PROMOTING DEMOCRACY AND INCREASING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION:
The Role of Civil Society in Chad

Civil Society Assessment Report

Counterpart International
Promoting Elections, Accountability and Civic
Engagement in Chad (PEACE) Program

Date: January 31, 2011

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Acknowledgements

Counterpart International would like to express our gratitude to everyone in N'djamena, Abéché, Bakara and Moundou who generously provided their time for the interviews and made this assessment possible.

Particular credit is due to Melanie Reimer for leading the development of the assessment interview guides, conducting interviews and focus groups and authoring the report.

The electronic version of this document in English and French is available for downloading from Counterpart's website at www.counterpart.org/PEACEcivilsocietyreport ; alternatively, a copy may be requested by e-mail from Abiosseh Davis at Adavis@counterpart.org.

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List of Acronyms

AED	Academy for Educational Development
APLFT	Association pour la Promotion des Libertés Fondamentales au Tchad (Association for Promotion of Fundamental Freedoms in Chad)
BPE	Bureau Permanent des Elections (Permanent Elections Bureau)
CADH	Collectif des Associations de Défense des Droits de l'Homme (Collective of Human Rights Defense Associations)
CEFOD	Centre d'Etudes et de Formation pour le Développement (Center of Research and Training for Development)
CELIAF	Cellule de liaison et d'information des associations féminines (Liaison and information unit of women's associations), a national women's CSO network)
CCSRP	College de Control et de Surveillance des Ressources Pétrolieres (Committee for Monitoring of Oil Resources)
CENI	Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante (Independent National Electoral Commission)
CIEL	Coalition Indépendante des Elections Libres (Independent Coalition for Free Elections)
CILONG	Centre d'Information et de Liaison des ONG (Information and Liaison center for NGOs)
CPP	Commission Permanente Pétrole (Permanent Petroleum Commission)
CSAPR	Comité de Suivi de l'Appel à la paix et à la réconciliation (Committee for Monitoring of the Call for Peace and Reconciliation)
CSO	Civil society organization
DONG	Directorate of NGOs in Ministry of Planning
EDR	Election dispute resolution
EISA	Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy
EITI	Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative
GRAMP-TC	Groupe des Recherches Alternatives et de Monitoring du Projet Pétrole Tchad-Cameroun (Group for Alternative Research and Monitoring of the Chad-Cameroon Oil Project)
HCC	Haut Conseil de Communications (High Council of Communications)
INGO	International non-governmental organization
LTDH	Ligue Tchadienne des Droits Humaines (Chadian League for Human Rights)
MINURCAT	UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ONIPED	L'Observatoire National Independent de suivi des Processus Electoraux et de la Democratie (Independent National Observatory for Monitoring of Electoral Processes and Democracy)
PEACE Program	Promoting Elections, Accountability and Civic Engagement Program
RALCOSA	Reseau des Acteurs Libres de la Societe Civile, des Organisation Syndicales et des Associations des Droits de l'Homme
REPPACT	Réseau pour la Promotion de la Paix et de la Citoyenneté au Tchad (Network for Promotion of Peace and Citizenship in Chad)

RESOCIT	Réseau de la Societé Civile Tchadienne (Network of Tchadian Civil Society), body created by CENI
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

I. Executive Summary

In October 2010, Counterpart International conducted a civil society assessment to better understand the current situation of civil society in Chad, including the strengths, weaknesses and future potential of the sector as a key element in Chad's emerging democratic environment. The assessment paid particular attention to civil society's role in the areas of elections, advocacy, government accountability and conflict prevention and resolution, as it was intended to guide and inform planning and implementation of Counterpart's work in Chad, while more generally expanding the body of knowledge on Chad's civil society sector. Counterpart recently launched the Promoting Elections, Accountability and Civic Engagement (PEACE) Program, a two-year program funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) aimed at expanding citizen participation in democratic processes through peaceful, free and fair elections in Chad. In addition to support for the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), the Program will assist civil society organizations (CSOs) in their efforts to inform citizens and increase their involvement in the electoral process, facilitate constructive engagement of government and civil society actors to enhance election administration and dispute resolution, and support CSOs in acting as government watchdogs and advocating for positive change in Chad.

Since its independence in 1960, Chad has experienced high levels of conflict and instability. It is one of the least democratic countries in the world according to several leading indicators, and does not have a history of free and fair elections. Nevertheless, many see the upcoming elections in Chad as a potentially major step forward for democracy in the country. Legislative, presidential and local elections are all currently scheduled for the first half of 2011; voter registration took place in mid-2010 though its results have not yet been announced. The assessment found that many Chadians are skeptical about the elections, but it appears that the participation of civil society could significantly influence the level of citizen participation as well as contribute to the transparency and perceived fairness of the election process.

Contemporary civil society in Chad is dynamic and motivated to continue and expand their involvement in the democratic development of the country, despite the challenges of accessing much needed resources and of operating in a restrictive political climate. Since 1990, there have been fluctuations in the relationship between the government and civil society. The change in government in 1990 laid the foundation for the operation of modern civil society by opening up the political space. The operational environment for CSOs has been especially open and stable since the historic 2007 Accords were reached[1], except for reprisals related to the 2008 rebel attacks on N'djamena.

Urban-based Chadian civil society is characterized by a small core of dedicated leaders who dominate the running of their organizations. A cluster of 10-15 prominent organizations based in N'djamena and working in the democracy and governance sector have gained the confidence of donors and benefit from a large proportion of international funding for civil society. N'djamena-based organizations are sometimes accused of having a narrow constituency or base of supporters or members and minimal outreach to other regions or areas outside the city.

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[1] The August 13th, 2007 Electoral Reform Agreement between the government and key opposition political parties, entitled "Accord Politique en vue du renforcement de Processus Democratique," established the legal framework to guide the current election process in Chad, in an attempt to avoid further electoral boycotts and conflicts. The Syrte accord, signed between the government and various rebel groups at about the same time, was an attempt to address instability, especially in eastern parts of the country. *Chad: Powder Keg in the East*, International Crisis Group, 2009

The development of a "second tier" of CSOs and branches of national CSOs in secondary cities has been slow but is gathering momentum. The three major faith-based organizations and the largest unions have extensive national networks. In recent years other active CSOs with access to donor funding have made concerted efforts to expand their programming and support base well beyond the capital.

Illiteracy and low education levels, though not confined to rural areas, are significant factors inhibiting the engagement of rural residents in civil society and more generally in their own development. These factors, as well as the logistical and cost issues, combine to make radio the most appropriate form of mass media for outreach to rural areas, where most inhabitants have access to radio for at least some time each day. State and private radio have a combined audience of 85% of the population. Private media is operating under a new law and will be authorized to fully cover elections for the first time ever in 2011; rules for media regulation in election processes are still being finalized, and the private media and regulatory bodies will require training and support to ensure that the media can effectively play its vital role in these elections.

Chadian women are primarily active within women-focused organizations, and do not often have leading roles in other CSOs. Women's civil society activism is significant, and women's organizations are recognized as having a highly developed capacity to mobilize their constituents. A particular strength is the fact that women's groups are viewed as largely independent, and less politicized than other CSOs. Youth CSOs suffer from fast turnover of volunteers and leaders, which hampers their development and credibility. There is a tendency for youth to be confined to "youth committees" or other structures specifically focused on youth, and their engagement in wider civil society and credibility on that level is therefore limited. Both women's and youth CSOs claim to have more difficulty in accessing donor funding than other groups, most likely due to capacity gaps in terms of meeting donor expectations.

The primary strengths of civil society were found to be the strong level of commitment of activists, the increasingly high public profile of CSOs, widespread trust of the population at the grassroots, and the necessary competence to carry out well-targeted initiatives. Although the prevailing attitude among national and local government officials is still one of suspicion of independent civil society, CSOs are steadily gaining credibility and are increasingly invited by government to participate in multi-stakeholder bodies. The most credible and organizationally developed CSOs in Chad are primarily human rights associations, which are reported to be the most respected by the government.

On the other hand, informants noted that civil society is weakened by internal divisions among CSOs and networks as well as a lack of financial resources, insufficiently trained staff and poor organizational management skills. Collectively, these weaknesses render rural outreach especially difficult for urban based Chadian NGOs. At the local authority level, lack of awareness and appreciation of the role of civil society can lead officials to prevent CSOs from accessing communities, although traditional chiefs are generally cooperative if their role is duly respected. Contacts in the east of the country described a higher-than-usual tension between civil society and local government officials.

In contrast to limited civil society involvement in past elections, including a boycott in 2006, a large and diverse set of civil society organizations and networks have decided to engage in the upcoming election process. Their activities will range from voter education to observation of the elections themselves,

though many CSOs are still waiting for funding requests to be granted by donors before finalizing their plans. Some CSOs have already collaborated with the CENI on voter registration via a specially established network called RESOCIT (Network of Chadian Civil Society), but other organizations and networks are concerned that their independence being compromised and are planning their own mobilization and observation activities. At this point, the full extent of civil society cooperation with CENI in these elections has yet to be defined.

The realistic objective of most CSOs is not necessarily a free and fair election, but rather a measurable improvement in the fairness of the process. Experience in general civic education is widespread among CSOs and networks, including media outlets, unions and religious organizations, and this will form a solid basis for conducting voter education. Civil society is keen to take the initiative and mobilize volunteers to carry out education and observation activities, but faces budgetary constraints in doing so.

Most informants believe there is a minimal chance of violent conflict or uprisings directly related to the upcoming elections, primarily because expectations for actual change are low (especially in the case of presidential elections), and trust in politicians is negligible. Communal elections could incite the most emotions given that they have not been held before and are closer to community issues. On the other hand, some informants in the eastern part of the country fear that rebel groups could "sabotage" the elections in that region. The role of CSOs in election-related conflict has been limited to date, and few CSO informants have mentioned this as an area in which they plan to intervene in the 2011 elections.

CSOs are active in advocacy and are represented on several high-level national committees and oversight bodies, but real impact on policy has been restricted to date. Lack of access to government information, inability to mobilize the populace, and unsophisticated advocacy skills are seen as the major hurdles to enhanced influence of CSOs in these areas. As well, lack of awareness and education make it nearly impossible for communities to directly access information about government and thus to monitor government activities at the grassroots level. However, GRAMP-TC (Group for Alternative Research and Monitoring of the Chad-Cameroon Oil Project) and other CSO groupings are actively informing and training populations affected by the petroleum industry to monitor government spending and activities in their communities.

The development of the oil industry has given rise to several active and interconnected networks of CSOs who are researching, publishing information, and advocating for better use of petroleum revenues. This sector constitutes the heart of government accountability initiatives in Chad. The activities of CSOs working for oil and mining revenue accountability are generally well-respected, and their outreach to rural areas affected by oil exploration and the pipeline is impressive.

In conclusion, there is good reason for optimism about the prospects for an increasingly active and influential civil society in Chad - provided that donor support is sustained and provided that the government continues to tolerate a fairly vocal CSO sector, as they have in recent years. Sustainability without donor resources is highly questionable, and continued international encouragement for constructive engagement between government and civil society will be vital, especially during the sensitive elections period. In this regard, 2011 and especially the first six months of the year are destined to be an important juncture for civil society in Chad.

II. Introduction

A. General context of Chad

One of the poorest countries in Africa, Chad's human development statistics tell a bleak story: 80% living under the poverty line; nearly 75% adult illiteracy (87% among women) and average life expectancy of just under 50 years of age.[2] The tragedy of these numbers is exacerbated by social dislocation and political instability. Uprisings, political coups and civil war have scarred the country and chased away many hoping to invest in the country's economy, democracy and well-being. In fact, there is a near absence of government in some parts of Chad, and a limited sense of nationhood among its citizens. Large swaths of the country, particularly border zones, are seen as unstable and there are significant refugee and displaced populations, notably in the east near the Sudanese border.

The country is a diverse blend of cultures; French and Arabic are the two official languages, but more than 100 languages are spoken by the more than 200 ethnic groups. The largest religious groups based on the 1993 census are Muslim (53%), Catholic (20%), and Protestant (14%).[3] As many as three-quarters of Chadians live in rural areas and are not employed in the formal sector, though urban areas such as the capital N'djamena are growing. The southern part of the country is more densely populated and the economy is primarily agrarian, although increased oil exploration and resulting revenues are changing this composition. The vast northern part of the country is sparsely populated and home to nomadic herders. In general, the north and east are predominantly Muslim, while Christian denominations dominate in the south.

Despite increasing oil revenues, Chad remains mired in poverty. In September 2008, the World Bank withdrew from a project launched in 2001 to finance development of the fledgling oil sector.[4] The Chadian government had repeatedly sought greater control over revenues, in violation of commitments to use funds for poverty-alleviation projects. Funds have reportedly been spent largely on propping up national security through military investments and on a growing number of public works projects. However, transparency remains problematic in spite of pressures from Chadian civil society and the international community.

Chad is one of the least democratic countries in the world according to several leading indicators. Chad consistently ranks in the bottom ten of major development and democratic indices such as the Human Development Index (UNDP); Freedom in the World (Freedom House) and Corruption Perceptions (Transparency International).

> "Chad is not an electoral democracy. The country has never experienced a free and fair transfer of power through elections." Freedom House, Freedom in the World Report 2010

Nevertheless, many see the upcoming elections as a possible step forward for democracy in the country. Legislative, presidential and local elections are all currently scheduled for the first half of 2011. There are a number of reasons for optimism: the existence of a legal framework to prepare the country for elections

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[2] CIA World Factbook 2010
[3] Ibid
[4] BBC News, "End to World Bank's Chad oil deal", 10 September 2008, available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7608163.stm

(known as the August 13th Accord of 2007); a temporary "bipartisan" national election commission (CENI); firm international support for fair processes; and commitment from the government to complete the electoral census and follow through on its agreements.

Given its history of violence and undemocratic governance, the upcoming elections could play a critical role in determining the future stability of Chad. This is especially true given that MINURCAT (the UN peacekeeping mission in Central African Republic and Chad) is preparing to withdraw from the country at the government's request, giving rise to fears that the Chadian security forces will not be able to provide the same level of security. If there is robust citizen participation and elections are managed in a democratic, non-violent, and transparent manner, it could be a significant advance in terms of improving citizens' perceptions of government legitimacy and responsiveness. On the other hand, if participation is apathetic and elections are perceived to be unfair, there could well be further deterioration in security conditions and governance.

B. PEACE Program Overview

Promoting Elections, Accountability and Civic Engagement (PEACE) in Chad is a two year program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to promote broader citizen participation in democratic processes through peaceful, free and fair legislative and presidential elections. The program was launched in July 2010. Counterpart International, together with PEACE partners International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), and Management Systems International (MSI) will support and assist the National Electoral Commission in various areas of election process communications and administration, including media outreach, voter education, voter complaint mechanisms and post-election evaluation.

The PEACE Program will also support civil society organizations (CSOs) in their efforts to network, exchange information and collaborate on activities that will inform citizens and increase their involvement in the electoral process. Additionally the program will support CSOs in acting as government watchdogs and advocating for positive change, in particular by helping Chad to meet its commitments in joining the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative by monitoring performance and serving as a link with government, business and citizens.

C. Description of Civil Society Assessment – rationale, scope and methodology

In October 2010, Counterpart International initiated a qualitative assessment of current Chadian civil society to inform the planning and implementation of the PEACE Program. The purpose of the assessment was to map the composition of civil society in Chad, including the sector's strengths, challenges and opportunities for political and electoral engagement with government. The assessment results will guide and inform PEACE program planning and implementation as well as fill the gap in the current body of knowledge on Chad's civil society sector.

The assessment was designed to meet the following overarching objectives:
- To identify CSO capacity and experience in civic and voter education, advocacy, government accountability, public outreach and services to constituents;
- To identify priority areas for capacity building;

- To understand the key differences in capacity building needs of rural organizations;
- To explore the relationship between civil society and the government; and between civil society and the electoral commission;
- And to understand civil society's aspirations for the future.

The Civil Society Assessment included a desk study to establish a base of understanding of Chad's history and current overall context, challenges to democracy and governance, the goals and planned activities of the PEACE Program, the background and status of the civil society movement in Chad, and the identity of key players in civil society and other informants. The desk study informed the Assessment's subsequent field research.

Field research consisted of 50 interviews with targeting representatives of civil society organizations and networks, the private media, traditional and religious authorities, think tanks, donors and international organizations, the elections commission, and government officials. Thirty-four interviews were conducted in N'djamena, six in Moundou, nine in Abéché and one in the village of Bakara.

Four focus groups were conducted in N'djamena, two in Bakara, three in Moundou and one in Abéché to generate additional data and to test early initial findings derived from the desk research and individual interviews. A total of 72 informants participated in the 10 focus groups, with an average attendance of 6-8 persons. Focus groups were held with youth (both mixed and single-sex groups), CSO representatives, representatives of community-based organizations, rural residents (both mixed and single-sex groups), and beneficiaries/members of development-oriented non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The Civil Society Assessment was designed concurrently with a Counterpart-commissioned Gender Assessment. This report incorporates excerpts and recommendations from the gender assessment report (soon to be published) on relevant issues, especially in relation to women in civil society.

While the concepts and definitions of civil society, NGOs and youth vary widely from country to country, for the purposes of this assessment in Chad, Counterpart is using the following definitions:

Civil society: The term is subject to many various interpretations. Civil society is usually understood to embrace organizations, defined as loosely as possible—unregistered as well as registered—that have united voluntarily in taking actions to achieve mutually agreed-upon goals, often for the greater good of society. This assessment has adopted this interpretation in discussions with informants, although primarily focusing on formally registered CSOs.

Non-governmental organization (NGO): This term is used in Chad to denote civil society organizations registered with the Directorate of NGOs (DONG) under the Ministry of Planning, the majority of which are engaged in development or humanitarian programming. NGOs are a subset of civil society and this term is not used generally to refer to all formalized CSOs, as it is in some countries.

Association: Associations are groups of individuals who come together to promote a common agenda (such as environmental preservation) in a given location (village, region). Like NGOs, they do not operate to generate a profit and if profit is generated, it is used to fund association activities. In Chad,

associations register with the Ministry of the Interior, either at the national or regional level. Becoming an association is a prerequisite to becoming an NGO (one must be registered and functioning for two years as an association before applying for registration as an NGO); although associations have full legal rights and therefore many never change their status to NGO.

Groupement[5]:   According to Chadian Ordinance No. 025/PR/92, which governs and defines groupements and cooperatives, groupements are voluntary organizations comprised of producers or consumers who have common interests. They focus on improving socioeconomic conditions through the production, processing and marketing of agriculture, livestock, fisheries or handicrafts. They register with local representatives of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Groupements with a significant economic focus who demonstrate a higher management and organizational capacity can become "groupements à vocation coopérative", or cooperative interest groups, which are non-profit and whose registration includes specific tax benefits.

Cooperative: Ordinance No 025/PR/92 defines cooperatives as particular type of civil society, where people voluntarily come together to achieve the common goal of forming a democratically governed and managed company. Each member participates in the cooperative's activities, contributes equally to the company and assumes their fair share of the risks and outcomes of the company.

Youth: In Chad, this term includes adolescents and persons up to age 35, thus encompassing a much larger segment of the population than it would in Western countries.

III. Overview of Civil Society in Chad

A. Brief history of civil society in Chad

Formalized civil society began to emerge in Chad soon after independence in 1960 with the adoption of certain international conventions and legislation that allowed for creation of cooperatives. However, the wider development of civil society was slowed during the regime of President Hissein Habré (1982-1990). The assumption of political authority by Idris Déby Itno (popularly known as "IDI") in 1990 paved the way for an opening of the democratic space for civil society, based on a new legal framework and recognition by the new government of fundamental freedoms. The early 1990s saw the establishment of the first fledgling human rights organizations and CSO networks. Their prominent role in the landmark sovereignty conference of 1993 marked the first real foray of CSOs into the realm of politics and policy.[6]

The discovery of large oil reserves in southern Chad and the World Bank's decision to support construction of the Chad-Cameroon pipeline provided the stimulus for the next significant engagement

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[5] There is continued debate among theorists and practitioners of civil society development as to whether or not profit-making entities, such as cooperatives, can be considered part of civil society or if they should be strictly regarded as part of the private sector. This assessment does not seek to support or negate either argument. In the context of Chad, groupements and cooperatives are commonly considered part of civil society, despite the fact that they are generally profit-making and profit-sharing entities. Groupements are often the first step for community based organizations to become associations, which can opt to become NGOs. Definitions of groupements and cooperatives are translated from *Ordonnance no 025/PR/92 du 7 décembre 1992.*

[6] 130 representatives of civil society (including 31 from human rights associations) participated in the National Sovereignty Conference, out of a total 830 official nominees. "The Chadian Party System: Rhetoric and Reality", paper by Roy May and Simon Massey, April 2001, available at http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/events/jointsessions/paperarchive/grenoble/ws13/may_massey.pdf

of civil society in national level policy and an increased level of international interest in Chad. CSOs successfully advocated for the 1999 creation of and participation in an independent monitoring entity (Committee for Monitoring of Oil Resources or CCSRP)[7], but their warnings to the World Bank that revenues would not be devoted to poverty reduction initially went unheeded. The World Bank ultimately terminated its support for the project due to the government's failure to respect its commitments, as described above. Nevertheless, the activism and advocacy around this issue further bolstered CSOs' profile and credibility in Chad and greatly enhanced international linkages, especially among those focused on human rights and government accountability.

Informants indicate that the number of CSOs registered or operating in Chad has significantly increased over the past decade, although government data is incomplete at the national level. Most informants, however, assert that many new CSOs were created with the apparent support of the government and/or the ruling party, of which many are inactive or not seen as independent.

B. Current situation of civil society in Chad

Types of CSOs

The universe of civil society in Chad is populated by a wide variety of organizations, from the grassroots community level to national level organizations with satellites or members spread across the country. The capital city N'djamena is the hub of much CSO activity and the home of the most organizationally developed and well-funded entities. The principal types of Chadian CSOs identified by this assessment are (not an exhaustive list): human rights associations; professional or interest-based associations with diverse objectives, including women's and youth CSOs; NGOs focused on development and/or humanitarian relief; CSO/NGO networks and coordination/support bodies; faith-based organizations; private media outlets; labor unions; and groupements and cooperatives in rural communities or villages.

There are few official statistics on CSOs in Chad and similar organizations are registered with different Ministries. NGO, for instance, refer only to organizations with a registration certificate from the Directorate of NGOs (DONG) within the Ministry of Economy and Planning. Those who register as an NGO tend to be either Chadian offices of international NGOs, or Chadian NGOs specifically focused on the development or humanitarian sector. The DONG has 236 registered NGOs, but estimates that only about 100 are currently active. Separately, the Ministry of Interior maintains a registry of "associations," which is the first step towards becoming an NGO; one must be registered and functioning for two years as an association before applying for registration as an NGO. However, the current number of associations in the country is not known due to lack of regular reporting by regional governments since 2000, at which time registration was decentralized to regional governments by the Ministry of Interior.

Many organizations (including some of the longest-established CSOs) have chosen to remain as associations indefinitely as there seems to be little or no advantage to taking the additional steps to register as an NGO. Government controls and reporting requirements are more cumbersome for NGOs,

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[7] Loi N° 001/PR/1999 portant Gestion des Revenus Pétroliers, as modified by Loi N° 02/PR/2000 portant modification de la Loi No 001. Links to these texts and more information available at http://www.ccsrp.org

including a requirement to be "apolitical", among other conditions.[8] CSOs are required to be registered in some way in order to legally exist and carry out their work. CSO networks are however not required to be registered, though legal transactions must be performed via a registered member. *Groupements* (community-based organizations) and cooperatives, which are explained in a later section, register only with local authorities. That process is reportedly simple, but there are no centralized data on these entities. Given the diversity within the civil society sector, it is difficult to make generalized comments on all civil society organizations. The remarks in this section are largely based on findings related to the following four types of organizations, unless otherwise mentioned:

1. Human rights associations
2. Professional or interest-based associations with diverse objectives, including women's and youth CSOs
3. NGOs focused on development and/or humanitarian relief
4. CSO/NGO networks and coordination/support bodies.

The strongest and most visible CSOs in Chad are primarily human rights associations, according to broad consensus among the 50 informants interviewed. They emerged when the democratic space opened up in Chad in the early 1990s, have been well funded by donors, and are also reported by many informants to be among the CSOs most respected by the government. They are regularly invited by government to participate in consultative bodies or proceedings, and have influenced the passage of several key pieces of legislation, such as the law to protect Persons Living with HIV and AIDS and Law 001 on Petroleum Revenues. Supported by international partners, their objections to closures of private media outlets are reported to have resulted in the lifting of sanctions on several occasions. Four of the most prominent associations collaborate in one network (Collective of Human Rights Defense Associations - CADH), as well as being active members of various other coalitions. In addition to speaking out on human rights violations, conducting awareness raising on rights, and advocating on relevant legislation, each of these four has developed complementary programming that enables them to co-exist without serious conflict or duplication of effort.

General characteristics

The research showed that most CSOs have limited paid staff, whose salaries can fluctuate depending on available funding. Thus, CSOs rely heavily on volunteers to carry out both support functions and field activities. Women are relatively rare in managerial positions, as demonstrated by the number of male informants selected by CSOs to be interviewed by the assessment team. As is common in fledgling civil societies, informants agreed that the sector is dominated by dedicated leaders who drive the direction of their own organizations. There are difficulties with leadership styles and succession of such individuals, as well as conflicts among these potent personalities that sometimes result in divisions between organizations that should be closely collaborating.

A prominent and well-established Chadian CSO may typically have international donor funding and 15-25 staff and computers in cramped office space powered by ever-thrumming generators. There are an

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[8] "Criteria for Recognition of NGOs", posted 23 October 2008 on Government of Chad Ministry of Economy and Planning website, available at http://www.ecoplantd.org/Criteres-de-reconnaissance-des-ONG_a24.html

estimated 10-15 organizations operating on this level in the capital, with a handful of others based in other major cities. Meanwhile, less established urban-based CSOs would have 2-4 paid staff in a couple of sparsely furnished rooms, with little or no office equipment or regular access to Internet, and sporadic electricity supply. The existence of branches or other mechanisms to support operations in remote or rural areas varies widely and is greatly impacted by financial and human resource availability.

Resources

In terms of financial resources, urban civil society in Chad is largely dependent on international donors. Few organizations interviewed said they collected monetary contributions from their members or beneficiaries, and even fewer said they engaged in income generating activity. There are a few notable exceptions such as the Center of Research and Training for Development (CEFOD) that provides training services and sells publications to help cover their operational costs. While income generation by CSOs in Chad is legal, Chadian CSOs generally view the practice as foreign and even vaguely suspicious. As in other countries, the flow of donor funding for CSOs varies with the political and strategic priorities of the primary bilateral and multilateral donor agencies. The two most prominent funders of Chadian CSO activities as reported by interviewees are France and the European Union, while German and Swiss-funded initiatives also provide important resource flows as well as moral support to civil society in the face of government criticism.

A core group of 10-15 organizations based in N'djamena and working in the democracy and governance sector seem to be the recipients of a large proportion of donor funding to civil society. They typically have 4-8 different international donors and some of them have received funding for up to 10 years. Most informants indicated that women's organizations are at a disadvantage in terms of access to funding due to lower capacity, and that youth organizations have difficulty getting grants due to lack of experience and credibility. The humanitarian assistance sector is dominated by international organizations from N'djamena and especially Abéché, occasionally in partnership with Chadian organizations.

The government of Chad has allocated limited funding for CSO initiatives, mostly in the development sector or for one-off events such as World Free Press Day. In spite of wary relations, there is no evidence of any strong aversion among CSOs to receiving funds from the government; in fact, some interviewees had not considered the risks that this might entail for their independence, but were simply grateful for any financial support for their work. There is an apparent consensus among civil society and donors interviewed for this assessment that a number of CSOs exist only on paper or are formed in response to the government's financial "encouragement" and are thus seen as subject to control by the state. Relations between CSOs and government will be further discussed in Section IV.

> "There are two sides of civil society in Chad – one is created by government to make donors happy, and the other is really working and fighting for the people."
>
> "It can lead to confusion, but we know who the real CSOs are."
>
> Assessment interviewees

Public outreach and perceptions

N'djamena-based organizations are often accused of having a narrow constituency or membership base and minimal outreach outside of the capital. Although this seems to have been true of many CSOs in the past, in recent years the most active organizations have made concerted efforts to combat this shortcoming by expanding their programming and their support base well beyond the capital. The research showed that while a subset of CSOs continues to have a narrow geographical focus and support base, they tend to be those who are relatively new, poorly funded, inactive, and/or working in sectors where a significant constituency is not seen as a priority.

There are several notable examples of CSOs with extensive networks and/or members. The major faith-based organizations (Muslim, Catholic and Protestant)[9] have a wide reach through much of the country via churches, mosques and volunteers. Labor unions (notably the Syndicat des Unions) also have large membership representation in various regions. The umbrella body of women's organizations (Liaison and Information Unit of Women's Associations, known as CELIAF) and other CSO networks include members from various regions. A handful of the more established associations such as the Chadian League for Human Rights (LTDH) have satellite offices, projects and/or volunteers in several regions. Urban-based CSOs are increasingly making a genuine effort to extend their networks and/or programs to include populations in rural areas.

Nevertheless, it is telling that even villagers living very near to the capital have extremely limited knowledge of and contact with CSOs based in the city. Taking the example of Bakara, a mere half-hour drive from the city center, village residents reported that their only benefit from NGO activity had been in the form of support for the digging of water wells (three different international NGOs, over the space of 20 years). Their only other contact was via sporadic information on the radio about NGO programs, which never seemed to come to their village. The women had never heard of CELIAF, the most prominent women's CSO network, and had no knowledge of other women's CSOs operating in nearby N'djamena.

The country is vast, infrastructure is poor, and costs for travel and communication are high, all of which combine to constrain attempts at sustained outreach to rural areas and far-flung population centers by most CSOs – especially when needs are great in their immediate vicinity. Isolation is severe in rural areas, even in villages very near major cities such as Bakara. Roads are in poor condition, mobile phone coverage is variable, the post can take up to one month to deliver a letter, and access to the Internet is virtually non-existent outside of major urban areas. Few N'djamena–based CSOs have bilingual (French and Arabic) personnel according to informants; lack of bilingual staff hampers their ability to carry out networking, outreach and program activities in many areas, especially in the north and east of Chad. Thus, while laudable efforts are being made in recent years, the assessment found that much work remains to be done for civil society to overcome these challenges and reach out to the entire population of Chad.

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[9] The Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs (CSAI), Entente of Churches and Evangelical Missions in Chad (EEMET), and the Catholic Church through the National Peace and Justice Commission (CNJP).

C. Networking and Communications among CSOs

Considering the limited capacity and resources of civil society in Chad, there are a surprisingly large number of CSO networks in Chad, several of which have become project implementers themselves in addition to their role in uniting other CSOs. CELIAF, a women's CSO network, the youth CSO network REPPACT (Network for Promotion of Peace and Citizenship in Chad), and CADH, a network of human rights associations, are prominent examples. Others include the Independent Coalition for Free Elections (CIEL) and RESOCIT, which both focus on elections work, and Information and Liaison center for NGOs (CILONG), which unites and supports about 30 development NGOs. Networks have often coalesced around charismatic leaders, who in some cases have personal or professional

> "In Chad, every circumstance and opportunity is exploited to give birth to a network. Youth, old people, men, women, city residents, farmers, all try to organize around a structure to defend their interest and those of the population, according to the objectives that each one has in mind."
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> Translated from CEFOD newsletter Tchad et Culture, 17 June 2008)

disagreements that prevent collaboration or joining of these networks. According to informants, some networks or members are seen to have government allegiances; the resulting lack of credibility of those bodies has led to the creation of networks that sometimes have similar objectives to those already existing.

In spite of the potentially competing networks and coalitions, some informants feel that the divisions in civil society are exaggerated, and that for the most part there is solidarity and a high level of information sharing and collaboration. Others comment that the level of division is normal for civil society, and thus not a cause for concern. However, the factionalism does serve to weaken civil society, for example, when the government invites the involvement of certain organizations or networks in planning or monitoring bodies such as the CCSRP, the Poverty Reduction Strategy steering committee, and the multi-stakeholder group to monitor accession to EITI. Inevitably, some CSOs opt to participate in these bodies, while others opt out for fear of compromising their independence or reputation. Given that certain CSOs are already perceived as pro-government or pro-opposition, their participation in these government-endorsed bodies can be seen as further evidence of political leanings. This serves to deepen mistrust and foster divisions within the still-fragile civil society, and undermines the ability of CSOs to have influence on these bodies, particularly when some of the most powerful CSOs choose not to participate. A perfect recent example is the creation of RESOCIT, discussed in more detail below in relation to elections.

Collaboration among various types of CSOs, notably between associations, the private media and the unions, appears to be widespread, at least in the context of N'djamena. CSOs regularly take advantage of the reasonably priced services of private radio stations to conduct outreach to the population across the country. Some of the stations were actually founded by CSOs, and there are multiple CSO-created programs broadcast on a regular basis. The main human rights associations worked hand in hand with the private media to lobby for the lifting of media restrictions imposed in 2008, as described in more detail in the media section below. In a recent example, the CADH spoke out vehemently in defense of a popular independent newspaper that had been criticized publicly by the Prime Minister for an article that

allegedly incited hatred.[10] Some unions (notably the Syndicate of Unions and the Union of Journalists) are actively engaged in CSO coalitions such as the commissions for monitoring of petroleum revenues, Publish What You Pay, and CIEL, the primary election-related coalition.

Communications within the N'djamena-based CSO community are facilitated by a variety of platforms for regular exchanges and a plethora of networks and coalitions. Interpersonal links are strong among leading activists within specific sectors of focus, whose paths cross frequently within the context of N'djamena. However, our analysis indicated that many leaders and top managers do not have regular contacts with CSOs who are beyond their usual scope of activity – including those based outside the capital and those working in other sectors. The assessment noted that email communications can be problematic, even among those who have steady access in the workplace; email does not function well as a means of arranging meetings or securing information from even the most sophisticated N'djamena-based CSOs. Telephone contacts are more fruitful within the capital and beyond, but air time is expensive and most calls are limited to cursory exchanges of information. Especially in the case of making new contacts or establishing new relations, in-person visits are required in order to set up meetings or obtain information that could have been exchanged via telephone or email. Facilitation of communications by trusted intermediaries is often essential in this environment, according to the assessment experience and Chadian informants.

D. Civil Society in Rural Areas

Civil society in rural Chad consists of specific-purpose unregistered committees such as those the assessment team found in Bakara village – the water pump committee, women's committee, school committee – which unite a small group of residents to make decisions and represent the community on narrowly defined issues. There are also small groups of male elders that are consulted by traditional chiefs as needed to resolve disputes or make other major decisions. According to informants, the role of traditional leaders in decision-making is much more dominant in rural areas than in urban environments, and they are absolutely vital entry points to most rural communities, where people will simply not show up for meetings or activities if the chief does not summon them. In addition, the study showed that it is much easier for CSOs to gather a large percentage of the population (especially women) in a rural village than in an urban neighborhood thanks to the robust influence of the chiefs.

The next level of formal rural CSOs is "*groupement*" or community-based organization, which register with local government authorities. These CSOs tend to have wider community development objectives, but can also form around specific issues. Cooperatives are usually formed for joint promotion of economic activities, for example in cotton-growing areas. Generally financial and material resources are limited to those found in the community. The assessment identified several organizations in urban areas that work as support centers or linking services for rural groups, helping them to identify projects and reach out to donors or government to get them underway, but it is unclear how common this type of activity is. High costs and logistical constraints (transport and communications) are huge obstacles to

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[10] The prime minister's press release of 18 October 2010 is available at http://www.primature-tchad.org/. The response of the human rights associations was described by Tchadonline at http://tchadonline.com/%c2%ab-le-journal-ne-fait-que-relever-le-constat-connu-et-vecu-des-tchadiens-%c2%bb/

effective linkages between civil society in urban and rural areas, according to informants and observation by the assessment team.

Low literacy and lack of education make it more difficult for rural communities to access information about government and thus to monitor government activities. However, GRAMP-TC and other CSO groupings are actively informing and training communities affected by the petroleum industry to insist on their rights and to monitor government spending and activities in their communities. For example, they are developing information materials on budgets and public contracting that are suitable for local audiences, and establishing mechanisms for channeling grassroots concerns to the relevant government authorities. The concepts and skills required to monitor budgets and spending are complex, and there remains much work to be done to enable rural residents to participate in these areas. However, these community empowerment tools could be replicated by others and adapted to other purposes.

E. Civil Society in Northern and Eastern Chad

Both northern and eastern Chad are extremely isolated from N'djamena and the relatively active CSO scene in the southern part of the country; it is difficult and prohibitively expensive for citizens and groups in the North and East to link with national government, donors and other CSOs based in the distant capital. Some informants reported that civil society activism is much less common in the north of Chad. Northern organizations emerged with a focus on community development. As civil society became increasingly engaged in the promotion of democratic processes, northern organizations initially appeared to join the trend. However, societal and political pressures in the more tribal context of the north and resistance to "southern" ideas (i.e. positions advanced by people and organizations not originating in the north or east of Chad, such as campaigns against female genital mutilation) have led them to refocus on service delivery rather than engaging in sensitive political issues, according to some informants. Networking and participation in democratic processes such as voting is generally more difficult in the north since the population is so dispersed.

Eastern Chad is host to large populations of refugees and displaced Chadians and continues to be extremely unstable and thus it presents a rather different civil society picture than the other regions of the country. Due to the need for humanitarian assistance for those populations, there is a heavy presence of international NGOs who are based in Abéché with many of them providing services to displaced residents of distant camps. MINURCAT also has its peacekeeping headquarters in Abéché. This international presence has reportedly affected life in the Abéché area in many ways, generating some employment but also boosting the cost of living and contributing to increases in crime and HIV infection rates.

Informants in Abéché described a deep-seated distrust of "southerners" and other Chadians who are not originally from the eastern region, who are seen as having very different cultural norms and standards, which hampers the work of CSOs from the capital trying to extend their operations to the east. A number of Chadian CSOs with a foothold in Abéché have formed a "Circle of NGOs" in order to enhance solidarity and information sharing in a rather hostile and insecure environment. It is reported that regional government authorities openly describe human rights associations as worthless liars (some even consider them spokesmen for rebel groups) and view international NGO representatives as

troublemakers or even spies. This is more problematic for CSOs in the east than in other regions, since the unstable security situation means that cooperation with local authorities is essential for organizing activities outside of Abéché. At the same time, involvement of local authorities in CSO programming can have adverse reactions among the population, who do not trust the authorities. The Chadian CSOs reported that they have had the benefit of a series of training sessions organized by international NGOs (INGOs), but other collaboration between international and Chadian civil society is apparently limited, and access to donor funding is difficult for those without a base in the capital.

F. Women in Civil Society

Chad is among the most difficult places in the world to be female. Female life expectancy at birth is 49.9 years and the female adult literacy rate is a mere 20.8%. In addition, Chad ranks among the least equitable countries in the world in studies that examine the gaps between men and women. The gender assessment conducted by the PEACE Program found that Chadian women's access to power and formal decision-making authority is severely limited at all levels, from community to the national stage, with their role being largely informal and consultative in nature. Consistently, and almost unanimously, informants stated that the most important variable affecting women's access to resources and decision-making was their education level.

Low education levels and lack of self-esteem are seen as primary reasons why women occupy very few managerial and leadership roles in civil society. Additionally, domestic responsibilities and general societal expectations constrain women's participation in political life. Language also presents a barrier to women's participation in the broader civil society and even among women's organizations. According to informants, Arabic speaking women's organizations are more marginalized than other women's organization since many training workshops and other events in Chad and the region are conducted in French and relevant information is often available only in French. Despite these challenges, however, a few women have managed to transcend barriers and assume leadership posts, and several leading CSOs are headed by women.

Women are particularly active within women-focused organizations. Though traditionally under-resourced, women's organizations are highly organized and coordinated, largely thanks to CELIAF, a network that unites more than 400 constituent organizations that coordinate activities. CELIAF is represented in various governmental and mixed government-civil society bodies, such as the CCSRP monitoring the oil sector and the Economic and Social Council, as well as a range of civil society networks where it energetically advances the voice of women.

Women's organizations in Chad are recognized as having a highly developed capacity to mobilize their constituent organizations and beneficiaries. Historically, they have focused on service provision and awareness-raising activities, and these remain core strengths. With regard to the upcoming elections, women's organizations have been heavily involved in disseminating information, raising awareness, and conducting civic education campaigns, particularly among women and youth.

Beyond raising awareness, the role that women's organizations play in promoting fair elections, government accountability and civic engagement is limited. In recent years, the capacity of women's

CSOs to conduct advocacy and promote government accountability has improved, but is still somewhat nascent. Despite some notable successes in influencing the passage of legislation, women activists identified advocacy skills as an area in which they need more training. Other specific priorities for capacity building include coalition building, gender budgeting, public speaking, and strategic planning.

A particular strength of this subsector of civil society is the fact that women's groups are viewed as largely independent, and less politicized than other CSOs. Women's civil society organizations have largely avoided polarization and staked out the territory in the middle, which combined with the requisite skills and grassroots support could be parlayed into a unique advantage in terms of productive linkages with government and advocacy on behalf of women and the broader society. There was widespread consensus among respondents that women's civil society activism is significant and productive.

G. Youth in Civil Society

Youth, defined here as including the large segment of the population that is aged from adolescence to age 35, is on the surface very active in civil society in Chad. There is a wide range of CSOs and several networks in N'djamena and beyond that have been founded by youth to focus primarily on youth interests. However, as described above, youth CSOs suffer from fast turnover of volunteers and leaders, which hampers their development and credibility. Informants from youth CSOs suggested that youth organizations discriminated against by donors who are reluctant to "give them a chance" with their limited track record. Those without backing from faith-based organizations (a number of the most prominent youth CSOs are religiously affiliated) appear to have few resources to sustain them.

According to informants, youth CSOs find it difficult to mobilize their members and constituencies for so-called serious events; they have to be creative and develop strategies for getting across messages on issues of concern (HIV/AIDS, National Youth Policy, etc.) within the context of entertaining events that will attract a broad participation of young people. Otherwise, youth will not turn out for activities, unless some financial assistance can be provided to at least cover their costs of participation.

Youth is only marginally involved in decision-making structures and processes in rural communities, and thus is constrained in their ability to develop important skills from an early age by learning from their elders in such forums. Informants indicated that there is a tendency for youth to be confined to "youth committees" or other structures specifically focused on youth, and their engagement in wider civil society and credibility on that level is therefore limited. Even if a youth CSO wishes to engage in broader societal issues, they are often given a lesser role by fellow CSO leaders. That may be at least partially because of the perception expressed among various informants that youth CSOs are more susceptible to government influences (both incentives and threats), and thus less independent. Youth representation on national-level bodies tends to be limited, and is often hand-picked by the government.

A leading actor in the advancement of youth in civil society is REPPACT, a national network formed in 2005 that loosely unites 15 youth CSOs from both Muslim and Christian faiths, providing training and a platform for advocacy on shared priorities. Advocacy to date has been on issues such as the National Youth Policy and guarantees for freedom of movement of citizens, on which the government has agreed to engage in dialogue but no real change has yet been achieved. However, there is considerable energy in

this grouping that could be harnessed to good effect with the appropriate types of support. The members of the network have received training from EISA[11] and plan to be involved in observation of the elections in 2011.

Women are even less likely to be active members or leaders among youth CSOs because unmarried women in Chad are discouraged from openly expressing their views. Young women are often occupied with homemaking duties from a young age, and thus have much less free time to engage in volunteer activities or other CSO events. Young women reported having less time and interest in listening to "political" broadcasts on the radio, which in any event are often seen to be "men's business". A focus group of young women in N'djamena explained that girls only have a voice in families where education is valued. Even in a women-only focus group in Bakara village, the women under age 30 were notably reticent and only spoke when directly solicited to do so. Early marriage and dropping out of school (especially acute in rural areas) hinder the educational advancement of young women, who are said to have low self-esteem and often struggle to overcome the social and cultural norms that inhibit their vocal participation in activities outside the home and family sphere.

H. Private Media as Part of Civil Society

Independent or private radio coverage in multiple locales and languages reaches an estimated 70% of the population, while state radio coverage is an estimated 85% of the population with gaps primarily in the north, according to informants. Informants claim that "everyone" in Chad has access to a radio, either in their household or via listening clubs. Our research has shown conclusively that radio is the most effective mass media for information generation on democracy, voting, and local governance, especially when the coverage of state, international and local private radio stations are combined. There are an estimated 26 commercial and non-profit radio stations currently operating in the country, many of the latter run on a volunteer basis. These private stations have a broadcast radius ranging from 150 to 300 kilometers, depending on their equipment. Leading radio stations with a social focus, some of which were created by civil society organizations, include FM Liberté, Radio Brakos, Radio Lotiko, La Voix du Paysan and GenARDIS, as well as Radio Kaiba in Moundou.

> "The state of mass media in Chad is influenced by the lack of a telecommunications and transportation infrastructure, among other factors. As a result, radio is the dominant information medium."
>
> Radio: The Key to Communicating with Chadians, Audience Scapes 2010.

Informants estimated that only about 20% of Chadians have access (physical and financial) to print media. Nevertheless, newspapers provide an important supplementary source of more in-depth information for Chadians with even modest levels of literacy. A number of independent political and human rights publications exist including the N'Djamena Bi-Hebdo, Le Progres, Le Courrier, L'Observateur, Carrefour, Le Temps, Chronique and La Lettre (the latter two being newsletters of CSOs).

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[11] The involvement of EISA in training of CSOs on election-related subjects is detailed later in this report.

The government kept a close eye on private media for two years following the February 2008 attacks on N'djamena, imposing a regime of de facto censorship (known as Regulation or Decree No. 5) that included prison terms up to three years for false news, defamation, and insulting the president, and other restrictive measures.[12] These limits were only recently relaxed after extended lobbying by the media supported by Reporters without Borders.[13] The Haut Conseil de Communications (HCC) exercises control over most private radio broadcasts (see below for more information), while private newspapers are regularly criticized by government leaders or taken to court. A new press law was adopted in August 2010[14] to regulate the sector, and while some recommendations of journalist groups were taken into account, imprisonment remains a penalty for certain vaguely worded offenses.

Many of those working as journalists in Chad have not had the benefit of professional training, salaries are low, and capacity gaps are significant according to informants. Investigative journalism and monitoring of government is very limited – private media reports that it simply does not have the financial or human resources. However, close links between human rights associations and other CSOs with better access to information and expertise on complex issues enable media outlets to broadcast programs that effectively raise awareness among the population. Private media is being allowed to fully cover the elections for the first time ever in 2011 according to informants, and both local and international stakeholders have recognized the urgent need to clarify rules and best practices for media regulation in election processes, as well as provide training and support for media outlets and journalists (and responsible government agencies) to ensure that problems are minimized.

I. Strengths and Weaknesses of Civil Society Organizations

The assessment's informants were consistent in their views of the primary strengths of the organized civil society movement in Chad:

- *Commitment and dedication to their cause*. CSOs have proved resilient despite a sometimes hostile environment. In the past this has included threats and physical attacks against activists, although this has decreased over the past two years.
- *Relatively high profile and institutional development*. The level of organizational development and contacts of *a core group of CSOs* mean that the government takes them seriously and include them to a certain extent in dialogue and policy-making bodies. Civil society became much more credible in the public's eyes due to their vital role in achieving the August 13th Accords, which were a crucial step towards peace in the country.
- *Generally reliable and accountable*. According to informants, the public generally trusts civil society to tell the truth and deliver on promises (though this was not verified among the general public by the assessment). CSOs are especially favored to serve as trusted interlocutors in the area of conflict resolution among population groups such as nomadic herders and farmers.
- *Strong understanding of local context*. Civil society is generally seen as having a clear understanding of the needs of the populace and the best approaches to resolve problems, based on its close links

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[12] Freedom House, Freedom in the World Report 2010, available at
http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&year=2010&country=7799
[13] Reporters without Borders website article, August 19, 2010, available at http://en.rsf.org/chad-parliement-adopts-new-media-law-19-08-2010,38183.html
[14] Law No. 17 of 2010.

with communities and community leaders and use of participatory methods.   However, informants also explained that this was not necessarily true of all CSOs (details below).

- *Well-functioning platforms for collaboration and coordination*. Civil society facilitates communication through civil society networks, coalitions, committees and umbrella bodies – though there is no single entity that brings together all CSOs.
- *Dedicated and Committed staff*. Many informants mentioned the high quality and commitment characteristic of the key players in civil society; they were often favorably compared to government officials in terms of competence. The study results indicate that there is a committed and well-educated cadre of Chadian managers and leaders who have worked in the sector for years and are well-respected and skilled. This core group of activists does suffer some turnover; however, their gradual but increasing placement in senior government positions is widely seen as an asset, as it means more allies in the government. Additionally, Chadian CSOs are aided by a large number of volunteers, whose hard work and dedication help to offset the operation expenses for many CSOs.

On the other hand, there was also widespread agreement among CSOs themselves as well as other stakeholders regarding the primary weaknesses facing civil society in Chad, notably:

- *Internal divisions among CSOs*. A diverse array of alliances and disagreements among groups prevents civil society from speaking with one voice on vital issues and hampers coordination. Interestingly, most claim that there is still an underlying solidarity among the genuinely independent CSOs that outweighs superficial divisions within the community.
- *Lack of financial resources.* This factor limits programmatic and geographic reach, especially since the cost of operations in Chad is very high. Reliance on a major external donor can provide protection from government backlash, but it can also translate into a lack of independence and ability to speak out confidently on important issues. Financial vulnerability also leads to high staff turnover and excessive reliance on volunteers, which can lead to serious setbacks in small organizations without robust internal systems.
- *Limited grassroots-level awareness*. This is especially true in rural or remote areas, diminishing CSOs' ability to effectively engage and mobilize the population at large, and resulting in approaches and programs that may not always adequately respond to the needs of the population.
- *Ineffectual organizational management.* Weaknesses in financial and project management create difficulties in securing and maintaining support of donors, effectively implementing projects, and ensuring that financial and human resources are optimally used. For example, time management, scheduling and maintaining clear priorities were cited as challenges for busy CSO managers.
- *Lack of professionalism among CSO staff.* While volunteers enable many CSOs to supplement the work of their paid staff, reliance on volunteers (who in general lack training and experience) is a key factor in why CSOs can be viewed as lacking professionalism. This is exacerbated by volunteer turnover, which weakens institutional memory in CSOs.   As one informant commented, "Volunteering can only last so long when there is a family to feed."
- *High turnover among program staff:* Informants say that some of the best technical staff and managers are inevitably lured away to more steady and/or lucrative work, for example with the UN or international NGOs. Feeble internal systems for management of information, delegation and skill-sharing mean that these personnel changes deal a serious blow to organizations that generally operate with a minimal staff.

In addition to the above-mentioned assets and liabilities that emerged consistently among informants, a less-mentioned but crucial external factor in the development of the CSO sector in Chad over the past 20 years has been a relatively open political space and legal environment in which to operate. While there have been ups and downs since the change in government in 1990, including threats and physical attacks against activists as well as more subtle disincentives, by and large civil society has been allowed to operate in relative freedom. The environment has been especially stable and permissive since the 2007 Accords were reached, with the notable exception of reported reprisals related to the 2008 rebel attacks on N'djamena. Thereafter, the private media was also placed under strict limitations, which were not relaxed until passage of the new law on the press in August 2010 as described above. In fact, the considerable latitude allowed to civil society activism and the private media is somewhat surprising in the Chadian context, given the generally controlled political environment.

J. Capacity Building Priorities

The assessment team found that most prominent CSOs based in the capital had benefited from a considerable amount of donor-funded training and other capacity building over the years, including through Chadian support organizations such as CILONG. Some outside N'djamena have also had training opportunities, though coverage is mostly limited to Abéché and major population centers in the south, notably Moundou. However, due to the above-noted challenges to maintaining staff and volunteers and sharing knowledge, as well as the ongoing expansion of the sector, the study found that the overall needs for capacity-building were still significant. The following priorities for capacity building initiatives emerged from the assessment:

- *Financial management.* There was a unanimous view among CSOs and other informants that low capacity in financial management causes frequent problems in managing funds and reporting, leading to mistakes, mistrust and potential theft.

- *Advocacy.* CSOs are keen to increase their involvement in advocacy as a means of achieving long-lasting systemic change. Many expressed a need for better advocacy skills and strategies in order to achieve greater influence. Human rights associations are more skilled and experienced in this area, and also more credible; they could share valuable lessons with others engaging in advocacy.

- *Public mobilization.* Inability to mobilize the population to participate in programs and especially to support advocacy campaigns was regularly noted during the study as a weak point. The consensus is that past crackdowns by security forces on mass demonstrations have sufficiently terrified the majority of people, who fear that participation in any number of public activities may expose them to danger.. CSOs need help to devise creative methods of mass awareness raising and mobilization that can gradually overcome people's reservations. Although Internet access remains very much confined to urban elites, the rapidly expanding network of mobile phone services could be conducive to the use of SMS-based petitions or other similar tools.

- *Monitoring and evaluation.* There is insufficient monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity and practice throughout the civil society sector. The assessment found that there is an overall inability

to monitor projects and clearly quantify results. A good example of this is that most CSOs could not provide gender breakdowns for participants and communities served, even at the activity level. Moreover, CSOs were seldom able to point to concrete needs assessment data to support their identification of projects, which could result in a "disconnect" from the population that they are trying to serve. Logical frameworks are cited by donors as one of the most challenging aspects of proposal development for Chadian CSOs, particularly the identification of suitable indicators to measure change.

- *Project design and proposal writing.* CSOs seeking grants from international donors or agencies lack sufficient skills to meet donor requirements in terms of completion of proposal formats and supporting documents.[15] Grant-makers consistently need to provide extra support to enable applicants to meet requirements, and long time frames are needed for CSOs to be able to develop their proposals. These skills require both in-depth understanding of the targeted problems and proposed solutions and a technical capacity in completion of proposal formats, including budgets. Women's CSOs in particular struggle to develop competitive proposals, as noted by the gender assessment. CILONG is one important service provider that offers both general training on this subject as well as workshops related to specific donor calls for proposals.

- *Networking and coalition-building.* As noted above, civil society organizations and networks in Chad suffer from difficulties in forming and sustaining collaborative relationships over time. Most informants agreed that capacity-building in strategies and techniques for networking and formation and operation of coalitions (both short and long term) was a high priority.

IV. Relationship between civil society and government

A. Links and Collaboration

According to informants, the prevailing attitude among national and local government officials is one of suspicion of independent civil society, which manifests itself in a pronounced inclination towards control and against sharing of information. However, there are indications that relations are improving and incidents of CSO threats and intimidation are on the decline, especially since the 2007 Accords. Civil society was instrumental in helping the government resolve the 2008 crisis when rebel forces attacked the capital, which further bolstered their credentials with the government. There are a number of ex-civil society activists now in prominent positions in government that are seen as sympathetic to civil society.

> "After 20 years alongside the current President, there is a sense that everything has been tried, yet very little has changed."
>
> Assessment Interview

CSOs are steadily gaining credibility and are increasingly invited by government to participate in multi-stakeholder bodies as mentioned above, though sometimes it is at the insistence of donors. Their

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[15] A couple of well-established CSOs cited times when they actually contracted European consultants to assist them with writing proposals (to the EU in particular) in order to have a chance of success.

competence and constituencies are being recognized as valuable resources by the government, which in some cases requests and relies on information from respected CSOs such as GRAMP-TC. One government informant even stated that the role of CSOs as an interface between the population and elections organizers was vital. The government reportedly respects the three or four most prominent human rights associations, and some informants in civil society even say that the government "fears" those associations, based on cases where the government has agreed to publicly stated demands. The relationship with the big labor unions is tense, as they are powerful and often considered by government to be aligned with the opposition. The role of CSOs is particularly appreciated in the resolution of conflicts between pastoral herders and sedentary farmers, as the government has struggled to gain sufficient trust on both sides to intervene effectively and mediate such disputes. In summary, the assessment found that there is a sense of willingness on both sides to take the relationship forward, though also a great deal of wariness among all stakeholders.

Development-oriented NGOs regularly collaborate closely with the ministries and government departments most relevant to their specific sector of work – such as the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health. Examples include the National Food Security project, and initiatives for protection of the environment. In relation to promotion of human rights, the Ministry of Human Rights in particular demonstrates an open and collaborative approach to civil society, but informants claim that it lacks real authority and resources to implement its programs or collaborate with civil society on shared objectives. That Ministry heads up an Inter-Ministerial Committee that includes human rights associations and unions in the preparation of country reports on the situation of human rights in Chad.

B. Challenges in Civil Society-government Relations

As mentioned above, civil society has allegedly been subjected to intimidation and manipulation by the government over the two decades of its existence. In the past, there were many cases of threats and false arrests as well as physical attacks against activists that are widely believed (though not proven) to be government-ordered. There were also cases of information campaigns on state media designed to discredit a certain CSO or network among the population. These incidents have led to a certain amount of fear among civil society leaders, who according to some informants have become less outspoken against government and less inclined to engage on sensitive issues, whether consciously or otherwise.

In recent times, such overt measures against civil society have been rare, but according to our assessment they have been replaced by more subtle pressure tactics. Informants report that government now uses various strategies for "co-opting" leaders or entire CSOs whom it sees as a threat and thus either bringing them into the government sphere of influence or at the very least sowing the seeds of distrust among civil society activists. Methods can include direct or indirect financial support to CSOs, inclusion of leaders in government-led bodies, appointment of outspoken leaders to government positions, and creation of coalitions or groupings that are destined to divide - while appearing on the surface to be a unifying effort. Some prominent CSOs say that they have responded to these moves by limiting their collaboration to a few trusted partners, and resisting involvement in some bodies created by the government. A recent example of this kind of situation is RESOCIT, a CSO network initiated in 2010 by the CENI as a means of coordinating civil society work on the elections scheduled for the first half of 2011.

Some government informants expressed a certain envy of the financial resources made available to civil society. From their side, civil society complains that government is too bureaucratic and slow to act, has many incompetent officials whose appointment was not merit-based, and is plagued by corruption, as shown by officials regularly seeking kickbacks in exchange for their cooperation with CSOs.

Government is still very centralized in Chad, thus regional and local authorities have little latitude in terms of policy-making, and are seen to toe the line of the central government. At the local authority level (préfets, sous-préfets), there is a marked lack of awareness and appreciation of the role of civil society, which can lead them to prevent CSOs from accessing communities[16]. Sometimes informants indicate that the motivation of local leaders is to extract some form of compensation from the CSO who wishes to work in the communities, but other times it is simply distrust or fear of the unknown and possible negative repercussions from higher level authorities. Some CSOs admit to "slipping in" activities related to more sensitive topics such as elections within the wider context of development projects that are not seen as threatening by local authorities, in order to get around these constraints. Organizations based in the immediate area generally have an easier time than those coming from afar, who must work harder to develop the necessary trust. Traditional chiefs will generally cooperate with CSOs if not prevented by local authorities, and if their predominant role is given due respect. If relationships are cultivated with care and respect, and courtesy visits are paid to all the appropriate authorities, in most cases CSOs report that they are able to gain access to communities to carry out their work.

Overall, the risk of government imposing severe restrictions on civil society (such as new registration regimes or taxes on grants, as has been done in other countries) is seen as minimal by informants; most believe that the relatively high profile and level of development achieved by civil society, combined with steady support from the international community, offer sufficient protection against any such sweeping moves.

V. Civil society and elections

A. Civil Society Experience in Elections

While a select few CSOs were involved in the 1996 elections, the first significant civil society engagement occurred in the 2001 election period, which saw "a dynamic participation of CSOs as observers and watchdogs during the electoral process" according to one informant. The Independent National Observatory for Monitoring of Electoral Processes and Democracy (ONIPED) united a number of interested civil society organizations and trained 1000 observers for the 2001 elections. Following pressure UNDP, ONIPED's observers

> "For the first time in Chad's history, there is truly an opportunity for people to select their deputies and gain some control over their resources. Better educated, with access to television and the radio, messages have an opportunity to be easily disseminated."
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> Assessment Interview

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[16] While not legally required in most cases, it is generally accepted practice among CSOs to seek the informal approval of local government authorities before conducting activities in communities under their authority. If not obtained, the local authorities may instruct the village chief not to cooperate with the activity or be otherwise obstructive.

were accredited by the CENI, and the ONIPED observers logged many complaints and published a long list of cases of electoral fraud[17]. Although most complaints were not acknowledged by the Constitutional Court, ONIPED's work did lead to the invalidation of the votes of Chadians living in Sudan, which had allegedly been distorted by authorities. Civic education by civil society was reportedly discouraged by the regime by repressive tactics such as arrests and accusations against CSOs, and ONIPED's efforts in that area were limited by lack of funds.

The 2006 elections were held under turbulent political and security conditions, which ultimately led to a boycott by the political opposition and reportedly low voter turnout[18]. Chadian CSOs did not fully engage in the electoral process because demands by them and others for an independent CENI, free press coverage and broad-based independent election monitoring were not met by the government. International monitoring of the elections was very limited, and assessment sources indicate that no independent Chadian CSO observers were deployed.

For the upcoming Parliament, Presidential and local elections, now scheduled for the first half of 2011, a large and diverse set of civil society organizations and networks have decided to engage in the process, in activities ranging from voter education, mobilization for voter registration (already completed), observation of the registration process, and observation of the elections themselves. The breadth of interest is probably motivated to some extent by the funds that are being made available by a variety of international donors to support election-related activities, including civic education. The realistic objective expressed by most CSOs is not necessarily a free and fair election process, but they are hoping for a measurable improvement in the fairness of the election process as a small step forward for democracy in Chad.

B. Role and Experience in Civic and Voter Education

The majority of Chadians have low expectations for the upcoming election cycle; many assessment contacts both within and outside of civil society expressed apathy and/or pessimism about the 2011 elections. The distinct lack of enthusiasm has even been unofficially recognized by election authorities. Youth, in particular, were outspoken in their belief that "our votes don't matter" or the "outcome is already decided." This is especially true with regard to the presidential election. Interest in the local or communal elections seems greater, though citizens were often unaware that those elections were going to take place. Voter registration numbers are not yet available, but in any event, they may not reflect genuine interest in voting – a number of informants indicated that they had registered but would not necessarily vote. Voter registration among women was reported by informants to be low, particularly in the east, though official data is not yet available. In this context, extensive civic education will clearly be required in order to mobilize voters and try to ensure a more informed vote. The role of civil society will be indispensable in light of limited government capacity.

Experience in design and delivery of general civic education is widespread among interviewed CSOs and networks, including media outlets, unions and religious organizations; their capacity is reportedly high overall although the actual quality of activities and materials have not been assessed by this study. In terms of elections awareness raising and voter education, capacity and experience are not as deep because

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[17] Elections Présidentielles du 20 mai 2001: Rapport Général d'Observation" ONIPED, June 2001
[18] "Voting ends in Chad's elections", BBC News, 3 May 2006, available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4967594.stm

of the time that has elapsed since the last elections in which CSOs were broadly engaged (2002) and the above-noted gaps in organizational knowledge management. However, CSOs are very motivated to participate; many have a base of civic education trainers and methodologies that can be adapted to voter education, and there is a wide variety of existing materials, including training manuals and brochures.

Notwithstanding those ambitious plans, so far resources seem far from adequate to support voter outreach and observation activities across the country – many CSOs are still waiting for funding requests to be granted by donors before finalizing their plans. Among the major players, CELIAF already has a national civic education program underway targeting women and youth, and the Association for Promotion of Fundamental Freedoms in Chad (APLFT) and LTDH are actively promoting electoral participation, including in the eastern region. CIEL has some funding in hand and is in the course of allocating election-related activities and resources among its members, by region and by activity type; some will focus on voter and civic education, others on observation and monitoring activities, depending on their interests and capacity.

Due to high rates of illiteracy, certain cost-effective information dissemination methods (brochures, information posters, newsletters) have limited efficacy in Chad. Training of trainers has faced special challenges in this context, since written materials are of limited use. Language is another barrier to communications, especially in Arabic or other non-French speaking communities that have minimal access to information, even if they have literate members/leaders. More than 120 languages are spoken in Chad, complicating efforts to spread information and build grassroots capacity.[19]

Radio is unanimously favored among informants as the best mass media for communicating election-related messages, given its relatively low cost, up to 85% coverage of the population, and ease of translation of information to local languages. Radio is considered the only feasible mass media in the eastern region, where the INGO Internews is working with local authorities to ensure free flow of information and to minimize interference with radio broadcasting during elections. Internews also hopes to offer election-related training to locally based journalists in that region, if funding is secured.

However, it is important to note that rural as well as urban women insist that "live" information sessions in their communities are vastly preferable to ensure real and lasting awareness. That type of hands-on activity is time-consuming and expensive in a country as large as Chad, but is required to effectively convey complex information in addition to "remote" methods such as radio or printed materials. Theater and entertaining dramatic sketches are similarly labor-intensive, but considered by informants to be among the most impactful methods of transmitting civic education messages, particularly among youth.

Radio program formats used by CSOs and the private media include dramatic sketches, but are often in the form of debates or interviews. Some interactive features are used such as call-in shows, which are growing in popularity. Private and state radio stations are used in combination to achieve the widest possible coverage of the country. Television is seen as effective in limited areas, but prohibitively expensive therefore rarely used by CSOs.

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[19] CIA World Factbook, 2010

C. Role and Experience in Elections Observation

There is a modest base of knowledge about elections observation and analysis among currently active CSOs due to the gap of eight years since their last (limited) involvement. In preparation for this cycle of elections, 200 people from 64 diverse civil society organizations have been trained as trainers by EISA with European Union funding; they were expected to conduct observation of the voter registration process during 2010. Most did not have donor funds to carry out that activity, and none has produced reports to date, so it is unclear how extensive the observation activities were. Some members of the CIEL network were active in observing the registration process, and they indicate that those reports will be released soon – once the CENI releases their registration data.

EISA is the international organization with the most substantial programming in the field of elections in Chad. EISA plans to mobilize the 200 trainers mentioned above to train up to 5000 observers for the elections, with participants to be nominated by the same 64 CSOs. That list of CSOs includes a mix of organizations, some generally seen as independent and others not; about half are members of RESOCIT.

Thanks to these and other ongoing efforts, a core group of civil society activists in Chad has had the opportunity to develop a solid foundation of skills and knowledge that can now be spread further and utilized to good effect in election-related activities in the coming months. Although civil society is poised to take the initiative and mobilize volunteers to carry out education and observation activities, their ability to implement the kind of extensive outreach that is required in the current Chadian context will be constrained without significant donor funding. Several donors anticipate funding civil society observation activities (EISA does not plan to fund observation), but specific information on amounts, recipients and geographic coverage is not yet available.

D. Relationship with CENI and Relevant Government Authorities

There is a high level of interest among CSOs in conducting election-related activities, including coordination and, if possible, collaboration with CENI. Such collaboration has already included some civic education for the voter registration process, and could extend to observation of actual polls and other direct support to the election process. However, few interviewees are involved in RESOCIT, the CSO network created by CENI. It is unclear whether this abstention will prevent them from being accredited by CENI to observe the elections – there are indications that the CENI is not keen on accrediting large numbers of observer missions. One human rights association takes the view that accreditation is not strictly required in order for them to exercise their right to observe and report on their observations; it remains to be seen how that plays out.

The Permanent Elections Bureau (BPE), the technical unit within the government that serves to support CENI in implementation of elections, welcomes the broadest possible participation of civil society in the elections. As a newly created body, they have informally consulted with well-established CSOs such as LTDH in order to better understand the perspectives of civil society and the public on the looming elections. However, they have no authority to accredit or otherwise engage with CSOs during the election cycle, and very limited resources.

Another relevant government body is the High Council for Communications or HCC, already mentioned above, which is an autonomous administrative entity that is charged with regulating all mass media in Chad.[20] While the state and private media are represented on the governing board of the HCC and the mandate highlights protection of freedom of the press, the assessment found that the focus is more on keeping the media in line. The study found that enforcing the limits to freedom of the press is expected to be the priority, especially during the upcoming elections cycle. The HCC will have the authority to summarily suspend the operations of radio stations that it believes have violated regulations on election coverage (such as announcing partial results), who can then appeal to the courts for the right to re-commence broadcasting.

The HCC is working with the media and political parties to develop a Code of Good Conduct for Elections Coverage that will presumably assist in understanding the rules to be followed and the applicable remedies. CSOs and private media outlets are both considered responsible for seeking the appropriate approvals for election-related programming before it is published or broadcast, which could constitute a significant burden (and entail delays) for both civil society and the HCC.

E. CSO Collaboration on Elections

Unfortunately, the recently established network called RESOCIT is viewed by almost all informants as ineffective due to its excessive size of 150 members, the inclusion of inexperienced and/or inactive organizations, the lack of shared vision among the members, the cumbersome coordinating body of 32 members, and the lack of independence due to its creation by and (so far) reliance on CENI for funding. The view among civil society and other informants is generally that there has been "no value added" by the creation of this grouping, and some feel it could have a negative impact. There can be no doubt that it has muddied the waters of civil society engagement in the 2011 elections. Donors have not been inclined to fund its activities, so it may be destined to the sidelines – which could still have the side-effect of reducing the overall engagement of civil society in the upcoming elections. CENI's plans for civil society involvement in the next steps of the election are not well defined at the time of the assessment. Many informants opined that RESOCIT should not be involved in election observation as it could not be truly independent.

Certain well-established and credible CSOs have opted to participate in RESOCIT, in spite of reservations. As one of them put it: "You have to be there" in order to know what is going on – far from a wholehearted endorsement. LTDH is one prominent example of those who have joined RESOCIT, and they are represented by long-time LTDH leader and current president of CIEL, who has even accepted the role of co-chair of RESOCIT. Other CSOs have chosen not to engage with the network for fear of compromising their independence. In spite of RESOCIT drawbacks, it may well be able to play a useful role in terms of information sharing and coordination of election-related activities among a large number of CSOs. However, it may also pose a real challenge to civil society organizations who wish to independently engage in election-related activity, and who wish to join forces to ensure free and fair elections, especially if CENI refuses to cooperate with and accredit those who are not part of the network.

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[20] The HCC is an independent body foreseen by the Chadian constitution. It is responsible for guaranteeing freedom of information and communications, and is composed of nine members or councilors, three of them nominated by media and arts professionals, and the remained political appointees. Its composition and operations are governed by Law No. 19/PR/2003 modified by Order No. 11/PR/2008 as well as internal regulations.

There are currently four other networks (CIEL, RALCOSA, ROSCIAPE and RAPPEL)[21] working on elections in addition to RESOCIT. Each of these four networks is characterized by a dynamic leader who has assembled his allies; relations among them are competitive and sometimes tense, according to informants. The three major faith-based organizations were not considered eligible for inclusion in RESOCIT and are thus exploring the possibility of joining forces to mount their own observation mission, which could take advantage of their impressive combined outreach capacity.

VI. Civil society and dispute prevention and resolution

As briefly noted in the introductory section, Chad suffers from a complex set of armed conflicts involving rebel groups, unsecured borders and unstable relations with some neighboring countries. The assessment, however, focused primarily on the engagement and potential role for Chadian CSOs in mitigating community-level or inter-community conflict, especially as those might arise or increase in the context of elections.

Most informants believe there is a low chance of violent conflict or uprisings directly related to the upcoming elections, primarily because expectations for actual change are low (especially in the case of presidential elections since there are no longer any term limits and no serious opponents), and trust in politicians is very low. Informants in rural areas commented that they are "all the same, make promises then go away and nothing happens"). Communal or municipal elections could incite the most emotions since they have not been held before and are closer to community issues. Religious tensions seem to be fairly low; no informants of the assessment mentioned religious differences as a potential flashpoint for violence.[22] National faith-based organizations have established regular collaborative links through regular dialogue, and are making a concerted effort to keep relations peaceful among their followers.

In the east of the country, informants do not expect violence to erupt at a popular level, given that expectations for change are if anything even lower in that region than elsewhere in the country, due to the predominance of the ruling MPS (Mouvement Patriotique de Salut) party. However, some informants fear that rebel groups could "sabotage" the elections out of frustration with the virtual one-party state that exists in the eastern region. Opinions on the ground are mixed regarding the potential impact of MINURCAT's impending withdrawal on regional security; some appreciate the effect of the UN-mandated peacekeeping mission, while others believe that the new Chadian-Sudanese forces will be more effective.

While communities in Chad, especially in rural areas, generally have traditional conflict management systems in place, non-violence and dialogue are not necessarily familiar concepts. In some areas, conflict is

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[21] Respectively, the Coalition Indépendante pour Les Elections Libres (CIEL); the Reseau des Acteurs Libres de la Societe Civile, des Organisation Syndicales et des Associations des Droits de l'Homme (RALCOSA); the Réseau des organisations de la société civile pour l'appui au processus électoral (ROSCIAPE) ;and the Réseau d'Appui au Processus Electoral (RAPPEL)

[22] It should however be noted that distinctions between ethnic groups and communities with contrasting livelihood patterns (such as herders versus farmers) often correspond to religious affiliation; for example, it is reported that most herder groups are Muslim. Thus, these disputes can easily be misinterpreted as related to religion.

still regularly resolved by traditional Muslim leaders through the informal rules of blood feuds (*diyah)[23]*. According to informants, in rural areas there is little choice but to rely on traditional leaders to mediate and resolve conflict, due to the absence of judicial institutions and lack of popular confidence in the justice system. Some chiefs have received formal training to enhance their methods for handling disputes, but the need for additional capacity was stressed by various informants including the Chadian Association of Traditional Chiefs (ACTT). Informants reported that in some cases elders are involved in consultations with the chief to resolve community disputes, but women are minimally involved. It was mentioned that wives may be consulted privately by village level decision makers, but their role extends no further than that except in disputes between women or domestic disputes, in which they are at times permitted a more visible role.

The assessment data shows that religious or faith-based groups are among the few civil society bodies that effectively reach the local level in large parts of the country, especially in remote or unstable areas. They have made it a priority to play a role in conflict prevention and resolution – in general but especially between religious groups. To date, their efforts to prevent and mitigate inter-religious conflict in Chad have been collaborative and generally successful. According to interviews with all three major groups, they hold regular conferences of senior officials and carry out ongoing awareness campaigns among their members to promote inter-religious tolerance.

The assessment also found that CSOs have a crucial role to play in conflict resolution, especially between communities of herders and farmers, whose interaction leads to one of the most common types of conflict in Chad. According to our findings, a small group of CSOs have had some training and are engaged in dispute resolution, mediation of conflict, and peace-building. Those CSOs have established a degree of credibility and experience in this area, and are considered by many to be more effective than government in mediating these conflicts. Among the handful of CSOs with expertise is the Chadian Association for Non-Violence (ATNV), which from its base in Moundou conducts a range of peace-building and rights awareness-raising activities at grassroots level in the southern sector of the country. According to informants, their well-respected work includes translation of key human rights documents into local languages, creation of local peace committees, and intervening to mediate and facilitate dialogue in actual conflicts, in close collaboration with traditional chiefs.

While in the east of Chad, traditional chiefs are also charged with resolution of local disputes, a positive pattern of collaboration has been established by the local government working in concert with APLFT and MINURCAT to peacefully resolve a series of inter-communal conflicts. In several cases, informants described how APLFT had taken the lead role in awareness raising among affected populations, while the UN mission supported logistics and the local government managed the conciliation process. Local radio stations supported by Internews and government-initiated local peace committees have also played an important role in reducing conflicts between pastoral herders and farmers.

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[23] *Diyah is* a traditional tool for handling disputes linked to blood crimes, which consists of a financial compensation paid to the victim's family by the author of the crime. In a region where prison did not exist, *diyah* played a major role. The practice of paying *diyah* has become less common, particularly in N'Djamena. However, in the north and the east it remains commonplace. *Chad: Powder Keg in the East*, International Crisis Group, 2009. For more information see Comparative Criminal Law and Enforcement: Islam - Homicide And Bodily Harm at http://law.jrank.org/pages/667/Comparative-Criminal-Law-Enforcement-Islam-Homicide-bodily-harm-jinayat.html

The role of CSOs in <u>election-related conflict</u> has however been limited to date, since few CSOs were active at the time of 2002 elections and the 2006 elections were boycotted. The political space for this kind of CSO engagement has been severely constrained in the past. Few CSO informants have mentioned this as an area in which they plan to intervene in the 2011 elections (beyond normal programming of those already active in the subject area), though they are willing to be involved if supported to do so. Unsurprisingly, there is still a prevailing perception that management of election complaints and disputes is the realm of the government-appointed election authorities. It is also unclear how the government and CENI will react to their involvement. It may require careful negotiation and diplomacy to secure the cooperation of the authorities, who are not so far showing an inclination towards broadening the scope of elections activity of civil society and other external actors.

Given that civil society participation in complaints and election integrity mechanisms (other than observation) is virtually uncharted territory in Chad, there is also a risk that the public will perceive CSOs implementing these activities as government-influenced and not independent, given the necessary level of collaboration with CENI and the unfamiliarity of all parties with civil society's role in this field. Potentially, it could even foster further suspicions within the CSO community among those who do not understand the role of independent civil society in these functions, especially if (as is likely) CSOs seen as government-aligned become involved.

VII. Civil society advocacy and promotion of government accountability

As previously mentioned, Chad ranks near the bottom (171st) of Transparency International's worldwide Perception of Corruption index. This assessment found correspondingly low levels of trust in government and lack of belief that popular mobilization can bring about change, even through elections. Access to government information is a distant dream for most citizens, especially given low literacy levels and poor communications infrastructure. CSOs uniformly report difficulties in obtaining information that should be publicly available and that would enable them to be more effective in advocacy. Government authorities are suspicious of their motives and do not recognize their right to information.

Civil society, at least the leading organizations based in N'djamena that have been the core of this study, have a clear understanding of their importance in a democratic society, and have ambitions to become more influential in the way that Chad is governed. CSOs are reportedly active in advocacy for policy change, but few have been able to make a real difference through their advocacy. CSOs have a presence on several high-level groupings and committees but are consistently outnumbered by government representatives. They have difficulty in mobilizing the population to publicly challenge the government; most refuse to join demonstrations that may expose them to danger. Additionally, according to several informants, advocacy methods used to date have been too confrontational and have failed to persuade government officials and politicians, who are said to not understand advocacy and thus regard it with a degree of suspicion.

Nevertheless, the petroleum "boom" has given rise to several active and interconnected networks of CSOs who are researching, publishing information, and advocating for more transparency and better use of

petroleum revenues for the benefit of the populace. This sector naturally forms the core of government accountability initiatives in Chad. The most prominent research body and think tank is GRAMP-TC, which has established a sound reputation for quality information and analysis, and has close links with government officials that provide them with unrivalled access to information on oil and other extractive industry activities.

In addition, there are several CSO networks or groupings focused on the oil industry, including several "Permanent Petroleum Commissions" (CPP) in various regions, which have broad civil society membership, extensive outreach internationally and links to the Regional Secretariat of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. Publish What You Pay/Earn Chad has been an outspoken CSO coalition, serving as an umbrella for the CPPs and other nationally and regionally based monitoring bodies, CSOs and networks from across the spectrum to raise awareness and push for EITI accession by Chad.

Human rights advocacy in Chad is vigorous and quite outspoken. Government seems to respect these groups, who have been able to achieve redress for significant numbers of individual human rights violations, as well as effectively defend the private media on a regular basis. Other CSOs and coalitions have persuaded government authorities to ease access to prisoners, to accept recommendations for a law on disabled persons' rights, and to incorporate some suggestions for the new law on the press. In the east, CSOs have had success in the demobilization of child soldiers and release of illegally detained persons, while in the south civil society has in recent years persuaded local authorities to permit freedom of action to CSOs in mediating herder-farmer conflicts, and to rein in forestry protection brigades who were harassing women collecting firewood.

In spite of considerable levels of enthusiasm and some successes, most CSOs lag behind the well-established human rights associations in terms of their maturity and advocacy influence. Unions have been trying in vain to lobby for measures to increase wages in accordance with increased costs of living. Youth organizations have yet to push a National Youth Policy past the draft stages. Several CSOs cited their greatest success as getting a representative on a commission, or receiving a prompt response to a letter to a prominent government official.

In recent years, the capacity of women's CSOs to conduct advocacy or monitor and report on government has improved but is still nascent. Women civil society activists point to participation in successful campaigns to promote the passage of the 2002 Law on the Promotion of Reproductive Health, and the 2007 Law on the Fight Against HIV/AIDS and the Protection of Rights of Persons Living with HIV/AIDS. On the other side of the coin, women's rights continue to be vulnerable in Chad as a ten-year struggle to adopt a comprehensive Family Code has yet to come to fruition, largely due to contrasting religious and cultural viewpoints.

Government typically fails to credit the inputs of civil society when it makes decisions or passes legislation based on CSO advocacy, which is a source of frustration. Ambitions among civil society for genuine influence on public policy are still quite modest; there is a sense that government concedes on small points to appear consultative and soothe civil society and donors, but generally their position remains unaffected on major issues. Furthermore, implementation of laws that are on the books is problematic, making

legislative victories somewhat hollow. Those with less experience and confidence are reluctant to openly speak out against the government on controversial issues, limiting their advocacy to "soft issues" in many cases. Some recounted receiving threats and subsequently withdrawing from advocacy activities. Most informants believe that as civil society becomes stronger, the government will respect them more and be less able to co-opt or impose restrictions on their operations.

Law 001 on use of oil revenues[24], including allocation of 5% for development of communities in producing areas, was seen as a major victory of civil society advocacy. The law was welcomed by Chadians and the international community as a major advance that could serve as a model for other producer countries in Africa and the rest of the world. The acceptance of four civil society representatives on the CCSRP, in theory an independent body to ensure the appropriate use of oil revenues, was another major step forward for the credibility and participation on the national scene by CSOs. Civil society advocacy to oil company Esso has resulted in a huge hike in compensation to landowners for destroyed fruit trees. Less positively, the government prohibited the dissemination of a CSO report on the use of oil revenues.

In April 2010 Chad became a candidate country to join the EITI, recognized as the global standard for improved transparency in the oil, gas and mining sector[25]. The commitment of the government to this initiative is a potentially major step towards greater accountability for oil revenues. Chad now has two years in which to meet EITI standards; it will be an important litmus test for the genuine will of the government to open up its financial and budget information to the world. In accordance with EITI requirements, a multi-stakeholder group has been established with representatives from national government, oil companies and civil society.

The activities of the CSOs working for oil and mining revenue accountability are professional and well-respected overall, and their outreach to rural areas affected by oil exploration and the pipeline is impressive. They have developed community outreach tools that are succeeding in empowering rural communities – not only to address the impacts of the oil business but also to monitor government-funded projects to ensure that corruption is not undermining the investment in such assets as schools, clinics, roads, etc. One strategy that is proving effective is the use of committees through which community concerns can be channeled to the relevant government authorities or oil companies, with follow-up action as needed. Oxfam Intermon (Spain) has built capacity by training a number of Chadian CSOs and networks on public budgeting best practices and current processes, and offering grants to support community empowerment activities.

In relation to the oil industry and transparency of revenues, many battles still lie ahead. There are issues with respect to the CCSRP, which informants say has proven ineffectual as a true watchdog of oil exploitation and revenues and subject to government interference. The subject matter is complex and thus difficult for non-experts – especially those serving as volunteers on a part-time basis - to analyze correctly in any depth. The challenge is multiplied when raising awareness and capacity of community

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[24] The adoption of Law n°1 of 11 January 1999 on oil revenue obliged the government to include this revenue in the state budget. This law stipulated that 80% of oil royalties should be spent on poverty reduction programs and 5% should go directly to the producing regions and provided for the establishment of a savings fund for future generations.
[25] "In following the EITI standard, the government of Chad commits to publish all payments of taxes, royalties and fees it has received from its extractive sector. Equally, extractive companies operating in Chad will publish what they have paid to the government." http://eiti.org/news-events/chad-commits-transparency-it-becomes-eiti-candidate

members with weak literacy and numeracy skills, who are supposed to be benefiting from revenues but in many cases are suffering instead from damage to their land and livelihoods. The government continues to allege that spending on national security (the military and weapons) is essential and a priority that ranks above poverty reduction, since "there can be no development without peace," to paraphrase the President's refrain.

GRAMP-TC is constantly cited as the source of best information on natural resource revenues and state budgets, as well as on impact of the oil business on communities, and is even secretly relied on by government officials in some cases. By focusing on presentation of objectively verifiable facts in pursuit of the fight against poverty, they have managed to maintain their credibility and avoid provoking negative reactions among government. Many CSOs take advantage of data obtained by GRAMP-TC to formulate positions and advocate for change in their own areas of concern, in a synergistic relationship that seems to work well for all concerned.

VIII. Conclusions, Key Findings, and Recommendations

Civil society has a significant role to play in any democracy, but is particularly crucial in emerging democracies such as Chad, where it could serve as a counterweight to the power of the state, assist in social service provision, raise public concerns about abuse of power and lobby for access to information and good governance reforms. Civil society is also traditionally positioned to promote political participation, by educating people about their rights and obligations as democratic citizens and encouraging them to participate in elections. CSOs can also provide a valuable non-partisan presence in monitoring the conduct of elections as well as mediating and helping to resolve election-related conflict.

There is considerable reason to predict a bright future for civil society in Chad, in spite of current external challenges and various areas for internal improvement. The primary strengths of Chadian civil society include the strong level of commitment of activists, the increasingly high public profile of CSOs, widespread trust of the population at the grassroots, and the necessary competence to carry out well-targeted initiatives. These assets cannot be taken for granted, but rather need to be protected and further cultivated in order to ensure the continued development of civil society.

A. Key Findings

When considering the following findings, it should be kept in mind that the focus of this assessment was on civil society's role and engagement in the domain of democracy and governance, with special emphasis placed on activities and potential of CSOs in the field of elections, advocacy, government accountability and dispute resolution.

General findings on civil society

1. The capital N'djamena is the hub of much CSO activity, and the home of the most organizationally developed and well-funded entities. The CSOs with the most visibility and influence are human rights associations, which first emerged in the early 1990'a, when the

democratic space opened up in Chad. As is common in fledgling civil societies, the civil society scene is dominated by a small group of influential leaders.

2. CSOs are generally reliant on fluctuating levels and sources of international donor funding, the majority of which is consumed by 15-20 experienced organizations and 4-5 prominent CSO networks. There seems to be a large gap in capacity and resources between these organizations and the rest of the CSOs, which indicates the need to develop a second tier of CSOs—smaller, regionally-based organizations that can more easily connect with local communities at lower cost and with less cultural and linguistic barriers.

3. The sector suffers from internal divisions, and various informants indicated that there are "several civil societies". In reality, there are at least two major categories of CSO in Chad: one faction that is unofficially fostered by government, and the rest who are to varying degrees more independent and credible. The latter are often seen by government as pro-opposition, and indeed some have aligned themselves in that way based on shared interests. However, a core group of CSOs appears to be genuinely non-partisan and increasingly acting as a counterweight to government, though they remain far from speaking with a unified voice.

4. The fundamental strengths of civil society organizations were summed up succinctly by one informant as "solidarity, persistence and independence". Technical competence is considered to be high among a core group of activists and CSO managers, but that capacity is too concentrated in a small number of key people and does not extend to overall professionalism in organizational or financial management.

5. Youth and women's organizations both face challenges in terms of access to funding and skilled human resources; the former also suffer credibility issues, while the latter have a solid reputation for impartiality and grassroots outreach.

6. Arabic speaking women's organizations are more marginalized, given that many training workshops and other events in Chad and the region are conducted in French and relevant information is often available only in French. It can be concluded that this same challenge applies to all CSOs without French-speaking staff and leaders, which are more common in rural areas and in the north and east of the country.

7. Women in general still struggle to escape the traps of illiteracy, low self-esteem, low levels of education and cultural barriers to become prominent players in CSOs that are not specifically focused on women's interests – with a few notable exceptions.

8. Relations between civil society and national government are gradually improving since 2007, though mutual suspicion remains the norm, and relations are worse in the eastern region. Continued international encouragement for constructive engagement between government and civil society will be vital, especially during the sensitive elections period.

9. CSOs are represented on a number of important national level multi-stakeholder groupings and committees but need additional training and experience to be able to achieve genuine influence on behalf of civil society.

10. High costs and low access to transport and communications are major obstacles for rural community-based groups to seek external support from any source, while illiteracy and low education levels are also significant factors impeding rural engagement in civil society. Instability

and a dispersed population are additional challenges to rural civil society and promotion of democratic processes in the east and north of the country.

Elections

1. Indications are that voting in the upcoming 2011 elections will be less than enthusiastic, although voter registration numbers are not yet known. Apathy appears high in relation to both presidential elections, in which they believe there is no chance of change, and legislative elections, primarily because they perceive that politicians are all the same and/or the opposition has no chance (particularly in the north and east).
2. It is unclear whether many people realize that communal elections have been rescheduled for 2011; those are bound to arouse more interest but also more confusion, since it will be a historic first local government election.
3. The low level of expectations may well translate into at least one benefit: violence is seen as unlikely by almost all informants in N'djamena and Moundou. Unsurprisingly, Abéché informants see the situation differently in the unstable east, fearing that the opposition and/or rebel groups may seize the opportunity to attack the government or foment unrest.
4. The role of civil society in these elections is expected to be broader and deeper than in past elections, and a great number of civil society organizations and networks have decided to engage on some level in the process. Nevertheless, the precise scope of work and division of labor has yet to be determined, since in most cases it depends on funding and observers will require accreditation by the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI). This could make coordination difficult as the election dates quickly approach.
5. All CSOs and other stakeholders recognize voter education as a fundamental priority to ensure a credible process and an end result that will be accepted by the population.
6. Experience is not widespread, but significant efforts are underway to train civil society trainers and election observers to ensure that CSOs can play a credible role. There is reason to hope that a significant cross-section of independent civil society will be able to set aside their differences in order to coordinate observation activities and findings, which would in that case carry much greater weight.
7. Radio is the most effective mass media for information generation on democracy, voting, and local governance, especially when the coverage of state and private radio are combined. Private media has been kept under strict control since the 2008 crisis; that has recently changed with the adoption of a new press law, but relations with government are not amicable. Running on shoestring budgets and authorized to fully cover the elections for the first time ever in 2011, most will be unfamiliar with the rules for media conduct in election processes. Thus, it would not be surprising if rules are breached and the HCC steps in to suspend operations of some private media outlets during the election period.

Advocacy, accountability, and dispute resolution

1. Civil society is relatively active in advocacy for policy change, but only a few organizations have been able to make a real difference through their advocacy. CSOs need better access to information from government, as well as improved methods of informing and mobilizing the population. Advocacy methods used to date are too confrontational and not sufficiently persuasive

or constructive. Most government officials and politicians do not understand advocacy well and thus are naturally resistant.

2. There is cause for optimism, albeit cautious, in the field of government accountability for oil revenues, which indeed extends to oil company transparency in payments to the government and responsibility for impacts on communities affected by oil exploitation. A foundation has been laid through concerted advocacy that resulted in Law 001 on use of oil revenues, which was hailed as a major victory of civil society advocacy, although monitoring and enforcement has subsequently proven problematic. The petroleum "boom" has however given rise to several active and interconnected networks of CSOs who are researching, publishing information, and advocating for more transparency and better use of extractive industry revenues for the benefit of the populace. This sector forms the core of government accountability initiatives in Chad.

3. Several informants reported that CSOs are playing a crucial role in conflict resolution, especially between communities of herders and farmers, whose competing land uses are one of the most common causes of non-military conflict in Chad. A handful of CSOs have established a degree of credibility and a track record in this field and, as neutral parties, are considered to be more effective than government in mediating these conflicts.

4. Religious or faith-based groups have a solid presence at local levels, especially in remote or unstable areas, and they have made it a priority to play a role in conflict prevention and resolution.

5. The role of CSOs in election-related conflict has been limited to date, given that few CSOs were active at the time of 2002 elections and the 2006 elections were boycotted. Civil society participation in complaints and election integrity mechanisms (other than observation) is virtually uncharted territory in Chad, and it is not clear how the government and CENI will react to their involvement.

B. Recommendations

To Chadian civil society

- Make increased efforts to raise basic awareness among the population about the role of civil society and its importance in a democratic society, and promote the good work that is being done.
- Expand on efforts to build grassroots constituencies of supporters and volunteers, especially in rural communities – in order to better understand their needs, and to rally support for your causes.
- Consider the advantages of developing a voluntary national CSO code of conduct establishing clear standards for organizations to follow, as a means of enhancing credibility and accountability of the sector.
- Focus more attention on developing internal knowledge management systems and task delegation, to reduce the negative impact of staff and volunteer turnover.
- Work to overcome personal differences to focus first on promotion of free and fair elections, and subsequently on the broader development of civil society in Chad. Where differences of opinion persist, focus collaboration on areas of agreement rather than letting relations lapse. Consider the use of neutral external parties to aid in conciliation efforts.

- Be more strategic in advocacy, working steadily to cultivate contacts within government, using verifiable facts, and when possible presenting views in a constructive format of recommendations as compared to direct criticism, using more confrontational methods only if and when necessary.
- Explore sustainability strategies to complement donor funding, including income generation activities and paid service provision.
- Train and use female facilitators and community workers to improve approaches to working with women in rural communities, and ensure that women's voices have an influence on program planning and implementation.
- Use radio to broadcast key information from the print media to reach a wider audience, using local languages as much as possible.
- Develop creative strategies for reaching illiterate people, including public events, infotainment, image-based informational tools, caravans, and theater sketches.

To Government

- Invest in the education of the Chadian people as a top priority for social, economic and political advancement of the country, with a special emphasis on education of girls; this should include literacy training for adults.
- Continue to give civil society a significant role in multi-stakeholder bodies formed to advise government or monitor compliance with plans and commitments; respect the choice of members by civil society for those positions, and offer to assist in covering their direct costs of participation in such bodies.
- More specifically, work closely with civil society towards accession to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, as required by EITI conditions.
- Consider the appointment and training of civil society focal points in key ministries and agencies, who can facilitate exchange of information and channeling of requests and concerns, helping CSOs to navigate the bureaucracy.
- Continue to seek the assistance of experienced civil society organizations in resolving conflicts where their credibility as neutral parties can facilitate the process of finding durable solutions.
- Be transparent about financial and other material assistance provided to CSOs by all government agencies, ideally in the form of an annual report that identifies recipients, amounts and objectives of the assistance.
- Consider increased funding for the Ministry of Human Rights so that it can intensify its work promoting and defending human rights across the country, and become a more credible partner for civil society in this domain.
- Adopt and implement legislation to facilitate public access to government information, and take other measures to share information more freely and frequently with civil society and public at large, including budget information.
- Make it a priority to help the private media to understand their role during elections and the rules that are necessary to ensure a fair and transparent process, to minimize the chance of inadvertent violations of best practices.

To CENI (Independent National Electoral Commission)

- Continue to be open to the active and multi-faceted participation of civil society organizations in the elections process.
- Follow a transparent and merit-based procedure for accreditation of observers from Chadian and international civil society, allowing for wide participation and encouraging national coverage by a variety of observer missions, not limited to members of RESOCIT.
- Refrain from funding any election observation activities by civil society, in order to avoid misunderstandings and perceptions of bias.
- Be open to collaboration with civil society in mechanisms for managing elections complaints and disputes, taking advantage of the unique position of credible CSOs to increase public confidence in these procedures.
- Utilize and fairly compensate the broadcast services of private radio stations, which can play an important role to complement state radio and television in reaching remote populations during elections.

To Donors and the international community including NGOs

- Continue to make funding available to a wide variety of civil society organizations and programs in recognition of their independent role and expertise, including support for operational costs, and explore the creation of mechanisms for sustainable long-term funding of the sector. Accept that outreach to rural and remote areas has a significant cost, but is crucial to the ongoing development of democratic society in Chad.
- Support the technical and organizational development of a "second tier" of CSOs, especially in areas outside of N'djamena, who often have greater contacts and credibility at local levels but suffer from more difficult access to training and funding.
- Continue to defend the legitimate rights of private media outlets and CSOs that may be targeted by government for their critical positions, which may occur increasingly as elections approach.
- Work to facilitate cooperative relations and the identification of common ground between government and civil society, especially in areas such as the east of the country where there is a significant level of mistrust of both local and international CSOs among local authorities.
- Especially in rural areas, be open to funding civil society programs that creatively combine concrete assistance to meet priority needs as expressed by the population (such as housing or education) with less tangible benefits such as information and awareness, in order to gain the confidence of communities and persuade them of the relevance of the programs, and by extension the utility of civil society.
- Resistance to change is stronger in rural areas; donors should design long-term strategies and investments in rural development that take this into account.
- Build the capacity of local CSO partners, especially in management and delivery of humanitarian aid, so that Chadian civil society can become more stable and able to respond to future emergencies.
- Continue to offer training and mentoring to CSOs to enable them to meet donor requirements, simplifying procedures where possible to make grants more accessible, and devoting sufficient resources to monitoring grants to ensure accountability and quality programming.

- Support collaborative structures and mechanisms among CSOs, but resist the temptation to impose them – durable civil society networks and coalitions must arise from CSOs themselves.
- Insist on transparent and merit-based selection of CSO grant recipients in donor-run programs and when donor funds are being channeled through international NGOs, government or other bodies such as the CENI.
- Make efforts to be more inclusive a) of Arabic-speaking citizens/CSOs by making sure that translation services are made available, and b) of women and women's CSOs, possibly by setting quotas for women/women's CSO participation. This will ensure they have equal opportunities as grantees and as participants in meetings, trainings, committees, etc. Support similar practices among CSO partners and grantees.
- Place a high priority on collaboration with government to improve general school education and literacy programs, with a focus on girls' education as a stepping stone to a more gender-balanced civil society and society in general in the long run.
- Encourage the observation of elections by civil society by awards of modest funding to capable organizations and networks, including smaller grants to less experienced CSOs that can effectively target specific population groups. Discourage CENI from using donor funds for civil society observation activities, for reasons noted above.
- Continue to support training of media outlets and journalists (as well as responsible oversight bodies) on the rules and best practices for media regulation in election processes.
- Capitalize on the extensive outreach and human resource networks of faith-based organizations and traditional chiefs to transmit important elections and other public information. Build upon the skills and experience of actors such as the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs (CSAI) which represents the single largest religious community in the country, Protestant denominations through their association, Entente of Churches and Evangelical Missions in Chad (EEMET), the Catholic Church including through the National Peace and Justice Commission (CNJP), as well as traditional chiefs through their national Association.

To the PEACE Program

- Communicate clearly and regularly with government and respect government reporting and monitoring requirements.
- Ensure that program-sponsored training is of high quality and suited to the local situation, and conduct rigorous monitoring of training impacts.
- Pay close attention to the local or municipal elections, which could prove to be the most interesting to the public and the most likely to provoke strong emotions. Awareness about these elections is low and extensive civic education will be required.
- Share information and collaborate as much as possible to maximize synergies with others working to support civil society in democracy.
- Develop gender-sensitive indicators and ensure that the program measures involvement of and impact on both men and women.
- Relationships with traditional leaders and local government authorities need to be cultivated with care, including regular courtesy visits and invitations, in order to ensure smooth operations and access to communities.

IX. Appendices

Appendix 1: Bibliography

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Appendix 2: Summary of PEACE Program

Promoting Elections, Accountability and Civic Engagement (PEACE) in Chad

Promoting Elections, Accountability and Civic Engagement (PEACE) in Chad is a two year program funded by USAID to promote broader citizen participation in democratic processes through peaceful, free and fair legislative and presidential elections. *Counterpart International*, together with PEACE partners *International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES),* and the *Management Systems International (MSI)* will support and assist the Commission Électorale Nationale Indépendante (CENI) in various areas of election process communications and administration, including media outreach, voter education, voter complaint mechanisms and post-election evaluation. This assistance will be provided through direct trainings, technical assistance and material support to CENI.

The PEACE program will also work with Chadian civil society organizational partners on election and good governance activities through training and grants. PEACE will support civil society organizations (CSOs) in their efforts to network, exchange information and collaborate on activities that will inform citizens and increase their involvement in the electoral process. In addition, the program will encourage and facilitate constructive engagement of government and civil society actors aimed at jointly identifying challenges and solutions in election administration. The PEACE program will also administer grants to civil society organizations (CSOs) for voter education activities, to establish voter dispute mechanisms as well as mitigate potential election-related conflict. In addition, the program will support CSOs in helping Chad meet its commitments in joining the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) by monitoring performance and serving as a link with government, business and citizens.

By the end of the **PEACE program**, Chadian citizens will witness:
- Increased CENI and CSO public outreach education on electoral processes and activities;
- Enhance capacity of CSOs and thus citizens to monitor public procurement processes;
- Quick resolution of electoral disputes through CENI dispute structures and CSO engagement.

Over the next two years, Counterpart, USAID, CENI and key CSOs will work to increase collaboration between the government and CSOs to encourage broad citizen participation in democratic governance.

PEACE's Three Main Objectives:

Objective 1: Strengthened Capacity of CENI to Effectively Administer Electoral Process

- *Electoral Best Practices*–Managerial and election administration training for CENI officials and electoral dispute resolution training for judicial authorities.
- *Voter Outreach and Education* – establish and support media unit to disseminate elections related material.

Objective 2: Improved Ability of CSOs to Conduct Election and Government Accountability Public Information Campaigns

- *Promoting Civil Society Engagement in Election* – Provide training and grants for civic education, election monitoring and election dispute resolution.
- *Promoting Civil Society Engagement in Transparency and Government Accountability* – Develop support among CSOs for a civil society transparency coalition, through grants and training.

Objective 3: Increased Ability of Electoral and Civic Institutions to Resolve Disputes and Mitigate and Manage Election-Related Conflict

- *Formal Electoral Dispute Resolution Mechanism* – Assist CENI in bringing together key stakeholders to establish, communicate and implement a formal electoral dispute resolution strategy.
- *Civic Engagement in Election Dispute Resolution* –Build upon local dispute resolutions mechanisms and provide training on the use of media in EDR related processes.

Appendix 3: Assessment Interview and Focus Group Guides

Note : *All interviews were preceded by standard introductory information about the project and the assessment. The following questions were prepared in advance for the interviews, however, they were adapted as needed to suit each situation and each informant, including additional questions, and further adapted for interviews in Moundou and Abéché.*

Questions for CSOs and CSO networks

1. What is the mission of your organization? How many paid staff do you have? How many volunteers (who work on a regular basis)? How many of your staff are women? How many are youth (under 25)?

2. What kinds of activities are you carrying out at present? Where? How do you decide what projects or activities to undertake?

3. When you design your projects and activities, how do you take into account the different needs of women and men? Youth? Rural and urban populations?

4. How does your organization educate Chadians about elections? (probe: educating people about how to vote, where to vote, when to vote, why to vote?) Are you engaged in RESOCIT? Do you want to be in RESOCIT or work with CENI? Why or why not?

5. Are you carrying out any advocacy activities? If so, what issue are you advocating for? Have you had any advocacy successes? What are the challenges in influencing government decision-making? (Do you face any specific challenges in advocacy work as a women's/youth organization?)

6. Is your organization involved in monitoring government spending? In what way? What have been the challenges and successes of these efforts?

7. How do you use the media in your work? (Probe - advertise events, inform the public of important information, or get people to support your position on an issue). What types of media are most effective for reaching men and women in rural areas?

8. Do you think that upcoming parliamentary elections are increasing tensions in Chad? In what way? What election-related events could trigger violence? Do you carry out any conflict prevention activities? Please describe them.

9. What are the major challenges facing your organization?

10. What training or skills do you need in order to be more effective in…advocacy, monitoring of government spending, elections, conflict resolution.

11. What would you say are the main strengths of civil society in Chad? What are the main weaknesses? What are the challenges that are specific to rural organizations?
    Probe: What are the challenges/obstacles to civil society in
    a. influencing government decision making?
    b. monitoring government actions and spending?
    c. supporting free and fair elections, especially via educating the public about elections?
    d. helping to reduce and resolve election-related conflicts?

12. What kind of financial support (grants) have you received from local or international donors? (List amounts, source, project/purpose for last two years.) Did you have difficulties in meeting the donors' requirements or completing the project?

13. One of the objectives of Counterpart's PEACE program is to support civil society activities in educating citizens about voting, monitoring elections, preventing and resolving election-related conflict, and monitoring government spending. What recommendations do you have for the PEACE program? In what ways can the program help CSOs to effectively implement activities in these areas?
Supplementary Questions for CSO Networks only
A. Who are the members of the network? How many members do you have? In which parts of the country? How do members participate in the network?
B. What are the key challenges facing CSO networks in Chad?

Questions for Donor Organizations/Agencies
1. Does your organization/agency have or support any activities focused on the upcoming elections in Chad? Please describe them. (Probe – what objectives, what type of activities, what geog area). How are civil society organizations involved in them, if at all?
2. How do you incorporate the needs of women in your programs? (probe: do you conduct gender assessments to identify the specific needs of women? What are your best practices for mainstreaming gender in your programs?)
3. How do you incorporate the needs of youth in your programs? (probe: do you consult with youth separately to understand their needs? What are your best practices in this area?)
4. Do you have any programs or activities focused on civil society capacity building? Please describe them. (Probe – grants, training, what type of organizations)
5. What do you think are the greatest strengths of Chadian civil society organizations? What are the challenges of working with civil society in Chad? How have you managed or coped with these challenges?
6. Do you think that upcoming parliamentary elections are contributing to existing tensions in Chad? In what way? What election-related events do you think could trigger violence? Do you carry out or fund any conflict prevention activities? Please describe.
7. One of the objectives of Counterpart's PEACE program is to support civil society activities in educating citizens about voting, monitoring elections, preventing and resolving election-related conflict, and monitoring government spending. What recommendations do you have for the PEACE program? In what ways can the PEACE program collaborate with your organization/agency in these areas of activity?

Questions for Media Organizations
1. What type of media outlet do you represent? What is the mission or main purpose of your organization? Who is your main audience?
2. What forms of media reach the most people in Chad? Among men? Among women? Among youth?
3. What types of communication methods do you find to be most effective in educating your audience about issues of public interest? (i.e. Public Service Announcements, printed articles, skits, press releases?)
4. What methods does your media outlet use to educate Chadians about elections? (Probing: what topics are covered in these media programs/releases)
5. In what ways does your media organization monitor government spending and hold government accountable for promises made to citizens?

6. How do CSOs work with you to disseminate information about their activities or issues of concern? PROBE: Do they contact you frequently? Do they invite you to their events? Do they send you press-releases? Are there CSOs that you cover regularly? What are they?
7. What kind of support would you need to improve or expand your work in election education? What kind of support would you need to do more government monitoring?
8. Do you think that upcoming parliamentary elections are contributing to existing tensions in Chad? In what way? What election-related events do you think could trigger violence? How can the media help to prevent or resolve election related violence?
9. One of the objectives of Counterpart's PEACE program is to support civil society activities in educating citizens about voting, monitoring elections, preventing and resolving election-related conflict, and monitoring government spending. How can the PEACE program work with media organizations to meet these objectives?

Questions for Government Representatives
1. What department/ministry do you represent? What is the mandate of your department/ministry?
2. In what ways does your department/ministry collaborate with civil society organizations? (probe: Do you work with civil society organizations in disseminating information? Do you gather data through civil society organizations? Do you provide any funding for CSO activities?)
3. What do you think are the greatest strengths of Chadian civil society organizations?
4. What are the challenges your department/ministry faces when working with civil society? What are the challenges that the government in general faces in working with civil society? In what ways can these challenges be overcome?
5. What do you think should be the role of CSOs in Chad?
    Probe:
        a. Delivering services to the people – Health, education, etc. What kinds of services in particular?
        b. Raising awareness, training, information – in what kind of issues in particular?
        c. Collaborating with the government to bring about change
        d. Monitoring elections
        e. educating voters
6. Does your department/ministry have any specific programs or activities related to women? Do you collect data separately on women and men? How are women's needs different from those of men in your area of work?)
7. Does your department/ministry have any specific programs or activities related to youth? Do you collect data separately on youth? What special needs do youth have in your area of work?)
8. One of the objectives of Counterpart's PEACE program is to support civil society activities in educating citizens about voting, monitoring elections, preventing and resolving election-related conflict, and monitoring government spending.
9. How can civil society activities help support the upcoming elections? (probe: by educating Chadian citizens about how to vote? By monitoring elections? By helping to resolve election-related conflicts?)
10. How can CSOs help prevent or reduce possible election-related violence in Chad?
11. Who else (what other actors) can work on reducing possible election-related violence? How?
12. What other recommendations do you have for the PEACE program?

Questions for Traditional Secular and Religious leaders/Faith-based organizations
1. What is the mission of your organization? OR What is your role in the community?
2. In what ways do you help to educate members of your community about how to vote, when to vote and why to vote?
3. How do you contribute to the prevention and resolution of violence in your community? What type of support would strengthen your role in conflict prevention and resolution?
4. Do you think that upcoming parliamentary elections are contributing to existing tensions in Chad? In what way? What election-related events do you think could trigger violence? How can organizations like yours (OR leaders like you) prevent or resolve election-related violence?
5. What role do CSOs in Chad play in educating citizens about the elections? About government spending?
6. What do you think should be the role of CSOs in Chad?
    a. Delivering services to the people – Health, education, etc. What kinds of services in particular?
    b. Raising awareness, training, information - in what kind of issues in particular?
    c. Monitoring the government, holding the government accountable for its promises and actions, advocating for change
    d. Monitoring elections
    e. educating voters
7. What challenges do Chadian civil society organizations face? In what ways can these challenges be overcome?
8. What do you think are the greatest strengths of Chadian civil society organizations?
9. One of the objectives of Counterpart's PEACE program is to support civil society activities in educating citizens about voting, monitoring elections, preventing and resolving election-related conflict, and monitoring government spending. What recommendations do you have for the PEACE program? How can Counterpart work with CSOs in meeting these objectives? What role can traditional and religious leaders play in supporting these objectives?

Focus Group Questions

Note: *All focus group discussions were preceded by standard introductory information about the project and the assessment. The following questions were prepared in advance, however, they were adapted as needed to suit each situation and each group, including additional questions, and further adapted for groups in Moundou and Abéché.*

Questions for Focus Groups of CSO Representatives
1. Are your organizations educating your members and the communities you serve about the upcoming elections? Through what activities?
2. Do you collaborate with the government?
    a. If so, how?
    b. What are the challenges in that collaboration? What are the advantages?
3. Are any of you working with CENI? Are you involved in RESOCIT? Why or why not?
4. Are you carrying out any advocacy activities? What issue are you advocating for? Have you had any advocacy successes? What are the challenges in influencing government decision-making?
5. Is your organization involved in monitoring government spending? In what way? What have been the challenges and successes of these efforts?

6. Do you think that upcoming parliamentary elections are increasing tensions in Chad? In what way? What can your organization do (or is it doing) to prevent or resolve election-related conflict? What can CSOs in general do to prevent or resolve election-related conflict?
7. How do you collaborate with other CSOs?
    a. Have you implemented joint projects?
    b. How do you share information with other CSOs?
8. There are many CSO networks here in Chad. What is the role of those networks (including your network, if applicable)?
    a. What are the challenges that these networks face, in your experience?
    b. How could those networks be more effective?
9. What are the main strengths of civil society in Chad? What are the main weaknesses or challenges to its further development?
10. What are the specific challenges in serving the needs of rural populations? What are the challenges faced by rural CSOs? How could their development be supported?
11. What training or skills do CSOs need to enhance in order to be more effective in:
    a. advocacy
    b. monitoring of government spending
    c. elections related education
    d. conflict resolution.
12. How do you use the media in your work? (Probe - advertise events, inform the public of important information, or get people to support your position on an issue) What types of mass media or other communication methods are most effective for reaching men and women in rural areas?
13. One of the objectives of Counterpart's PEACE program is to support civil society activities in educating citizens about voting, monitoring elections, preventing and resolving election-related conflict, and monitoring government spending. In what ways can Counterpart support CSOs in these areas? What other recommendations do you have for the PEACE program?

Questions for CSO Beneficiary Focus Groups
1. What civil society organizations are you familiar with? How did you learn about them? What do you think about these CSOs?
2. What specific problems in your community or family do CSOs address? How do these organizations help women in particular?
3. Can you tell us how you, your family or your community have benefited from the work of CSOs? (Probe for specific examples) Were you satisfied with the results?
4. Did you register to vote in the upcoming legislative elections? Why or why not? What are the major barriers to voting that you face? (Probe: Does your family encourage you to vote? How do you decide who to vote for? Do you think that your vote matters? Did the registration process require a lot of time? Is it difficult to travel to polling stations?)
5. Where do you get most of your information about elections? Are any of the civil society organizations that you know informing citizens on how and why to vote? Are they doing a good job? Why or why not?
6. How do CSOs work to prevent or reduce violence in your community and in Chad? What kinds of things can CSOs do to help prevent or resolve election-related violence? Who else (what other actors) can work on reducing possible election-related violence? How?

7. What do you think <u>should</u> be the role of CSOs in Chad?
    a. Delivering services to the people – Health, education, etc.
    b. Raising awareness, training, information
    c. Monitoring the government, advocating for change
    d. Monitoring elections
    e. educating voters
    f. other