



Governance and Transparency Fund Annual Report 3

Reporting period: 1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011

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1. Programme Identification Details

GTF Number	GTF003
Short Title of Programme	Increasing government accountability in conflict zones through public participation in policymaking
Name of Lead Institution	Conciliation Resources
Start date	03/09/2008
End date	02/09/2013
Brief Summary of Programme:	A five-year programme seeking to support changes in governance by enabling conflict-affected groups to better participate in decision-making processes to determine 'the way things are done', thus affecting institutional change. It aims to contribute to more effective governance and better prospects for sustainable peace in four project areas – West Africa (Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia), northern Uganda (with Southern Sudan), Caucasus (Georgian/Abkhaz conflict region) and Fiji; and to greater understanding of how to improve governance in conflict contexts.
List all countries where activities have taken or will take place	Liberia Guinea

	<p>Sierra Leone Uganda Southern Sudan Georgian/Abkhaz conflict region Fiji</p>
Target groups and wider beneficiaries	<p>West Africa Through our main implementing partners, the project will be of direct benefit to up to 15 community and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia, primarily working in border communities. The wider beneficiaries would include the constituencies and reach of these organisations.</p> <p>Georgian/Abkhaz conflict region The target groups are communities affected by the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict: Georgian IDPs and returnees to Gal/i, Abkhaz society. The estimated number of beneficiaries are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Georgia: inhabitants of at least 12 collective centres (c.1,200 individuals) and the larger communities they live in • Abkhazia: individuals (civil society

	<p>activists, youth, journalists, politicians) taking part in events, c. 300 including c. 250 villagers/farmers and 25 individuals from CSOs in Gal/i</p> <p>The IDP population from Abkhazia in Georgia as a whole is c. 200,000 and the population in Abkhazia and Gal/i is estimated at between 150,000 and 170,000.</p> <p>Fiji The indirect beneficiaries of this project will be the citizens of Fiji, an estimated 950,000 people, but the more direct beneficiaries will number in the region of 4-5,000 in term of direct participation in CCF-convened events. The exact number will appear in reports.</p> <p>Uganda/ Sudan The wider beneficiaries are estimated to be around 10,000, those reached through the project's sensitisation activity.</p>
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2. List of Acronyms

AGENDA	Actions for Genuine Democratic Change
ARLPI	Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CCF	Citizen's Constitutional Forum
CENCAD	West Africa Centre for Capacity Development
CHP	Centre for Humanitarian Programmes
CR	Conciliation Resources
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DDP	District Dialogue Platforms
GoG	Government of Georgia
GTF	Governance and Transparency Fund
IDP	internally displaced persons
INGO	international non-governmental organisation
ISNC	Institute for the Study of Nationalism and Conflict
JAW	joint analysis workshop
JPC	Justice and Peace Commission
LDI	Liberia Democratic Institute
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
LSG	local self government
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
	Ministry for Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied
MRA	Territories, Accommodation and Refugees

NGO	non-governmental organisation
NRM	National Resistance Movement
PCP	Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding
PER	Public Emergency Regulations
PRDP	Peace Recovery and Development Plan for northern Uganda
SoOT	Goergian State Strategy on Occupied Territories
UJCC	United Joint Christian Council
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

3. Executive Summary (max. 2 pages)

a. West Africa

CR's partners in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone have been mobilising and building capacities of community based organisations (CBOs) to engage on various governance and decentralisation processes and policies in the respective countries. In Sierra Leone district dialogue platforms have been formed in Pujehun, Kailahun and Kambia districts to engage with government officials and demand accountability. In Liberia, partners have concentrated on building capacities of CBOs to assess the governance situation in their districts and, with findings, engage to demand accountability from government officials. Rural radio was used as a means to prompt government officials to respond to public scrutiny. As a result of the engagement processes with CBOs and citizen groups, district officials have become more responsive to demands for information. To meet the demand for accountability, district chairpersons have requested that district staff be trained to improve their skills. In the next programme phase partners will be supported to improve policy dialogue skills. Another focus will be undertaking more national policy engagements and working with the media to increase the impact of their work on governance and decentralisation issues. The protracted Presidential election in Guinea in 2010 ultimately created an environment more conducive to civil society efforts to promote good governance. In Liberia national and district elections scheduled for October 2011 have generated tensions but also opportunities for civic actors to promote policy debate on issues such as decentralisation. Partners are conscious of the risk of violence in the lead up to the election.

b. Georgian/Abkhaz conflict region

Our key Georgian partner, *Synergy*, developed its role during the year, fostering interaction between local decision-makers and grassroots communities in the run-up to May 2010 **local elections**. The network is regarded as a valuable resource for internally displaced persons (IDPs) as well as local communities - solving over 30 concrete cases affecting some 500 families in collective centres and issuing weekly press releases and appeals. Synergy built good relations with the authorities to convey the lessons of this engagement and advocated for more equitable approaches to a large-scale IDP **eviction process** in Tbilisi, which affected some 1,620 families. **Tensions between Moscow and Sukhum/i** dominated public debate around issues of corruption and governance in Abkhazia. At the same time, further developments around the **Georgian State Strategy on Occupied Territories** (SoOT) stirred heavily politicised debate in the Abkhaz public domain and generated suspicion against international engagement and civil society. A documentary by a Georgian filmmaker shown on Abkhaz TV in June set in motion **public accusations of local civil society** being 'anti-patriotic' and 'corrupted by the West'. This left local partners vulnerable and delayed some programme work, but also brought to the fore valuable insights into internal politics and deep-rooted fears within Abkhaz society, generating

extensive debate. Abkhaz partners deepened their relations with local government officials and broader civil society, publishing five research papers on aspects of governance and corruption and facilitating discussions on ways to address this. Youth campaigns were also carried out in three Abkhaz regions, leading to improved awareness, policy and/or practice in regard to waste management and drug abuse. Overall the programme has effectively built local actors capacities that feed into wider society and has prompted a gradual shift in how governance issues are debated and managed. Although changes in the political environment have caused delays and disruptions, the programme moves toward fulfilling its overall purpose and leaving sustainable impact.

c. Uganda/Sudan

Elections in Uganda and South Sudan (including an independence referendum and resultant challenges) dominated political debate, complicating partners' engagement with policy makers on issues not seen of direct relation. Despite this, with growing success, project partners in Uganda trained and deployed volunteer monitors and paralegal dispute mediators – of 197 complaints (31% related to land) they resolved around half, working with communities to refer other more challenging cases, such as rape, to the relevant authorities. Partners have developed relationships with both government and communities and are influencing policy on recovery and reconstruction. The project is helping to publicise an increasingly politicised and fragmented process of decentralisation. Partners have convinced local authority leaders to challenge reported deficiencies in the implementation of the centrally managed Peace Recovery and Development Plan for northern Uganda (PRDP), with the authorities taking action on reports of malpractice from grassroots monitors. Monitoring government responsibilities provides some models that can be adapted for the volatile situation in Acholiland. The Gulu District's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) has acknowledged the value of such monitoring, as well as the role played by partner-trained community mediators in the resolution of land disputes. Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI) trained 240 land-mediation committee members (42% women), who in turn trained a further 1,200 (23% women) on land mediation and basic land laws, and the processes of land mediation. Out of 55 land cases reported to ARLPI, 43 were successfully mediated, while 7 were still pending. Also related to the PRDP, the project has supported a studying showing how the needs of communities – who were not involved in its planning stage – are now being excluded, especially those of women and youth. Civil society is becoming increasingly interested in holding government to account – as reflected in grassroots community meetings as well as among national NGOs. The political climate, which often leads to civil society engagement being depicted as oppositional, will continue to remain a challenge and requires concerted attention from local civil society and international donor actors.

d. Fiji

After the 2009 abrogation of the constitution and delaying elections for five years, the 2010 to 2011 reporting period was one of strategic programme adjustment: in essence a change from promoting good governance and public participation within a parliamentary democracy, to working to promote a return to constitutional democracy, while developing good governance and public participation at a grassroots and community level. This change in programme direction has shown a level of success, with the emergence of a national track II dialogue process and a recent higher level UN sponsored dialogue bringing increased engagement between civil society organisations (CSOs) and the government, along with evidence of changes in good governance knowledge and practice within the areas where the Constitutional Citizen's Forum (CCF) education team operate. The reporting period saw CR's core partner CCF reach full organisational capacity after a two-year expansion process. This enabled CCF to increase its overall impact and output, with a 40% increase in education workshops and similar increase in media and research activities. Other significant activities include: a public lecture on equality and non-discrimination, participation and support for a national track II dialogue process, and a workshop with CSOs on peace media with a leading peace journalism expert, Jake Lynch. CR established a new partnership with the Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding (PCP), focusing on activities to influence change within the Fiji government - the Government Dialogue Training and Security Force training activities. Ultimately, while working within an unstable political environment, with unpredictable change factors, under strict emergency regulations (censorship and assembly restrictions), CR's partner's ability to achieve the Fiji programme's overall purpose is restricted. A change in political environment conducive to achieving the overall purpose in the future is possible, but progress towards the overall purpose is now more limited. Nonetheless, the endeavours of partners help to create foundations upon which change can be built over the long-term.

4. Programme Management

a. West Africa

CR appointed a new West Africa Programme Director who took up the post in September 2010, and with the support of CR staff and partners assumed responsibility for the project. In January 2011, the Programme Assistant, based in Freetown, resigned from her post. With the appointment of the Programme Director and a reapportioning of the roles/workload of the Senior Finance Officer and Office Assistant it was decided not to recruit a replacement at that time but to give the Programme Director more time to recruit some one with more project coordination skills that would support partners with field based monitoring and capacity building at field level.

b. Georgia/Abkhazia

No change since last report.

c. Fiji

Due to an expanding programme workload, a part-time position of Programme Associate was created in July 2010. This position was responsible for day-to-day oversight of the Fiji programme. During the reporting period, the part-time position was based in Fiji.

d. Uganda/Sudan

No change since last report.

5. Working with implementing partners

a. West Africa

CR continues to work with three partners: the Liberia Democratic Institute (LDI) and Actions for Genuine Democratic Change (AGENDA) both based in Liberia, and the West Africa Centre for Capacity Development working in Sierra Leone and Guinea. LDI and AGENDA are complimenting efforts by using different approaches to work in the same districts with CBOs: AGENDA works with the CBOs through a mentoring and coaching approach to policy dialogue, LDI builds their capacity on participatory approaches for research and dialogue engagements at community and district level.

Staff members from LDI and CENCAD took part in separate regional conflict analysis and advocacy workshops organised by CR in Freetown in February 2011 as part of an EU-funded programme. Focusing on the identification of issues, strategic allies and the means to engage with policy makers contributed to capacity development for GTF implementation.

CENCAD's capacity has improved to enable it to implement project activities in Sierra Leone and Guinea. LDI and AGENDA continued to implement project activities in Liberia to complement CENCAD's effort and capacity in the region. CENCAD's capacity to deliver on the project was one of the risks identified.

b. Georgian/Abkhaz conflict region

The institutional change concerning the Georgian partner organisation Institute for the Study of Nationalism and Conflict (ISNC) that was undertaken in year 2 has proved effective. With the new finance assistant working on a part-time basis, funds directed to sub-grantees are being monitored more efficiently.

Two IDP youth organisations ('Refugee Women's Union' in Tsqaltubo and 'Saunje' in Zugdidi) joined the IDP network *Synergy* in year 2 and have proven to be valuable assets and are now visible and well-respected actors in their respective regions.

In the course of year 3 the network incorporated the Tbilisi-based IDP organisation 'Help Yourself' as an additional member. The director of 'Help Yourself' has since been particularly active and valuable in supporting the work of the IDP advocacy group.

In year 3 *Synergy* successfully fundraised for a small grant from the East-West Institute, which provides matching funding for GTF-related activities in year 4.

c. Fiji

During the reporting period, CR commenced a new partnership with a relatively new NGO, the Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding (PCP). PCP commenced operation in 2007. CR supports PCP's growing work with Fiji's security forces (police, military and prison services) along with providing core training and support in organisational capacity building (e.g. project management and financial management).

PCP provides important facilitation and peacebuilding support to a number of peacebuilding initiatives in Fiji. CR's organisational support will enable PCP to gradually extend its role thus facilitating expanded support to local initiatives. The security forces training project, directly supported by CR, provides conflict mitigation training in areas such as conflict analysis, human rights and gender analysis to Fiji's security forces.

d. Uganda/Sudan

JPC Gulu took over responsibility for project implementation from JPC Ganai. AR Year 2 indicated that this would be happening because JPC Gulu, a member of JPC Ganai that covers the geographical area most relevant to the project (districts of Gulu, Kitgum, Pader and Amuru), would be better placed to play a direct role. This has worked well.

AR Year 2 also noted that the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) would continue to play a strategic role in Year 3 but not an implementation role. After UJCC completed the training of community, NGOs and district leaders on PRDP, the activities were taken over by ARLPI, a member of UJCC. This was considered necessary to reduce on transactional costs.

Our new partners in implementing the project are:

The Justice and Peace Commission (JPC) of Gulu Archdiocese: active in northern Uganda since 2001, particularly in inter-community peacebuilding, and in establishing a network of paralegals/ community based volunteers in the former IDP camps and return villages, and promoting community based mediation/ dispute resolution across the LRA affected areas of northern Uganda. It is instrumental in our community engagement initiatives.

Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI): established in 1998, ARLPI is an interfaith initiative for peace in northern Uganda that has developed a network of community-based peace-committees in the IDP camps, and has a record of inter-community mediation, contacts with LRA and a strong advocacy voice at the local, national and international levels. Since 2000, CR has collaborated with ARLPI on a number of projects such as: strengthening ARLPI's organisational capacity, international and national advocacy promoting civilian protection and a non-violent resolution to the LRA conflict, work with communities to resolve emerging disputes, research, cross-border peacebuilding work and developing a strategic plan.

Totto Chan, a child trauma centre based in Juba, South Sudan: Totto Chan has a track record of collaboration with UNICEF, and has supported former child abductees returning from the LRA in Southern Sudan to civilian life. Jim Long John, the Director of the Totto Chan has been instrumental in the last four years in coordinating cross-border peacebuilding between Uganda and Southern Sudan, and among communities within Sudan. He works with men and women, religious and traditional leaders and elders in cross-border peacebuilding work. As lead contact, Jim has long-standing links with our key Ugandan partners.

6. Risk Assessment

a. West Africa

Risk	Potential impact	Probability	Mitigation measures
WA-Risk1 (External) A return to armed conflict or hostilities within (for instance in relation to election-related violence) and/or between the countries that impedes ability to cooperate across borders and address security and development issues through governance processes.	Medium to high: Impact on accessibility to target groups	Low	<p>In the event of hostilities or election-related violence partners would be supported to work to the degree to which the context permits: endeavours would focus more on advocacy for non-violent solutions directed at national and international actors.</p> <p>At a local level in the case of election-related political violence, CR and partners are working with youth actors (such as bike riders) who are often used to perpetrate violent acts in order to assist them to commit to non-violent approaches.</p>
WA-Risk2 (External) Governments are unwilling to address security and development concerns and unable to engage with civil society to develop ways to address them.	High for all countries	Guinea: Low Sierra	Planned activities were rescheduled at a later date after the election campaign and bye-election tensions were over in the target districts. CR and Partners continue

Risk	Potential impact	Probability	Mitigation measures
		Leone: Low Liberia: Medium	to work with civil society through dialogue meetings with the district authorities in the target countries for participation in decision-making.
WA-Risk3 (External) Project is unable to maintain regular access to rural communities in targeted areas: access to rural communities is hampered by very poor road infrastructure, limited telecommunications and the rainy season, which renders many roads unusable.	Low	Medium	Partners implement most of the activities designed for remote rural areas within the dry season, and continue to work in areas of the country where it is possible to do so at all times.
WA-Risk4 (Internal) Partners are unable to build necessary capacities of CBOs to enable them to interact effectively with local authorities.	High	Low	Partners have designed support programmes to develop the capacity of CBOs and to accompany them in their first interactions with the local authorities.
WA-Risk5 (Internal) CENCAD is unable to establish itself as a respected sub-regional NGO and CR is unable to provide necessary support for the partners' (CENCAD, LDI and AGENDA) professional and organisational development.	High	Medium	CR continues to support the development of the capacities of CENCAD, LDI and AGENDA (for instance in financial management and reporting, project design, participating in field monitoring missions to the communities). Furthermore, CR organised joint meetings of partners to encourage learning between them and

Risk	Potential impact	Probability	Mitigation measures
			identifying synergies in approaches, tools and targets.

b. Georgian/Abkhaz conflict context

Risk	Potential impact	Probability	Mitigation measures
G/A - Risk 1 (External) Reoccurring political unrest in Georgia poses a danger of full-scale political crisis. Further developments in this direction where government and opposition are not able to engage in dialogue and compromise to find a solution to the crisis, can potentially lead to violence and a diminution of the democratic space.	Low to medium impact on the ability of CR, ISNC and the IDP advocacy group to maintain constructive links with decision makers and political party representatives.	Low	Support to the IDP network continues in order to promote their engagement in democratic processes at local and national levels. In the event of political disruption some activities would have to be postponed until the situation calms down again to enable lobbying for changes in policies and strategic policy meetings with various political parties. However, grassroots advocacy work would continue.
G/A - Risk 2 (External) Local branches of Georgian Interior Ministry put pressure on local communities, including network members, local authorities and beneficiaries	Medium impact on beneficiaries, civil servants and IDP network members that would limit their space to manoeuvre and willingness to engage in programme activities	Medium	Network members would need increased support on the ground and intensified engagement with authorities as well as grassroots communities. <i>Synergy</i> members already invest significant time and energy to make their programme work as transparent as possible and demonstrate that it is not harmful to interests of the Interior Ministry. This

Risk	Potential impact	Probability	Mitigation measures
	create problems in relation to travel into Abkhazia and/or international travel by residents of Abkhazia		support for programme work. In the event of travel restrictions being imposed CR would continue to engage with partners using various telecommunications (email, phone, skype) to sustain relations and continue to provide support.

c. Fiji

Risk	Potential impact	Probability	Contingency Plan
Fiji Risk 1 - Constitutional, Citizenship and Human Rights Education			
(External) Increased personal security risk due to changed political climate. This affects all staff and has lead to the temporary closure of the office and a low level of intimidation and significantly increased bureaucracy (applying for permits to hold workshops) could lead to an inability to reach communities and conduct awareness-raising.	High: If prolonged this will have adverse effects on the outputs of these activities.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built-in room in the community education programme timeline to enable a 'catch-up' phase. Divert resources to other forms of public education e.g. radio.
(External) Broad censorship is imposed on the media - banning CCF's radio education and advocacy.	Medium: Will stop/halt the ability to undertake certain activities.	High (has taken place)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divert resources to other activities with same/similar outputs – such as local theatre, education workshops.
(External) Adverse weather conditions may affect ability to access more remote communities	Medium: Delays to programme	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redeploy resources to get plan back on track
Fiji Risk 2 - Facilitating a Pathway to Sustainable Democracy			
(External) The current interim/military government does not show any willingness to begin political dialogue leading to a new political settlement	Medium: If the regime decides not to adhere to its timetable for	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Input into legislative and constitutional debates though more difficult will continue

Risk	Potential impact	Probability	Contingency Plan
	reform the status quo will likely persist throughout the GTF implementation period with only limited space to influence a government legislating by decree.		<p>through seminars and individual contacts with figures in the regime, but the implementation of advocacy put on hold.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divert resources to advocate for a quick return to democracy and other legal issues.
Fiji Risk 3 - Countering racism and promoting multiculturalism			
Broad censorship is imposed on the media - banning CCF's radio and newspaper education and advocacy	Medium: Will restrict partners in undertaking certain activities	High (has taken place)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divert resources to other activities with same/similar outputs- such as local theatre, education workshops.
Increased security risk due to changed political climate leading to an inability to reach communities.	High: If prolonged, this will have adverse effects on this activity	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built-in room in the Education programme timeline to enable a 'catch-up' phase.

d. Uganda/Sudan

Risk	Potential impact	Probability	Mitigation measures
UG - Risk 1 (External) Renewed instability following the January 2011 referendum in South Sudan in which over 98% voted for independence from Khartoum.	High: Increased instability in South Sudan increases the prospects for LRA activity in South Sudan and return to northern Uganda. Increased political instability in South	Medium	<p>Carry out regular risk analysis and design means to protect the space for engagement of partners across the border; potentially</p> <p>Divert resources to support advocacy aimed at promoting return from the LRA ranks</p>

Risk	Potential impact	Probability	Mitigation measures
	Sudan will adversely effect the achievement of the programme objectives, especially the cross border strand of our work.		
UG - Risk 2 (External) Election-related violence in the run up to and in the aftermath of the 2011 election in which political challenge to the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government increased. Post-elections violence, targeting of the opposition and free speech threatens smooth programme implementation.	High: If political intimidation happens to our partners, or LRA returns to northern Uganda, it will have adverse effects on achieving the stated objective.	High (political intimidation) Medium (return of LRA to Uganda)	Regular briefing about our work to the Government and different embassies. Work with partners that have solid support at the grassroots level Carry out regular risk analysis and adapt initiatives in line with changes in the context Many local actors in Uganda will assume a strategy of self-censorship to avoid confrontation with the regime
UG - Risk 3 (External) Following the parliamentary and local council elections (in both Uganda and South Sudan), majority of the members of parliament and counsellors at the decentralised levels (districts and states in Uganda and South Sudan respectively) are new. They do not know their roles as elected representatives and do not know the programme and activities of most partners.	High: The programme had to go back to the introductory stages-explaining to elected leaders the objectives and expected outputs from the programme. This will slow down the pace of programme	High	Renew work with civil servants (in the district and central government). Slow the pace of programme implementation

Risk	Potential impact	Probability	Mitigation measures
	implementation.		
UG - Risk 4 (External) Neglect of northern Uganda because of its perceived opposition to the NRM government	Low: Neglect has been a common approach over many years and therefore its continuation will not have a substantively new impact, rather it will increase the scepticism amongst local population towards participation in policy making processes	High	Work with partners that have extensive networks and are respected in their communities. Increase skills and lobbying skills of the civil society organisations in northern Uganda.
UG - Risk 5 (External) Increased donor funding to northern Uganda that has no component of capacity building of local organisations results in existing partners getting over-stretched (and pulled in different programme directions)	High: If it happens, it will delay achievement of impact.	High	Regular briefing of the donor agencies in Kampala in one-to-one meetings, and through the donor technical groups. Support the partners to develop their action plans that are realistic and in line with their mandate

7. M & E Arrangements

The Consultant originally appointed to accompany CR through the mid-term review (MTR) stepped down from the role in September 2010 on appointment to a full time post. CR then tendered for a consultant to undertake the MTR and following consultation with KPMG, to ensure there were no conflicts of interest with the leading candidate, appointed Adam Platt to undertake the MTR. The MTR was undertaken in a timely and professional manner. CR proposes to appoint Adam Platt to undertake the lead M&E role as set out in the inception report and the approved budget. This would involve Adam Platt accompanying the project through to its conclusion.

8. Logframe Changes

Up to 30th March 2011, there were not changes to the log frame. However, from April 2011, the programme is proposing changes to the logframe for our work in Uganda/Sudan (see attached proposed changes).

9. Emerging impact on governance and transparency

Please see appendix 9.

10. Cross-cutting issues

- Targeting excluded groups

a. West Africa

In West Africa, our partners focused on the border districts, which are often excluded from most development and economic processes of the target countries. People from **rural communities** in those border areas are, in turn, excluded from policymaking and engagement. Through the project, some of these excluded groups participated in dialogue processes with the district authorities and partners engaged in dialogue with the central authorities reflecting insights gained from working with excluded groups.

Three examples of excluded groups engaging more effectively through the project are:

A recent dynamic has been an increasing number of **women** elected as chiefs in the Kambia district in Sierra Leone. These female chiefs though elected did not know much of their roles in order to perform effectively and contribute to local governance. Through the project, women chiefs have joined the district dialogue platform to engage in policy dialogue at the district level. The project provided training to develop their capacities and confidence to demand accountability in their chieftdom.

Despite having organised themselves into bike rider associations and providing much needed transport to the rural communities, **ex-combatants** are still seen as the “deadly people” and left out of local decision-making. Through the project in Kambia district of Sierra Leone, the bike riders are represented in the district dialogue committee and are part of on-going consultations on development processes in the district.

In Guinea **civil society** activities have generally been centred in Conakry and other bigger towns. In the border districts there are few CBOs working as individual entities. The project has enabled the mobilisation of CBOs to form a dialogue platform, which engages with the authorities of Forecariah Prefecture for participation in decision-making at that level. In recent times the district authorities have started to invite the civil society platform to their meetings.

b. Georgia/Abkhazia

Displaced communities from Abkhazia residing in Georgia proper have directly benefitted from the project. These include over 500 IDPs living in collective centres, mainly in three Georgian regions, as well as their respective communities as a whole; 13 IDP organisations that coordinate efforts in a network; and state institutions at local and regional levels in at least three communities, with a concomitant knock-on effect in the operation of these institutions more broadly. Toward the end of year 3, support and advocacy work among the displaced communities was extended to IDPs resettled to a new settlement in the village of Potskho-Etseri in Western Georgia in the course of forced evictions from Tbilisi and elsewhere in the country. This ‘new’ community is currently considered one of the most vulnerable in Georgia.

c. Fiji

The Citizens’ Constitutional Forum’s (CCF) grassroots education programme is continuing to target rural indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian communities. These groups have a limited capacity to participate in and influence national or local government. CCF’s education programme educates these marginalised groups in good governance principles, human rights and the importance of active citizenship.

With the political environment increasingly restrictive, a deterioration in government institutions, increased corruption, a deteriorating economy, and diminished access to justice there is likely to be an increase in social exclusion.

d. Uganda/Sudan

The overall programme is designed to support a transformation in the conditions for excluded groups – in particular IDPs, those returning from the bush who were engaged with the LRA, women and young people. Studies have been undertaken on post conflict recovery implementation highlighting the exclusion of vulnerable groups. In particular the component of the monitoring recovery programme is engaging with **young people**. In all about 72 young people have been trained in monitoring recovery programmes.

11. Progress towards sustainability

- Partner's capacity to sustain impact

a. West Africa

Partners are now more visible in policy dialogues at district levels. Each of the three partner organisations during this period have enhanced their efforts to work with communities as well as engaging with district authorities. The partners have also improved their media engagements through radio programmes at community and district level. Various district council staff were invited to take part in radio phone-in programmes to answer questions from the public about accountability on local governance and development initiatives in districts. This has made the district authorities more alert and ready to provide information to prove that they are working. With this experience, partners need to do more to be visible at national level. Partners are becoming more credible interlocutors through this work and are developing relations with the communities as well as with the authorities that will stand them in good stead in the long term. They will remain subject to a fragile financial and funding context but their abilities to raise funds through grant applications will be stronger.

b. Georgian/Abkhaz conflict region

IDP network members individually continued to gain reputation and trust within their respective communities among their beneficiaries as well as local authority representatives. Through the very practical and joined-up experience of the network, members increased their capacity and skills in effectively advocating IDP issues and solving individual cases, which also gave a boost to their self-confidence and had a knock-on effect on *Synergy's* reputation as a whole as a valuable and reliable resource. This is evidenced by *Synergy's* success in accruing small-scale funding in its own right in the past year from the East-West Institute

and network members being invited as Georgian civil society representatives at an online conference with Hilary Clinton. In addition, *Synergy* members currently make up five out of eight organisations represented at a national Georgian civil society steering committee dealing with IDP issues.

Groups that were set up during the first years of the GTF project, representing around 500 IDPs, are now engaging with local authorities directly to solve problems with the support of the network. For example, IDPs in the collective centre in Tsqaltubo solved electricity problems with the help of LSG without facilitation from *Synergy*.

In years 1 and 2, CBOs and youth groups in three more Abkhaz regions (Gagra, Tkvarcheli/Tkuarchal, Ochamchire/a) received training in advocacy and campaigning; and working contacts were established through meetings and round table events with local authorities/municipalities. ***This dialogue with civil servants continues and focuses on constructive discussion to solve concrete problems in the respective regions.*** In Sukhum/i, youths involved in GTF-funded campaigning approached the ministry for sport and culture and jointly conducted a large-scale campaign sponsored by a local mobile phone company, to raise awareness about road safety problems in Abkhazia.

Despite existing pressures on Abkhaz civil society, CR partner CHP managed to re-establish and consolidate its standing as a respected expert resource on public participation practice among various circles within Abkhaz society. CHP has been approached by various actors (parliament, other civil society initiatives, interest groups, journalists, political opposition) for consultation in regard to legal disputes and matters of public interest. Its role in this regard has potential to sustainably impact on common practice and public opinion in regard to ways of solving conflict in the society.

Our Abkhaz partner CHP has long been effective in engaging with government and support from CR enables it to sustain this role. ISNC is comprised of individuals who have long played effective policy advocacy roles but over the past year they have begun to exercise this influence from a stronger institutional base. In the case of *Synergy*, which had much less experience of engaging with local authorities at the outset of the project, members are becoming more articulate in formulating and advocating policy positions and are depending less and less on CR to facilitate relationships with the local authorities. In all cases these are skills that will serve communities beyond the duration of the specific project.

c. Fiji

The CCF reached and sustained its target size of 20 full-time employees, with five programme teams: education, legal, research, communications and youth. Within Fiji civil society, CCF is viewed as being at the forefront of influencing change in the political environment, as such CCF has limited problems in attracting additional donor funding, increasing their financial sustainability. CCF

has also shown a strong ability to adapt to the difficult political environment, adjusting its media and education methodologies to suit this environment. For example the organisation changed its media approach during the reporting period, increasingly using peace-media strategies.

In developing a new partnership with the PCP, CR aims to build capacity and expertise within an organisation providing long-term local facilitation capacity and expertise to local civil society and peacebuilding initiatives. Individual members of PCP have extensive experience and coming together to work in one organisation is designed to deepen and broaden their reach.

The last year has seen a significant shift in inter-NGO relationships in Fiji, with CCF at the forefront of improving communications and increasing collaboration between key NGOs in Fiji. This move towards collaboration and common strategies will improve the overall reach and sustainability of the programme. The lack of improvement in the broader political environment in Fiji (e.g. increasing government isolation and militarisation etc.), along with continued political instability within the country does put the sustainability of programme's outputs at risk. The Public Emergency Regulations (PER) in particular limits CCF's ability to affect positive change and use media to educate in good governance, human rights and citizenship, nonetheless, the programme of work is helping to shape the foundation that can be built upon as and when there is movement in the political context.

d. Uganda/Sudan

Because of the ***changing political situation and the uncertainty that comes with it***, (elections in Uganda, elections and referendum in South Sudan, the LRA extending its areas of operations in DRC, CAR and South Sudan), the project undertakes continuous analysis and revalidation of the analysis. CR has continued to work with partners to undertake political analysis and to support partners and communities to help them develop skill sets (for example in land mediation and monitoring recovery programmes) that can be applied flexibly. We have continued to witness improvements in administrative, programming, reporting (both financial and narrative reporting) capacities. We have also seen improvement in the skills set, especially in alternatives to violence and mediation of community disputes - especially in regard to land - among the partners and the individuals that they work with. These are resources that will remain in the communities and partner organisations when GTF comes to and end.

- Impact of external events

a. West Africa

Cross border security remains an issue of concern throughout the Mano River region. **Election-related violence** in Cote d'Ivoire resulted in flows of refugees into remote regions of Guinea and Liberia. The protracted period of instability highlighted how

elections can spark significant problems. Elections in Liberia in October 2011 and Sierra Leone August 2012 will expose underlying tensions in these countries. There have been several instances of political violence around chieftaincy and parliamentary by-elections in Pujehun and Kono Districts, in Sierra Leone, which raises concern for the upcoming campaigns for the main elections in 2012. The electoral experience in Guinea showed that political violence can be contained and the political process can cope with threats of violence despite fragile democratic practice. These are important signs of instability that the project will continue to monitor carefully.

Economic hardships aggravated by the ***soaring prices of basic goods and fuel*** poses socio-economic, political and security related challenges in all countries in the region and there have been instances of violence and demonstrations by traders.

b. Georgian/Abkhaz conflict region

Most external events that have impacted on the Caucasus programme work, have done so negatively in the short term, but potentially helped bring about positive change in the longer term and affecting wider circles of society:

The Georgian State SoOT and the 'modalities' by-law that followed stirred up increased scepticism within Abkhaz society in regard to Western engagement in general and dialogue processes with Georgians in particular. This was reflected in the screening of a Georgian documentary film on Abkhaz TV in June, which led to vehement criticism of Abkhaz NGOs as being 'corrupted by Western money' and working 'against Abkhaz interests'. However, these initially heated outbursts provoked an ultimately constructive debate about the need for a strategy in regard to relations with international actors and issues of engagement and dialogue processes.

Evident frictions in the relations between Abkhazia and Russia, e.g. in relation to property rights issues or expenditure of Russian funds, have resulted in surprisingly open and serious debate about concrete problems to do with transparency and served to create awareness within society more broadly that civic control mechanisms are needed.

In Georgia forced resettlement created a greater sense of vulnerability and instability among IDP communities. At the same time this period demonstrated a high level of competence and ability to react promptly on the part of local and international NGOs, who worked in tandem and effectively impacted state policies and practice. *Synergy's* role boosted its reputation among international and local actors, including authorities and beneficiaries.

c. Fiji

The continued bad relations between the Fiji government and the international community (in particular Australia and New Zealand) continued to add tension to the internal political climate, leading to continued security and at times organisational survival concerns, with the Fiji government at times suggesting that national NGOs (and CR's partners) are proxies for foreign governments.

d. Uganda/Sudan

Decentralisation in northern Uganda saw the increase of the number of local districts from five at the start of the GTF project period to 10 in the last reporting year. It means that partners' capacities were stretched; they were only able to continue networking with each other and keep up with these changes in governing structures, rather than consolidate a CSO-coalition on the PRDP issue.

- Influencing public opinion

a. West Africa

AGENDA organised town hall meetings to discuss the Freedom of Information Bill while it was undergoing review in the House of Representatives. From January 2011 AGENDA initiated a campaign to lobby for greater access to information for border communities concerning their development.

LDI conducted radio discussions and phone-in programmes in target border districts to generate public debate on a wide range of issues focusing on local government responsiveness, transparency and accountability to citizens in rural border communities. About 30 state actors participated in two target districts. The phone-in programmes have enabled district development committees, district administrators, and other district actors to provide needed information and account to people in the communities and districts. Bringing government officials to respond to public questions on air has offered an opportunity for citizens to demand accountability on specific issues. An additional focus was the Decentralisation Bill, which has been awaiting confirmation by the President, in order to encourage the promulgation of the Bill and to influence its implementation.

In undertaking work with the media it is clear that there is much scope for improvement before the media is seen as a partner in promoting good governance. Project partners frequently pay for airtime for project activities. However, some radio stations have been influenced by involvement in the project and have started their own programmes on accountability based on learning derived from project activities. While it is premature to see how this is influencing public opinion it is further developing the means to do so.

b. Georgia/Abkhazia

In April 2010, *Synergy* started publishing a monthly four-page supplement in one of Georgia's most popular nationwide newspapers, *Rezonansi*. This gives network members and affiliated journalists the opportunity to inform the broader Georgian audience about IDP issues and the work of the network in particular. At the same time, local TV channels in the target regions have covered *Synergy* activities and raised concrete problems in the collective centres that CR partners work with. Both are steps to draw lasting attention to IDP issues among the mainstream Georgian society and demonstrate more widely that IDPs are citizens with a voice to be respected.

In a specific instance *Synergy* utilised the opportunity to reach out to the public through the media to issue public appeals which complimented the submission of recommendations regarding resettlement process to the Ministry for Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees (MRA) and to the international community. The appeals were also printed in local papers. These efforts, utilising public awareness and local and international NGOs led the MRA to establish a commission, which drew up standard operating procedures regarding resettlement processes, which improved conditions on the ground and facilitated more effective monitoring.

The newly established independent film studio in Sukhum/i, Asarkia, covered four public campaigns that CHP carried out with local partners and youth in Abkhazia. Some of the campaigning was also captured in several issues of a regional newsletter 'People and times'. All these items are available on an Abkhaz civil society website, which makes information about GTF-related activities accessible to a broader Abkhaz audience. (http://www.asarkia.info/asarkia/index7.php?ELEMENT_ID=52; <http://www.asarkia.info/times/>)

c. Fiji

With the PER in place throughout the reporting period, ability to influence public opinion was greatly reduced. CCF did use alternative media methods to attempt to influence public opinion, including the use of paid advertisements with minimal success.

- Capacity of relevant national institutions

a. West Africa

The local Governance Commission in Liberia has been asked to provide additional information on financial implications as well as the administrative scope for implementing the Decentralisation Policy. The Commission may not have the capacity to produce and justify the implementation of the Policy and this can affect the approval process by the president.

b. Georgia/Abkhazia

Project activities within the Caucasus programme have helped to further build healthy working relationships between citizens, municipalities and LSG institutions, especially with new personnel in offices in Georgia proper (as of May 2010) and Abkhazia (as of February 2011). However, power of decision making within these institutions is rather limited, as most authority, including that concerning budgetary questions, lies with the central authorities. De facto state institutions in general are rather vulnerable and fragile: they suffer from Soviet legacies and post-war symptoms such as nepotism and corruption. In particular the Gal/i region faces weak mechanisms of governance. Due to lack of substantive international engagement around these issues, progress in rethinking takes place only gradually. Structures in these institutions are weak; and decision-making processes often get stuck at various levels. As a result of project work, lower level public servants have sometimes 'utilised' civil society representatives to raise issues higher up in the structures in order to improve policy and practice that affect people's lives. CHP has intensified co-operation with the public chamber and has been consulted by parliamentary committees and municipalities, which has served to inform the prioritisation and decision-making processes of these institutions. For instance, sanitary issues raised in GTF-supported campaigns/meetings were taken up by the city council and turned into better practice.

c. Fiji

There has been considerable change within Fiji government institutions, including the downsizing of the civil service by a third across most government departments, along with the continual militarisation of governmental institutions (currently 64% of senior government positions are filled by military or ex-military personnel). The overall effect of these changes on the sustained impact of the project is currently unclear (i.e. affect on institutional skills and capacity). But they are likely to impact on individual government department's ability to consult the public and receive inputs into public policy. The current political instability, lack of a democratic government, political parties and political leaders, along with a lack good governance practices, has an adverse impact on the programme's ability to promote immediate change, but the process of engaging with the institutions as well as with the broader public through civic education becomes central to long-term prospects for change.

d. Uganda/Sudan

Our strategy was to collaborate with elected representatives, civil servants, government officials, other NGOs and the media. In most events, we brief the government on our intentions and objective for holding specific activities. Where feasible, we invite political leaders – both from the government and opposition, civil servants, other CSOs, and sometimes the media. The challenge, however, is that an estimated 70% of the elected leaders lost their seats in the recent elections. The programme has to return to the drawing board to connect with the incoming political leadership at the community, district and national level and inform them of the steps taken previously. An additional issue is the culture of governance in which there is limited effective communication: individual government officers at the district level frequently try to shield the problems they face from those at the national level and vice versa out of fear of the ramifications for personal position. As a result the gravity of many issues deepens because they are not addressed in a timely fashion. Effective CSO work can highlight such issues but also assist in addressing them.

- Indicate if the success of your programme is dependent on a sequence of reforms or actions by others that are beyond your immediate control

a. West Africa

Both LDI and AGENDA in Liberia have been campaigning for the passing of the Decentralisation Policy by the Cabinet. In addition to educating rural communities on what the Policy entails, they continue to engage the District Development Committees and the Commissioner's offices in Lofa and Cape Mount Counties to learn about the Policy for effective implementation. The two partner organisations joined the coalition of civil society organisations to campaign for the fast passing of the Decentralisation Policy by the Cabinet. ***The Decentralisation Policy of Liberia has now been submitted to the president by the Governance Commission.*** The proposed Policy seeks to decentralise administrative, economic and political authority to the sub-political divisions of the country to enable local people to elect their officials such as county superintendents, district commissioners amongst others. In view of this, the House has conducted first hearings on a bill submitted to the Legislature to amend Article 54c of the Constitution, which gave power to the President to appoint local officials. ***Partner organisations have been involved in making presentations during the hearing for the amendment proceedings.*** Government officials at national and sub-national levels are continually becoming receptive to new democratic ideas and reforms. If this Policy is passed it will provide greater scope for the success of the project.

b. Georgian/Abkhaz conflict region

Effective reforms in the decentralisation processes in the region would help strengthen LSG institutions and make mechanisms of public participation at local levels more meaningful to the citizens in the target communities. ***A new 'law' on LSG in Abkhazia is expected toward the end of 2011.*** Civil society is trying to feed into the process of amending the law. If successful, this can in the future facilitate components of GTF-related work.

Some of the personnel changes after 'elections' in Abkhazia in December 2009 have proved positive in that new staff in some institutions are more responsive to issues raised by civil society: e.g. the de facto interior ministry; member of parliament responsible for the Gal/i region.

Early 'presidential elections' are scheduled to take place in Abkhazia in August, following the death of Abkhaz 'president' in May 2011. In the short term, the highly politicised pre-election period will make it difficult for CR and partners to raise sensitive issues as planned, in particular in regard to the Gal/i region. At the same time, most partners will be involved in the 'voters' league for fair elections', diminishing their focus on GTF-related project work. Outcomes of the election will in the medium and longer term determine how the *de facto* government will relate to civil society activism and Western engagement, which will have implications for our work.

While the EU has declared a strategy of "engagement without recognition" in regard to Abkhazia to date there has been little substantive content to what engagement will mean. This will impact on the standing and perception of 'Western' engagement and local civil society activity.

c. Fiji

The actions of the Fiji Government will have a strong effect on the outcomes of the programme, if the government takes definite steps towards returning to constitutional democracy and the removal of the public emergency regulations (which the programme partners are promoting) the programme will have greater impact. This has been reflected in the change of strategy in 2009, with a change of programme emphasis and resources towards trying to influence the direction the government takes - e.g. dialogue, peacebuilding media initiatives, government dialogue training.

d. Uganda/Sudan

Northern Uganda's recovery from conflict is tenuous: decentralisation is increasingly politicised and leading to fragmentation of land and its ethnically-determined ownership. Central control of recovery programmes that are weakly implemented and monitored, with

minimal local participation are part of the problem rather than solution to creating harmony and reducing conflicts. The CR GTF project seeks to address this situation.

12. Innovation

In a number of instances, reflected below, partners have adapted ideas or implemented initiatives with a new slant, in order to impact upon their respective contexts. A particular lesson is that the impact is often less to do with the specific innovation but more to do with the persistence and patience of the process through which partners undertake their work:

a. West Africa

Mentoring and internships: AGENDA organised mentoring and coaching for CBOs on different approaches to policy, governance and accountability work, bringing eight staff from two CBOs from Lofa and Grand Cape Mount to Monrovia on internships with organisations including AGENDA itself, NARDA and LDI. The internships were organised in phases under different themes (research methods, advocacy, policy dialoguing, gender analysis and project planning and development) to enable them to return to their communities to practice what they learnt, and feed into the on-going project implementation on governance and accountability in the target districts.

Local Governance Monitoring: LDI developed a Local Governance Monitoring tool with target CBOs to enable monitoring to occur in regions where it had previously not been undertaken. This was done through extensive participatory consultations and selection respondents in the target districts. Two local CBO partners from Lofa and Grand Cape Mount Counties were trained as part of developing the Local Governance Monitoring Tool.

Through *participatory surveys* conducted with community groups, where emerging issues were shared with them in their communities, CENCAD was able to mobilise varied community groups including market women, teachers, farmers associations, CBOs, female chiefs, bike riders, and district councillors into district dialogue platforms. The DDP facilitates the creation of space for the participation of communities in governance and decision-making through their representation on the platforms. It helps communities to identify and communicate their peace, security and development needs to decision makers and similarly to communicate and inform policy decision, plans and implementation strategies of the decision makers to the communities.

b. Georgian/Abkhaz conflict region

Targeted newspaper inserts: Synergy member *Postfactum* has for a number of years published a monthly magazine that focused on IDP issues and was largely distributed among displaced communities in Georgia proper. A new approach was taken to not only target IDPs themselves, but to get messages and information about displacement into mainstream media and thereby reach broader circles of Georgian society. With this objective, *Postfactum* started a co-operation with the nation-wide daily newspaper *Rezonansi*, which started publishing a 4-page *Synergy* supplement on a monthly basis in October 2010 (all issues (in Georgian) are available at CR's website: <http://www.c-r.org/our-work/caucasus/idp-network.php>);

Co-financing: In order to make co-operation between *Synergy*, local communities and LSG structures more effective and tangible, ISNC and *Synergy* set up co-financing schemes to solve concrete problems in collective centres: where formerly local authorities were not able to fully cover repair and other costs from their budget, respective costs are now shared between LSG, collections from local communities and GTF project funds. This has proved an effective method to achieve concrete results and at the same time promote co-operation and shared responsibilities and ownership.

Students as agents of change: CHP and CR have faced considerable difficulties trying to engage with youth groups in the Gal/i region, who respond to the lack of opportunities by moving away to Zugdidi, Tbilisi, or parts of Russia to study and/or earn. It has therefore proved difficult to get together a consistent and sustainable group of people who are ready and able to commit themselves to long-term engagement in civic activities. In year 3 CHP has therefore taken a new approach and started working with students from Gal/i who study at the university in Sukhum/i, a potentially unique resource in Abkhazia in that it moves more or less comfortably in both Abkhaz and Georgian communities within Abkhazia. Their engagement in the project has empowered them to realise the specific role they can play as 'mediators' for more effective bridge-building and youth activism within the Gal/i.

Focus groups: Within Abkhaz society issues of governance and transparency have in the past not been debated widely and openly. Furthermore, there has been lack of acceptance for civil society to be playing any role in this regard. However, through thorough analysis based on focus groups with various layers of the society, and constant engagement with the authorities, acknowledgement of NGO involvement in this regard has increased. This was formally confirmed in May 2010, when CHP held a round table on governance issues, which focused on dialogue between civil society and decision-makers, and was followed up by TV debates and newspaper reports on the topic.

c. Fiji

Advocacy through fashion shows: Out of the restrictive political environment in Fiji, (media and assembly restrictions), the CCF have developed innovative methodologies and strategies to get their advocacy messages to the wider public. A fashion show on the theme of human rights, enabling a sympathetic media to display CCF's message in the minimally censored fashion section of their magazines and newspapers, is a prime example.

Training: Government dialogue training and the security force training programmes have never been tried in Fiji, and represents a significant step change in trying to change the political context from within, through creating change within the military and government.

- Employing new technology

b. Georgia/Abkhazia

CHP have commissioned the independent film production NGO *Asarkia* to produce short films about public campaigns that were carried out within the framework of the project. Some have been screened on Abkhaz TV. Within the first quarter of year 4, *Asarkia* will make all films available online (at www.asarkia.info), which becomes increasingly important given the sharp increase in the numbers of internet users in Abkhazia more recently. CHP colleagues have also strategically made use of their *Facebook* pages and blogs to promote fresh material and thinking generated through GTF-related work. The latter has become increasingly influential in informing public opinion in Abkhazia, in particular among the younger generation.

c. Fiji

CCF has also increasingly used communications mediums such as social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook to get its messages across.

13. Learning from GTF

a. West Africa

CSOs have an opportunity to act as a link between government structures and communities by understanding processes guiding official led governance processes and at the same time engaging with marginalised communities (especially in rural areas). In the

MRU while CSOs themselves are often weak they are nevertheless able to engage with communities that feel excluded and have very limited confidence in the authorities and structures of governance. Through the work of our partners we are observing that patience is required to build relations of confidence in the communities – it is necessary to maintain connections and return to share findings, not just have an extractive relationship with communities. Confidence is often derived from the commitment to create relations through sustained engagement.

After conducting surveys in target districts, partner organisations used findings and emerging issues to enable community groups to engage from an informed perspective with district chairs, councillors, paramount chiefs, district development committees, district administrators, and members of parliament. While issues relating to decentralisation and the exercise of local governance were paramount other issues were identified, such as security threats, and partners were able to support communities to bring these to the attention of relevant actors in the security agencies and relevant ministries in each country.

Surveys conducted in target districts by partners were also able to identify tensions and drivers of conflict. The surveys were used as a starting point to promote community discussions with various actors and generate consensus on points of action. Subsequently various consultation and dialogue meetings were organised providing space dialogue between community representatives and state actors. Allied to the abovementioned radio phone-in discussions this process enabled state actors to respond to the issues raised by the people. Sustained engagement by partners and appropriate follow up is necessary to that the airing of concerns does not become a way to mitigate tense issues without ways to actually act upon the issues.

b. Georgia/Abkhazia

The experience of *Synergy* has shown that effective networking among civil society actors is essential in order to be taken seriously and get messages across to decision-makers. In the Georgian context, adequate attention and support to local civil society from the international community (namely INGOs) has eventually led to positive change of government policies and practice, e.g. in regard to resettlement/eviction processes.

For Abkhaz civil society it is essential to have/gain access to reliable and relevant information on governance processes and structures. In their specific contexts this requires the production of data and analysis themselves, due to lack of research in this area (the lack of accurate information is an important factor across the board in the regions of our operation since we observe that often policies are developed without adequate reference to the real needs and aspirations of communities). Opportunities to learn

from and compare experience from other contexts, is particularly valuable since it enables civil society actors to introduce concrete and constructive recommendations to their own context from different perspectives.

Cultivating constructive relationships at different levels is a crucial skill and approach: the experience of Synergy and ISNC in developing co-financing mechanisms for projects with local government or gaining the confidence of low level officials as a way to collaboratively develop better approaches are examples. Healthy relationships with individual key figures in 'state structures' are often necessary to move things forward, (e.g. MPs dealing with specific issues such as human rights or minorities can be allies) but a challenge is to address the perception that CSOs/NGOs are considered oppositional: it is necessary to show that criticism can be constructive and this requires a strategic sense of how to present it and when to advocate for change.

In the Abkhaz context where sensitive issues are in danger of being politicised once they are in the public domain, it has proven effective to employ a mix of strategies, engaging various actors in a step by step process to secure gradual buy-in and support for any given approach/idea for public debate and lobbying: e.g. in order to raise awareness and improve policies CHP first carried out small 'opinion polls', focus groups and research into people's attitudes toward road safety and waste management. It turned out that people were willing to accept fines and pay additional fees in order to improve the situation. In informal work meetings, authorities were confronted with the findings; and possible solutions were discussed. CHP together with youth groups then conducted more visible events, such as conferences, actions and advocacy campaigns in order to engage wider circles of society and secure general support for changes of respective policies and practice.

Applying the methods and a step-by-step approach described above to slowly sensitise various layers of society to the importance of participation in domains of everyday life, has resulted in issues of governance entering the public domain in Abkhazia. To date it has been possible to facilitate constructive debate about governance issues that have a direct impact on peoples' daily lives, but recognising the need to be modest in the particular context and not launch into campaigns on issues that are more politicised. Issues raised during advocacy campaigns have been picked up by the media and decision-makers, and have led to change in policies and practice, as well as people's attitudes, e.g. in regard to waste management.

Through involvement in the project, IDPs in target regions of Georgia have found a voice and confidence that they have a role to play as citizens to identify, voice and solve their problems in regard to integration processes. Respective local authorities have recognised that involving local communities in decision-making processes that concern them, is eventually beneficial for all parties involved.

The programme has directly contributed to improving rights of Georgian IDPs in regard to (forced) resettlement processes and housing conditions. Programme activities have led to strengthened work relationships between civil society and local authorities, and to better practice at local levels in taking concerns of affected grassroots communities into account. For example, IDPs in collective centres in the target regions were involved in decision-making processes regarding their resettlement, which created shared responsibilities between official structures and beneficiaries

c. Fiji

A receptive government: A key element in gaining improved national governance and transparency is the linking of people to government institutions; increasing the wider public's ability to influence government, while demanding efficient service delivery. Civil society has more opportunity to influence if receptive government institutions exist. CSO's need to take a dual approach, working with both the public and the government to enable sustained engagement between both: different strategies are appropriate at different times to gain the confidence of government actors but also to encourage change as a result of public pressure, however distant a prospect this might sometimes appear.

It is also important to understand that military / authoritarian states are not necessarily monolithic in nature, and engagement opportunities (dialogue processes, individual engagement) can be found to work with 'moderate / progressive' elements. What remains to be seen in Fiji's case is whether such openings can be built into opportunities to influence change in government policy. The importance of continuous engagement, in constantly probing for opportunities to engage and build relationships with individuals in the government, does appear to widen the domain of debate with these individuals and gradually percolate through the system.

d. Uganda/Sudan

In the Uganda/Sudan context working with all major stakeholders (civil servants, elected representatives, CSOs and communities) requires a transparent approach (explaining to all stakeholders the work we do and what we are able to do). This ensures that expectations are not allowed to become a burden and minimises the risks of being misunderstood by the government.

Working with conflicts that transcend international borders is a challenge. While the LRA-GoU conflict started in northern Uganda, it subsequently moved to South Sudan, DRC and the CAR. Despite South Sudan being directly affected by the conflict, and the inter connections between Sudan and Uganda being well articulated, the policy prescriptions and approaches employed to address the conflict, both by national governments and by bilateral and multilateral actors, remain country specific, hence the issues do not

receive the attention that they deserve in both countries. This requires tailored advocacy and awareness raising strategies to be developed. Our cross border work involves engaging the governments, traders associations, civil society, customs officials, and tax authorities in both Uganda and South Sudan. CR and partners are the only organisations making the connections of the issues of governance and conflict on the Uganda–Sudan border (this is why we are asking for the changes to the log frame to make this strand of work more explicit).

In light of the narrowing political space in Uganda, partners have resorted to involvement and participation of representatives of all key political actors in most of their activities. In particular, most activities involve participation of government representatives (at the national and district level), elected representatives, civil servants and other CSOs operating in the region. This approach reduces the possibility of activities being misunderstood by the Government - that hitherto believed that civil society is working with opposition politicians to discredit the government.

At the same time a local approach is clearly vital: empowering grassroots people, community based volunteers and paralegals who are agents of change in their own communities enables them to resolve community disputes as and when they arise with the perspective of an insider but the detachment of an outsider trained in mediation.

- Analysis and Engagement with Non-State Actors

Initiatives undertaken across the regions of engagement highlight that the creation of spaces for the voices of people to influence policymaking and implementation, to track governance and demand accountability at local and national levels is critical for social change. Empowering people with information, skills and the creation of such space enables them to own, or at least gradually feel some ownership, of processes and builds their confidence to engage with authorities and dialogue for change.

CR's initiatives are founded on a continuous process of analysis undertaken separately and jointly by CR staff and with our partners. The very engagement in initiatives, which are designed on the basis of analysis and then tested and reassessed through implementation, is part of the process of understanding root causes of conflict and fragility and identifying means to address this. The contexts of the four regions in which the programme is being implemented vary considerably and make it difficult to create standard approaches to issues of governance and participation: there are many process experiences and approaches that are common but specific contexts demand specific approaches. For instance, in regard to engaging with non-state actors, which is relevant to work undertaken in the Caucasus and the LRA-affected regions of East Central Africa, these actors have very different

characters: in Abkhazia the de facto authorities are a non-state (non-recognised) state like actor, which assume many of the functions and characteristics of states. This requires a particular mode of engagement, while at the same time being cautious about how this is presented and perceived by actors in situ and by Georgia. The LRA presents a very different case. It is a fluid and in some senses chaotic non-state actor that does not seek to establish ordered means of governance but rather operates through the use of mobile violence and terror. This has significant implications for the way in which civic actors choose to improve governance in the region, especially in a context in which military responses to the LRA predominate. Violence spreads across states and challenges the sovereignty of states. Due to other pressing challenges in the politics of each of the states, the LRA violence is not prioritised and therefore does not get the requisite attention from the governments and civilian protection is lacking. At the same time CR's programme is also operating in Fiji, a state in which a military actor has seized power and exercises governance but is not regarded as legitimate. This poses the dilemmas for civic actors seeking to promote participation as a means to hold authority to account but also for international actors as to whether engagement or isolation is a more effective strategy to promote change and the reestablishment of constitutional order. In West Africa the challenge is not to engage with non-state actors, but to engage with weak institutions of state.

What is clear is that there are no standard approaches. Analysis and engagement constantly need to be recalibrated and approaches to engaging with such actors on all issues, be it governance, human rights standards or humanitarian access, are evolving and have to be negotiated at every step. As a consequence, civil society actors in such fragile and/or non-recognised states have a more relevant and vital role to play in order to improve democratic processes because governments are often the transmitters of non-democratic practice. Yet, the space for civil society (often a far from homogenous or consolidated entity) to effectively promote democratic development and conflict transformation is by definition very limited. Therefore, great sensitivity is required on the part of international actors, as well as flexibility to adapt to and appreciate nuanced changes on the ground.