphs with comments captured directly from their responses.

The evaluation was in two sections. **Section A** (which participants were asked to rate the logistics, planning, facilitation process and whether they had learnt anything new) and **Section B** (which participants were rating achievement of objectives of the convening)

**SECTION A:**
A four level scale rating was used as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Bad”</th>
<th>“Average”</th>
<th>“Good”</th>
<th>“Excellent”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Planning
On planning done for the convening from their experience as participants, 67% said it was **good**, 13% said **excellent**, and 20% said **average**. None said **bad** (see Graph 3 below)

**Graph 3**
PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS

- A longer notice period would have been more helpful
- Participation was high and the information given was relevant
- Information about the meeting could have been shared earlier
- Always room for improvement
- Okay

Venue

On the facilities and venue, 80% said **good**, 0% said **average** and 20% said **excellent**. None rated **bad** (see Graph 4 below)

Graph 4
PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS

- The facilities were excellent
- Need to make access to internet
- Always room for improvement
- It was a little hot and dark before lunch which allowed attention to waver (esp. during presentation of scoping)
- The facilities were excellent
- Need to make access to internet

**Attitudes**
With regards the attitudes, availability and helpfulness of the conveners, 47% rated **good**, 53% rated excellent, 0% rated **average**. None rated **bad** (see Graph 5)

**Graph 5**

![How Participants Rates the Attitudes and Helpfulness of Convenors](image)

**PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS**

- Based on Dr Mhlongo what the Trust wanted to achieve was to explain the process and the rest will be done at country level
- They were receptive to ideas; a bit over defensive
- Provided all the information needed
- Always room for improvement
- Very open to differing views which enriched the process
- They are quite open and calm even when there are obvious pressures in the room
- Emphasized honesty and showed humility in accepting criticism

**Content**
With respect to quality of the event based on content, 87% rated **good**, 13% rated **average** and 0% rated **excellent**. None rated **bad** as illustrated in graph 6
PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS
- The scoping study was not very clear but information generated is valuable
- Always room for improvement
- Objectives of the meeting were achieved
- We could benefit more by having more documents
- Not much as it needs to be discussed at country level

Process
On how the participants experienced the process used to facilitate the event, 67% rated “good”, 13% rated excellent and another 20% rated average. None rated bad (see graph 7)
PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS

- I think the timing constraints limited "participation" in deciding on a process, but I like the "doing" model best!
- Participants' views were taken into account
- Facilitator (CDRA) conducted the facilitation services very well
- Very good process
- Always room for improvement
- Not the usual pressure workshop that leaves everyone stressed out
- I think the timing constraints limited "participation" in deciding on a process, but I like the "doing" model best!

Learning

The question on whether the participants have learned anything new, 73% rated “yes” and 13% rated “no”, while another 13% did not respond (see graph 8)

Graph 8

PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS

- Learnt about the situation in other countries
- Being a new employee to KCDF and in the field of grant making, meeting was invaluable
- A lot of common challenges and best practices
- Comparative knowledge of what's working and/or not in countries
- Need to provide adequate information, ownership
- Did not learn much
- Even though I did not attend Tanzania meeting, I learned a lot.
- The outcomes of the baseline and how it has reinforced expected outcomes and researches on the ground from a self assessment perspective
- Perspectives from the three groups on some potential solutions to the challenges
• Very interesting baseline and scoping study most of which confirms CIVICUS’ Civil Society evaluations
• Learnt about situation in other countries

SECTION B:
In this section of the form, participants were asked to rate the achievements of the objectives of the convening. The following four level scale was used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes, fully</th>
<th>Mostly but not fully</th>
<th>Not really</th>
<th>No, not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Objective 1: To discuss the project implementation strategies.

7% of the participants rated “yes, fully” and 80% rated “mostly but not fully”, while 13% rated “not really” or “no, not at all”. See graph 9

PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS
• I feel that too much caution was built into the discussions and that led to useful, but sometimes lengthy deliberations
• The report will tie the gaps identified in the plenary
• The project document was not shared
• We did not get a comprehensive full picture of the project
• As we were attending the meeting for the first time we need to go back to our respective bodies and seek mandate
• A few details that could have clarified project implementation were missing

Objective 2: to discuss the findings and the recommendations of the recently completed scoping study and baseline survey.
27% rated “yes, fully” and 73% rated “mostly but not fully” and 0% rated “not really” while none rated “no, not at all” as illustrated on Graph 10.

**Graph 10**

**Objective 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, fully</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly but not fully</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not really</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, not at all</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS**

- The presentation was rushed and some materials were not included in the pack
- It was almost too much information to process
- A full report of the scoping study was not provided for in depth scrutiny, only a summary was provided
- The time was short and there were many issues on the table
- More need to be done - no business as usual
- Recommendations did not come out clearly from the report
- Perceptions portrayed a good picture but the situation on the ground may paint a different picture

**Objective 3: To discuss project implementation arrangements including country and thematic coordination.**

21% rated “yes, fully” and 72% rated “mostly but not fully”, 7% rated “not really” and none “no, not at all” (see graph 11)

**Graph 11**
PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS

- It's quite clear what is expected of the country convenings and with a little content focus, we should be good to go
- What is required from lead organizations in setting up the meetings
- Room for fine-tuning through bilateral meetings vs. case by case issues
- Provide the terms of reference for the country meetings
- More information is needed
- Will support in the national meeting and provide support if required
- Not sure about the agenda of these meetings; the goal posts seemed to shift a bit

**Objective 4: Inform the implementation of the overall project for sustainability purposes.**

64% rated “yes fully”, 29% rated “mostly but not fully” and 7% rated “not really”. None rated “no, not at all”. (See Graph 12)

**PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS**

- Most lead organisations were unprepared to lead. A sign that this discussion was not concluded
• Everyone has to get involved
• Agreed justification for proposed interim
• For Uganda it was reasonable as we play an important convening role as a programme objective
• Excellent tool for proactively accepting different perspectives / critiques on approach, etc
• Most lead organisations were unprepared to lead. A sign that this discussion was not concluded

Summary:
Graph 13 below shows the overview of the rating of achievement of objectives. A small proportion indicated negative response of “not really” and neither indicated “no, not at all”. This rating indicates a level of unsure understanding of the project.

Graph 13

Overview of Rating of Achievement of Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Yes, fully</th>
<th>Mostly but not fully</th>
<th>Not really</th>
<th>No, not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objective 2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>