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EVALUATION REPORT

UDF-GAM-10-353 – Strengthening Advocacy Capacity of Civil Society in The Gambia

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Disclaimer
The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluators. They do not represent those of UNDEF or of any of the institutions referred to in the report.

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(i) Background

The project ran from 1 January 2012 – 31 December 2013, with a total grant of USD 225,000. It was designed by Concern Universal (CU), and was implemented in all regions (Upper River Region, Central River Region, North Bank Region, West Coast Region, and Lower River Region) of The Gambia. It was implemented in partnership with The Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (TANGO), which at the same time was the project's main beneficiary. The target population consisted of 121 NGOs (including the staff of some 60 NGOs), and their over 2,000 members (including community based organizations, religious and cultural bodies, youth organizations, trade unions and farmer associations), of which most are connected through TANGO. As defined in the Project Document, the overall objective was to strengthen the advocacy capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Gambia. Accordingly, Concern Universal's strategic approach aimed for three key outcomes:

- An increased level of understanding established between government and civil society of the impact of joint dialogue;
- An increased capacity of TANGO and its members allowing effective engagement on issues of concern to civil society;
- An Increased opportunity for civil society engagement with government by 2013.

(ii) Assessment of the project

The approach to facilitate the initiation of advocacy with government to address pressing needs of the Gambian civil society was adequate to establish an understanding of the impact of dialogue on policy development and implementation among both government and NGOs. The design of the project's communication and capacity building components was appropriate to support future efforts of TANGO and its members to reach out and engage with religious, community, business and political party leaders. The outputs of the project's research and consultation activities provided access to human rights information and a strategy development tool NGOs needed to conduct advocacy in an informed and secure manner. While engagement forums provided opportunity for a joint NGO/government review of policy implementation essential for regional and local governance, public events served to improve accountability by raising awareness about the progress TANGO members achieved with improving public services. It is therefore our view that the **overall design of the project was relevant** to strengthen the advocacy capacity of CSOs in The Gambia.

Other than a shift of the media campaign's focus from TV to radio, and a reallocation of limited resources to expand capacity building to district tribunal court members, the project's implementation was carried out according to plan. While causing variations to some quantitative indicators, this had no negative effects, as the project in most cases achieved or exceeded the targeted outputs. More precisely, frequency of dissemination of relevant information to its members under TANGO's newly established advocacy unit has tripled, and beneficiaries praise the usefulness of the advocacy strategy framework tool. In addition, advocacy skills as well as district tribunal trainees confirm that the knowledge they acquired serve their professional needs. In addition, the project's communication and forum activity

effectively informed the public discussion about discrepancies between legal provisions and current policies. Thus clarifying the benefits of government-NGO partnership, the grantee contributed to a strengthened advocacy capacity of civil society, which is why evaluators conclude that **the project was effective**.

Claiming 45% of the budget, CU's and TANGO's joint administrative expenditure for human resources and project management reached a relatively high budget share. Investing at the same time a budget share of 48% in capacity building and the media campaign, however, achieved an impressive output, among them: the training of 238 NGO members and 238 tribunal court members; the engagement of 11 governors, 87 councillors, 209 Technical Advisory Committee members, and 143 CSO members in open forums; a wide dissemination of publications (among them: the baseline study and the advocacy strategy framework), and the transmission of about 89 radio broadcasts. **While not particularly efficient, evaluators are still satisfied** given the project's achievements.

The grantee's initially proposed outcome indicators lead to a favourable assessment. They, however, also show that impact in respect of the project's ultimate objective, i.e. government policies that support an enabling environment for civil society operations, was rather limited. Evaluators on the basis of independently gathered first-hand evidence, also confirmed that **the project generated some positive impact**. Focusing on their objectives, achievements, and providing examples of engagement between NGO and local/regional government authorities, beneficiaries demonstrated to evaluators their advocacy and lobbying skills.

Despite positive results there are some **shortcomings, which risk limiting the sustainability** of the project's outcome. While TANGO's advocacy unit is still operational, the organisation still lacks input and resource capacity to provide systematic evidence of the extent to which the efforts of its members and its network in general are contributing to the development of the country. Network members also praised TANGO's more tangible, instrumental and lasting services, but it is also a fact that some of the project's principal advocacy tools are no longer pro-actively disseminated. Finally, evaluators established that the pending implementation of provisions governing the financial arrangements of decentralization limit the effects of joint dialogue between civil society and government. Those local government administrations, which currently operate interventions initiated by advocacy, mostly do so by financing through local tax income. As these resources are scarce, they are usually insufficient to meet the local needs NGOs have identified.

(iii) Conclusions

- The fact that CU's approach included the conduct of baseline research and the use of target indicators is highly commendable, as it confirmed the project's ***relevance*** and facilitated the evaluators' favourable ***assessment of the potential impact*** of the grantee's contribution to strengthened advocacy capacity.

- Given the extent to which the networking capacity of TANGO has been increased, CSOs' advocacy skills and district tribunal members' legal knowledge have improved, and public awareness and discussion have been informed by existing discrepancies between legal provisions and current policies, there is little doubt that the project ***effectively clarified the value and mutual gains of engagement in advocacy.*** It

is, however, also a fact that the effects of joint dialogue have not yet reached beyond the level of regional governance.

- Continued, targeted advocacy will be needed to shape central government policies that support a fully enabling environment for civil society operations. To overcome the currently ***limited effect and sustainability of the project's outcome*** we recommend the grantee (CU) to encourage TANGO (1) to focus on continued support for its members by raising NGOs' capacity to conduct sectoral monitoring of progress of local development efforts; and (2) to directly lobby different sectors of central administration on behalf of its members, in order to advocate for the transfer of implementation responsibilities, and the release of corresponding central government funding. The latter should be justified by an informed analysis of local development needs as provided by its members.

(iv) Recommendations

- In accordance with our ***observations on relevance and impact, we recommend to the grantee*** (CU) to encourage TANGO to exploit progress monitoring among its members more systematically, as this will enable TANGO to improve its current assessment in qualitative terms and thus enhance the organizations' strategic objectives. This may also help TANGO to attract new donors and implementing partners for an expansion of the original project.

- ***Based on our comments on sustainability, we recommend to the grantee*** (CU) to encourage TANGO to extend the project. Future proposals to donors could focus on (a) training for NGOs in progress monitoring by sector, and deepened analysis of local achievement and remaining needs; and (b) introducing capacity to TANGO so it can convert such input by its members into synthesized analytical information for use in future advocacy campaigns. A project extension could also include support schemes enhancing administrative and judicial absorption capacity:

- Both for civil servants and CSO staff, a series of seminars on administrative standards and good practices to ensure comparable levels of budgetary planning and management capacity up to the regional level nationwide. Following training, such initiative could also include short-term rotational work placements for the exchange of relevant experience. Cooperation both with the Ministries of Local Government and Finance could promote cohesion through the dissemination of equal knowledge and skills, which the country's central budgetary authority reportedly requires prior to the release of the levels of regional funding previously requested.

- The establishment of an advisory facility for district tribunal members. The objective of such a functional unit could be to offer a "legal help line" which district tribunal members could contact by phone. The facility would also monitor the decisions taken through this mode of alternative dispute resolution, in order to obtain reliable data about the extent of compliance of district tribunal judgements with the laws of the country.

II. INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

i. The project and evaluation objectives

This report contains the evaluation of the project entitled "Strengthening Advocacy Capacity of Civil Society in The Gambia". The project ran from 1 January 2012 – 31 December 2013, with a total grant of USD 225,000 (out of which UNDEF retained USD 22,500 for monitoring and evaluation).

The project was designed by Concern Universal (The Gambia and Senegal), and was implemented in all five regions (Upper River Region, Central River Region, North Bank Region, West Coast Region, and Lower River Region) of the country. It was implemented in partnership with The Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (TANGO), which at the same time was the project's main beneficiary. As defined in the Project Document, the overall objective was to strengthen the advocacy capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Gambia. The target population consisted of 121 NGOs (including the staff of some 60 NGOs), and their over 2,000 members (including community based organizations, religious and cultural bodies, youth organizations, trade unions and farmer associations), of which most are connected through TANGO.

UNDEF and Transtec have agreed on a framework governing the evaluation process, set out in the Operational Manual. According to the manual, the objective of the evaluation is to "undertake in-depth analysis of UNDEF-funded projects to gain a better understanding of what constitutes a successful project which will in turn help UNDEF devise future project strategies. Evaluations also assist stakeholders to determine whether projects have been implemented in accordance with the project document and whether anticipated project outputs have been achieved".

(ii) Evaluation methodology

The evaluation was conducted by an international expert, working with a national expert, under the terms of the framework agreement between UNDEF and Transtec. In accordance with the agreed process, the evaluation aimed to answer questions across the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria of *relevance*, *effectiveness*, *efficiency*, *impact*, and *sustainability*, as well as the additional criterion of *UNDEF value added* (see Annex 1).

The evaluation took place from March – April 2014 with the fieldwork in The Gambia conducted from 10 - 14 March 2014. The evaluators reviewed available project documentation and contextual / background materials on issues surrounding the advocacy capacity of civil society organizations in the Gambia (Annex 2). Initial and final interviews were held at the offices of Concern Universal (CU) and TANGO in Banjul, involving CU's Programme Officer, as well as TANGO's Director and Advocacy Manager. Other meetings focused on interviews and exchanges with the project's staff (TANGO programme officers), a resource person, and with beneficiary representatives of the target groups from various regions of The Gambia, to confirm the project beneficiaries' experiences and to obtain updates of their most recent activities. These interviews and group meetings were carried out in the country's capital Banjul and in Brikama (West Coast Region), involving 7

implementation partner and project staff, 3 resource persons, and 21 project beneficiaries.

(iii) Development context

NGOs often primarily focus on raising awareness and on the provision of local services, but to avoid that their activities remain at the level of stopgaps they usually also undertake advocacy. Holding government structures and other relevant stakeholders accountable, NGOs participate in and influence public policy formulation and implementation to seek long-term, sustainable solutions to the issues their own support activity otherwise will only be able to address over a limited period of time.

The Gambia's NGO community has been growing since the late 1970s, with both international and national NGOs contributing to the country's social and economic development, including efforts to provide enhanced educational facilities, reduce poverty and protect human rights. According to information issued for the year 2012 by the Ministry for Local Government 114 national and international organizations have registered their operations with the country's NGO Affairs Agency (a body under the authority of the Ministry of Interior).

Strategically pursuing their mission in synergy with the Gambian government's objectives and targets, most of these national and international NGOs aspire to function as driving forces for development, while working with communities, organizations, institutions or individuals throughout the six regions of the country. Accordingly, their objective is to improve the welfare of Gambians, while particularly targeting the vulnerable (children, youth, women, persons with disabilities) under-served, marginalized, and poor parts of the country's population. Interventions are often crosscutting in nature, but predominantly focus on agricultural support, healthcare, education infrastructure, youth employment generation through entrepreneurship, capacity building for livelihoods and life skills development, human rights campaigning, and gender advocacy for the elimination of harmful traditional practices.[1]

The reality, however, is that most of these interventions complement and fill operational or resource gaps due to the fact that government performance (at various levels) does not correspond to stated development objectives, in particular as far as interventions for above mentioned target groups are concerned. At the same time International NGOs like CU noticed that Gambian NGOs displayed low levels of engagement in advocacy. Lacking the capacity to capture development and policy-making processes, most of them were unable to engage with stakeholders to jointly discuss and develop approaches aiming to solve pressing development issues in the long-term.[2]

Given TANGO in 1983 was founded by NGOs for NGOs operating in The Gambia, CU applied to UNDEF to support the NGO association to play its role as an umbrella organization, i.e. to disseminate the knowledge and develop the skills its members require to engage in an evidence-based advocacy dialogue that has the potential to successfully inform and shape policy development and implementation for the benefit of their target population.

[1] Source: TANGO, Study on the Impact and Perception of NGOs (baseline study), section 2.2
[2] Source: TANGO, Terms of Reference for the Development of an Advocacy Strategy for NGOs

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

(i) Project strategy and approach

The overall objective of the "Strengthening Advocacy Capacity of Civil Society in The Gambia" project, as defined in the Project Document (UDF-GAM-10-353) in December 2011, was to strengthen the advocacy capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) in The Gambia. More specifically, the project aimed to raise awareness of TANGO, its members and government of the potential benefits of joint policy engagement; equip TANGO and its members with skills, knowledge and resources for their engagement with government on issues of concern to civil society; and provide a platform for on-going and meaningful government-civil society dialogue.

At the project's outset, the country's CSOs found it particularly difficult to engage in the promotion of democracy. Based on past incidents, human rights activists often feared intimidation, arrest, detention and prosecution by government authorities. In 2010 the government, under the impression of increasing CSO numbers, intended to tighten the NGO bill. According to the grantee's initial analysis, TANGO's attempt to react and mobilize NGOs for a review of the draft bill and the formulation of suggestions was ineffective, due to the absence of strong advocacy and lobbying skills. Therefore, CU saw the need to facilitate the development of skills and resources to advocate on behalf of CSOs and to defend the work of their activists vis-à-vis the government.

Accordingly, CU's strategic approach aimed for three key outcomes:

- An increased level of understanding established between government and civil society of the impact of joint dialogue;
- An increased capacity of TANGO and its members allowing effective engagement on issues of concern to civil society;
- An Increased opportunity for civil society engagement with government by 2013.

CU is an international development organisation committed to the vision of a world where justice, dignity and respect prevail for all. Supporting practical actions that enable people to improve their lives and shape their own futures, the organisation's mission is to work in partnership to challenge poverty and inequality. The UNDEF funded project in The Gambia related to both objectives of CU's 2009-2014 strategic framework, which aim (1) to enable community-led development and (2) to both inspire and influence. Under the framework' first objective, the project's actions fell under those of CU's initiatives improving (a) skills through capacity building and (b) the respect for rights through empowerment of women, children and other vulnerable groups. Furthermore, the project action's were particularly pursuing the strategic framework's second objective, which foresees CU's engagement in initiatives that promote (c) changes of policies and practices to help overcome barriers to development and open up new opportunities, and (d) more and better investment in holistic community-led development approaches engaging individuals to build a fairer world together, through development education and activism.[3]

[3] Source: http://www.concern-universal.org/how_we_work

(ii) Logical framework

The Project Document translates CU's programmatic approach into a structured plan of project activities and intended outcomes. The framework below aims to capture the project logic systematically, and attempts to link activities and intended outcomes with medium-term impacts and long-term development objectives, which evaluators observed dispersed over different sections of the grantee's Project Document, result framework and reporting.

Project Activities & Interventions	Intended outcomes	Medium Term Impacts	Long Term Development Objectives
1. Building an environment for communication between government and civil society Needs assessment among government and civil society representatives, and work-shop to consider findings Study visit to Ghana, to consider CSO – government support mechanisms Media campaign, to illustrate gains for governance	Understanding of the impact of joint dialogue is established between government and civil society: - TANGO members initiate joint dialogues with government	Government and CSOs have become aware of the value of engagement and mutual gains	A more open culture of communications for civil society A government more engaged in policy dialogue
2. Building advocacy capacity, strategy and skills Set up TANGO advocacy unit Develop advocacy policy for TANGO and advocacy strategy for TANGO members TANGO agrees partnerships with two human rights bodies Advocacy and lobbying skills training for CSOs in all regions TANGO becomes a member of West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOF)	The capacity of TANGO and its members allows effective engagement on issues of concern to civil society: - Members access legal advice on human rights - Members initiate advocacy meetings and engagements with government at the national and local level - Members enjoy a high degree of autonomy in their operations - Members use other West Africa civil society advocacy strategies in advocacy approaches	A strengthened TANGO undertaking advocacy activities CSOs action advised by human rights advisers CSOs across The Gambia display increased advocacy and lobbying skills	Government policies support an enabling environment for civil society operations
3. Strengthen civil society and capture learning and support Engagement forums between the CSOs and policymakers on different policy issues 'NGO weeks' to enable CSOs showcase best practices, network and enhance public understanding	Opportunity for civil society engage-ment with government by 2013: - TANGO members initiate policy review and development processes engaging government - Members receive increased technical and financial support from government towards the achievement of national development objectives	CSOs consider themselves to be active in policy dialogue	TANGO represents civil society in sub-regional forums

IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

(i) Relevance

Baseline Situation

The project assigned an external consultant to conduct a needs assessment among civil society representatives and government stakeholders. Considering regional and gender-balanced representation from across The Gambia, it included the views of TANGO members, their beneficiaries and partners, as well as the perspective of government line ministries. The resulting study report was to benchmark their understanding and perceptions of TANGO's and NGOs' role in engaging government as well as other stakeholders through advocacy in a constructive dialogue on policies and improvements of people's livelihoods. Findings were based on (a) personal discussions with 34 of TANGO's 74 member NGOs, which were organised in the form of either bilateral meetings or focus groups to involve individual or several members of a NGO; and (b) meetings held at institutional level with key informants and other representatives of partners, beneficiaries and the government. These inputs confirmed most importantly that NGOs needed to (i) make stronger efforts to engage with government to sharpen their image as altruistic and sincere organizations aiming to influence public policy and legislation for the benefit of the country's people; (ii) better showcase their work and needs to improve the perception of NGOs' contribution to development in the public, among their partners, and end-beneficiaries; and (iii) coordinate and diversify so that their achievements complement each other. Another key issue to be addressed included the need to (iv) build the capacity of beneficiaries, to enable them to conduct field progress monitoring and diagnosis, a key ingredient to efficient needs assessment and reporting by NGOs, so they demonstrate accountability and can overcome increasing donor fatigue.[4]

Selected baseline findings

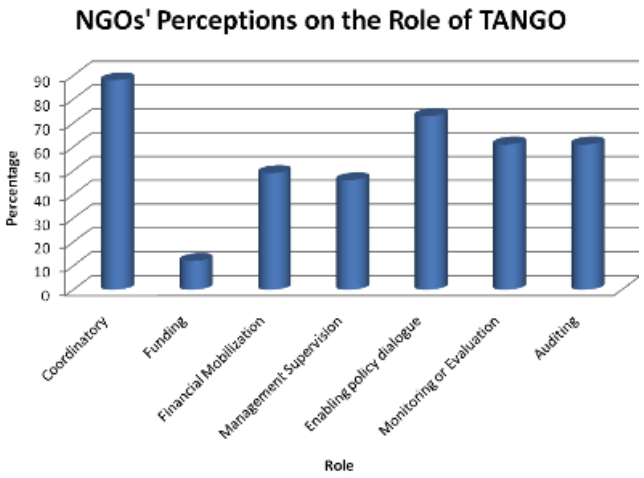
At the outset of the project the reputation of NGOs and the understanding of their role was shaped, among others, by:

- A negative public perception of NGOs due to the lack of information about their vision and mission;
- Poor awareness of the significant development work carried out by NGOs;
- Absence of coordination and consideration of the complementarity of the NGOs' efforts;
- Insufficient accountability of NGOs vis-à-vis their beneficiaries, donors and the government;
- A consensus among a number of stakeholders that the interventions of NGOs, however, have a considerable impact on the life of people across all regions of The Gambia.

The project response

The baseline study confirmed the implementing partners' role to improve the advocacy, communication and coordination capacities of the Gambian NGO community.

[4] Baseline study: On the Impact and Perception of Non-Governmental Organsations in National Development, chapter 8, Conclusions, p. 89f.



The NGOs' study input clearly mandated CU and TANGO to focus on advocacy capacity building

Therefore, the project's approach comprised of measures (1) building an environment for communication between the government of civil society, (2) building advocacy capacity, strategy and skills among NGOs, and (3) strengthening civil society and capture learning and support. The implementing partners furthermore chose to expand purpose and target group of training under the project's second component to district tribunal court members. Evaluators understood that these courts played an important role in providing the grass-roots level in remote areas with alternative justice services. Accordingly, evaluators found various examples of relevant project design, addressing the baseline aspects and involving a variety of relevant stakeholders:

1. Building an environment for communication between government and civil society

The purpose of the *sensitisation workshop* was to present the findings of the baseline survey to CSO and government stakeholders, in order jointly explore the role of constructive dialogue and its impact on policy-making. It was usefully combined with a critical review of The Gambia's 2002 Local Government Act. At that point of time the law, which established and regulated a decentralised local government system, had still not seen effective implementation. The objective was to launch a policy dialogue among NGO and government representatives, which would lead to the preparation of conclusions, and come up with some jointly formulated recommendations and intentions, to be disseminated by means of a press release. This was highly relevant, as - according to the law - the regional councils were to receive state funding and be responsible to technically and financially plan the development of their region, which is why NGOs would normally link their initiatives to the master plans of the councils concerned by their interventions.

The project's *media campaign* was designed to publicise and raise awareness of the project's objectives among the wider public. Involving experienced and knowledgeable government, private sector and NGO actors was meant to facilitate the communication of messages pertaining to key policy areas to the general public. The project holders opted for radio airtime as the preferred channel of communication, since it was established that it could achieve an outreach of up to 80% of the country's population. In comparison, accessibility of the initially planned TV transmissions to the wider population, to engage in interactions by placing phone calls and asking questions, with 25% was expected to be considerably lower.

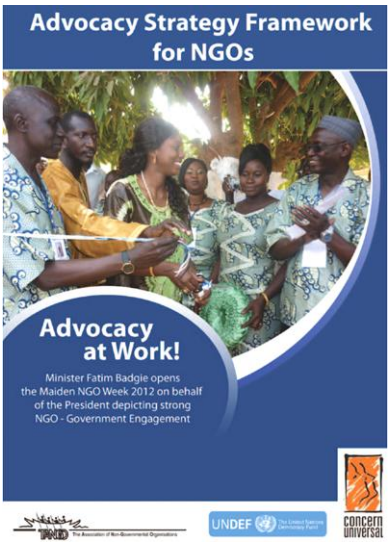
A *study visit* took TANGO, NGO representatives (identified by TANGO), and elected members of parliament (appointed by the National Assembly's Standing Committee for NGOs) to Ghana. Intended as a joint practical learning exercise, the participants were

expected to observe how civil society and lawmakers engage in policy dialogue, in order to conceive similar strategies for later implementation in the Gambia.

2. Building advocacy capacity, strategy and skills

By setting up a dedicated *advocacy unit run by a TANGO advocacy manager* the project aimed to offer its NGO members a facility providing access to the internet and a one-stop shop, where they can research resources, and find support and mentoring.

The objective of *developing an advocacy policy for TANGO and its members* was the establishment of a strategic framework usefully supporting the future efforts of the NGO community to reach out to and engage with religious, community, business and political party leaders, all of which play a fundamental role in influencing policy and national development. *MoUs with human rights bodies* were meant to provide NGOs activists can pursue their work in accordance with legally guaranteed human rights.



The project's advocacy framework, a strategic guide supporting Gambian NGOs' policy engagement efforts

Country-wide *advocacy and lobbying skills training* intended to facilitate the development of technical knowledge and methodological skills of mostly junior programme officers, so they support their NGOs members' senior staff to elaborate targeted strategies engaging government in specific policy issues. As indicated above, the grantee and TANGO added the members of district tribunal courts to the project's training target group to. While providing the grass-roots level in remote areas with important alternative justice services, many judges conducted their function without any guidance, and thus some of the decisions they took were not consistent with the country's law.

The project's *second study visit* to Nigeria was the preparation of TANGO's membership in the West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOF). Networking with WACSOF was expected to promote the sharing of ideas and strategies and the promotion of TANGO's advocacy campaign efforts in the long-term.

3. Strengthen civil society and capture learning and support

Engagement forums aimed to critically review the implementation of policies, which are essential for regional and local governance. These were therefore held in the form open meetings to promote dialogue between civil society and government, involving CSOs, regional governors, councillors and Technical Advisory Committees (TAC). The purpose of the project's *annual NGO weeks* finally was to

Advocacy Strategy Framework

"Actually, this document is a guide that outlines the process of organising an advocacy campaign. It is user friendly, as explanations are provided step-by-step, illustrated by colourful charts. Transferring knowledge visually, and not just by text, facilitates the communication of examples."
Madi Jobarth
TANGO's Advocacy Manager

enable NGOs to better communicate the services they provide for civil society, and how these contribute to the development of The Gambia.

(ii) Effectiveness

No significant changes other than those reported (for the media campaign and training activities, c.f. relevance) were made, neither to the plan of project activities nor its schedule. Evaluators accordingly noted variations at the level of the initially planned output indicators. Their assessment, however, is that the project in most cases achieved or excceded the targeted outputs.

1. Building an environment for communication between government and civil society

The Local Government Act was reviewed with all target groups during the sensitization workshop, advocacy skills training and the regional forums

The project's *sensitization workshop,* which was attended by 50 (planned: 100) NGO and government representatives, revealed that most participants were unaware of the devolution of powers foreseen by the Local Government Act. Introducing the procedures for transfering public functions from central to local government, the project effectively facilitated the initiation of a dialogue between civil society and government representatives. As foreseen, the law's main provisions were also communicated via a press release. This helped clarifiying to the wider public that, if decentralization became a reality, NGOs could make a difference by representing the views and needs of civil society, thus informing the implementation of policies at the local level.

Under the *media campaign*, weekly radio transmissions covered 56 (planned: 4 TV and 8 radio) panel discussions about the Local Government Act, the NGO bill, policies on population, gender, environment, VAT, as well as topics such as government-NGO partnership and the project's NGO week event. The panel discussions reportedly received 8 calls on average, during which the radio audience had opportunity to ask questions and obtain clarifications. Additional radio airtime comprised of 15 spots, widespread communication of 10 press releases, and 8 live programmes (planned: 20 spots), which informed the wider public living in six regions of The Gambia about the project's activities.

During the one-week (planned: three-day) *study visit* CSOs and members of parliament from Ghana shared their advocacy and engagement experience in Accra with 4 Gambian project beneficiaries (2 NGO and 2 National Assembly representatives) and 2 project staff members (planned: 6 beneficiaries and 2 staff). Among the insights, which participants upon their return to The Gambia reported about, were the importance of well researched baseline information for situational analysis, and of carefully chosen language and behavioral patterns for advocacy purposes. Although the 2 National Assembly members have reportedly informed The Gambia's parliament about the NGOs' successful role as key development partners of Ghana's government, they failed to present to evaluators evidence how they disseminated such information among their fellow members of parliament.

2. Building advocacy capacity, strategy and skills

Appointed as the project's *advocacy manager,* TANGO's former programme manager led the implementation of the project. The new advocacy unit's support function entailed, in particular, enhanced communication between TANGO and its members. In terms of frequency, the dissemination of relevant information has reportedly tripled - and service provision continues, which demonstrates that the advisory capacity for the development and implementation of the advocacy strategies of TANGO's members has effectively improved.

The advocacy strategy framework, which was developed by an external consultant in collaboration with 30 of TANGO's members, was praised by NGOs for being the network's first ever document providing NGO board members with strategic orientation, and supporting their organizational planning. While printed in 100 copies for dissemination among TANGO's members, a wider circle of the country's CSOs can download the document via the Internet[5], and obtain guidance how to play a critical role by contributing to policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. On the basis of 2 *partnership agreements with human rights bodies,* 50 NGO representatives were trained how to address fundamental rights issues to mitigate adverse effects on their work and on security. No human rights violations obstructing the efforts of the network's activists have been observed since.

Thirteen regional trainings were conducted for a total of 488 participants. While the *advocacy and lobbying skills training* for TANGO members was held as planned in all of The Gambia's 5 regions (involving 250 participants), District Tribunals were targeted by 9 training events, which were partly funded by UNDEF and additionally sponsored by the Canada Fund, in order to guide 238 tribunal members in alternative justice provision. Advocacy skills training participants from Lower River Region were inspired to conceive (with the project's technical assistance) the country's first ever request suggesting central government to transfer forestry management to the local level (submitted by the Basse area council, while three more areas are still considering). Beneficiaries of the District Tribunal appreciated the training's guidance, expressing confidence that their future rulings will be significantly more in compliance with the country's law.

CU's country director signs a MoU at the Chief Justice's office, which supported the training for members of the District Tribunals

3. Strengthen civil society and capture learning and support

Nine (planned: 6) *regional engagement forums* promoted open dialogue among 450 representatives of civil society and various levels of governance. Involving the participation of 143 CSO and 209 TAC members, as well as 11 regional governors and 87 councillors, they provided a platform enabling a critical analysis of the way regional and local governance currently implement public policy (see also the section on impact). The project's 2 *annual NGO weeks* held at the TANGO Fajara office in February 2012 and at Basse (Lower River Region) in May 2013, provided NGOs with a showcase demonstrating to both citizens and the government their contribution to the transformation of lives and livelihoods.

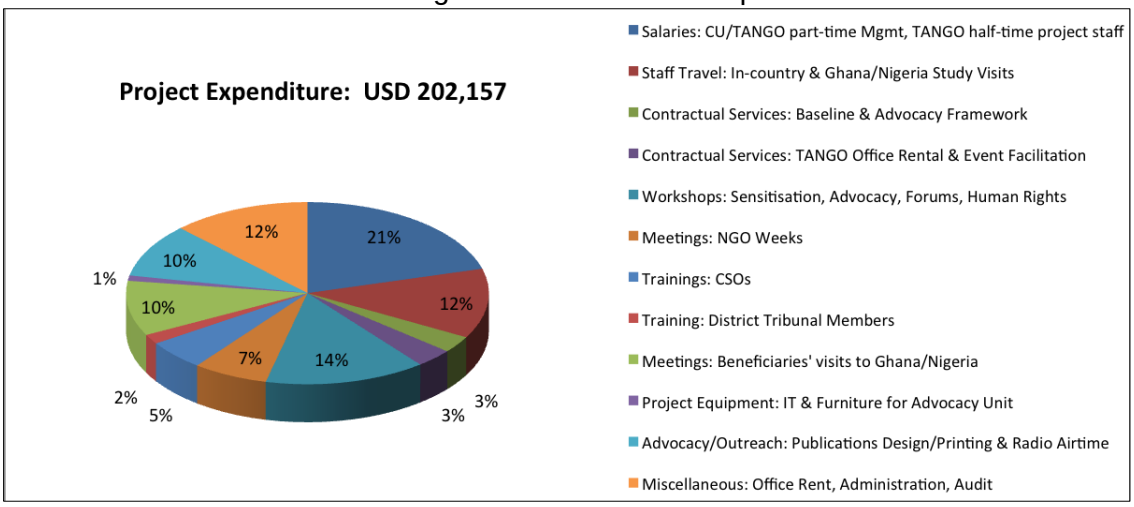
[5] However, evaluators found the document only offered on the website of CU, but not on TANGO's. See: http://www.concern-universal.org/files/tango_advocacy_strategy_final.pdf

Raising awareness about their engagement in national development, they also offered an opportunity for NGOs from across the country to share and exchange ideas, experiences, and to forge new alliances. A representative of the presidency visiting the NGO week reportedly acknowledged of the contribution of NGOs to the country's development efforts.

The continued availability of TANGO's advocacy unit to its members and the dissemination of a reference framework for the development of advocacy strategies were significant achievements, and so was the encouragement the project instilled to the Lower River Region to push for decentralisation of the management of its forestry sector. Considering these effects and the overall extent of the capacity building provided, as well as the impressive output of the media awareness raising campaign, evaluators are of the view that the project effectively contributed towards a strengthened advocacy capacity of civil society, in particular with a view to policy formulation and governance.

(iii) Efficiency[6]

In addition to the project's *media campaign*, which achieved an impressive output (c.f. section on effectiveness) by expending about 10% of the project's budget for wide dissemination of publications (among them: the baseline study and the advocacy strategy framework) and the transmission of about 89 radio broadcasts, capacity-building activities represented the project's principal focus. Accordingly, an overall 38% of the budget's expenditure related to *workshops, meetings and training* sessions: the project's sensitisation workshop, the consultations leading to the development of the advocacy framework, the regional forums which brought together representatives of civil society and various levels of governance, as well as the human rights training for NGOs absorbed 14%; for the advocacy and lobbying skills training of TANGO members the grantee spent 5%; the newly introduced training measure targeting District Tribunal members caused a minor additional cost of 2%[7]; study visits to Ghana and Nigeria required expenses in the order of 10%; and the NGO weeks achieved both shared learning and outreach at an expense of 7%.



[6] Quantitative assessments made in this section are based on the total amount of project expenditure, which excludes the budget amount reserved for evaluation by UNDEF.

[7] This training was added to the initial plan of project activities, for which funding used from UNDEF sources amounts to USD 3,450. The remainder (86%) of the training's total cost of USD 24,550 was covered with the support of the Canada Fund.

Breaking the amount spent for the advocacy skills training of TANGO members[8] over the reported total number of 250 trainees provides a low average cost of approximately USD 67, which was spent per beneficiary to help NGOs elaborate targeted strategies how to engage with government in policy issues. Considering that the training of 33 of 238 District Tribunal members (=14%) was sponsored by UNDEF, an average of approximately USD 105 per participant was spent to ensure that alternative justice provision complies with the country's law. Putting in place the advocacy unit and engaging event facilitators, both to support networking and knowledge transfer, was also achieved at considerably low prices, requiring just about 3% of the budget.

Spending about USD 42,000 for salaries of administrative and project personnel, the combined nominal staff costs of CU and TANGO amount to 21% of the total budget. Adding the expenses for staff travel, the level of expenditure for project management and coordination reaches a relatively high budget share of 33%. With 12%, the grantee's budget for office running and administration appears also rather costly, while the grantee's 1% allocation for the TANGO advocacy unit's equipment (IT & furniture) was very modest.

In conclusion, the grantee spent about 45% of the budget to manage and administrate the project. While this does not appear to be particularly efficient, evaluators are still impressed, since - compared to related expenditure - achievements of the project's activities both under the communication and capacity building components were commendable.

Evaluators meet with TAC members, former regional forums participants

(iv) Impact

The design, monitoring and reporting of the grantee's initially proposed outcome indicators allow for a preliminary analysis of potential impact. A comparison of selected - mostly quantitative - target indicators with the project's reported achievements and evaluators' field observations leads to the following assessment:

- *50% of TANGO members are initiating joint dialogues with government (baseline: discussing politics is a no-go for CSOs):* an absolute majority of surveyed former advocacy skills trainees and regional forum participants (80%) were confident they are now equipped with the skills and arguments needed to engage in joint policy dialogue. While the project's regional forums were first opportunities for dialogue, evaluators' however could not yet find evidence that mutual gains were understood to an extent likely to establish more open communication and cooperation between NGOs and government.
- *50% of TANGO members are initiating advocacy meetings and engagements with*

[8] Expenditure considered for this purpose in addition to the actual cost of the advocacy training series includes the contractual services hired for the purposes of conducting the baseline study, and developing the advocacy strategy framework, both of which constituted essential inputs to the project's capacity building activities.

governments at national and local levels (baseline: no engagement of TANGO and CSOs with government during the past 5 years): an absolute majority of former project beneficiaries (70%) responded to be either involved in some kind of dialogue with government authorities or to have included advocacy engagement in their NGO's strategy. This confirms capacity of TANGO members has improved. From their interviews evaluators however conclude that the extent to which they will effectively engage in issues of concern to civil society remains to be confirmed.

- *TANGO members are initiating 10 policy review and development processes, engaging with government (baseline: from the onset, TANGO and its members are not consulted in policy development processes*): in the context of the present project, TANGO on behalf of its members reportedly has launched 9 different policy dialogue processes (e.g. on the subjects of decentralization and local government; population and gender; the NGO bill and tax collection) with central and regional level government authorities. Even if not to the full extent envisaged, the project has hence clearly generated increased opportunity for civil society engagement with government.

While observations in relation to the above 3 target indicators confirm the project's potential impact in respect of its overall objective (i.e. strengthen the advocacy capacity of CSOs), the fact that another 4 target indicators were either not achieved or not reported upon demonstrates that more advocacy will be needed to arrive at government policies that support an enabling environment for civil society operations (i.e. the ultimate impact according to the project document).

On the basis of interviews held with 7 implementation partner and project staff, 3 resource persons, and 21 project beneficiaries, evaluators also independently formed the view that the project generated some positive effects. They demonstrate that the grantee managed to bring about change, since (1) some of the interviewed beneficiaries displayed clear signs of improved advocacy and lobbying skills, which (2) supported their capacity to better communicate objectives and achievements to both beneficiaries and government authorities, which in turn already (3) produced first signs of joint advocacy engagement by NGO and local/regional government authorities in favour of a more community-led local development.

Selected anecdotes are provided below[9]. They are grouped along the key issues identified at the outset of the project (= baseline, cf. section on relevance), in order to demonstrate if and how the project contributed to a strengthened advocacy capacity of TANGO and its member organisations.

These examples show that the grantee has indeed managed to provide a first appropriate response to address the baseline situation.

[9] In line with current development practice, an effort was made to identify recent anecdotes or to obtain, where possible, details of relevance complementing the grantee's available report documentation, to conduct an independent assessment of impact.

A negative public perception of NGOs due to the lack of information about their vision and mission

"The project's Advocacy Strategy Framework enables NGOs to present themselves to their counterparts and the wider public from a different perspective. Advocacy used to be considered as something of confrontational nature", explains **Madi Jobarth, TANGO advocacy manager**. "We studied the effects of the framework. Our members are now more actively engaging in advocacy, and the way in which they do this transparently shows that their aim is to inform policy processes for the benefit of the population. Understanding has improved that NGOs engage with state, regional and local representatives to address issues like access health or justice, hence the achievement of objectives, which are often already stipulated by existing laws or government policies."

"I took from the training that you have to be perfectly knowledgeable on the subject matter if you want your advocacy efforts to be taken serious", highlights **Priscilla Dunn, Development Programme Secretary of YMCA**. Therefore I research literature and the Internet. If appropriate, I interview knowledgeable people. TANGO should be the single access point for information NGOs are regularly looking for. Nowadays I consult TANGO, but also other organizations like Action Aid, Gambia Family Planning, and Fopac."

Poor awareness of the significant development work carried out by NGOs

TANGO's second "NGO week" event targeted Basse, the administrative capital of The Gambia's least developed region. Often together with their individual beneficiaries, NGOs in exhibition stalls, panel discussions, and live radio broadcasts explained how they contribute to basic service delivery, and hence improve the quality of life. While the visiting wider public's immediate feedback was favorable, many also asked for information and ways how to claim their rights and entitlements. This was among others triggered by the case of a local woman, whose stall and contents were seized by the police, when she tried trading vegetables on an informal street market. Proving that she is a regular taxpayer and stating the fact that Basse has no official marketplace for women to sell their items, she successfully reclaimed her produce and today still sells in the same place. The need to empower people to help themselves through dissemination of relevant, human-rights-based information therefore was one of the main lessons learned from the event.

"We learned how important community radio is for us to reach out to everyone with our sensitization efforts", states former trainee **Rama Toulie Mbake, of the Gambia Women Finance Association**. "We now use broadcasts to explain to the wider population what we do and what the benefits are. We can feel the effect of that, because women's interest in business activity has increased since. We also use this communication channel to explain to the men that what women put aside in savings from their business will in the end benefit their whole family. Rama says the project gave her the knowledge what matters and the confidence to tell others about it: "I have now the courage to express myself in front of entire groups or to speak on community radio."

Absence of coordination and consideration of the complementarity of the NGOs' efforts

According to **Paul Alex Mendy, Water & Sanitation Officer and member of Brikama Council's TAC,** the project significantly changed the area's local development planning processes: "Traditionally, we were expected to consult with village heads where to build a well or make repairs. TANGO's training has helped raising awareness among the population, village heads and public officers that it is the right of the people who live in the local community to determine the needs, priorities and to guide local development action." His colleague, former workshop participant **Ousaimon Cham, Regional Officer of the Forestry Department,** adds that their TAC recently responded critically to a centrally planned agricultural project, which aims to convert local forestry land for rice cultivation purposes. The plan was to compensate 100 hectares of rice plantations by 4 hectares of reforestation: "Given environmental (climate change) and resource (firewood) concerns of the local community, we have complained that central government failed to consult us".

Insufficient accountability of NGOs vis-à-vis their beneficiaries, donors and the government

"About two thirds of our members have now understood the importance of annual and financial reporting", says **TANGO's director, Ousman Yabo**. "This first insight should enable us to analyse and, at a later stage, communicate our member's contribution to development and governance. While this can be a powerful advocacy tool, there is still some way to go, as the absence of resident NGO staff in remote regions of our country limits the monitoring and evaluation of progress related to specific development sectors."

Before the advocacy skills training **Amie Kujabi, youth coordinator of the Child Protection Alliance**, thought advocacy is a one-off effort, but then understood that it is a continuous process: "You can't do that and then stand back. Advocacy must be informed by the monitoring achievements together with our beneficiaries. This tells us where and how to intervene, and with whom to engage. I also think TANGO should become the place for sharing and exchanging the knowledge and achievements of all its Member NGOs."

The project inspired former beneficiary **Omar Malleh Ceesay, representative of the Help Promotion and Development Organization**, to pilot an initiative in a hard-to-reach village community in the area of Foni, which does not obtain many local services. Organizing a one-day forum, they found out that local people knew very little about the role of authorities and NGOs: "We realized that they were unaware of the programmes operated in their area. While they realized that tax-paying citizens are entitled to measures addressing their needs, they clearly needed help to get involved in the local development of their own area. We are still working in the Foni area, implementing a project supported by the Global Fund, and have therefore been able to observe that they now have the ability to assess what local development activities actually do for them."

(v) Sustainability

In view of the project's achievements (cf. sections on effectiveness and impact), evaluators at the time of their field visit mostly focused on (a) the continued availability and functioning of TANGO's newly established advocacy unit; (b) the sustainability of TANGO's platform engaging NGOs and government in advocacy and dialogue; and (c) the ultimate impact the project aimed for, which was to arrive at government policies that support an enabling environment for civil society operations:

a. Continued availability of TANGO's advocacy unit

The unit is still run by the project's advocacy manager, who continues to provide relevant information and support services to TANGO members. Evaluators found teamwork considered a priority, with internal management and operations of the advocacy unit being based on weekly staff working meetings, which involve at least the advocacy manager, and both TANGO's networking and training officers. As TANGO staff often operates on the ground, the advocacy manager's direct backup in case of absence is the networking officer, but internal communications channels (i.e. phone, email) are kept open to ensure unrestricted access to information and advice for TANGO members, as and when needed. As far as continued knowledge sharing is concerned TANGO, however, still struggles. The organisation lacks data to measure and provide evidence of the extent to which the efforts of its members and its network in general are contributing to the development of the country. A collection of NGO member profiles (i.e. strategy, budget, staff, work in progress) is underway, but there is concern about scarce human resource capacity to convert this input into aggregate analytical information that can be offered in return to members to raise awareness about development needs and inform future advocacy campaigns.

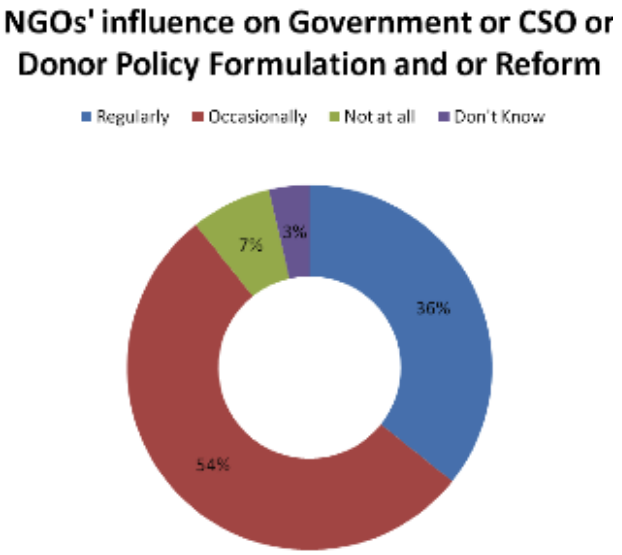
b. Sustainability of the platform engaging NGOs and government

In the words of the grantee's programme officer, CU prides itself for having assisted TANGO in creating "[…] a forum, where civil society can have the courage to engage with government. We needed a platform where civil society is consulted, and its views are taken on board by government when implementing or before touching on given policies". Evaluators commend TANGO, which is now visibly spearheading the effort to promote change by networking its NGO members, connecting them with public sector stakeholders and decision-makers. During beneficiary interviews members expressed their appreciation, saying TANGO now offers "[…] more tangible, instrumental and lasting services". These include not only the advocacy unit's advisory services and tools, but also daily electronic circulars with relevant information on funding opportunities and reports on progress made in-country and throughout the developing world, as well as regularly broadcasted policy talk shows on The Gambia's West Coast Radio station. While members are also reported to hold more events and meetings at TANGO's facility, the organization is currently reflecting how to attract more donors' funding and possibly partnerships with the private sector in order to run its own radio station. Including more of its members in talk shows, TANGO expects to raise even more awareness about and proposals for solutions to local development issues. Evaluators, however, noted that some of the project's principal advocacy tools, i.e. the perception/baseline study and the advocacy strategy framework outputs, are no longer available in hard copy, and that TANGO does not offer supplements e.g. via its website.[10]

[10] Instead, evaluators found the advocacy strategy framework offered for download on CU's website only.

c. Government policies supporting an enabling environment for civil society operation

Evaluators established that the effects of joint dialogue between civil society and government have not reached beyond the level of regional governance. In accordance with The Gambia's financial arrangements for decentralization, the country's central budget is meant to supply regional councils upon their requests with dedicated grants. It is understood that the country's central budget authority currently withholds most of this funding, claiming that regional councils lack management and hence absorption capacity. It also appears that the country's 4-year national development strategy is not in synchronicity with the planning cycle of different government sectors, which further complicates regional and local attempts to progress development issues. Therefore local government administrations currently operate mainly on the basis of local tax income (from e.g. business licensing, market stall fees etc.). While TANGO has certainly been able to support the joint efforts of its trainees (i.e. NGOs, local and regional level structure representatives) to ensure targeted expenditure, beneficiaries made very clear to evaluators that these locally available resources are insufficient to meet the local services required. An example frequently mentioned was the establishment, maintenance and repair of local infrastructure. Evaluators also learned that many of the trained district tribunal members are illiterate, and that most of these former project trainees do not keep written records of their judgments. The absence of transcripts not only limits the assessment as to whether the training positively impacted on the consistency of their decisions with the country's law. It also indicates the need for an advisory capacity the district tribunals could turn to in the long-term. Advisory feedback e.g. by phone is currently not offered, but reportedly provided ad hoc when requested.



At project launch, 54% of the beneficiary NGOs claimed they only occasionally manage to influence policy formulation

Despite first positive results and given the above findings which provide a mixed image, evaluators have formed the view that there is a need for (1) continued action to appropriately inform the attempts of TANGO's members to engage in advocacy and (2) targeted sectoral advocacy pursued by TANGO on behalf of its members specifically addressing central structures in charge of the implementation of the country's decentralization policy and related administrative provisions.

(vi) UNDEF Value Added

The project and all of its products were transparently branded as supported by UNDEF. UNDEF funding also provided a perception of neutrality, an important aspect for a project in a context in which advocacy was previously often misunderstood as a form confrontational

conduct. Accordingly, no human rights violations obstructing the efforts of the TANGO's members have been observed since.

V. CONCLUSIONS

i. Concern Universal's (CU) initial approach was reconfirmed by the findings of an externally conducted baseline study. Accordingly, the project was designed to establish understanding of the impact of dialogue on policy development and implementation among government and NGOs, and to subsequently support members of the Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (TANGO) initiating advocacy with government to raise awareness about and address the needs of the Gambian civil society. While this supported capacity building, there was an even more important need to facilitate NGOs' access to human rights information and a strategy development tool to enable the conduct of advocacy in an informed and secure manner. In addition, events showcasing NGO best practices were meant to improve accountability vis-à-vis the general public. It is therefore our view that **the project represented a relevant effort** to strengthen the advocacy capacity of CSOs in The Gambia. Our findings related to the project's communication component show that the design was adequate to raise awareness of TANGO, its members and government of the potential benefits of joint policy engagement. Aiming to support the future efforts of the NGO community to reach out and engage with religious, community, business and political party leaders, it was appropriate to develop (1) a generic advocacy strategy NGOs can adapt to their respective circumstances and to (2) offer advocacy and lobbying skills training to NGOs. Engagement forums finally provided opportunity for an open, joint review of policy implementation essential for regional and local governance by CSOs, regional governors, councillors and Technical Advisory Committees.

ii. With the exception of (a) shifting the media campaign's focus from TV to radio and (b) the reallocation of limited resources to expand capacity building to district tribunal court members, no significant changes were made to the planned project activities. The project's communication activities effectively informed the public discussion about discrepancies between legal provisions and current policies (e.g. in relation to the Local Government Act), and clarified the benefits of government-NGO partnership, as well as the importance of well researched baseline information, situational analysis, and tactful conduct for advocacy purposes. Since the project established TANGO's advocacy unit, the dissemination of relevant information to members has reportedly tripled and service provision has continued since. Beneficiaries praised CU and TANGO for providing with the advocacy strategy framework a tool facilitating their strategic orientation and organizational planning. Both the NGO participants of the advocacy skills training and the beneficiaries of the training for district tribunal members confirmed to evaluators that their capacity building needs were met and that the acquired knowledge serves their professional work. NGO weeks organised by TANGO enabled NGOs to showcase to both citizens and the

government their contribution to the transformation of lives and livelihoods. For these reasons, evaluators are of the view that **the project was effective.**

iii. Some of the grantee's initially proposed outcome indicators allow for a positive assessment of potential impact in respect of the project's overall objective (i.e. strengthening the advocacy capacity of CSOs). They, however, also show that impact in respect of the project's ultimate objective (i.e. government policies that support an enabling environment for civil society operations) was rather limited. While more increased levels of initiated advocacy and maintained dialogue are probably just a matter of time, evaluators on the basis of independently gathered first-hand evidence still established that **the project generated some positive impact**. Some of the beneficiaries displayed advocacy and lobbying skills, as they focused in conversations with evaluators on their objectives, achievements, and examples of advocacy engagement between NGO and local/regional government authorities.

iv. Capacity-building activities represented the project's principal focus. Accordingly, a third of the budget's expenditure related, most importantly, to sensitisation and advocacy framework consultation workshops; regional forums bringing together representatives of civil society and various levels of governance; as well as advocacy and lobbying skills training; the newly introduced training measure targeting district tribunal members; and the NGO weeks; all of which achieved both shared learning and significant outreach. Adding salaries of administrative and project personnel (21% for combined nominal staff costs of CU and TANGO), expenses for staff travel (12%), and office running and administration cost (12%), the level of project management and administration expenditure reached, however, a high budget share of 45%. **Although not particularly efficient, evaluators are still satisfied in view of the project's achievements.**

v. Despite positive results evaluators have come across a number **shortcomings which risk to limit the sustainability** of the project's outcome: (1) TANGO's unit is still operational and run by the project's advocacy manager, who continues to provide relevant information and support services to TANGO members. However, the organisation still lacks data to measure and provide evidence of the extent to which the efforts of its members and its network in general are contributing to the development of the country. (2) TANGO is now visibly spearheading the effort to promote change by networking its NGO members, who confirm they are offered "[…] more tangible, instrumental and lasting services". Nevertheless, evaluators found that some of the project's principal advocacy tools are no longer pro-actively disseminated. (3) Evaluators established that, due to pending implementation of Gambia's legal provisions for financial arrangements for decentralization, the effects of joint dialogue between civil society and government have not reached beyond the level of regional governance. Therefore local government administrations currently operate interventions that have been informed by advocacy mainly on the basis of local tax income. These resources are, however, insufficient to meet the local services required.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

To strengthen the outcome and similar projects in the future, evaluators recommend to UNDEF and project grantees:

i. The fact that CU's approach and methodology included the conduct of baseline research and the formulation of outcome indicators is highly commendable, as this enhanced the project's ***relevance*** and significantly facilitated the ***assessment of impact***. Based on the above ***we recommend to the grantee*** (CU) to encourage TANGO to exploit the monitoring of progress among its members more systematically, as this will enable TANGO to improve the current assessment in qualitative terms and thus enhance the organization's strategic objectives. This may also help the beneficiary organisation itself to attract new donors and implementing partners for an expansion of the original project.

ii. Given the extent to which advocacy and lobbying skills of Gambian NGOs have been enhanced, there is little doubt that the project contributed effectively to increased engagement between them and local authorities. Despite this achievement it is, however, also a fact that the effects of joint dialogue have not yet reached beyond the level of regional governance. Advocacy targeting central government will be needed to shape policies that support a fully enabling environment for civil society operations. ***Based on our observations on effectiveness and sustainability, we therefore recommend to the grantee*** (CU) to encourage TANGO to (1) continue its actions to appropriately support the attempts of its members to engage in informed advocacy, which must include their capacity to conduct sectoral monitoring of progress of local development efforts; and to (2) undertake sectoral advocacy itself on behalf of its members, that specifically targets central structures, aiming for the transfer of implementation responsibilities, and the release of corresponding central government funding, justified by informed analysis of local development needs as provided by its members.

iii. In relation to our conclusion that shortcomings risk to limit the sustainability, it is our strong belief that continued lobbying of political stakeholders, government structures, and more analytical local progress monitoring will be needed to ensure enhanced NGO engagement in governance processes. ***Based on our comments on sustainability, we therefore recommend to the grantee*** to:

- Encourage TANGO to use its website to pro-actively disseminate the project's principal advocacy tools. In particular, offer the perception study and the advocacy strategy framework for download in a dedicated "advocacy" section, e.g. by replacing the project summary in the current "CU/UNDEF" section;

- Support TANGO with donor screening in preparation for a proposal suggesting an extension of the project, which focuses on development progress monitoring by

sector, and deepened analysis of local achievement and remaining needs;

- Discuss with TANGO options for organisational review to introduce human resource capacity for converting its NGO members' input into aggregate analytical information that can be used to inform future advocacy campaigns. While initially project-funded such function could be maintained, e.g. with the help of membership fees;

- Consider to suggest that TANGO intensifies its lobbying efforts vis-à-vis central government, offering that a future donor-funded TANGO project could include support schemes enhancing administrative and judicial absorption capacity as follows:

  (a) Both for civil servants and CSO staff, a series of seminars on administrative standards and good practices to ensure comparable levels of budgetary planning and management capacity up to the regional level nationwide. Following training, such initiative could also include short-term rotational work placements for the exchange of relevant experience. Cooperation both with the Ministries of Local Government and Finance could promote cohesion through the dissemination of equal knowledge and skills, which the country's central budgetary authority reportedly requires prior to the release of the levels of regional funding previously requested.

  (b) The establishment of a monitoring and advisory facility for district tribunal members. The objective of such a functional unit, which could be transferred to the authority of the Chief Justice's office in the long-term, would be to offer a "legal help line" which district tribunal members could contact by phone. In addition, the facility could monitor the decisions taken through this mode of alternative dispute resolution, in order to obtain reliable data about the extent of compliance of district tribunal judgements with the laws of the country.

IX. ANNEXES
ANNEX 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONS

DAC criterion	Evaluation Question	Related sub-questions
Relevance	To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local, and national levels?	▪ Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context? ▪ Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why? ▪ Were risks appropriately identified by the projects? How appropriate are/were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse?
Effectiveness	To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals?	▪ To what extent have the project's objectives been reached? ▪ To what extent was the project implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not? ▪ Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives? ▪ What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this?
Efficiency	To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts?	▪ Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs? ▪ Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability? ▪ Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives?
Impact	To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy?	▪ To what extent has/have the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address? ▪ Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative? ▪ To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization? ▪ Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why? Examples?
Sustainability	To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be a continuing impetus towards democratic development?	▪ To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact? ▪ Are the involved parties willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable)?
UNDEF value-added	To what extent was UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors?	▪ What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project, that could not as well have been achieved by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc.). ▪ Did project design and implementing modalities exploit UNDEF" s comparative advantage in the form of an explicit mandate to focus on democratization issues?

ANNEX 2: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

UNDEF

- Final Narrative Report
- Mid-Term/Annual Progress Report
- Project Document
- Milestone Verification Reports
- Financial Utilization Report
- Project Officer's Evaluation Note

Concern Universal / TANGO

- Study on the Impact and Perception of Non-Governmental Organisations in National Development (Baseline Study)
- Advocacy Strategy Framework for NGOs
- Terms of Reference for the Development of Advocacy Strategy for NGOs
- Critical Analysis and Review of the Local Government Act (Presentation)
- Using Policy, Legislation, Institutions and Resources to Promote and Protect Women's Human Rights and Human Dignity (Presentation)
- Evaluation of trainee feedback
- Concern Universal: Mission, Vision, Values and Strategy 2009-2014
- TANGO Strategy
- Images: trainees, stakeholders

Laws, conventions:

- District Tribunals Act and Subsidiary Legislation
- Local Government Act, as amended

Other sources:

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ANNEX 3: SCHEDULE OF INTERVIEWS

10 March 2014	
Grantee's Project Briefing	
Burang Danjo	Programme Officer, Concern Universal
Tony Jansen	Country Director, Concern Universal
Ousman Yabo	Director, TANGO
Kebba K Barro	Networking Officer, TANGO
Tabu Saar	Training Officer, TANGO
Lamin Nyangdo	External Consultant (Advocacy Strategy Framework)
11 March 2014	
Beneficiary Interviews: NGOs (Greater Banjul Area)	
Madi Jobarth	Advocacy Manager, TANGO
Amie Kujabi	Youth Coordinator, Child Protection Alliance (CPA)
Priscilla Dunn	Development Programme Secretary, YMCA
Joanna Mendy,	Program Department Records Officer, FAWEGAM
Rama Toulie Mbake	Gambia Women Finance Association (GAWFA)
Gibairu Janneh	Director, Gambia Press Union (GPU)
12 March 2014	
Field Visit: Beneficiary Interviews, TAC members of Brikama Area Council (West Coast Region)	
Sheriff Bojang	Regional Officer, Department of Water Resources
Paul Alex Mendy	Water and Sanitation Officer, Brikama Council
Wandifa Drammeh	Community Development Officer, DCD
Sanjaryi Ravali	Public Health Officer, Regional Health Directorate
Bintou HK Fatty	Programme Officer, Women's Bureau
Teneng Faye	Community Development Officer, DCD
Sally Kamara	Community Development Officer, DCD
Ousaimon Cham	Regional Officer, Forestry Department
Tambu S Kuilli	Retired CEO of Local Government Authority
13 March 2014	
Beneficiary Interviews: NGOs & LGAs, North Bank Region (NBR) and Lower River Region (LRR)	
Buwa Kimteh	Focal Point, WANEP, Lower River Region
Njagga Khan	Department for Local Community Development, NBR
Fatou Sanco	Women Councilor, Women's Bureau, NBR
Momodou B Siseh	National Disaster Management Agency, NBR
Haru Napriate	Focal Point, WANEP & Worldview The Gambia, NBR
Omar Malleh Ceesay	Help Promotion and Development Organisation
Beneficiary Interview: District Tribunal Member, West Coast Region	
Alfusainuy Jarju	District Tribunal Member, Foni Binta Karanye District

14 March 2014	
Interviews with Resource Persons	
Momodou Jallow	Director, Governance, Ministry of Local Government
Alieu Jallow	State Councilor, Ministry of Justice
Evaluators' Debriefing	
Burang Danjo	Programme Officer, Concern Universal
Sarah Lamb	Programme Support Officer, Concern Universal
Madi Jobarth	Advocacy Manager, TANGO

ANNEX 4: ACRONYMS

CU	Concern Universal
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
LGA	Local Government Authority
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
TAC	Technical Advisory Committees
TANGO	The Association of Non-Governmental Organizations
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
USD	United States Dollar