



**TOWARDS A WORLDWIDE
INFLUENCING NETWORK**

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STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP DIALOGUE AND DISSENT
OXFAM NOVIB AND SOMO
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SOMO



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2 INTRODUCTION

In 2016-17, Oxfam Novib, SOMO, and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs embarked on a strategic partnership to bring about a shared vision of a just world without poverty. The Partnership, *Towards a Worldwide Influencing Network*, strengthens the ability of civil society organizations in the so-called Global South to bring about inclusive and meaningful policy change. Unique and crucial in this locally-driven effort is the ability of the strategic partnership to multiply local results via Oxfam's worldwide influencing network. This leverages impact and constituencies in key international cities and platforms.

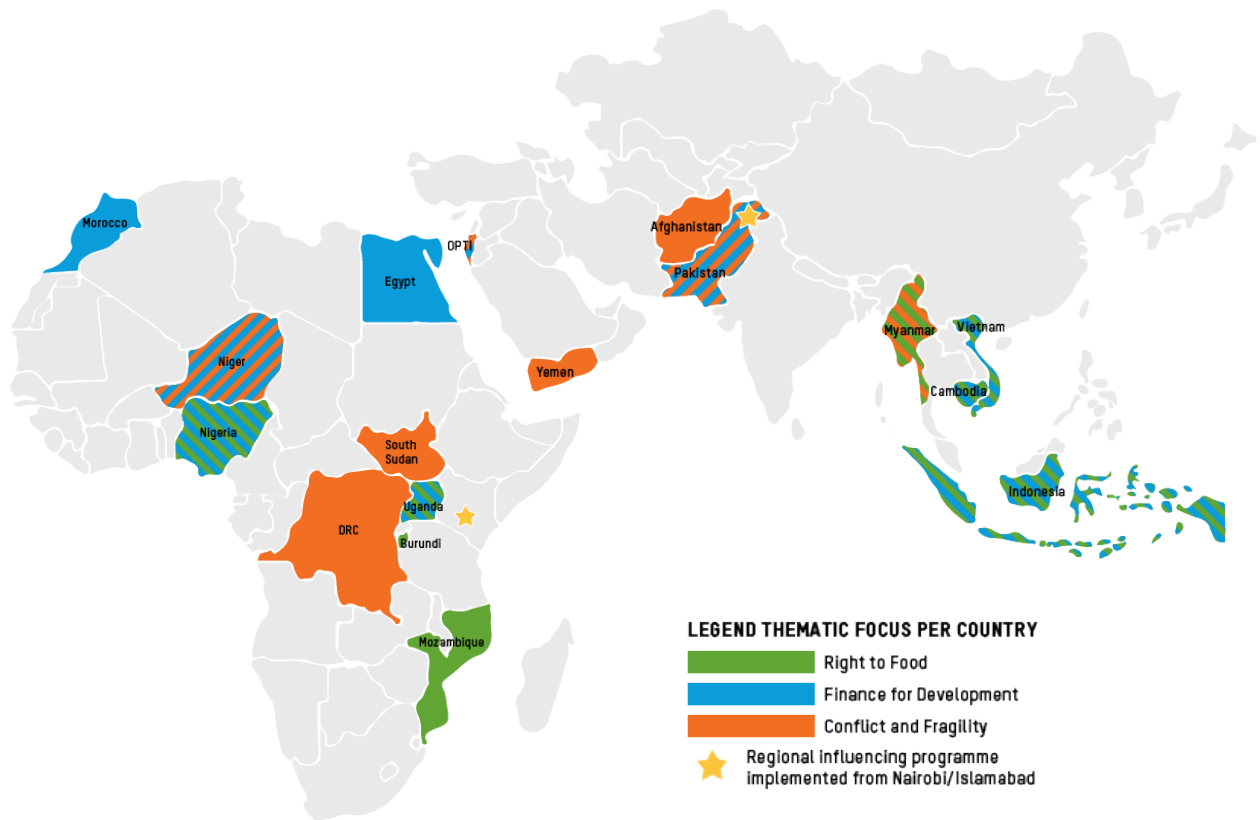
This report outlines the Partnership's results in its first 15 months, from January 2016 through March 2017. Together with the accompanying financial report and program data—published daily on the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs' dashboard](#) and Oxfam's project-browser, [ATLAS](#), in accordance with Oxfam's commitment to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)—the report presents a broad picture of the challenges, successes, and upcoming opportunities associated with undertaking such dynamic work in today's ever-changing world.

DELIVERING REAL CHANGE

Towards a Worldwide Influencing Network concentrates on three themes—Right to Food, Greater Responsibility in Finance for Development, and Conflict and Fragility—each imperative for bringing about a more just and equal world. Focusing on these three themes allows us to conduct and examine the success of our work sector by sector, while allowing for successes and influencing victories to cross-pollinate civil society space. Indeed, empowered people able to influence governments and the private sector should be actively doing so across the many areas relevant to their local context. We therefore work with distinct theories of change for each of our [three thematic areas](#).

This report will briefly present, by thematic area, highlights and specific cases that deserve a closer look. We will also discuss lessons learned and the continued importance of this valuable partnership.

In 2016 and the first quarter of 2017, the Strategic Partnership was operational in 17 countries. Over 80 southern organizations were directly supported with funds and services to improve their influencing capacity.



STRENGTHENING INFLUENCING CAPACITY

Our aim is that more people—especially traditionally marginalized groups—play an active role in building an equitable world where they can realize their basic rights and change policies and behavior of governments and private sector actors. To this end, strengthening civil society’s influencing capacity is key. In the three thematic areas a generic Theory of Change is built around five interdependent outcomes:

- *Strengthened civil society* take-up and lead evidence-based advocacy interventions that can form alliances, mobilize citizens, engage in expert policy debates, and lobby powerful and influential people.
- *Political will* of influential people that endorse policy asks, put pressure on power-holders, and set in motion processes of change.
- *Citizens’ norms and attitudes* shift as a result of new insight and awareness and, consequently, take action.
- *Citizens’ voices*, exerting pressure on power-holders.
- *Stronger and wider alliances* of organizations and people that more effectively leverage citizens’ power.

Our capacity strengthening interventions are tailor-made and context-specific, befitting the needs of local partners that build on capacity assessments we have undertaken. Together, we co-create influencing strategies in which context analysis, power analysis, and stakeholder mapping determine influencing and campaign strategies. As part of this process, we conducted strategy, campaigning and digital campaign skills development activities in 11 countries involving 49 partners. These sessions are rooted in Oxfam’s long history leading successful campaigns by leveraging citizen power.

In the first year, a considerable part of strengthening influencing capacity was focused on conducting sound research and supporting deeper technical analysis and learning. Oxfam Novib and SOMO shared key thematic knowledge and expertise to lead reach, inform evidence based advocacy activities and most importantly to participate convincingly in the political debate.

LESSONS LEARNED

The first year of the Partnership focused on strengthening influencing capacity and establishing influencing strategies with partners. In some cases, this meant scaling up mutual ambition, while in others—in particular in the challenging context of conflict such as in Yemen and South Sudan—ambitions have been reevaluated in order to be realistic.

Research conducted (and outlined in the next section) suggests that citizens' trust in civil society organizations can be improved. In the coming year, we will deepen in dialogue with partners to more fully understand this issue, and we will explore the consequence of shrinking civic space on these perceptions.

The complementary value of the alliance partners is most visible in SOMO's research contributions to Oxfam global campaigns such as the research on country by country reporting for multinationals for the report ['Opening the Vaults'](#) and the tax haven report [The Netherlands: a tax haven](#). Steps have been taken to intensify this complementarity by jointly developing influencing strategies, in particular with respect to the Finance for Development Fair Financial Flows pathway and the Conflict & Fragility private sector pathway which will build on the lessons from SOMO's [Multinational Corporations in Conflict-Affected Areas programme](#).

The Partnership envisions that roles will continue to gradually shift from a traditional donor-recipient relationship to one in which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oxfam, SOMO and local partners jointly undertake influencing activities. We note progress in several countries. In Yemen, for example the Dutch Embassy joined a core group led by Oxfam, CARE, and UN Women to coordinate Women, Peace and Security activities. We note that cooperation is especially pronounced at The Hague level, for example, in relation to shrinking civic space in several countries and Minister Ploumen's support for the Land Rights Now campaign. We see significant potential to further explore and intensify this partnership in the years to come, especially at the country level.

KNOWLEDGE-BASED AND DATA-DRIVEN

Our effort to strengthen civil society and influence national and international policy demanded a thorough understanding of the landscape. To that end, this year, in collaboration with Wageningen University and partners, we conducted landmark research into citizens' voice and civil society norms and attitudes in 11 low- and middle-income countries. A key component of the research was to learn how this Strategic Partnership could increase civic engagement and empower "beneficiaries" to become "active citizens".

A total of more than 10,000 respondents were surveyed across the 11 countries, with sampling methodology differing from country to country depending on local influencing objectives and strategies. For example, for a project aimed at community mobilization in relation to land rights, sampled individuals were smallholder farmers; however, when the project aim was to mobilize urban youth, the sampling targeted students.

Survey findings were jointly analyzed with partners and directly incorporated into influencing strategies. A local partner in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, for example, sampled 1,001 respondents. Findings verified underlying but unsubstantiated assumptions of the Theory of Change. Namely, little awareness among those surveyed of the issue of tax justice; a perception of rising inequality; and a general belief amongst youth (under age 29) that citizens can influence the government if they make an effort. Research findings also indicated that the target group's primary source of information is the internet, particularly Facebook. Together, these findings helped partners strategically shape our influencing: to strengthen digital outreach to activate the youth—those most likely to believe in the possibility of change—to educate the community on the relationship between taxes and public health.

A corollary research objective sought to verify underlying assumptions regarding raising citizens' voices, and learn more about which factors determine citizen engagement. Across the 11 sampled countries, "trust" and "clear results" were the predominant drivers of citizen engagement. In general, people who have higher levels of trust are more likely to be active citizens. However, research discovered that in several countries civil society organizations are not trusted as much as we would have expected. While on average people trust local civil society organizations more than they trust government, it is important to note that in some countries there is no pronounced difference in the level of trust in civil society organizations and the local or central government.

In six countries where respondents indicated that their trust of civil society organizations is low, the analysis shows that the general perception of civil society organizations is positive. Partners would require further analysis to inform concrete actions, but recognize a need to strengthen the public image of civil society organizations which could have a bearing on 'trust'. As part of unprecedented pressure by state authorities to limit the civic space, civil society is often portrayed in media as foreign agents, promoting foreign values and agendas counter to traditional local values.

As a result of this finding, in the coming year we will further enter into dialogue and support local partners in understanding and interpreting the data. The responsibility to address trust and legitimacy concerns lies with partners and we can support them to use traditional and digital media to improve the image of civil society organizations, and to be more present and accessible in communities explaining the work we do. This may help increase trust as it should imply supporting local people according to local needs and agendas.

This research data will serve as a baseline against which we will measure results throughout the Strategic Partnership. To ensure this monitoring and evaluation framework is appropriate and sufficiently robust, we established in 2016 the External Reference Group and continue to consult with them.

3 RIGHT TO FOOD

Land rights continue to be under pressure across the globe and the impacts of climate change are increasingly felt among the poorest. It is imperative that at this historically crucial juncture, civil society in the Global South addresses and challenges those who would otherwise disempower people living in rural poverty, by failing to act on climate change and violations of land rights.

The Strategic Partnership contributed to these important efforts by leading and participating in alliances with small-scale producers and active consumers around the world to protect people and the planet.

| | Outcomes 2016 | Planned outcomes 2018 |
|---|------------------|--------------------------|
| Governments improved policies: # cases | 36 | 92 |
| Companies behave more responsibly: # cases | 65 | 124 |
| Civil society organizations strengthened: # organizations | 112 | 142 |
| Political will has increased: # cases of influential supporting | 44 | 54 |
| Worldwide influencing network gains power: # alliances | 32 | 77 |
| Citizens raise their voices: # citizens | 183990 | 317399 |
| Citizens changed their attitudes: # citizens | 7241 | 168000 |

Table 1: Right to Food outcomes of first 15 months against planned outcomes at the end of 2018

Against our Strategic Partnership outcome targets we note substantial progress. We recorded 36 cases in which international bodies, such as the EU and the UN, and governments in southern countries have improved their policies. We also note 65 cases in which companies improved policies, which now better promote and ensure access to land and water, awareness of climate change, and pro-poor value chains.

Aligned to the Theory of Change whereby a strengthened civil society builds public pressure and wins political will to change policy, the most visible achievements are in improved influencing capacity of civil society. In the first 15 months of the Partnership, 112 southern civil society organizations took part in or initiated influencing activities in 7 countries. Moreover, 32 alliances have become more influential advocates as a result of participating in Oxfam-led trainings and workshops, and, in particular on the issue of land rights, the global Land Rights Now campaign guarantees wider networks and better coordinated influencing strategies among alliance members.

More than 183,000 people across several countries participated in global campaigns and national actions in Nigeria, Cambodia, Mozambique and Indonesia. These individuals claimed their rights and exerted public pressure, contributing to 44 cases in which those in power in southern countries, in the Netherlands, and in the EU have endorsed our policy asks on issues such as inclusive agribusiness investments.

CAMBODIA PRIVATE SECTOR PRACTICES

In Cambodia, land is the most important resource for agriculture development, and approximately 80% of the rural population lives from subsistence farming. As part of the Government of Cambodia's economic development agenda, it granted Economic Land Concessions (ELCs) to private companies. These ELCs are criticized for negative environmental impact and for indigenous peoples' loss of farmland.

A HAGL Corporation rubber plantation, for example, encroached indigenous community lands in Cambodia. Our local partner Equitable Cambodia, supported by Oxfam Novib, constructively engaged with HAGL and other private sector actors in Cambodia to push Corporate Social Responsibility principles, and the International Finance Corporation's Compliance Advisor Ombudsman mechanism. The Partnership enabled community members to understand these principles, and to collect and analyze the information necessary to incorporate them into their networking and advocacy.

In an unprecedented collective lobby and effort by our partners and indigenous community members, Equitable Cambodia, the Compliance Advisory Ombudsman, HAGL, and the provincial deputy governor identified new external boundaries of the ECL area, accounting for indigenous communities.

Through convening local allies and facilitating learning across provinces, Equitable Cambodia successfully engaged with HAGL and four other companies to adjust their business practices. Two additional companies—Roy Feng Agro-Industry in Preh Vihear and Angkor Gold in Ratanakiri—have taken positive first steps to support smallholder farmers. Rooted in local practice and evidence, the partners are now applying their influencing strategy to national agriculture and land laws.



Figure 1: community and local authority mediation on land concession in Inn village, Ratanakiri province - photo taken December 13, 2017, Mr. Sok Lida, Equitable Cambodia.

GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR LAND RIGHTS

In the first 15 months, more than 25 local and local-to-global alliances in the Right to Food thematic area were formed or strengthened. They now actively share resources and risks, while complementing advocacy efforts. One such example is the [Land Rights Now Alliance](#), which campaigns for the land rights of indigenous peoples and other communities with customary tenure—often among the most marginalized groups.

Land Rights Now has reached more than 11 million people online, with more than 125,000 people signing petitions calling for action to secure indigenous peoples' and local communities' land rights.

Pressure on national governments in existing land cases is thus jointly exerted not just by affected individuals, but by members of the largest land rights alliance in the world, made up of more than 550 organizations. Without Oxfam's Worldwide Influencing Network, these national-to-global advocacy networks would have far fewer opportunities for campaign victories.

Indeed, we have also seen Worldwide Influencing Network results right here in The Netherlands. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs joined the Global Call to Action on Indigenous and Community Land Rights, and the Minister supported the campaign by facilitating [a side event at the United Nations General Assembly](#) and hosting the campaign launch in the Netherlands on March 8, 2016.

We were able to link the national-level advocacy of these campaign supporters to influencing efforts in Europe. In the Netherlands, this led to Dutch Development Bank FMO adopting a new sustainability policy on January 1, 2017. This was the first time the FMO conducted an extensive open consultation based on the principles that Oxfam and other Dutch nongovernmental organizations had suggested, and it demonstrates best practices regarding the integration of environmental, social, and governance requirements. We will continue to lobby for similar policies to be adopted by other development and investment banks.

4 GREATER RESPONSIBILITY IN FINANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Just eight men own the same wealth as half the world. Governments continue to find new ways to continue the destructive race to the bottom on corporate tax. In this context, our work across the theme of *Greater Responsibility in Finance for Development* demanded continued global campaign pressure and national influencing to draw public and political attention to the relation between tax and inequality. We proposed concrete alternatives: progressive tax policies, budgets that serve people’s needs, and expenditure monitoring to reduce waste and inequality.

| | Outcomes 2016 | Planned outcomes 2018 |
|---|------------------|--------------------------|
| Governments improved policies: # cases | 46 | 133 |
| Companies behave more responsibly: # cases | 8 | 19 |
| Civil society organizations strengthened: # organizations | 696 | 953 |
| Political will has increased: # cases of influential supporting | 24 | 154 |
| Worldwide influencing network gains power: # alliances | 25 | 67 |
| Citizens raise their voices: # citizens | 118805 | 453842 |
| Citizens changed their attitudes: # citizens | 22650 | 134300 |

Table 2: *Greater Responsibility in Finance for Development* outcomes of first 15 months against planned outcomes at the end of 2018

As in our Right to Food thematic area, we note substantial progress toward projected results. Given the technical subject matter, in the first 15 months we prioritized support to local organizations to, for example, monitor municipal budgets and advocate for better access to information on public finance. Research, supporting technical analysis and learning were prioritized. For example, SOMO supported partners in Indonesia to strengthen tax justice advocacy in relation to tax treaties with the Netherlands. Oxfam’s Knowledge Hub on governance & citizenship drives the thematic learning agenda building on its expertise embedded in Oxfam’s worldwide network.

As a result, almost 700 civil society organizations increased or initiated participation in influencing and advocacy efforts on tax justice in 10 low- and middle-income countries. In Nigeria and Uganda specifically the community outreach and cascading network approach resulted in a high reach to civil society organizations.

We recorded 25 cases in which alliances have become broader or are more efficiently coordinating advocacy activities against corporate tax evasion and in support of fairer fiscal and financial government policies. Public pressure mounted as 118,805 people took action against extreme inequality and poverty in the Netherlands, Uganda, Pakistan and Vietnam. The global pressure through the network of the Oxfam confederation worldwide as a result of the Even it Up! campaign that launched the inequality report at the Davos World Economic Forum counted over 320,000 people taking action. Our efforts have contributed to 46 cases where (sub-) national governments or global actors were held to account for inequality, and adopted or implemented more stringent policies on topics such as tax evasion, fiscal justice, or fair finance. In Pakistan, for example, 22,650 men and women demonstrated increased awareness of—and changed norms and/or their attitudes regarding—tax justice.

PAKISTAN & FIGHTING TAX DODGING ACROSS THE GLOBE

Using the tax system to redistribute wealth is one of the key means by which governments are able to address poverty. But big business is dodging tax on an industrial scale, depriving governments across the globe of the money they need to address poverty and invest in healthcare, education and economic development. In a destructive race to the bottom on corporate tax, governments across the globe offer tax exemptions in an attempt to attract business. As a result, the tax burden falls proportionately on the citizens.

In Pakistan, citizens bear the burden of indirect taxes. The most prominent indirect tax is the “general sales tax” which disproportionately affects poor consumers as they spend almost all of their income on essential goods. In contrast, only 0.3% of Pakistanis file a tax return and pay income tax.

Oxfam convened a National Tax Justice Coalition with 28 Pakistani civil society organizations from 15 districts of Sindh and Punjab province. The Coalition mobilized citizens to take action on fair taxation and reached 1.5 million people on social media.

The Pakistan Inequality Report launched in the previous year by Oxfam and partners built public pressure in a context where tax avoidance was central in the political debate and the Pakistani government is showing new political will to increase the number of direct tax payers.

As national pressure is building in countries like Pakistan, through Oxfam’s global network and in alliances such as Tax Justice Netherlands, we pressed the EU and the Dutch government to adopt more stringent tax standards. SOMO’s research, including the Eurodad 2016 released report Survival of the richest Europe’s role in supporting an unjust global tax system and contributions to Oxfam’s policy papers such as Tax Battles: the dangerous global race to the bottom on corporate tax complemented campaign and lobby activities that contributed to increasing Dutch public support for tax justice. A majority in Dutch parliament supported motions on tax policies and the European Commission released a proposal on tax transparency.

ENGAGING CITIZENS IN PUBLIC FINANCE – UGANDA

In Uganda, partner organization Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) mobilized 75 civil society organizations from 59 districts and 19 municipalities to influence the national budget 2017-2018, resulting in 11 “alternative budget proposals” being adopted by parliament in February 2017. These adopted proposals covered practical issues such as adjustment of wage bill ceilings in the water sector, additional budget for the National Health Insurance Scheme, and prioritization of pro-poor agricultural policy. A gender assessment of sectoral budgets led to a deferral of the Health Ministry budget by parliament in order to address gender equity.

This outcome best illustrates the effectiveness of a stronger civil society voice rooted in a wider alliance that speaks with a collective voice. Oxfam contributed to CSBAG to effectively collaborate with members, allies and stakeholders at local and national levels to conduct this crucial evidence-based advocacy.

5 CONFLICT & FRAGILITY

The Conflict & Fragility thematic area of the Partnership aims for greater women’s participation in peace and security processes; inclusive security sector reform; and private sector actors operating with more sensitivity to the impact of their actions on conflicts.

A global increase in conflicts and the number of fragile states means that—despite significant global developments to strengthen and expand the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) framework at a global level (UNHCR article 1325)—this work is more important than ever.

We note significant progress at the level of the African Union, where stakeholders have progressed on implementing the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) roadmap 2016-2020, however, security sector reforms in national conflict contexts such as the civil war in South Sudan have still not taken shape.

The thematic area therefore operates in an increasingly challenging context where global and regional space may be opening while conflict means less space for national civil society to operate. This requires tailored planning, adapting strategies and activities to ensure we will continue to see gains in the coming years. Therefore, we have built a strong foundation for influencing work by more specifically strengthening the capacity of partners and establishing alliances to link national advocacy efforts with advocacy at the United Nations, African Union, and networks in Brussels, the Netherlands, and Africa.

Given the challenging context of conflict in targeted countries such as Yemen and South Sudan, we note slow progress and need to take a longer term perspective on expected outcomes. We have adjusted our ambition level and will further prioritize interventions to incorporate in the next annual plan 2018-19. These adjustments include an elaboration of the private sector pathway interventions in the coming years based on the lessons of SOMO’s Multinational Corporations in Conflict-Affected Areas program.

| | Outcomes 2016 | Planned outcomes 2018 |
|---|------------------|--------------------------|
| Governments improved policies: # cases | 2 | 35 |
| Companies behave more responsibly: # cases | 0 | 7 |
| Civil society organizations strengthened: # organizations | 18 | 311 |
| Political will has increased: # cases of influential supporting | 2 | 16 |
| Worldwide influencing network gains power: # alliances | 11 | 37 |
| Citizens raise their voices: # citizens | 1568 | 187189 |
| Citizens changed their attitudes: # citizens | 0 | 720 |

Table 3: Conflict & Fragility outcomes of first 15 months against planned outcomes at the end of 2018

We recorded two cases of improved gender sensitive government policies on inclusion and protection within the security and justice sector. At least 18 civil society organizations are better able to lobby and advocate for issues that are key to women’s security in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel, and South Sudan. Eleven alliances are better able to lobby and advocate for women-inclusive security provision, peace-building, and conflict transformation, and are better able to use Oxfam’s global network that leverages citizen power in the Rights in Crisis campaign.

SECURITY SECTOR REFORM SOUTH SUDAN

South Sudan faced renewed conflict and civil war in 2016-2017, posing a particularly challenging context for security sector reform. Nonetheless, the Strategic Partnership made progress toward inclusive community security and protection.

Following the development of a contextualized influencing strategy with clear power mapping, the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization (CEPO) and the South Sudan Law Society (SSLS) identified four civil society networks at national and state levels to widen their alliance comprising 116 civil society organizations. Jointly they reviewed four major security laws (the South Sudan National Police Service Act, the National Security Service Act, the SPLA Act, and the Penal Code Act). The partners facilitated briefings to share policy recommendations with security sector institutions, including the Law Reform Commission (LRC).

Notable in this particularly challenging context of renewed conflict and civil war is that the National Ministry of Interior formally requested the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization to renew facilitation of the “National Security Actor’s Forum,” with the aim to reform the security sector. This forum meets twice monthly in Juba, South Sudan, with security sector stakeholders including representatives of diplomatic missions, UN Police, civil society, and UN agencies with a focus on sexual violence prevention. The forum will be co-chaired by South Sudan National Police Services, the Inspector General of Police (IGP), and the UN Police Commissioner.

6 INFLUENCING CAPACITY IN CONTEXT OF SHRINKING CIVIC SPACE

Empowered civil society is a driving force of change and we are privileged to directly partner with over 80 local civil society organizations. In support of partners' advocacy, 30% of the Partnership budget was dedicated to improving the influencing capacity of organizations and alliances.

Earlier we indicated that to support strengthening of influencing capacity we build on a capacity assessment. This is a structured dialogue with partners regarding their influencing capacity and identifies priorities for specific interventions. A summary of findings from these dialogues is visualized in figure 2.

Summary per country of partner influencing capacity assessments

Based on the assessment of 77 partners. The rating scale reads like this;
 1=Big opportunities for becoming more successful in influencing
 2=Considerable Gains to be considered for becoming more successful in influencing
 3=Gains to be considered for becoming more successful in influencing
 4=Expert & potential to strengthen the capacity of others

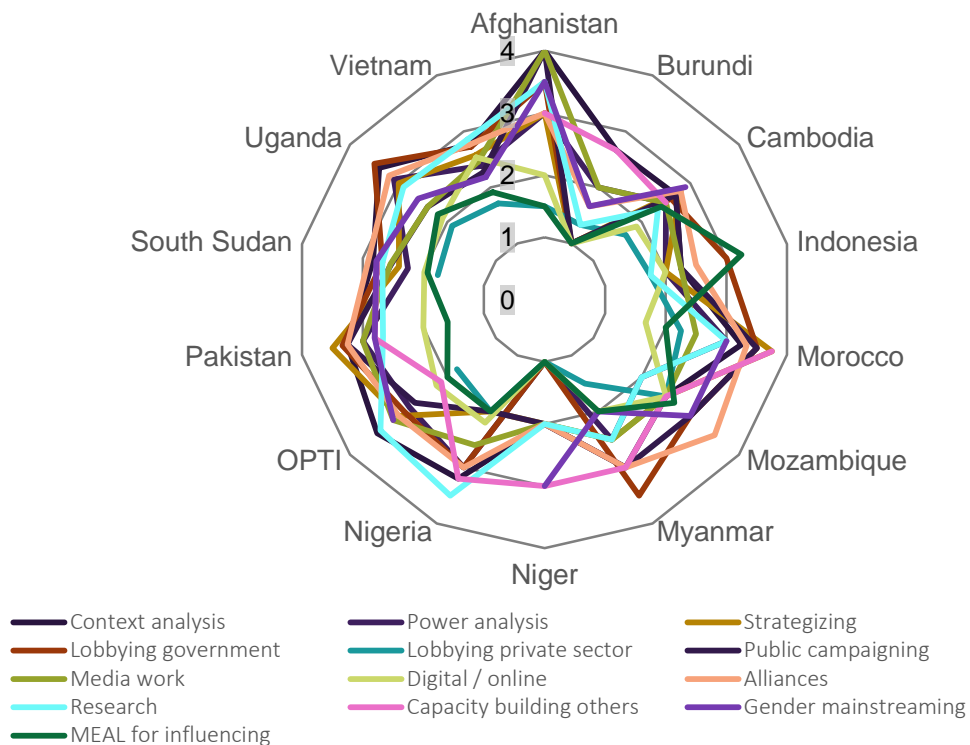


Figure 2: Summary result of capacity assessments

A key finding of the capacity assessments indicated support was needed to establish a more structured approach to influencing that further elaborates the political role of civil society. In the coming year, we will focus on joint influencing with partners in the execution of their influencing strategies.

VIETNAM – INFLUENCING CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

The focus of the Budget Transparency, Accountability, and Participation coalition (BTAP) in Vietnam is to address fiscal justice through reform of the fiscal system to be more transparent and participatory, ensuring budget allocation to social services are responsive to the needs of marginalized groups. With financial and technical support of Oxfam Novib, the coalition grew from a small network of civil society organizations to become a nationally recognized actor on fiscal justice. BTAP reached out to provincial and national political leaders and have seen their recommendations for budget transparency and audit results accepted in a government decree, as well as two recommendations for clearer procedures and stronger coordination mechanisms in the budgeting process included in a National Assembly Resolution.

“Before, I paid money (local fee and tax) as asked by local government without any idea. But now I only pay when I am clearly explained why the money is collected and how it will be spent.”

Mrs. Ho Thi Suong – Baze community based group (Linh Thuong commune – Gio Linh district)



Although we are seeing improved influencing capacity, Oxfam Novib, SOMO and our civil society partners are concerned with shrinking civic space. This trend risks jeopardizing our aim to have more people, especially marginalized groups, play an active role in building their society. We regularly challenge this trend by raising political and public awareness and by lobbying donor governments' responses to the restrictions. Locally, we worked with other Dialogue and Dissent partners to influence nongovernmental organization legislation, as well as protection strategies for partners and staff.

7 LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Strategic Partnership between Oxfam Novib, SOMO, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and local civil society organizations is on track for realizing its full potential. In the Netherlands, we note close communication and cooperation between Oxfam Novib, SOMO, and Ministry staff. We see potential to explore further collaboration with Embassies of the Netherlands in joint influencing with partners in the pursuit of national advocacy objectives.

Early outcomes and data are allowing us to re-assess the validity of our original Theory of Change and associated assumptions. Our Theory of Change remains open to evolution and adjustments have been shared in the annual plan 2017-18. We are continuing to calibrate Conflict & Fragility interventions and are developing even more focused activities in the private sector and for Finance for Development's accountable financial flows pathways.

The most striking lesson learned regards the question of the trustworthiness of civil society organizations. Going forward, we will deepen our understanding of the findings and seek out opportunities to address trust and legitimacy issues raised by partners. While ultimately the responsibility to address these issues lies with our national partners, we will explore potential responses.

Swiftly changing contexts, especially in conflict areas and fragile states, stresses the importance of continuous learning, and we remain driven by evolving data, learning events, and exchanges across our worldwide influencing network to maintain our strategic agility.

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