Working towards
Transformational Development
and the
Sustainable Development Goals

Annette Madvig and Chris Roche
May 2016

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INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN SECURITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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Glossary

AACES	Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme
ABM	Anglican Board of Mission Australia
ACPNG	Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea
CSOs	Civil society organisations
CCA	Climate change adaptation
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
FFS	Farmers field schools
FPIC	Free, prior and informed consent
HIV/AIDs	Human immunodeficiency virus / Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
INGO	International non-government organisation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PICAN	Pacific Islands Climate Action Network
PNG	Papua New Guinea
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STI	Sexually-transmitted infection
VCAN	Vanuatu Climate Action Network
2030 Agenda	UN Declaration 'Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for global action'

Executive Summary

World leaders launched the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on 25 September 2015, boosting global aspirations to improve the conditions and opportunities that shape people's lives and their interactions with the planet. These aspirations are highly relevant: 800 million people live in extreme poverty and 60 million people are currently displaced by conflict (UN 2015a, 8). Limiting global warming below 2 degrees Celsius, let alone below 1.5 degrees Celsius, will be a challenge for all.

The concept of "transformation" is central to the declaration of ambitious normative intent launched at the UN Sustainable Development Summit, *Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for global action*, which sets out the SDGs. Yet the *2030 Agenda* is imprecise about what is meant by transformation and the mechanisms of change that might bring it about.

This report asks whether it is possible to define more clearly what transformation is and, if it is, whether we know how to achieve it, or at least work towards it. In doing so, the report takes a somewhat different tack in the ongoing debate amongst academics, development practitioners and other commentators about the merit of leaders making another grand statement and setting collective goals.

This report argues there is no universal definition of transformation, given the diversity of ways in which people understand and experience the world. Common insights can be drawn, however, from a range of thought traditions which consider that something about human society should be fundamentally different in the future from the way it is now. From these insights, the researchers suggest that transformation appears to involve a deep process of change in how we relate to ourselves, others and the environment and how power is distributed and exercised, facilitated by mechanisms and values consistent with end goals.

Following these insights, the report proposes a working definition of "transformational development" which the researchers believe might usefully guide the work of development agencies who seek greater effect:

Transformational development encompasses genuine, lasting improvements in people's lives that are enabled and sustained by the creation of just, equitable, accountable and environmentally sustainable social, economic and political systems. Transformational development requires that development actors work with values and methods that are consistent with transformational outcomes.

The report also argues that it is not possible to say definitively, and in the abstract, whether or not the SDGs will have meaningful impacts: this is an empirical question. Nor can there be one formula for working towards transformational development. Instead, the report proposes that those seeking to work towards transformation, or transformational development, are more likely to be effective if they employ multiple, linked strategies to exercise change across formal and informal systems and at individual and collective levels. These strategies should start from the most locally relevant point in a particular situation (Gaventa 2006, 31; Rao and Kelleher 2005, 60-61).

The report explores the benefits and challenges of using such an approach by analysing five projects of four Australian non-government organisations (NGOs) who want to support transformational development. The case studies are:
- Action Aid Australia: strengthening smallholder farmers' resilience in arid and semi-arid eastern Kenya
- Anglican Board of Mission Australia: promoting women's equality in PNG as part of the living Gospel
- Caritas Australia: improving sexually transmitted infection management in PNG
- Oxfam Australia: promoting the free, prior and informed consent of project-affected communities
- Oxfam Australia: supporting coalitions to improve climate change adaptation in Vanuatu.

Finally, the report considers the implications of these insights on transformation from theory and practice for the work of development agencies, specifically for international NGOs and their donors. The report suggests that agencies can test their programs and organisations for "indications of transformation", even if they cannot show conclusively that they are contributing to transformational development, especially in the short-term. Agencies can engage better with political, uncertain forces and experiment with institutional and social learning and innovation. Such strategies can support work to fulfil the transformational potential of the *2030 Agenda*: its acknowledgement that universal challenges are shared problems; its commitment to leaving no one behind; and its recognition of the indivisibility of economic, social and environmental concerns in transformation.

Introduction

The concept of "transformation" attained a global stage with the launch in September 2015 of an ambitious agenda at the UN Sustainable Development Summit: *Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for global action.* The *2030 Agenda* sets out seventeen "universal and transformative" Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) whose realisation is intended to profoundly improve the lives of all and transform the world for the better (UN 2015b, 2).

While transformation is the conceptual heart of the *2030 Agenda,* it is left undefined, potentially creating another obfuscating but pleasant-sounding "buzzword" (Cornwall and Brock 2005, 1043). This report takes advantage of the SDG spotlight to review several different sets of literature and probe critically what "transformation" might mean. The report captures these insights in the following working definition:

> *Transformational development encompasses genuine, lasting improvements in people's lives that are enabled and sustained by the creation of just, equitable, accountable and environmentally sustainable social, economic and political systems. Transformational development requires that development actors work with values and methods that are consistent with transformational outcomes.*

The report then uses these insights to consider which elements of the *2030 Agenda* and the SDGs may contain transformational potential. In order to test what the practice of transformational development might look like, the report analyses case studies offered by Australian NGOs working internationally. The case studies suggest that agencies who wish to support transformational development must, in combination with other actors, employ multiple strategies across multiple domains to support change.

The case study analysis reflects that the SDGs' ambition for transformation is, in effect, part of an ongoing effort at learning and practice by many people and organisations concerned with justice and sustainability. In using the case studies to try and discover clues about what might be, or could be, transformational about some Australian NGOs' approaches to development, and to make recommendations for their future work, the researchers are supporting a project previously identified by Chris Roche:

> I now wonder whether a greater focus on exposure to – as well as analysis and communication of – the practice of transformative development and associated norms of accountability might be a more strategic way of both supporting those who are attempting to promote this agenda and possibly providing some encouragement and guidance to senior managers in NGOs to offer the right kind of organisational culture and support (Roche 2015, 92) [1.]

Research funding

Methodology and limitations to the research

Research audiences

The primary audience for this report is Australian NGOs working in international development that wish to formulate and put into practice more transformative development approaches. This reflects the researchers' interest in generating "a theory that is useful, meaningful and relevant to participants," with the intention that the theory and findings can be used and modified through further research and practice (Breckenridge et al, 2012, 4).

The secondary audience for this research is policy-makers and donors (government, civil society and other) who are interested in how they can formulate, support and fund a more transformative development agenda.

Methodology

The research for this report was conducted between July and December 2015, from the Institute for Human Security and Social Change at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia. The research was conducted through a literature review and case study analysis. The case studies were selected and analysed as follows:

- The Directors of the Institute for Social Change developed the project idea with senior leaders at five ANGOs who had expressed an interest in the research questions. Four ANGOs confirmed their participation. Each NGO submitted an outline of two or three of their projects that they considered transformational in some way.
- The researchers held a workshop with ANGO representatives to discuss the researchers' working definition of "transformational development" and to consider the merits of the potential case studies. The researchers and NGOs agreed on one case study from each NGO that seemed most relevant to the research questions and for which a reasonable evidence base existed. Two cases were selected from Oxfam Australia, as researchers felt that each offered an interesting angle not covered by the other cases.
- The researchers reviewed project documentation provided by the ANGOs to form an initial hypothesis of how the projects might or might not have employed transformational objectives and methods. To do this, they assessed the cases against their working definition of transformational development and Rao and Kelleher's framework for understanding social change (2005).
- Using that initial hypothesis, the researchers developed questions which they explored in 3-4 semi-structured interviews with staff from each ANGO and its project partners. The purpose of the interviews was to tease out more information about what was or was not transformational about the

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[1] This project is also consistent with Faustino and Booth's search for "alternative operational models" that draw on direct and positive evidence, rather than only on negative and indirect evidence, of how development agencies are not only "thinking politically" but working differently in practice (Faustino and Booth 2014, 3-4).

project methodology and outcomes, and to gather further evidence from participants. The interviewees are not named in this report to protect their confidentiality.

- The researchers wrote an analysis of each case study and shared it with the NGOs for feedback. At a second research workshop, the researchers and NGO representatives discussed the findings of the literature review and case study analyses.

The researchers presented their preliminary findings at a meeting of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) civil society network on 6 October 2015 and at a workshop during the Australian Council for International Development's annual conference on 15 October 2015.

Limitations to the research

There are three limitations to the research. One is that only five case studies have been reviewed and a limited number of informants interviewed. Further work would be needed to assess the broader relevance of the researchers' conclusions.

A second limitation is that the researchers cannot make any first-hand claims about the quality of the projects reviewed. The researchers could only identify and describe project processes or results based on the analytical models used, the evidence available in existing project documents and through interviews with the staff of ANGOs and their partner organisations. Due to time, resources and scope, the researchers could not independently verify the information received.

Internal and independent documents existed to varying degrees for the projects selected, including: project designs; thematic policies; progress reports; research reports; mid-term reviews; independent evaluations; informal field notes; and artefacts produced by program participants. The researchers used interviews to cross-check information contained in the project documentation, and to clarify and deepen their understanding of issues, on the assumption that information relevant to the research questions would not necessarily be documented.

This limitation to the number and type of informants also reflects a third limitation. The researchers could not investigate what participants in the projects, or other members of their communities, might themselves define as transformational or not and how they perceived or experienced the projects. The nomination of project case studies reveals something of what the participating NGOs and their partners might understand about the idea of "transformational development" (which is interesting in and of itself). Yet the conclusions about the transformational aspects of the projects are those only of the researchers based on project documentation, interviews and the broader literature.

Part One: Setting a transformational agenda

1.1 World leaders set a "universal, integrative and transformative" agenda

World leaders launched a highly ambitious declaration of intent at the UN Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015: *Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for global action*. The agenda set out seventeen "universal and transformative" Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to "stimulate action over the next fifteen years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet". Aiming "to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner", the goals cover a wide range of areas, including poverty, social services, economic productivity, equality, environmental protection, peace and cooperation (UN 2015b, 3).

The launch of the SDGs boosted global aspirations that are highly relevant to global conditions and constraints: 800 million people live in extreme poverty and 60 million people are currently displaced by conflict (UN 2015a,

8). The international community will have to work hard to meet the commitment it made at the Paris climate change conference in December 2015 to limit global warming below 2 degrees Celsius, let alone to meet its aspiration to limit warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The *2030 Agenda* joins a body of statements made by leaders since 1945 about humanity's collective ability to end poverty and realise every person's human rights (Barder 2015). It is intended to ensure ongoing commitment to development in poor countries while generating "focused and coherent action on sustainable development" in all countries (UNGA 2012, 46-47).

Within the UN, the declaration serves to bring together its streams of work on "development" and "sustainable development", as requested by UN members states at the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development, or Rio+20. As the "post-2015 development agenda", the SDGs succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which framed international efforts to end poverty and improve social indicators in developing countries from 2000 to 2015. From the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and its successors, the SDGs also inherit the mantle for protecting the global environment while promoting economic prosperity.

The SDGs were developed in several stages, led by heads of government, convened by the UN and with input from government, private sector and civil society stakeholders in several consultative processes.[2] With time, more information will be revealed about how bargaining over values and interests shaped the final document (Hulme 2007, 15)[3], but the degree of consultation distinguished the SDGs from the bureaucratically-led MDGs (Hulme 2007, 3-10).[4]

1.2 But what is "transformation?"

The merit of making another high-level statement, even one that would bring together two important agendas, was contested during the three year negotiation of the SDGs and has been debated since their launch. The researchers believe that understanding the potential of the SDGs depends to some degree on understanding the notion at the heart of them, that of "transformation". While the ambition of "transformation" serves as a mobilising call in the *2030 Agenda*, it is not defined explicitly in the document. By implication, "transformation" might be understood to take in the full scope of the vision, goals and methods set out in the *2030 Agenda*.

Such imprecision may be necessary for a document negotiated by all UN Member States and which is intended to shape action in many diverse contexts. Its ambiguity may well allow different actors to imbue it with local meaning and develop goals and strategies relevant in their own context – helping translate a global endeavour into something meaningful in practice. The researchers believe that exploring different understandings of transformation might assist development agencies, like the Australian NGOs who contributed case studies to this research, who do wish to implement a transformative agenda through their own practice.

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[2] Following the mandate given at Rio+20, in 2013 the UN Secretary-General commissioned a High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda to make recommendations on what the new, combined agenda might include. The Panel consulted and took submissions from a large number of national and local governments, civil society organisations, businesses and multilateral organisations. Subsequently, an Open Working Group of Member States worked over 2013-2014 to develop the SDGs, consulting with Major Groups and civil society stakeholders.

[3] Hulme (2007, 15) notes in relation to the Millennium Declaration that bargaining was fierce, for "...if 'your goal' was in the Declaration then it would automatically be on the agenda at national and international meetings for years to come."

[4] The MDGs were built on earlier commitments made during UN Summits in the 1990s. Hulme (2007, 3-10) explains that the concept of a consolidated set of development targets to guide aid investments was developed by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee in 1996, followed by the UN proposing a different set. The negotiation of the *Millennium Declaration*, led by the UN Secretary-General and agreed by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in September 2000, included lobbying by interested parties and bargaining by nation states. The final working out of the Millennium Development Goals, however, as the mechanism by which to implement the *Millennium Declaration's* intent, was done by a technical working group comprised of the OECD DAC, the World Bank, IMF and UNDP.

The word transformation can be used descriptively, to explain the level and nature of social, economic, political, technological or environmental change as it occurs. For example, the scale and impacts of globalisation, as well as resistance to it, might be described as transformation(s) affecting every society (Castles, year unknown, p6). Similarly, the exponential development and application of digital technologies in every industry could be described not just as disruptive but transformational. Digital technology is radically changing the production of value, the emergence of markets and the relationships between producers and consumers in ways that are difficult to understand fully as they emerge (Hagel III et al 2015).

It is also possible, however, to use the word transformation normatively. In the *2030 Agenda* and in several sets of writing about social change and development, "transformation" is used to convey the desire that something about what we do and achieve - politically, economically, socially, technologically and environmentally - and why and how, should be fundamentally different in the future from the way it is now. This generates interesting questions about what should and could be different, as well as how that can be realised.

The researchers acknowledge the risk that they merely attach themselves to yet another warm, purposeful "buzzword" of the international development industry. A word like transformation can hide "a multiplicity of contingent, situational and relational meanings" to allow particular actors to define paths of action and solutions palatable to their own interests (Cornwall and Brock 2005, 1044, 1046, 1055-56). Recognising they may not mitigate this risk entirely, the researchers emphasise that they are less interested in prescribing a route(s) to a particular vision of transformation than in understanding how ideas and practices related to transformation might inform their own development research and practice and that of the NGOs who have participated in the research.

1.4 Transformation goes beyond transactional benefits

One way to understand the fundamental differences that might be sought is to consider what transformation is not considered to be. Some development practitioners argue that "too many development initiatives have limited impact. Schools are built but children do not learn. Clinics are built but sickness persists. Governments adopt reforms but too little changes for their citizens" (DDD Manifesto Community 2014). From this perspective, something is happening, but it is not enough: the intervention does not have the effect it seeks.

Some authors believe limited results occur when development or social change objectives are approached transactionally. That is, when governments or aid agencies focus on an exchange: they deliver money, goods or services on the assumption that these will overcome the challenging problems being targeted (Darnton and Kirk 2011, 117). Participants within a transactional framework - benevolent givers to charity, aid organisations, bureaucrats and poor people - are constructed in fundraising campaigns or in poverty-reduction programs as being on opposite but mutually beneficial sides of a neutral technical exchange.

Transactional development approaches aim to "help" "beneficiaries with needs" or "meet the demand" from "consumers with choices" (Cornwell 2000, 2002 cited in Ackerman 2005, 8; Eyben and Guijt 2015, 10). Through this lens, attention is placed on what is being delivered, such as improved capacity or a transfer of money or technology. Inter-personal and inter-organisational relationships are viewed instrumentally and managed through contracts with linear forms of accountability from the recipients back to donors (Kelly and Roche 2014, 14, 28; ECDPM 2008, 2; Eyben and Guijt 2015,10). Development agencies' accountability in these cases is often limited to assessing whether something is done 'right', rather than considering whether the 'right' thing is being done in the first place, let alone whether they are the 'right' bodies to do it (Ramalingam et al 2009, 10).

Authors point out several limitations of a transactional approach to development. For example, it might encourage short-term policy agendas (UNSG HLP 2012, 14). Public support in developed countries for "helping" might be broad after celebrity-lead appeals but it is also likely to be shallow, with little introspection about

values or significant changes to the behaviour and social organisation of the givers (Darnton and Kirk 2011 31, 117). The failure to see people who are poor as "people with rights" (rather than only as consumers and/or beneficiaries) might allow governments to avoid their responsibilities as "duty holders", unaccountable for meeting the political, economic, social and cultural rights of their peoples (Ackerman 2005, 6, 8).

While exchange-based relationships might deliver useful goods and services, for these authors a "transformational" approach to development and innovation involves a relational way of thinking and engaging with deeper, challenging processes related to the distribution and use of power. The benefits of technological innovation - like vaccines, mobile banking and drought-resistant agricultural techniques - may reach many people, but their ownership and distribution may also exclude people who are poor or discriminated against. These authors see transformational development as rights-based, asking how and with whom development agents work, as well as how and to whom they are accountable. They believe transformational development encourages mutual learning about how to address common problems collectively (Kelly and Roche 2014, 54) and view the capacity of people and governments as an end as well as a means (ECDPM 2008, 2; Eyben and Guijt 2015, 9).

1.5 Different traditions promote different transformational purposes

These insights about the deeper levels of ambition, processes and relationships of "transformation" also find expression in the writing about social change in different domains. The following paragraphs explore the ways in which the concepts of 'transformation,' 'transformational development' and 'transformative change' (noting the tautology in that phrase) are used and understood in some of those domains.

Perspectives from (Christian) faith traditions

For faith traditions, spiritual, social, political and economic change has long been understood to be interlinked (Hoffstaedter 2011, 14; Medical Teams International, year unknown, p2). As expressed by some Christian writers (noting the political range that exists within Christian thought and practice), the notion of transformation recognises the inherent integrity and wholeness of each person, a uniqueness of being that endows subjectivity and transcends material existence. Wholeness is seen to derive from the person reconciling and maintaining a harmonious relationship with God. That relationship provides the basis both for personal peace and for recognising and responding to the humanity, dignity and innate creativity of every other person (Williams 2009, 3; Pope Francis 2015, 60; Myers 2011, 3, 16; Medical Teams International 2015, 3).

Transformation, driven by spiritual understanding, is seen to be effected not through charitable acts, or transactions which reinforce the power of some over others. Instead, it requires removing the barriers that prevent people exercising their agency to pursue just and peaceful lives that reflect the loving purposes of God, as well as supporting the individual, social and political capacities required for them to do so (Williams 2009, 3). Transformational development is thus about realising improvements for people living in poverty as well as changing attitudes and behaviours towards poverty and injustice, to enable all people to live free from poverty and injustice.

Recently, Pope Francis has argued that the spiritual understanding of human purpose must also reflect the fact that humanity is part of nature: there is an intrinsic and fraternal communion between humans and nature, all created by God. Caring for Creation contributes fundamentally to personal and shared peace and justice (Pope Francis 2015, 49, 67-68, 164). Protecting "our common home", both out of respect for the natural world of God's creation, and for the purposes of enabling healthy and dignified human lives, must, he argues, be a priority for a global community facing serious environmental, human and social degradation (Pope Francis 2015, 3, 12, 33).

Perspectives from critical theory

For critical political theorists, the key concern is with the distribution of power and resources. They argue that individuals do not hold power in equal measure and that there are systemic constraints on the lives of individuals and communities (Mohan and Stokke 2000, 249). These theorists observe how power is allocated, exercised and institutionalised, in whose interests, and the processes which might be employed to challenge it (Gaventa 2006). The flows of goods, money, ideas and legal norms between the rich and the poor, or between the powerful and the less powerful at sub-national, national and international levels is seen to structure relative advantage over time in favour of the rich and powerful (Kennedy 2014, 4).

Critical theorists argue that transformation thus entails a structural shift in economic and political relations to distribute power and its associated assets, resources and influence more widely (Mohan and Stokke, 2000, 249). While a person's material conditions might be improved through "an economic process that extends access to goods and services towards otherwise marginalised groups", critical theorists argue that genuine, long-lasting justice requires "redistributions of power, representation and accountability, and more inclusive social, economic and political institutions" (Banks & Hulme 2014, 189, 191, Shepherd et al 2014, 157).

Stopping and preventing poverty and inequality is seen to require the redress of social relationships that are structured to keep people who are marginalised and/or living in poverty socially and politically excluded – and their human rights diminished - while policy priorities are set by national or global elites. This view is at odds with neoliberal assumptions that position poverty reduction as a secondary objective reliant mainly on economic growth (Banks & Hulme 2014 188,192). Indeed for some critical theorists, capitalism itself must be questioned (Andreasson 2010, p.17), or at least the nexus between growth and prosperity. Climate change and global recession are seen to have brought into relief the inequity and environmental threat inherent in dominant economic systems and distributions of power (Jackson 2009, 6-13) in ways that put both rich and poor at risk over the long term.

From these perspectives, the desire to achieve better outcomes (less poverty, empowered people) while retaining fundamentally unaltered economic, political and social systems (for example through "fair trade" or "ethical consumption") is vanity (Zizek 2010). It has been argued that the lack of a "technical consensus on how to bring about development" after sixty-five years of debate and practice makes it difficult to define what new systems should look like and how they might be realised. Yet transformation is unlikely to be gentle if "the tools for development policy making are distributional... allocat[ing] resources and authority toward some and away from others" with a preference for putting resources "into the hands of those whose return on their use will cause whatever we mean by 'development'". For critical theorists, transformation requires making difficult political and economic choices that impose costs and generate social conflict (Kennedy 2006, 170-173).

Perspectives from feminist theory

From a feminist perspective, transformation can occur only if gender equality is achieved and the rights and empowerment of women are realised (Abelenda 2015). This necessarily entails an interest (similar to critical theory) in how power is distributed and used. Power shapes the "rules of the game" in social systems and institutions which determine "who gets what, who does what and who decides," thus (re)producing systemic inequality and marginalisation (Rao and Kelleher 2005, 58-5).

Feminist theory brings an additional insight to critical theory, however. As "changing gender relations confronts the basis of social organisation in any society," being the relationship between women and men (Nazneen & Mahmud, 2015, 198), such change entails a deep-seated transformation. Real change is seen to address both the public manifestations of 'visible power' such as laws, budgets and political representation, but also the 'hidden' and 'invisible' power which shapes how men and women conceive of themselves and their roles in families and society (Miller et al 2006, 7, 9).

From this perspective, transformational development requires not only that women can participate in, and benefit from, economic life (partly an instrumentalist view of development) but that development supports gender justice, rights and citizenship in private and public spheres. There must be space for women, as well as for people marginalised on other grounds, to claim their rights and hold the state and other development agents accountable (Nazneen & Mahmud, 2015, p.203).

Perspectives from sustainability theory

In the literature on environmental risk and climate change, transformation must be towards sustainability. The notion of sustainability (the definition of which has been argued over since the 1987 Brundtland report) encompasses both an understanding of nature, its provisions and limits, and of the ways in which humans respond to nature and to each other in reference to those provisions and limits. It entails a concern with outcomes - the sustaining of the natural world and its ability to support human livelihoods - as well as processes - the ways in which political and social institutions govern the use and distribution of natural resources (Adger and Jordan 2009, pp3, 6).

Thus, while effective responses to climate change and other environmental threats must be based on science-driven understandings, they also require "processes of deliberation, argumentation and discussion" to shape and drive them (Adger and Jordan 2009, pp6-7). Transformation to sustainability is understood to require adaptive management and learning, as well as efforts to address the underlying causes of vulnerability, such as structural inequalities that create and maintain poverty (IPCC 2012, pp3, 18). Political processes are seen to enable qualitative and long-term reformations of economic, political and social functions and relationships and how these affect complex and dynamic natural systems (Wilson, 2012, p.19; Mapfumo et al p2).

For especially vulnerable human communities, where there is low adaptive capacity or where the effects of climate change will be particularly severe or widespread, the scale and depth of the change is also understood to be important. While in other domains incremental steps might be seen as valuable contributions towards long-term, deep qualitative change, such as for gender equality (Rao and Keller 2005, p.62), some sustainability theorists argue that for environmental challenges, "tinkering on the margins will not do the job" (High Level Panel on Global Sustainability 2012, p.7).

In that view, resilience may require more than incremental adaptation which is understood to respond to threats while maintaining an existing technological, governance or value system (IPCC 2012, p3; Mapfumo et al p.2). Instead, transformational changes might be understood as adaptations that are "adopted at a much larger scale or intensity, those that are truly new to a particular region or resource system, and those that transform places and shift locations" (Kates et al 2012, p.7156). For some sustainability advocates, as for some critical theorists, that means, for example, throwing off the growth paradigm which drives unlimited production and consumption.

Perspectives from leadership theory

Lastly, the literature on leadership and transformation considers two main preoccupations, on the premise that leadership has a significant effect on development outcomes (Lyne de Ver 2009, 3; Batilawa 2010, 5). First, the purpose of transformational leadership is considered to be the pursuit of desirable change in uncertain contexts: improved performance at an organisation or firm level (Cossin and Caballero 2013, 5) and social change at a society-wide level. As the preceding discussion illustrated, the nature of desirable social change will be defined differently in different domains. For feminist leadership theorists, for example, the heart of that change will be gender justice as well as action to change other bases of oppression and marginalisation, such as ethnicity and class (Batilawa 2010, 11, 13).

Second, in terms of how leadership might be exercised to support transformational purposes, some of the organisational development literature focuses (fairly traditionally) on the personal qualities of the individual. A transformational leader is seen to influence and inspire individuals within the organisation, transforming

their confidence and capacities while influencing the group as a whole by establishing a collective purpose and values (Cossin and Caballero 2013, 5-6). In contrast, critical literature is less concerned with the requisite (and apparently apolitical) personal qualities of a "leader" (such as charisma or superior intelligence)[5], and more interested in how leadership can be practiced in ways consistent with the overall objective (Lyne de Ver 2009, 8-9).

In response to feminism's core concern with gender justice and justice for other marginalised groups, for example, it is argued that feminist leadership is about women with a feminist perspective using "their power, resources and skills in non-oppressive, inclusive structures and processes to mobilise others – especially other women" around a shared, transformational agenda (Batilawa 2010, 14). This definition requires that leaders reflect on, and grapple with, the distribution and use of their own and others' power and how it can be transformed and shared to empower other people and support transformational goals (Batilawa 2010, 16).

The call to consider the effects of power is a reminder that the practice of transformational leadership is as political as its purpose. In this literature, leadership practice is understood as occurring within particular contexts, shaped by particular configurations of power, authority and legitimacy (Lyne de Ver 2009, 9). Some authors argue that if leaders are to create space for desired changes to occur, they must: foster acceptance for change; grant authority to implement change and hold agents accountable for it; and support the abilities required to achieve change (Andrews et al 2010, 143-144). Doing so requires that they employ political processes such as bargaining, negotiating and influencing to affect the use and distribution of power in whichever sphere of society is targeted (Lyne de Ver 2014).

Consistent with this view is a second insight: that leadership need not fall as a responsibility or honour of one person, but can be exercised by groups of people working together, at any level of society. Indeed, given that complex development or social change challenges are often problems of collective action, "building formal or informal coalitions of interests, elites and organisations, both vertical and horizontal" in which leadership is exercised within and between them, is considered essential (Lyne de Ver 2009, 9; 2014).

1.6 The traditions share insights about the nature of transformation

This brief review of five sets of writing shows there is no universal definition of what a transformed world looks like. This reflects the diversity of ways in which people understand and experience the world. These perspectives do, however, reveal shared insights into the nature and processes of transformation. Transformation generally affects:

- relationships - with the self, others and the environment, involving multiple actors and multiple sites;
- power - how its formal and informal distribution and exercise shapes material conditions as well as political and social inclusion;
- depth – the change must be significant in a given context, enduring and qualitatively different from what has gone before, even if it occurs incrementally; and
- processes - the diverse ways in which leading, collaborating, learning, adapting and restructuring power occur.

In summary, transformation appears to involve deep processes of change in how we relate to ourselves, others and the environment and how power is distributed and exercised. Transformational processes need to be

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[5] For example, Batliwala (2010) is cautious of less critical literature which focuses on what she terms "feminine leadership," that is, the employment by women leaders of assumed, socially-acceptable "female" values such as cooperation, consultation and caring. Feminist writers argue that women may bring such values to their leadership practice, but that the more important focus is on the purposes that drive women who exercise leadership.

supported by values and ways of working that are consistent with the goals sought. These assumptions are fundamentally different from those underpinning transactional, or exchange-based, ideas about change.

These common insights are also drawn together by the development literature which examines politics as a critical factor shaping the production and reproduction of poverty and marginalisation. That literature derives in large part from critical and feminist theory, but is presented separately here as it teases out usefully the nature and implications of power for the kind of project captured in the SDGs:

> "The focus on equity and empowerment... represents a relational understanding of how development unfolds...one that...insists that sustainable and inclusive forms of development involve progressive changes to the power relations that underpin poverty and exclusion. The intention, then, is to develop a more encompassing and relational view of development that problematises the workings of societies rather than the characteristics of particular groups and involves thinking in broader terms around how to achieve social justice..." (Hickey et al 2014, 6).

The literature on the politics of development argues, first, that interests, power and processes need to be taken into account to understand how development occurs. Efforts to shape and manage development which ignore politics will fail in the long term, even if they might have some success in the short term (Phillips 2015). In this context, politics is understood to be "all the activities of conflict, negotiation and co-operation which occur when people with different interests, ideas, power and influence.... take decisions about how resources [and ideas] are to be used and distributed and about how power is to be gained and used" (DLP 2011, 2).

Second, the literature argues that the interplay of power and interests means development concern and action emerges in an ever-changing political landscape. Development and human rights problems are not apolitical, simple, predictable or linear. Moreover, they are worked on in social and political contexts of messiness, non-linearity and uncertainty, where cause and effect cannot be entirely, or even barely, predicted (Ramalingam 2013).

1.7 "Transformational development" involves particular and systemic change

Having identified common insights into what transformation involves, for the purposes of this report the researchers propose a "working definition" of transformational development. This is not an effort to reduce the diversity of traditions, but to capture their core insights so that the researchers can use them to investigate the case studies.

> *Transformational development encompasses genuine, lasting improvements in people's lives that are enabled and sustained by the creation of just, equitable, accountable and environmentally sustainable social, economic and political systems. Transformational development requires that development actors work with values and methods that are consistent with transformational outcomes.*

The premise of each part of the definition can be understood as follows:

- *Particular gains:* The development sought should contribute to genuine qualitative change in people's lives and the fulfilment of their human rights, directly or indirectly. This covers material gains, such as access to clean water and labour-saving or life-saving technologies. It also covers subjective well-being, or gains in a person's or group's ability to exercise his or her own "choices, capabilities and freedoms" (Sen 1999; Yamin & Boulanger 2013, 13; Nelson 2007, 2047). The longevity of those gains will depend in part on the environmental sustainability of the gains and the context in which they occur.

- *Systemic change:* A process of genuine transformation will also change the "fundamental structural constraints" that underpin poor development outcomes (Saith 2006, 1183). It will challenge the forces that perpetuate injustice and inequality and prevent individuals and communities from realising their rights and

well-being (Shutt et al 2012). It will engage with the role played by power and politics, creating space to expand efforts to realise human rights and well-being and to extend economic, technological and social opportunity.

- *Process consistent with goals and values:* Development outcomes are unlikely to be transformational unless the processes by which they are sought are transformational. Where the objective is to change the economic, social or political status quo, development actors must be conscious of how they too might be part of that status quo, of their own relative power and influence in an existing social system. Development actors must be conscious of how their own values and methods, "how and with whom [they] behave" might support or hinder their contribution to transformational objectives (Eyben and Guijt 2015, 9-10).

Part two: Working towards transformation

2.1 The potential impacts of the SDGs are contested...

Having sought to understand the idea of transformation, the report now considers what is known about how to achieve it, or at least work towards it.

For an agenda as ambitious as the SDGs, even if it embodies some genuinely transformational principles, its proof must lie in the extent to which it is realised. Despite its talk of "implementation mechanisms", the *2030 Agenda* is non-committal on the mechanisms by which transformation will be secured, as it is on the idea of transformation itself. Again, that might reasonably reflect the negotiated nature of the document, but the preceding discussion on the politics of development and change suggests the implementation of the SDGs cannot be taken for granted.

During the SDG negotiation process, some critics contested the idea that the MDGs had had any impact at all on national policies or development outcomes. They were thus sceptical of formulating new goals (Green 2015a). Other critics, while acknowledging the apparently variable impact of the MDGs, noted that the international community had made important progress addressing challenges like poverty, child health and maternal mortality. They suggested that formulating a new set of expanded goals could be useful to maintain the momentum (Mirchandani 2015).

The literature considers three main ways in which the global goals might have transformative effects.[6]

Legal effect

In terms of legal effect, the SDG regime has been compared to negotiated conventions. The *2030 Agenda* sets out a range of "implementation mechanisms," but some authors argue that, from the perspective of international law, the SDGs, like the MDGs, constitute a weakly legalised international regime. *The 2030 Agenda* is a non-binding declaration with imprecise obligations on parties and no legally enforceable sanctions in the case of non-adherence (Gauri 2012, 4). This means that rather than regulate behaviour and relationships between states, the SDGs can aim only at influencing government and non-government policy commitments and behaviour, a form of soft law (Miller-Dawkins 2013, 8).

Rhetorical force

Some authors argue that such soft law influence is brought to bear on policy-making through rhetorical force. From this perspective, the SDGs provide a moral point of reference, exposing the difference between "the

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[6] This report only summarises the literature; Miller-Dawkins (2014) provides a comprehensive consideration of the ways in which the SDGs might have effect or not.

world we want and the world we have" (Clemens et al 2007, 747; Manning 2009, 12). Activists and policy-makers can use countries' SDG commitments as leverage to lobby for, or introduce, legal, policy and behavioural change (Gauri 2012, 6; Green et al 2012, 3; Miller-Dawkins 2014, 8,18; UN 2013, 13).

Some argue that this rhetorical influence was the primary strength of the MDGs, which they see as having influenced development policy and funding more successfully than earlier international standards (Manning 2009, 25; Kenny & Sumner 2011, 1). In some developed countries, for example, it is reported that the MDG effort may have convinced politicians of public support for effective aid, while in some developing countries, civil society groups used data collected against MDG indicators to lobby parliaments and governments (Manning 2009, 29-30).

A cautionary note is that the eight MDGs were seen to have had rhetorical force in part because of their parsimony and simple expression (Miller-Dawkins 2014, 6). Some commentators have dismissed the *2030 Agenda's* seventeen goals and 169 sub-targets as a long and vague wish list shaped by too many interested parties. In this view, although the comprehensiveness of the SDGs represents the inclusive process of negotiation, stakeholders might find it difficult to communicate so many objectives. The potential to use the SDGs for moral mobilisation might be diffused (Norton et al 2014, 1 The Economist 2015; Vandemoortele 2015). At the least, sophisticated and sustained campaigns will be needed to reach the public, political and business audiences being targeted by emerging SDG promotion efforts.

Policy implementation

A third line of argument is that while normative influence might be important, it is not a sufficient condition for transformation. Of the MDGs it has been said that "it is a lot to ask of one legally toothless document, silent on the necessary steps to achieve its declared goals, to dramatically and observably change the course of global development - however grand the signatories" (Kenny & Sumner 2011, 1,24). From that perspective, it is less important that world leaders make a political statement of worthy goals and more important that they take steps to make those goals matter in practice.

While the *2030 Agenda* expresses a normative political vision, it also embeds a particular, managerial, view of how social, economic and political goals can be achieved in practice. The *2030 Agenda's* arrangement of a transformative vision into a hierarchy of goals, sub-targets and indicators reflects the assertion by proponents that "the MDGS have proven *that goal-setting* can lift millions out of poverty, improve well-being and provide vast new opportunities for better lives" (emphasis added) (UNDESA 2015). As noted earlier, some critics have rejected the idea that setting and measuring the MDGs had much impact on national and international policy. Yet for proponents of global goals, the major weakness is not a strategic one (i.e. the setting of goals in the first place), but subsequent managerial and accountability mistakes, such as picking too many goals or the wrong ones, not addressing the goals in a joined-up way, or not measuring progress against the goals properly.[7]

Some commentators have therefore queried the ability of any government, particularly those in fragile and least developed countries, to plan and implement an ambitious agenda of 169 sub-targets in addition to existing national priorities (Norton et al 2014, 7). They also note that less than thirty of the SDGs have "precise ends, specific deadlines or clear target populations" (Vandemoortele 2015). Others, however, argue that the proliferation and inter-relatedness of the SDGs reflects the complexity of people's lives (Clark 2013) in a way that the MDGs did not (Manning 2009, 15). "A list of multiple goals [might be] essential for any serious development effort based on rigorous thinking" (Hulme 2007, 17) – and it could be argued that the *2030 Agenda* is at least right in seeing that transformation requires multi-disciplinary efforts.

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[7] For example, the report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (UN 2013, 14) frames major risks in these managerial terms.

For proponents of goal-setting, the potential over-reach of the SDG agenda will be mitigated by a crucial focus that the MDGs lacked and which might enhance accountability. While the UN will establish a global management and measurement system (providing ongoing work for UN agencies), the *2030 Agenda* focuses on strengthening the national and sub-national efforts required to make real progress in developed and developing countries (Norton et al 2014, 7, Rodriguez Takeuchi et al 7, Green et al 2012, 3). All national governments are expected to translate the global goals into relevant national targets, budget for their own priorities and monitor progress against their own country conditions and priorities (Kanbur 2010 2; Norton et al 2014, 3, Miller-Dawkins 2014, 14; Lusiani 2013,). That might, it is argued, go some way to ensuring greater effect and more attention to the uneven distribution of development gains between and within countries.

2.2 ...and can only be proven empirically

How might the various arguments presented in the preceding section be weighed? Drawing on the discussion in part one, and on much of the development literature, it appears reasonable to say that there can be no one transformative "solution":

> While not wanting to reduce social change to a formulaic solution... those seeking to challenge power in all of its spaces, levels and forms need to search not for one solution, but to build multiple, linked strategies and in different sequences, depending on the starting point in any given context...That is when transformative change might really occur (Gaventa 2006, 31).

The challenges captured in the SDGs are complex and imbued with power issues and they develop in non-linear ways (Barder 2012; Ramalingam 2013, Roche & Kelly 2012, 8). The discussion in Part One of this report suggests that significant global change cannot be steered or controlled effectively by government and non-government actors using only plans, data and funding (Sumner 2009; Ramalingam 2013, 127). Nor will legal or rhetorical force alone be sufficient.

The literature review suggests that goals and efforts to measure results against them may be important, but they must be seen as being formulated and worked on in political contexts, where power shapes strategies and outcomes are emergent (Ramalingam 2013, 60). Prioritising issues, people and resources, and working together towards common objectives, as the *2030 Agenda* envisages, will inherently involve political contests that generate winners and losers. This inherent contestation is not acknowledged in the *2030 Agenda.*

Without being able to foresee what the exact contests will be, it is hard to know whether or not powerful stakeholders will be willing to adopt "a politics which is far-sighted and capable of a new, integral and inter-disciplinary approach to handling the different aspects of the crisis" (Pope Francis 2015, 144). It seems to the researchers, therefore, that despite the thoroughness of the scholarship reviewed above, it is impossible to say definitively and in the abstract whether or not the SDGs will have meaningful impacts. Instead, this will be an empirical question to interrogate over the period 2015 to 2030.

This report cannot therefore answer its second research question – what is known about how to achieve transformation or at least work towards it – by looking only at the SDGs or at theory. Taking their readers on a large leap of scale, the researchers have instead sought to gather empirical evidence from some existing development efforts. They hope this will reveal experiences and lessons that can be considered by those who wish to support transformational development, including under the guise of the SDGs.

2.3 INGO practice gives empirical insights...

Examining INGO practice is one contribution, potentially, toward understanding how to formulate transformative ambitions and develop multiple, linked strategies to translate those ambitions into outcomes. The researchers analysed five case studies contributed by four Australian NGOs, identifying the objectives and strategies they employed. A summary of each case study is presented below in the report, while the full analysis is in the annexure.

The researchers chose to explore potential INGO contributions to transformational development because of some INGOs' interest in improving their practice and in the SDGs. The participating Australian organisations wanted to reflect on their practice and share this learning with others. Additionally, international development NGOs tend to be strong advocates for global frameworks like the SDGs. In Australia, many development NGOs lobbied hard, nationally and internationally, for their vision of the SDGs. They are likely to frame their future advocacy campaigns and development programs around the SDGs, at least to some degree.

The researchers also chose to explore INGOs' practice in relation to transformational development as a contribution to a wider critical literature examining the role and impacts of development INGOs. This report's delineation of transformational objectives and processes, dependent as it is on a critical conception of power, may be challenging for many agencies who wish to contribute to positive, even transformational, development outcomes. A long-running literature has queried the extent to which international NGOs can, and do, acknowledge the politics of development and their own role in it.

Some critics question many INGOs' desire to "'do good' unencumbered and untainted by the politics of government or the greed of the market", arguing that compressing development challenges within technical plans and behaving like "anti-politics machines" has the effect of entrenching their own and others' power to the detriment of the people they ostensibly seek to help. Others believe that NGOs can and do draw attention to the political nature of social and economic development and seek to challenge and transform power relationships (Fisher 1997, 443, 445-446; Bebbington et al, 2008, 5).

The present researchers cannot resolve the debate about the overall merits and impacts of INGOs. By exploring the degree to which certain projects have or have not contributed to transformational outcomes, they can, however, reveal some of the challenges involved for INGOs who do wish to work in more transformational ways. The researchers do note that the scale of any particular project is limited and that the INGOs have implemented these projects as part of broader national, regional or thematic engagements. The projects are just one window, therefore, into INGO practice.

2.4 ...through a holistic model for change

The researchers constructed the case studies in three steps, drawing on the document review and interviews with key informants:

1. The researchers identified whether the projects had transformational goals and ways of working, using the working definition of transformational development set out in Part One.
2. The researchers identified the strategies used in the projects to work towards their transformational objectives, using a model developed by Rao and Kelleher (2005).
3. Finally, the researchers drew out what they considered to be the strengths, weaknesses and lessons of the strategies employed by the project partners.

Rao and Kelleher developed a model by which to explain how social change occurs (Figure 1 below). The model indicates what might be changed (the four domains at the diagram's centre) as well as the mechanisms for effecting change (the forces along the four sides of the diagram). Rao and Kelleher's purpose is to show that gender equality can be brought about only by effecting change at both the personal and social level and in formal and informal relations.

Figure 1: Domains and mechanisms for change (Rao and Kelleher 2005, 60)

Individual/Family/Community Change

Capacities, ideas & beliefs, & empowerment

Access to resources such as land, income, education & health.

Informal/ Intangible

formal/ tangible

Social norms and attitudes

Policies, Budgets & laws

Organisational/Societal/Systemic Change
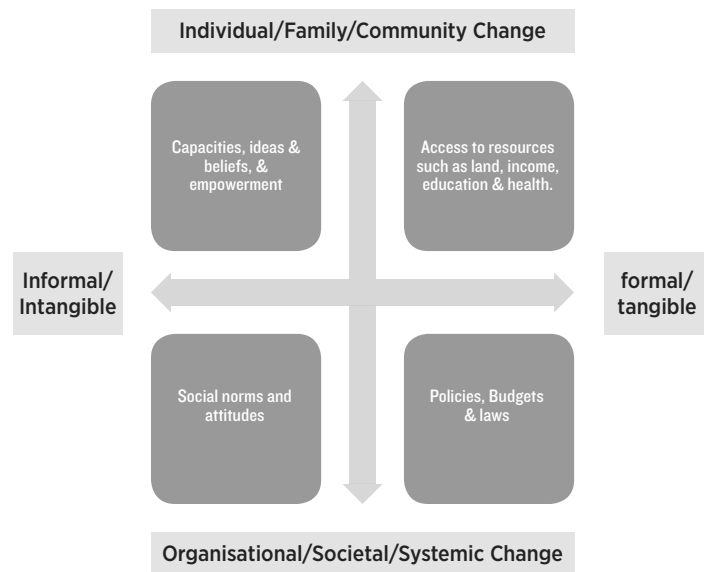
For example, laws and policies might be generated by the formal political system, but they are subject to the effect of the values, attitudes and beliefs held by those supporting or opposing them. Conversely, exclusion might be effected at an interpersonal level (for example, the control of intimate partners), but that practice is supported by values, attitudes and beliefs held more broadly in society, by discriminatory or weak laws or by systemic constraints on access to resources (Rao and Kellher 2005). Strategies to change particular circumstances must therefore tackle the multiple domains which shape them.

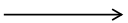The present researchers use Rao and Kelleher's model to explore the work undertaken in the case study projects, thus expanding its application beyond work towards gender equality. The model is useful to the present research because it offers a holistic understanding of how social change happens but does so without prescribing particular pathways of change. This gives the researchers a common conceptual framework by which to examine and compare the strategies used by the INGOS in different contexts. The model is also consistent with the elements of the working definition of transformational development.

In the section below, the objectives and achievements of each project are introduced. The strategies used by the projects to support their objectives are mapped onto the Rao and Kelleher model. As per the key, the figures below show strategies and outcomes for which there was project evidence (an unbroken arrow). They also indicate shifts across the domains which were harder to verify from the project evidence, but which may be occurring or have potential to occur (a dashed arrow). The direction of the arrows indicates how effort in one domain preceded and generated effort in a subsequent domain. A double headed arrow indicates that the work on two domains was simultaneous or mutually reinforcing.

The results and challenges encountered by the INGOs and their partners are discussed more fully in the case studies attached as annexure.

Key to case study models	
⟶	An unbroken arrow indicates actions or outcomes for which there is project evidence. The arrow starts in the domain where effort was first made, and points to the subsequent domain in which effort was made.
– · – · – ·>	A dashed arrow indicates action or outcomes for which project evidence is (as yet) uncertain. The arrow starts in the domain where effort was first made, and points to the subsequent domain in which effort was made.
◀—————▶	A double-headed arrow (unbroken or dashed) indicates that the project worked on two domains simultaneously or in ways that were mutually reinforcing.

2.5 Case studies: the INGOs employed multiple strategies towards transformation

Action Aid: strengthening smallholder farmers' resilience in arid and semi-arid areas of eastern Kenya

Transformational intent and achievements

Over 2011-2016, ActionAid Kenya, supported by ActionAid Australia, has worked with 2000 smallholder farmers in the Isiolo, Mbeere and Mwingi areas of eastern Kenya to improve their food security and resilience to shocks. ActionAid has also worked to improve the status and influence of women in households, communities and counties; up to 80 % of all project participants are women. The A$2.9 million project has been funded by DFAT's Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES).

The project has sought transformational development by empowering women and men small-holder farmers and women's representatives to work together to: meet their basic needs, participate in collective decision-making and hold government and businesses accountable for developing inclusive policies and economies. Overall, ActionAid has contributed as follows:

- *Facilitating qualitative change in people's lives*: nearly 2000 small-holder farmers have received farm inputs and adopted new agricultural technologies to increase their food production and income. 80 collective Farmer Field Schools have given 2000 people, three-quarters of whom are women, access to agricultural training, created business opportunities linked to value chains and helped women and men practice leadership and develop their self-confidence.

- *Supporting efforts towards structural change*: the project has improved government responsiveness to farmers by facilitating access to agricultural extension officials and supporting farmers' groups to petition county governments. It has also facilitated women's collective organising on a large scale through the Women's Association of Kitui County (WAK). WAK mobilised 6000 members and has helped women discuss and formulate their priorities, lobby government officials and develop self-confidence.

- *Working in transformational ways*: With a commitment to the empowerment of women generally and of small-holder farmers, ActionAid staff aimed to work in facilitative, supportive ways, taking individuals' self-esteem and capacity as the starting point and helping farmers and women link to government officials, businesses and other CSOs.

Individual/Family/Community Change

Farmers group members develop confidence & advocacy skills, share information & women exercise leadership; women & farmers form advocacy coalitions

Female & male small holder farmers have training, increased food production & diversified income.

1

Informal/ Intangible

3

2

3

formal/ tangible

Women play an accepted role in household & community decisions

Government officials meet community representatives & incorporate their ideas in policies & budgets; agriculture extension officials support farmers.

Organisational/Societal/Systemic Change

Using multiple strategies

In accordance with its global theory of change (ActionAid 2012, 4), and reflecting critical understandings of transformation, ActionAid has deliberately targeted qualitative change in people's lives as well as broader structural change, seeking to influence processes across the four domains in Rao and Kelleher's model.

The project has worked on, and made gains in, three domains: individuals and communities' access to resources; individuals and communities' capacities and empowerment; and formal policies and institutions. The impact of the work in these domains on the fourth domain – cultural norms – as well as feed back into the first domain, access to resources, is not yet fully evident and may take time and continued effort to realise.

The main strategies used to target the forces which shape the status quo and/or support transformational change have been:
- A focus on empowerment
- Strengthening women and farmers' capacities and influence through collective organising
- Facilitating community members' access to decision-makers ("duty-bearers")
- Facilitating better government service delivery.

The complexities of these strategies are explored in the annexure.

Transformational intent and achievements

The Anglican Board of Mission Australia (ABM) supports the mission of the Anglican Church of PNG (ACPNG), working with $10 million funding from the DFAT PNG Church Partnership Program since 2004 to strengthen education and health services. Additionally, since 2008 ABM and ACPNG have worked to promote women's leadership and contributions in the church and respond better to community issues like family violence. They have worked collaboratively with other PNG churches and Australian partners of the DFAT PNG Church Partnership Program partners to promote understanding and acceptance of gender equality by church leaders and congregations.

ABM, other CPP partners including UnitingWorld and PNG churches have sought transformational development by encouraging shifts in church leaders' attitudes, practices, policies and teaching so that they support women's empowerment in their congregations and church structures. They have also sought to strengthen women's skills and raise congregation members' awareness of human rights to support an overall shift in relations between women and men for all to enjoy "the fullness of life". Reflecting the partners' faith-based understanding of transformation as involving the fulfilment of God's vision for the dignity and life of all people, they have contributed to transformational development as follows:

- *Facilitating qualitative change in people's lives*: In the Anglican Church, men and women have had access to life skills training. Peer educators and gender officers have worked with congregations and church leaders to increase understanding, reduce prevalence and respond better to family violence and other human rights issues.

- *Supporting efforts towards structural change*: CPP partners have supported the development of church theology and policies which commit church leaders to: promote healthy, fulfilling relationships between men and women; encourage women to play leadership roles and be drivers of development in their families, churches and communities; and for church-based social services to meet women's needs and promote gender equality.

- *Working in transformational ways*: the collaborative initiatives grew from self- and shared reflection in PNG churches about how well women's welfare and rights were promoted and have enabled church leaders and members to share their insights, reflect and form policies using language and methods that resonate with church teaching.

Using multiple strategies

The work on gender equality by ABM, ACPNG and by other churches and CPP partners has grown iteratively, responding to opportunities rather than being driven by an overall program design. The implicit rationale for the work is that in a country with 90% Christian identification, changes in belief and practice amongst church leaders and members can make a significant difference to women's safety and opportunities.

As shown in the diagram, ABM and partners have targeted at least three domains of social change. The primary focus has been on encouraging change in cultural norms amongst church leaders and members, with a view to shifting formal expressions of change in church theology, policy, leadership training and resourcing. This in turn enables practical improvements in women's skills and livelihood resources, as well as reinforcing cultural change within the church. The flow-on effects of this work particularly in terms of women's leadership and ability to address power relations is less easy to extrapolate. Inter-linking, reinforcing change can be expected to take time to realise, given that the change being encouraged challenges both the culture of churches and of PNG society more broadly.
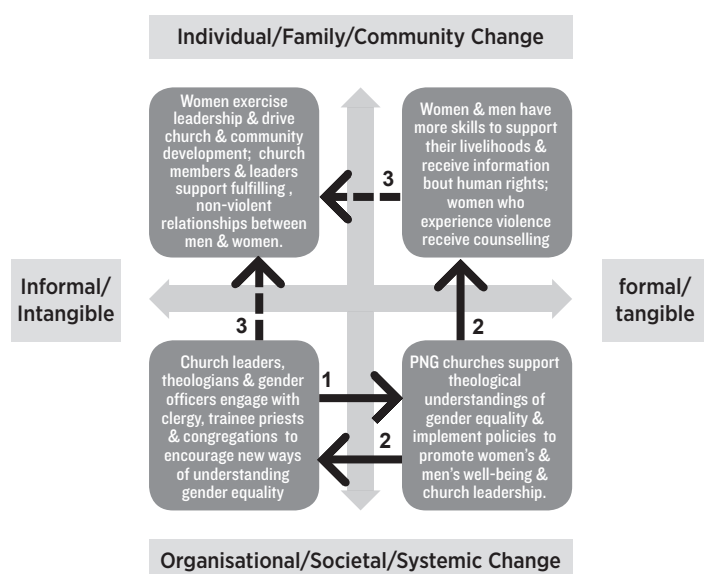
ABM, ACPNG, other churches and CPP partners including UnitingWorld and the CPP Church Leaders Council have employed a number of innovative strategies to target the forces shaping gender equality in PNG churches. These are explored in more detail in the annexure:

- Developing approaches that resonate within the church
- Seeking to change attitudes and knowledge at a pace that brings people on board
- Engaging church leaders
- Engaging church members
- Collaborative action across churches and their partners

Caritas Australia: improving sexually transmitted infection management in PNG

Transformational intent and achievements

Caritas Australia and its partners worked from 2007-2013 to improve the sexual health of men, women and young people in the Southern Highlands, Western Highlands and Chimbu provinces of PNG. Funded by the Australian Government's PNG Australia Sexual Health Improvement Program, Caritas Australia and Cordaid (Caritas Netherlands), the $A3.9 million project aimed to improve the delivery of sexual health services. It also aimed to increase knowledge of social factors such as stigma and discrimination that affected the prevalence and low treatment rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV.

The project sought transformational development by providing better quality services to people who were previously excluded or under-served. It also facilitated systemic change in a very specific way: upgrading STI testing and treatment services and medical staff capacities in the Catholic Church health system (CCHS) that delivers 28% of health care in PNG, including in remote areas. The project also sought to improve social inclusion by empowering service-providers and service-recipients to overcome stigma and discrimination. The project contributed to transformational development as follows:

- *Facilitating qualitative change in people's lives:* Improving patient access, particularly men and expectant mothers, to STI testing and treatment facilities; improving the confidence, skills and attitudes of about 200 PNG health care workers and laboratory assistants.

- *Supporting efforts towards structural change:* improving service provision in the CCHS by: strengthening staff capacities; refurbishing testing and treatment facilities in rural and remote areas; and building knowledge about the underlying factors driving sexual health, as well as how stigma and discrimination affect people with STIs and developing initial strategies to challenge such stigma.

- *Working in transformational ways:* Project personnel sought to work with humility, patience, long-term commitment and collaborative attitudes to enable organisational partnerships to work effectively in difficult environments and to support the confidence and change in capacity in CCHS health care workers.

Using multiple strategies

Project participants did not view the project through one particular lens of "transformation" but a concern for human welfare and dignity, common to faith-based understandings of transformation, was important to them.

Figure 4: Caritas Australia - sexual health management in PNG
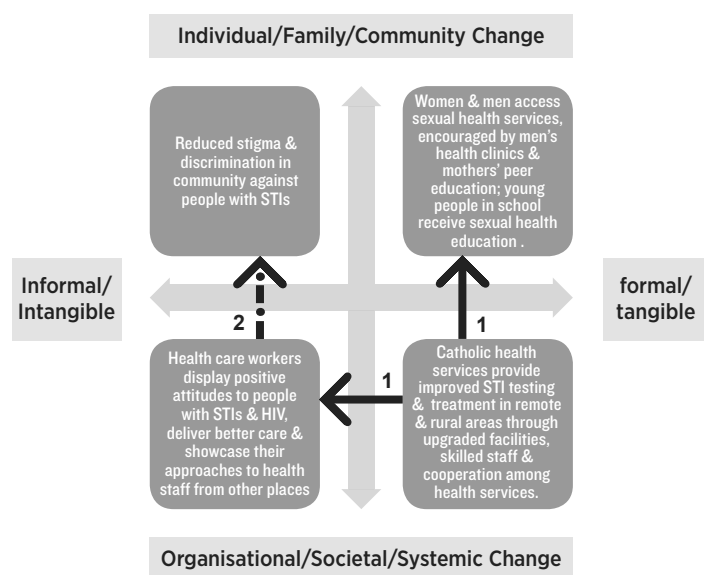
The project targeted three domains of the model directly. Starting with improvements to formal health facilities and systems, it sought to improve women, men and young people's health and knowledge, as well as to target the beliefs and practices of health care workers who care for patients. Efforts to address knowledge and attitudes about STIs in the community more generally were less successful and would require renewed, longer-term work.

The project partners employed several strategies to target the formal and informal forces affecting health care and social attitudes in PNG:

- Extending existing service systems
- Strengthening and working through relationships between partner organisations and their staff
- Working adaptively to deliver health care in remote and challenging contexts
- Building the confidence and competence of primary health care workers
- Sharing a concern for human welfare and dignity that was common across faith-based and secular partner organisations

Transformational intent and achievements

Enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) requires that governments and companies consult and negotiate meaningfully and in a timely way with Indigenous Peoples over the use of their land and resources. Oxfam has promoted understanding and implementation of the FPIC principle for Indigenous and other project-affected peoples in Asia, the Pacific and Africa for over fifteen years, one part of its broader engagement on the policies and practices of mining and hydropower companies.

From 2011-2014 Oxfam Australia implemented the "Building Regional Understanding of Free, Prior and Informed Consent Program" with funding of A$212,648 from DFAT's Australian NGO Cooperation Program.

The project sought transformational development by building the knowledge, capabilities and networks of national and regional civil society organisations to support Indigenous and non-indigenous communities hold government and industry accountable. The project was part of Oxfam's long-term effort to support transformation by using research and advocacy to influence governments and companies' acknowledgement and respect for the rights of project-affected communities. This work reflects Oxfam Australia's view, similar to critical and feminist theory, that transformation involves changing the "rules of the game" and the power of those who make and enforce the rules so that marginalised people can define and drive change themselves.

Through the Building Regional Understanding of FPIC program as well as through its broader engagement on resource and governance issues, Oxfam has contributed as follows:

- *Facilitating qualitative change in people's lives:* building the capacities of Indigenous Peoples, project affected communities and the organisations that work with them, through delivering FPIC training to 307 participants from 77 CSOs in 19 countries in Asia, the Pacific and Africa and developing and translating FPIC resources.

- *Supporting efforts towards structural change:* research and advocacy to influence the policies of companies, inter-governmental organisations and shared standards such as the Hydro Sustainability Assessment Protocol.

- *Working in transformational ways:* Supporting and working to promote the voices of Indigenous Peoples, project-affected communities and local and regional CSOs, rather than claiming to represent them.

Figure 5: Oxfam – free, prior and informed consent
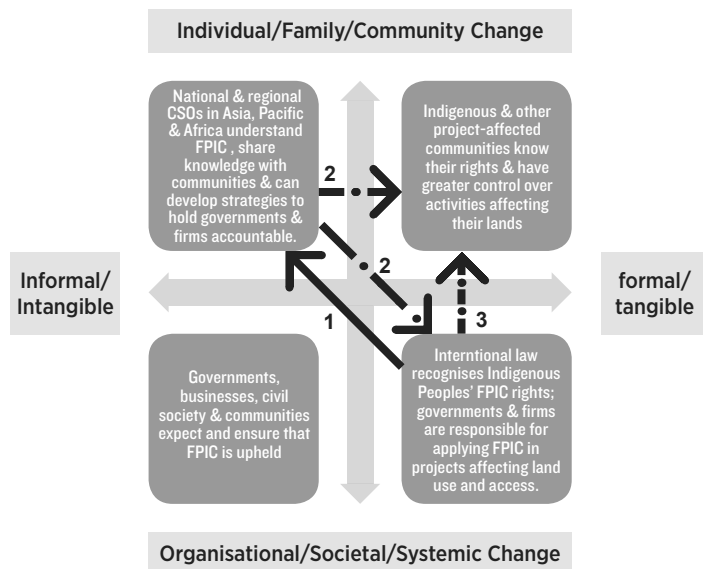
Using multiple strategies

As shown on the model, the discrete project targeting CSO capacity has worked in two domains, using international law policy commitments as a basis for resources and training to improve the knowledge and capacities of national and regional CSOs in Asia, the Pacific and Africa. The effect of these efforts on the resources and participation of affected communities and the ways in which governments and companies have responded to CSO advocacy and to communities, is difficult to gauge.

Oxfam Australia used a number of strategies to target formal and informal forces for change:

- Relationship-building
- Working sensitively to context
- Working at multiple levels
- Taking the long-view.

These are explored more fully in the annexure, as is the importance of managing the expectations of donors, organisations and participants about work that challenges entrenched power.

Transformational intent and achievements

Oxfam Australia and five consortium partners implemented a DFAT-funded Climate Change Adaptation Program in Vanuatu from 2012-2014. The A$2 million project aimed to increase the resilience and improve the capacities of women, men and young people in Vanuatu to respond to natural disasters and the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

The project sought to support transformational development by enhancing local adaptive capacities and community-based disaster preparedness. It also sought to support structural change by facilitating collaboration amongst civil society actors to share their knowledge and build their advocacy skills, and by brokering collaboration between civil society and government actors. The project contributed to transformational development as follows:

- *Facilitating qualitative change in people's lives:* Supporting practical community-based adaptation measures in health, water and hygiene, agriculture and disaster risk reduction with over 5000 people over 12 islands. This work improved people's knowledge, information sharing and practical action, in ways that appear to have supported communities' capacity to respond to Cyclone Pam.

- *Supporting efforts towards structural change:* The project supported disaster and climate change preparedness and strengthened long-term policy and representation by enhancing collaboration amongst civil society and government stakeholders. The formational of the Vanuatu Climate Action Network (VCAN) with over 20 ni-Vanuatu CSOs facilitated data generation, information sharing, program coordination, input into national adaptation planning and policy and collective action. Civil society now has a permanent seat at the national policy table.

- *Working in transformational ways:* Having made local and national coalition-building a significant part of its work, Oxfam Australia sought to work in transformational ways by positioning itself as a partner rather than as a leader.

Figure 6: Oxfam Australia - climate change coalitions in Vanuatu
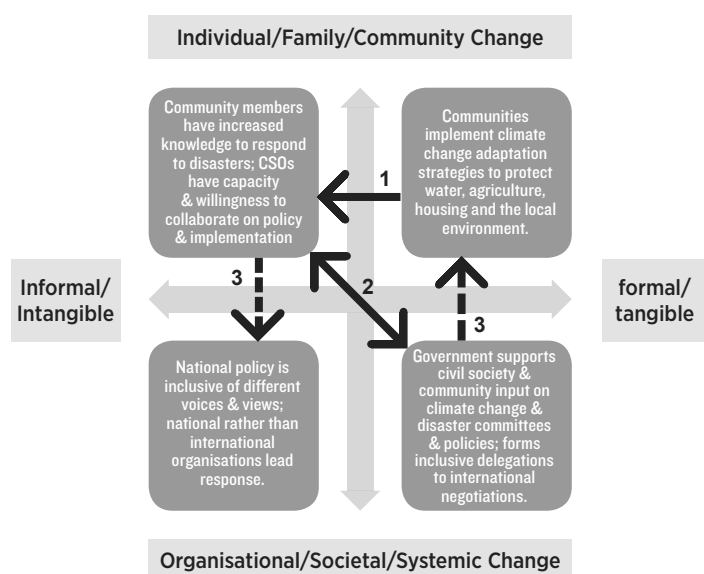
Using multiple strategies

The project targeted three domains of the model. Other consortium partners' support for community-based adaptation formed the starting point for the project, while Oxfam Australia focused on supporting cooperation civil society and government. By forming VCAN among national CSOs, Oxfam Australia sought to build their capacities to collaborate, share information and develop climate change strategies. It also worked with government officials at the same time to increase their receptiveness and involvement of CSOs in national policy formulation. The extent to which Oxfam Australia's work on the capacities and strategies of formal and informal actors is affecting broader norms and access resources is, as yet, difficult to gauge.

Key strategies employed by Oxfam Australia to target the forces shaping climate change response and policy were:
- Creating mechanisms for collaboration within civil society and between government and civil society
- Building trust and perceived legitimacy between government and civil society
- Supporting policy links
- As INGO partner, taking a low profile and resourcing collaboration and networking over a medium time frame.

2.5 Findings: Agencies can work strategically towards transformation

While the scope, location and stakeholders for each of the case study projects varied, the researchers have drawn from them common observations about the benefits and challenges of working towards transformational development. These reflections on how to work strategically in ways consistent with transformational processes and outcomes are consistent with wider development research but relevant to iterate here.

Work across multiple domains as appropriate to context, competency and legitimacy

The case studies demonstrate that there is no one pre-determined starting point or sequence of activities for actors who wish to support social change. All of the projects sought to work across, and connect with others working in, at least three of the domains in Rao and Kelleher's model, whether or not impacts across all three can be shown to have occurred. ActionAid's design was the most explicit about its intention and rationale for targeting the four domains, reflecting ActionAid's global theory of change that connects individual, community and structural change and ways of working.

The case studies reveal several insights about how to work appropriately across different domains to effect change. First, as discussed in the problem-driven development literature (such as Booth & Unsworth 2014 and Andrews 2015), development agencies should work on issues that are salient for local actors. ABM responded to reflection within the Anglican Church in PNG and its desire to support and recognise women in the church. Similarly, Caritas Australia and its partner organisations mentored laboratory and nursing staff in Catholic Church Health Service facilities in ways and on skills that resonated for those staff, leading to improved patient care and improved staff pride.

Second, agencies need to understand the wider eco-system of actors working on a particular problem to ensure their efforts are relevant and complementary and do not duplicate or undermine local initiative. By working across different domains, all the projects supported a variety of local actors - community members, government officials, service providers and civil society groups - to develop knowledge, confidence, skills and networks. For Caritas Australia, this included several parts of one of the largest health provider systems in PNG. The projects assisted the different actors to interact, draw on their resources and tackle particular problems (with different degrees of success) through a combination of effort at individual and systemic levels and by engaging with formal and informal forces shaping the problem.

Third, development agencies should work in areas for which they are equipped. For example, Oxfam Australia had unique technical expertise and contacts on FPIC that it drew on to support other CSOs and to shape its overall advocacy strategy. Caritas Australia partnered with technically-expert Australian and PNG organisations to deliver sexual health services through the most wide-reaching health service in PNG.

Fourth, the agencies require legitimacy as well as technical competence. It is unlikely that organisations which are not faith-based would be able to work with churches on gender equality issues in the way ABM and CPP partners have. Even though Oxfam Australia generated much of the early energy to build a climate change coalition in Vanuatu, it positioned itself deliberately as a supporter, rather than as a leader, of national cooperation between government and civil society.

Learn and adapt to changing conditions, with a long horizon

Two challenges for agencies which work across multiple domains are to select the best place to start and to adapt their approach deliberately over time, as resources, capacities and opportunity allow it. The case studies demonstrated that the agencies and their partners monitored and adapted their work over time. Being adaptable and building upon what worked meant that the agencies' activities did not always flow sequentially and logically from an initial design or intervention, as per an idealised program logic model. Instead, agencies added activities as opportunities emerged and dropped others as resources or space closed.

For example, ActionAid supported the emergence of the Women's Association of Kitui from conversations with several powerful women and other CSOs, taking advantage of the policy space opened by the new Kenyan constitution and decentralisation. ActionAid also discontinued several awareness-raising activities in Australia and Kenya as the DFAT funding and policy environment changed. Oxfam Australia sought to maximise the impact of its technical capacities in FPIC by targeting its training to local CSOs who were already undertaking advocacy on dam and mining projects in the Mekong and had the reach to disseminate information and leverage relationships.

Even when development actors respond carefully to changing opportunities and constraints, the overall time frame required to achieve a transformational ambition acts, potentially, as a larger barrier. The case studies demonstrated some good results that were important in their contexts, yet it is simply too soon to tell if the projects' transformational intentions of these programmes will be realised. Programming for their larger goals – healthier, food-secure populations, communities in which men and women are respected equally, responsive governments – likely needs a minimum 15-20 year horizon.

During that time, people and organisations working towards these goals will rely on propitious and supportive contexts, both in terms of the surrounding political, social, economic and environmental forces, and in terms of internal organisational support. There is no guarantee that internal or external forces will align consistently with the goals, nor will particular programs overcome all challenges, even as they adapt.

Acknowledge the challenge of shifting entrenched power relations

While the agencies worked across multiple domains and sought to learn and take advantage of opportunities as they arose, the case studies also show the difficulty inherent in trying to change established power relations. The interests and power of governments, companies and international organisations which own and manage large-scale development projects are strong. Even while Oxfam Australia's training and advice to CSOs occurred within the context of a broader, multi-domain approach to influencing policy and practice, it remains unclear whether these actions can generate sufficient shifts in power relations for FPIC to be implemented in all large development projects.

While ABM was able to respond to a real desire by the ACPNG leadership for women to live safer, fulfilling lives within their congregations, commitment among church leaders and congregations has waxed and waned over time. Meanwhile, cooperation between government and civil society in Vanuatu appears to have generated

fundamentally new opportunities to tackle climate change across the nation, but Vanuatu is still constrained from achieving all its objectives by the wider distribution of power that shapes international climate change negotiations.

The experience across these case studies is consistent with recent literature on micro-finance and social accountability (Provost 2012; Fox 2015): the "bottom-up" provision of services and information to individuals and groups is insufficient to generate systemic change. Similarly, working to affect the policy and legal domain, on the assumption that local groups and activists will be able to take advantage of new opportunities, sometimes pre-supposes a degree of organisation, capacity or demand for change that may not be evident in practice (Fox 2015).

A key challenge, therefore, is to understand how "bottom-up" and "top-down" processes and changes intersect and mesh. Any agency wanting to tackle a complex issue needs to understand how different actors are working on different elements of a reform process, including those in positions of relative power in the government or bureaucracy.

2.6 ... and agencies can develop and test "indications of transformation"

The observations made across the case studies about the challenges of working towards transformation also suggest it will be difficult for development agencies to report on and measure outcomes. In turn, this makes it difficult for program partners, researchers and donors to make definitive judgements about whether a program is "en route" to success and therefore merits ongoing support.

Given that uncertainty, the case studies suggest that there may be a number of verifiable "indications" that transformational purposes and processes are being nurtured in INGOs' projects. These don't necessarily form neat "indicators" that can be tracked in the orthodox sense. They could, however, form principles and strategies that can shape the design of a program and be used to inform robust discussions among stakeholders about progress.

From the case studies considered in this report, indications of transformation would appear to include:

- That power relations and local politics are well understood and being directly or indirectly addressed by the program and/or by other actors. As a number of other studies suggest this is as much about having a 'fine-grained' understanding of local micro-politics, coalitions, interests and power relations, as it is about understanding macro political economy considerations (Faustino and Booth, 2011, 1-4).

- That both the formal and informal domains are considered. As argued earlier the nature of visible, hidden and invisible power is important in shaping how transformation might be enabled or constrained, for example in the case of gender norms. Understanding the relationship between policies and practices on the one hand, and norms and attitudes on the other, is a critical component of this.

- That systemic change is aspired to even if not always directly targeted. Where it is dangerous or counter-productive to target powerful interests and established norms directly, it may be possible to do so obliquely. As well as minimising backlash, this may also allow space for the social processes and formation of alliances necessary for reform to emerge more organically, so that "it is radical across time, but incremental in a moment of time" (Pascale et al 2010: 186; Kay 2010). Good analysis should inform initial and ongoing strategies to support systemic change.

- That effective relationships, networks and collective action are emerging which bring together the necessary skills, legitimacy, representation and functions. The operation of coalitions is essential in the case of collective action problems (Leftwich 2011, 4). Effective coalitions require not just leadership and

the weight of numbers, but members who can fulfil different functions required to address the problem (Andrews et al 2010). Additionally, careful thought needs to be given to who is included or excluded from coalition processes, as this may shape and potentially reproduce or challenge existing power relations.

- That process, including the process of monitoring and evaluation itself, is consistent with goals. In order for agencies, including INGOs, to support transformational processes, they must be cognisant of their own power, reflexive in their practice and engaged in learning and adaptation. Agencies need also accept, as noted earlier, that the social and political contexts in which they work are messy, non-linear and uncertain. This might redirect their attention to supporting the emergence of self-organising adaptive systems which are resilient to shocks, rather than looking for "missing ingredients" to development (Barder 2012; Ramalingam 2013).

- Monitoring and evaluation might be reconfigured to provide verifiable evidence of progress along these lines. For example, agencies could use process tracing[8] or action research methods (O'Keefe et al) to reduce decision-making uncertainty and accept that definitive proof of causality will not often be possible. Agencies may need to accept they cannot guarantee that programs are on track - development outcomes are contingent on far more than the program intervention - but they could increase the odds that they were (Pritchett 2013, 32).

2.7 Recommendations: Agencies can enable transformational work

INGOs and other development agencies require appropriate systems, values and behaviours if they are to respond to the challenges discussed above and implement programs that demonstrate "indications" of work towards transformational outcomes. Drawing on the literature, case studies and discussion throughout this report, the following recommendations are aimed primarily at INGOs who have followed the launch of the SDGs with interest and may wish to work towards transformation more deliberately in their programs. The recommendations also target aid donors, including DFAT, whose funding policy and preferences also affect the ways in which INGOs work.

Recommendations to INGOs working towards transformational development:

- Develop organisational systems and processes that encourage genuine learning, feedback and adaptation, and which encourage alliance building.

This is particularly challenging given that many of the business processes NGOs use with donors and other CSOs are based on bilateral funding rather than multi-stakeholder relationships. Additionally, program design and logic models based on notions of predictability and relatively simple cause and effect thinking can often impair learning and adaptation (Kelly and Roche 2014).

There is great potential in Australian activists, community groups, Indigenous organisations, women's and minority groups to contribute to, and learn from, other people and groups in other regions who work on similar issues. This includes learning about – and fighting for - the type of support and policy environment those people require.

- Avoid 'technocratising' politics, wishful thinking, and 'promise inflation'.

Agencies which treat complex development problems – in which the distribution of power and resources is implicated - as only technical issues requiring technical solutions run the risk of overlooking or hiding power relations and entrenching vested interests. They also risk missing the emergence of quite radical changes to power relations, looking instead for technical accountability (Ferguson 1990, Hughes 2007).

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[8] See http://betterevaluation.org/evaluation-options/processtracing

Additionally short-term project cycles and competitive funding cycles can lead to a tendency to over-promise what degree of "transformation" can be delivered. Combining a technocratic approach with over-inflated promises may encourage agencies to short-cut the deep, complex social processes that underpin transformation. Any ability to support deep social change will depend on the agency effectively supporting local agents, rather than driving it themselves, and agencies need to make sophisticated assessments about when it is appropriate to become involved and not, and how.

- Recognise uncertainty and balance the demand for short term results and structural change.

There is emerging evidence that the "results agenda" has tended to privilege short-term economy and efficiency over long-term sustainable impact. Agencies and their partners require time to see genuine, long-lasting results. Short-term project cycles are unlikely to be sufficient for long-term transformational impact and can interrupt planning, delivery, knowledge and staffing. Development agencies and their partners need to consider carefully the right balance of strategies they can use to support both direct impact and policy and institutional change (UK ICAI 2015). They also need to manage consciously the tensions between short and long-term accountability and results and the resulting balance of incentives created for staff, partners, grantees and donors (Eyben and Guijt 2015, 12-13).

Arguably, this requires paying more deliberate attention to the balance between single-loop learning (are we doing the thing right?), and double and triple loop learning (are we doing the right thing, are we the right ones to do it and who says so?) (Ramalingam et al 2009, 10). The focus of monitoring and evaluation departments in many agencies is narrowly focused on the former and associated reporting, and inadequately on the latter. Developing structural means of ensuring both elements are considered routinely in agencies is one option.

- Balance organisational security and predictability with risk-taking and innovation.

Development agencies may grow and develop in ways that undermine their ability to promote transformational change. Organisational boards and senior management teams focus, rationally, on organisational and programmatic survival and growth by accessing continued and increased funding. Yet donor organisations and funding rules, where they entrench risk aversion, competition based on simplistic, short-term conceptions of value for money and narrow views on what constitutes "evidence of progress", may constrain development agencies from the risk-taking, innovation and adaptation essential to support transformational processes and outcomes (Edwards 2013; Carothers & de Gramont 2013; DDD Manifesto Community 2014).

INGOs, their boards and leadership teams, donors and partners need be in regular discussion about ways to support accountability and innovation in the pursuit of transformation. Indeed just as it has become common to discuss 'prosperity without growth' in the economic realm, it may be time to discuss impact and transformation without growth in the INGO sector (Roche & Hewett 2013).

- Experiment with social and institutional innovation as well as technological innovation.

Much of a growing interest in innovation and disruptive change in the development sector seems focused on the potential of new technology, social media and developing countries "leapfrogging" the generations of change that developing countries have been through. Technological innovation is clearly important, but so too is social and institutional innovation which produces systemic change and is often the means by which technology can be harnessed to shift power relations.

Much of this innovation often comes from 'positive deviants' who don't play by the existing rules or 'bend' them to achieve more radical solutions. The concept of positive deviance is based on the observation that 'in every community there are certain individuals or groups whose uncommon behaviours and strategies enable them

to find better solutions to problems than their peers, while having access to the same resources and facing similar or worse challenges' (Andrews 2015, 198). Understanding which leaders and community members are changing the rules of the game in this way, while also investing in the social learning processes by which such ideas might be shared, can be a practical means to not only identify social and institutional innovation, but initiate it in other locations.

- See the SDGs as an opportunity to promote internationalism and citizenship, "beyond aid".

If the SDGs are to form a "conceptual pivot" (Levine 2013) and their transformational potential is to be realised, this will require INGOs and development agencies to support that shift. This means rather than hold to a "rich helping poor" narrative, agencies could participate in an eco-system of actors that includes communities, NGOs, the private sector and governments. Those eco-systems could work with a narrative of shared identity, challenges and responsibility. They could incentivise international collaboration to build social, economic and political relationships and institutions fit for addressing complex challenges (Fullilove 2015).

Development agencies could focus only on lobbying for higher aid budgets or joining managerialist discussions about the best targets and indicators for the SDGs. A more strategic response to the SDGs, however, might be to support international and domestic actors to hold governments, companies and organisations accountable. The issues of climate change, inequality, gender based violence, youth employment, migration, and indigenous rights for example all resonate transnationally and provide important areas for reflection, learning and action where a co-investment in sharing strategies, solutions and campaigns might yield not only important results, but also build the networks and relationships required for a changed narrative on international cooperation.

Recommendations to DFAT and other donors

There are already important examples of how more transformational social, political and institutional relationships can exist in the aid system (Booth and Unsworth 2014). They provide us with clues to how the complex adaptive systems we are part of are already evolving responses to the challenges we face. As suggested above, an exploration, analysis and sharing of how this 'positive deviance' came about, and of the role and 'craft' of the 'exceptional responders' and change agents who have driven them would be hugely valuable.

How ideas are shared or combined, how new ideas are developed, how ideas and experiences are scaled up or adapted to different contexts are social and usually political processes. The ways in which these processes are encouraged, facilitated, brokered, supported and funded is key to their success.

The Australian government's interest in innovation lends itself well to supporting initiatives which might help identify, learn from and multiply the next generation of international cooperation. DFAT's InnovationXchange for example, might consider how it might 'surface' some of these processes and encourage them to be shared and propagated.

To support transformational development and the SDGS, donors can fund and support organisations in ways that:

- Build a diverse eco-system of actors, domestically and internationally.

Coalitions between different types of actors, such as NGOs, think tanks, universities, community groups and businesses, can incentivise learning, promote contestability in agenda-setting, strengthen delivery mechanisms, help shift power relations and generate stronger community and cross-party support for transformational development budgets and efforts.

- Incentivise partnership and coalitions.

While competitive efficiency is an important principle in many funding arrangements, funding and policy requirements that facilitate greater cooperation among civil society and other development agents is likely to

help rebalance organisational strategies away from "growth at any cost" and promise inflation to collaborative, accountable initiatives. This can support agencies to use multiple strategies to support change and to understand their own role in forming and supporting reflexive coalitions.

- Recognise uncertainty, support innovation and feedback, and increase the possibility of structural change.

Similarly to the recommendation made above for INGOs, and in response to growing recognition of the need to Do Development Differently (DDD Manifesto Community 2014), donors can manage consciously the tensions between short accountability and long-term results and perhaps deepen their definition of both. Accountability to tax payers for funds spent is vital, as is the ability to communicate the purposes of an aid budget. Yet donors are also interested in innovation and should develop that interest in ways consistent with transformational objectives and processes.

Arguably, this could be done in ways that are consistent with building the new narrative and relationships which a transformational approach to the SDGs might suggest. In particular this might include: building on the notion of more direct connections that a number of citizen to citizen initiatives are developing thus short-circuiting the usual reporting chain; empowering communities to tell and publicise their own experience with international assistance and cooperation (building on initiatives like the Listening Program[9]); or exploring how initiatives like UN pulse[10] or attempts to track social changes through social media might provide more public and real time feedback which provides an alternative channel to that of official development agencies.

- Support a new 'beyond-aid' narrative.

As noted above, the SDGs create an enormous opportunity for building citizen-to-citizen, government-to-government, and private sector links built on shared goals. These links create the possibility of reshaping domestic attitudes to international cooperation and Australia's place in the region. This might mean, for example, encouraging more strategic work with diaspora communities that already act as 'bridges' and connectors, with scholars from overseas when they are in Australia, and with Australian students who study overseas.

Conclusion: Transformation and the SDGs

Part One of this report explored the concept of transformation that is at the heart of the *2030 Agenda*, its intellectual origins and how it might be defined. The researchers argued that various traditions suggest that transformation involves deep processes of change in how we relate to ourselves, others and the environment and how power is distributed and exercised, facilitated by mechanisms and values consistent with end goals. If that is the case, while there is no one universal end point that is transformation, efforts to support transformation must go beyond transactional programs and relationships and grapple with the politics inherent in challenges like poverty, inequality and global warming.

Part Two considered how transformation might be brought about in practice. The researchers argued that it is impossible to know in the abstract and ahead of time what strategies and mechanisms will enable the SDGs to have effect in practice. They turned, therefore, to examine a narrow set of existing practices by Australian NGOs working internationally, with the assumption that these might reveal some lessons about how to support transformational development in practice. From those case studies, and in reference to a broader literature, the report proposed that development agencies are best able to support both specific and structural change when they work with other actors and employ multiple strategies for change across different domains. The

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[9] See http://cdacollaborative.org/cdaproject/the-listening-project/
[10] See http://www.unglobalpulse.org/

experience from the case studies has implications for how development organisations design and manage their institutions, relationships and funding arrangements as well their programming and advocacy.

Having started by considering the overall nature of transformation, then considering what that might mean in practice at global and more localised levels, the report now concludes by stepping back out to the level of principles. It considers what tentative conclusions might be drawn about the transformational potential of the SDGs in principle; it is for readers to determine how they might want to work to realise that potential in practice.

While the *Millennium Declaration* reflected a comprehensive concept of poverty, the MDGs were critiqued for forging consensus on a set of basic human needs (such as income, health, education and water) while marginalising more transformational aspects of development. Principles such as empowerment, rights, governance and equality – for women, for example - were excluded (Hulme 2007, 6, 15, 19; Manning 2009, 13,15), in at least some cases deliberately. The *2030 Agenda* has, however, claimed for itself a very ambitious purpose. Fulfilling that purpose will mean, as Amartya Sen pointed out long ago, "pay[ing] attention to long-standing material and objective aspects... while remembering that security, respect, status, dignity, voice and vulnerability may be more important to some than consumption" (Sumner 2009; Manning 2009, 43).

As noted at the beginning of the report, the *2030 Agenda* does not define what it means by transformation nor discuss in any depth how it expects it to happen. Yet it appears to the researchers that, based on their understanding of transformation as developed through this report, there are at least three principles in the new agenda that give it transformational potential. Each of these principles engages with the threads of transformation identified in this report - relationships, power, depth and process - and reflects the multilayered understanding of transformational development proposed.

Universalism

The first aspect of the *2030 Agenda* with transformational potential is its appeal to universalism: the acknowledgement that all people and countries are affected by economic, political and environmental crises, and all have a role to play in addressing those crises. Pushing international concern beyond the MDGs' focus on the "development" that is needed in poorer countries (which also ignored poverty and deprivation in rich countries), (Manning 2009, 45, 51; Saith 2006, 1184), the *2030 Agenda* is intended to be relevant to, accepted by and applicable to all countries (UN 2015b, 3). That applicability has been called a "profound conceptual pivot" (Levine 2013) although it is unclear to what extent it will occur in practice*.*

Some have argued this universalism might reflect the context in which the SDGs have been developed. The MDGs were formulated during a period of relative stability and prosperity in the developed countries whose aid budgets were implicated in funding the MDGs. In contrast, in the years leading to 2015, economic crisis, poverty and deprivation, violent conflict, intensifying globalisation and the impacts of climate change have affected people in developed and developing countries (Green, Hale & Lockwood 2012; Evans & van der Heijden 2014, 3). Certain problems, such as high rates of violence against women and social exclusion, occur in all countries (Kindornay 2014). In that context, perhaps a common interest in "people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership," in "shifting the world onto a sustainable and resilient path," is more salient (UN 2015b, 2).

Additionally, it is less easy to ignore in 2015 that addressing the most challenging global issues requires collective action as well as national action to support international goals (Sumner 2009; Ramalingam 2013, 56, UN 2013, 9). For example, domestic mitigation efforts framed by an international agreement are essential to prevent the climate warming beyond an irreparable threshold. In a globalised world where economic power is undergoing major shifts, structures of economic production and revenue management will make a larger impact (positive or negative) on poverty than foreign aid. While the *2030 Agenda* defers to existing international processes such as the UNFCCC and trade negotiations to solve global cooperation problems, it

does at least bring those cooperation problems within the overall shared framework of priorities (Miller-Dawkins 2014, 13).

For this potential to be realised, however, it is clear that it will be important to see and portray the SDGs as not primarily an 'aid' agenda, but as an opportunity to create a new 'beyond-aid' narrative. This in turn will mean ensuring that SDGs are not described and experienced by people in developed countries as about what happens 'over there,' while developing countries will need to take them seriously within their own polity.

Leaving no one behind

The second aspect of the *2030 Agenda* with transformational potential is its pledge that "no one will be left behind" (UN 2015b, 2). Unlike the MDGs, this is understood to address both absolute poverty and inequality, as expressed in the Preamble, Goal 5 "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" and Goal 10 "Reduce inequality within and among countries".

Inequalities associated with gender, household income, geographic location, disability, age and ethnicity prevent millions of people enjoying substantial, lasting change to their opportunities (UN 2015a, 3). National poverty levels can be reduced in the medium term without affecting inequality. For example, improvements to child mortality or primary school enrolments may benefit the richest proportion of the population or those with privileged positions within families and communities, such as boys and men and people without disabilities (Watkins 2013, 4). In the long-term, however, while economic growth is the main driver of poverty reduction, inequality inhibits broader economic growth (Watkins 2015) and the quality and distribution of growth produces better returns for poverty reduction than does the quantum (Watkins 2013, 6).

Tackling overlapping inequalities is expensive because it requires working deliberately and in a multi-disciplinary way to reach those not assisted by broad-based policies. Tackling inequality in all its forms is also politically challenging, domestically and internationally. Systematic social exclusion results from multiple, interlinking inequalities, shaped by the distribution of economic and political power (Shepherd et al 2014, 157). Achieving the transformation envisaged in the *2030 Agenda* requires "confronting the power relationships and vested interests that keep the poor where they are and... forming the national and international coalitions needed to deliver change" (Saith 2006, 1189, Watkins 2015).

For example, tackling exclusion requires redistributive measures which affect the access and wealth of the rich, as well as of the poor. Tax might be collected more effectively from the rich and middle classes (and multi-national companies) to fund good quality social services that poor and disadvantaged people access. Measures through which poor people can capture a greater share of the benefits of growth are also important. This requires, for example, ensuring that growth occurs in sectors that employ high proportions of poor people (such as agriculture and informal trading) and that structural changes to economies generate high productivity jobs (Watkins 2013, 7).

As noted in part two of this report, this will mean that unequal power relations and local politics are well understood and are directly or indirectly addressed. This in turn will mean that both the formal and informal 'rules of the game' are taken into account, as they shape how transformation might be enabled or constrained, and the degree to which progressive change is liable to be sustained.

Integrating economic, social and environmental concerns

The third transformational insight in the 2030 Agenda is the unapologetic acknowledgment that, while eradicating poverty is "the greatest global challenge", "eradicating poverty and inequality, preserving the planet and creating sustained and inclusive economic growth are linked to each other and are interdependent" (UN 2015b). It is perhaps in this domain that the some of the most complex and challenging issues lie, as questions of universalism, equity - including intergenerational equity - and the challenges of collective action come together most completely.

Figure 7 suggests that integrating economic, social and environmental concerns requires the establishment of a social "floor" above which every person of the planet is guaranteed a minimal level of well-being while keeping the overall consumption and arrangement of resources within an environmental "ceiling" that prevents irreparable environmental degradation (Raworth 2012, 4) [11] . The quest to provide "an environmentally safe and socially just space for humanity to thrive in... in which inclusive and sustainable economic development takes place" (Raworth 2012, 4) is inherently political and will require both particular improvements and structural change.

Figure 7: A safe and just space for humanity to thrive in: a first illustration (Raworth 2012, 4)
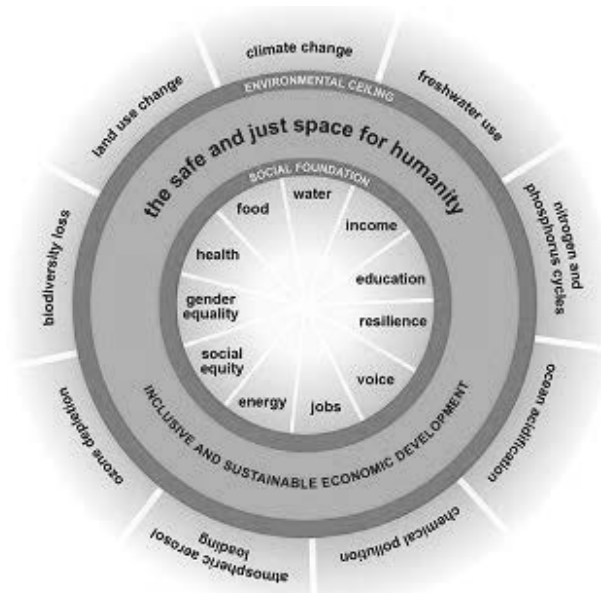
As explored in part one, sustainability is not only about outcomes - the sustaining of the natural world and its ability to support human livelihoods - but processes - the ways in which political and social institutions govern the use and distribution of natural resources (Adger and Jordan 2009, 3, 6). It could be argued that it is easier to define the outcomes - years of scientific work has yielded enormous and ongoing insights into the functions of the natural world, its capacities to respond to pressure and change and the scope of its uncertainties – than it is to work out how to reach those outcomes (Schmitz and Scoones 2015, 7).

Different people in different places and times will interpret the best combination of social, economic and environmental goals, precautions and trade-offs differently (Schmitz and Scoones 2015, 7). Finding a global "safe space" requires "bundling" a diverse range of interests which cut across many domains and groups - and therefore it also requires findings ways to negotiate conflict.

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[11] Rathworth notes "the 11 dimensions of the social foundation are illustrative and are based on governments' priorities for Rio+20. The nine dimensions of the environmental ceiling are based on the planetary boundaries set out by Rockström et al., 2009b, 'A safe operating space for humanity', *Nature* 461, 23 September."

For all three of these principles to be meaningful, people and organisations need to use the *2030 Agenda* and the SDGs to inspire and galvanise collective action and shift normative agendas. They are unlikely to realise the huge changes required by using the SDGs as a "global log frame" where energy and effort is devoted to layers of technocratic plans, increased aid funding, reporting systems and an overly managerialist approach to achieving goals.

Whether or not the potential of these three principles in the SDGs is realised will, the researchers believe, depend in part on how well the people and organisations implementing and advocating for the SDGs respond to the challenges involved in bringing about transformation in practice. As noted above, this will require new forms of international collaboration and partnership, fundamental levels of social and institutional innovation and more effective ways of coping with complexity and uncertainty.If we are to look back in 2030 with satisfaction, the work starts now.

Annex

Case study 1 - Action Aid: strengthening the resilience small-holder farmers' livelihoods in arid and semi-arid areas of eastern Kenya.

Summary of type of change targeted
"Supporting transformational change by empowering women and men small-holder farmers and women's representatives to work together to meet their basic needs, participate in collective decision-making and hold government and businesses accountable for developing inclusive policies and economies."

Background

Program overview
ActionAid Kenya, supported by ActionAid Australia, has been working with about 2000 smallholder farmers in three eastern Kenyan areas, Isiolo, Mbeere and Mwingi. About 70-80% of farmers involved are women. The A$2.9 million program "Strengthening resilience of livelihoods of smallholder farmers in the arid and semi-arid districts of eastern Kenya region" has been funded over the five years 2011-2016 under ActionsAid's $7.1 million portion of DFAT's $90 million Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES). AACES operates through ten Australian NGOs in 11 countries. ActionAid manages a similar program in Uganda.

The livelihoods program aims to improve small-holder farmers' food security and resilience to poor agricultural and climate conditions. ActionAid's program also aims to empower women in the same communities so they have more confidence and stronger status and influence at household, community and county levels.

Agriculture provides over 80% of Kenyans with their livelihoods. Challenges to production and food security include climate variability and declining rainfall. Pastoral rangelands and cropping lowlands, such as in the areas of Isiolo, Mbeere and Mwingi, are highly vulnerable to drought (Kenya Agricultural Research Institute 2012). A severe drought in 2010 saw high dependency on emergency food relief provided by ActionAid and other agencies. ActionAid assess poor conditions to be compounded by a poor policy environment for smallholder farmers and women, where delivery of agricultural research and extension services was weak and public infrastructure is neglected. Decentralisation in 2013 saw agricultural policy devolved to county level.

The program design was shaped by ActionAid International's global theory of change, in which poverty and marginalisation is understood as a denial of human rights and in which change depends on four inter-related conditions. Following community consultations during the program design, this global theory of change has been translated into program activities as follows:

- *So that basic conditions for poor and excluded people are met and they are able to claim their rights:* providing training and agricultural inputs to nearly 2000 farmers to increase their food production and diversify income sources. Inputs include drought-tolerant seed, small livestock animals, tools, water pipes, pumps, dam liners and training.[12] Nearly all the farmers with whom ActionAid works have adopted at least one new agricultural technology. About 1,500 people received access to savings and loans in 2014-15 through 'table banking'. One farmers group in Makima sub-county matched the KSH40,000 ActionAid grant with KSH37,000 of members' own funds. Within one year, the group had made loans to twenty members who raised and sold produce in the markets and repaid their loans with interest.

- *So that rights holder are conscious of why their rights have been denied and organize to claim their rights:* creating 80 Farmers Field Schools (FFS) with 2000 members (of which 1483 women), federated into 3

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[12] See the story as reported in Kenyan media: http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/ktn/video/watch/2000088351/-farmers-in-mwingi-mbeere-and-isiolo-plant-drought-resistant-crops-for-food-security

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cooperatives, as well as 10 Junior FFS operating in schools. As documented in monitoring reports, in order to build participants' confidence and capacities, the FFS have created opportunities for farmers to share agricultural and human rights information, develop advocacy skills and establish links to agricultural value chains. New business opportunities have included selling produce to export companies or for school meals. The groups have also offered leadership training for women and created opportunities for women to exercise their leadership.

- *So that civil society allies are mobilised to act in solidarity with rights holders to claim their rights*: supporting the FFS cooperatives to advocate to county authorities for better agricultural services and for more responsive governance, especially since decentralisation in 2013. ActionAid has also supported the formation of the Women's Association of Kitui County (WAK) which now has 6000 members (see box 1).

- *So that policies, laws and practices of state and non-state institutions are changed through people-centred advocacy and campaigns:* facilitating access and covering resource gaps so that government agricultural extension officials visit and work with the FFS. ActionAid has supported the WAK's engagement and advocacy with the Kitui County Governor and officials. ActionAid has also worked with other CSOs and alliances, including the Kenyan CSO food security and rights platform, to analyse agriculture issues and advocate to national and county governments.

Analysis

Transformational intent in the program
The intent and structure of the Strengthening Resilient Livelihoods program does encompass the three elements of the working definition for transformational development:

- *Qualitative change in people's lives*: The program has sought to enhance household food production by providing material inputs and training female and male small-holder farmers. Through training it has also sought to improve the confidence of men and women who are farmers and support women generally to take leadership roles in households and communities.

- *Structural change*: through fostering collective action, the program has sought to strengthen small-holder farmers' access to markets and create opportunities for women' to articulate their priorities and engage with government representatives. Through facilitating access and engagement between government officials, farmers and women representatives, as well as through research and liaison with other CSOs, the program has sought to improve government responsiveness to the needs and priorities of women generally and of men and women who are small-holder farmers.

- *Transformational process*: Through facilitative, supportive ways of working, ActionAid has sought to support empowerment. The extent to which ActionAid has catalysed and created opportunities for individuals and groups, or whether it has leant weight to existing initiatives, is unclear. It is also unclear what drove the exponential growth in WAK membership in 2014 and 2015 and what would help it maintain its active membership.

Understanding of transformation
ActionAid's work, informed by its global theory of change, appears to incorporate insights on transformation that reflect those found in leadership and critical theory. Interviewees stated that, in keeping with their organisational mission and their own experience working with communities, they understood transformational development to be about supporting people to believe in themselves and take action together so that their rights are fulfilled and their lives are better than they are now. The interviewees believed that lasting change

requires assisting rights-holders to understand how power at household, community and state levels shapes poverty and how they can challenge it to overcome poverty and marginalisation.

Progress against intent and lessons learnt
The program's work across multiple domains makes it ambitious. As the operating context has changed (for example, Kenyan decentralisation and cuts to the Australian aid budget), ActionAid appears to have concentrated its effort on the aspects outlined below. This concentration, which interviewees believed was also shaped by learning and reflection during implementation, seems to have given the program more coherence than the program design and early documents suggested.

ActionAid has used a number of strategies in its work consistent with its global theory of change:

- *A focus on empowerment:* ActionAid has aimed to empower people who are marginalised in three geographic areas. Participants were selected through participatory community methods such as well-being analyses. Participants include small-holder farmers (women and men) who are vulnerable to poor climatic conditions, receive little support from government and are poorly linked to value chains. They also include women who may not previously have had opportunities to contribute to household or community decision-making. Early reluctance on the part of some male community leaders to include women in the FFS appears to have waned with time and as women have earned incomes.

  The strategies for empowerment have been led by ActionAid staff. For example, staff arranged mentoring from like-minded community organisations from other geographic areas or connected communities to technical experts. The program is currently reliant on anecdotal evidence as the mid-term review did not collect adequate quantitative or qualitative data on progressive results. This makes it difficult to gauge program impacts. Most Significant Change stories collected from women FFS members during ActionAid monitoring visits describe substantial personal impacts for the women such as increased farm production, confidence and involvement in household decision-making. It is difficult to assess from the existing reporting the degree to which ActionAid's work has been a trigger for increased empowerment compared to the possible influence of other factors.

- *Strengthening women and farmers' capacities and influence through collective organising:* In line with its theory of change, ActionAid has sought to organise groups which not only address members' material needs but influence county policy. For ActionAid, collective organising is an important way through which people can affect the broader circumstances that shape their lives. FFS participation has fluctuated as members face other demands on their time. ActionAid has sought to build community engagement by providing practical benefits including access to farm inputs and savings, as well as opportunities to develop shared visions for a better life.

  In line with its philosophy of broadening coordinated action and expanding influence, ActionAid has also supported the FFS to formally federate into three collectives that advocate on food rights and security. The federation was intended to increase the groups' perceived credibility when engaging with government. ActionAid has sought to strengthen the collectives by training members in cooperative management and business planning, and creating opportunities to share ideas. As narrated by interviewees, ActionAid also identified opportunities to bring women together, which contributed to the formation of the Women's Association of Kitui County (WAK) (see box below).

  Interviewees said that community members in the project areas customarily collaborated on aspects of life like grazing and migrating stock. Some CSOs had been active in the project areas previously. Local initiatives such as the cooperative movement and a special "harambee" spirit of cooperation are also important in Kenya. Interviewees said, however, that ActionAid's collective organising approach arose

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from its global theory of change, rather than from local context analysis. They believed this had been an appropriate form of intervention in poor areas. From the project documents and interviews, it is difficult to gauge: how relevant to local people the coalition-building has been; whether it drew on existing interest in collaborative action; and how beneficial community members believed these efforts were.

It is also unclear whether FFS and the WAK have sufficient resources, leadership and purpose to continue their operations after ActionAid's AACES funding finishes in mid-2016. Given that these forms of political and community engagement may be new for many members, the initiatives might need longer-term support to be sustained. In its end of program evaluation, ActionAid could assess the relevance and sustainability of its approach to collective organising in the project areas, compared to its global theory of change. This would help ensure that future coalition-building approaches were fit for local purpose.

- *Facilitating community members' access to decision-makers ("duty-bearers"):* Strategies to support advocacy have been developed by ActionAid in response to the opportunities created by decentralisation and the promulgation of a new constitution. That constitution obliges Kenyan governments to involve their citizens in decision-making. ActionAid has helped FFS members understand and analyse proposed government budgets. It has supported community members to attend public budget hearings, present submissions and visit officials to see how their submissions have been responded to. Interviewees said that in each county the government had incorporated some FFS requests. This included improved social protections for people with disabilities in Makima and funding for dam installation to improve access to irrigation in Mwingi. Some officials reported to ActionAid that they were impressed by community members' new levels of confidence and clarity on what they wanted for their communities.

For interviewees, key enabling steps taken by ActionAid to help community members exercise influence were: gathering information; forming alliances with like-minded parties; providing financial and human resources to support the work; demonstrating the organisation's commitment by acting and taking risks; and identifying officials who were receptive to advocacy. One observation from the researchers is that in this program, the advocacy seems largely to have been driven by ActionAid, at least during the initial formation of the groups. Interviewees agreed that this had been the case to start with, but that over the last year, ActionAid has recognised the importance of communities leading the advocacy work, in keeping with its organisational philosophy of playing a catalytic rather than a controlling role.

At the start of the program, ActionAid noted that communities could identify problems that affected them, but ActionAid expected that over time communities would be able to identify problems and the policy factors shaping them. An example of community-led advocacy is that WAK now initiates meetings with the Deputy Governor. Another is of Bidii FFS in Isiolo which, with support from ActionAid, the Horticulture Crops Development Authority and Kenya Human Rights Commission, negotiated more favourable terms for sorting and selecting beans under its contract with the international food company Finlay. In the end of program evaluation, it will be important to try and measure the extent to which communities' advocacy skills and government receptiveness have changed over time, and what future impacts might be expected.

Facilitating better government service delivery: ActionAid has used research (for example on agriculture budgets in seven counties) and alliances with other CSOs (through the Kenyan CSO food security and rights platform) to generate resources that can be used by citizens to advocate for better government service delivery. ActionAid has also sought to connect service providers directly to the farmers in its FFS and federated cooperatives. The failure of county governments to pay the field work costs of agricultural extension officers had meant they were not able to deliver services as mandated. ActionAid provided funding for extension officers to travel to all 80 FFS and share their expertise, while the farmers have also telephoned and travelled to government officers to seek advice. ActionAid monitoring found increased confidence by extension officers and farmers.

The three federated FFS cooperatives made submissions demanding better service provision from county governments. ActionAid also facilitated visits by government cooperative officers to the cooperatives, to help them strengthen their governance. Over the course of the program, ActionAid has gradually withdrawn its funding for government staff to meet with farmers, drawing instead on the increased demand from farmers to mobilise government staff. It will be important to monitor the extent to which demand and responsiveness is maintained, to understand better how to ensure better service by duty-bearers to duty-holders.

Coalition-building and policy influence: Women's Association of Kitui County
As narrated by interviewees for the present research

Kenya's new 2010 constitution imposed obligations on governments to engage with citizens, while decentralisation in 2013 created opportunities to bring budgeting and decision-making closer to community level. In that context, ActionAid considered whether supporting women to organise collective action might help improve government responsiveness to their needs and priorities. ActionAid staff had been building relationships with influential women in the county. It believed there was potential to capitalise on existing community-based women's groups, that focused on family welfare and income generation, to generate a larger women's movement that could address policy issues.

To take this idea forward, ActionAid met with members of the county CSO Forum, with which it collaborated on food security issues. The members discussed what they saw as a gap in women's coalitions and agreed on objectives and strategies to bring women together. Each CSO then worked across several administrative wards to tell women about their rights under the new national constitution, share examples of women's organising in other parts of the country, discuss the idea of a Kitui county group and develop ward-level priorities. As narrated, many of the women felt excited, albeit anxious about what their husbands and community leaders might think of them. Interviewees believed that the women decided to proceed in spite of this anxiety because they had a better understanding of their rights.

Formed in November 2013, the Women's Association of Kitui County is seen to have created a voice for women from all forty administrative wards, and a space in which to speak at a county level. It has grown beyond the original objective of 2000 members to 6000. WAK grew slowly in 2014 as members worked to register WAK in the county court, battled against political opposition and had their initial policy petitions ignored. Progress was stronger in 2015 and interviewees believed that the weight of numbers enabled it to keep growing.

The structure of the organisation is said to be evolving over time as the women experiment with what works. ActionAid engaged the Kenya School of Government to support WAK's strategic planning. Participants formulated a vision of "a network of empowered women committed to joint pursuit of inclusive development and transforming society for a better living experience".

WAK Members have worked to engage other citizens and government officials through a range of strategies. In addition to the first Kitui rural women's assembly held in November 2013, which 1000 women attended, the members have: produced radio programs, held demonstrations, visited official and submitted policy position papers and accepted invitations by leaders to contribution in forums such as budget hearings.

Interviewees said that the women initially met with resistance from some officials who disliked being criticised. As leaders have observed that the women's intentions are "genuine" and as the association has come to represent a substantial number of voters, politicians have become more willing to listen. For example, while in 2014-15 the women's budget petitions were ignored, in 2015-16 women formulated budget petitions for every ward. They presented these at the county assembly to demonstrate what women wanted. Interviewees said that at least one activity in each ward from the women's submissions is now being funded.

From the perspective of interviewees, it is a transformational change that women are now seen as drivers of development in Kitui county.

Case study 2: Anglican Board of Mission – promoting gender equality in Papua New Guinea as part of the living Gospel

Summary of type of change targeted

"Supporting transformational development by (1) encouraging shifts in church leaders' attitudes, practices, policies and teaching so that they support women's empowerment in their congregations and church structures and (2) by strengthening women's skills and raising congregation members' awareness of human rights to support a shift in relations between women and men so that all enjoy "the fullness of life".

Program background

The Anglican Board of Mission (ABM)-Australia supports the pastoral and development work of Anglican churches in other countries as part of its Christian mission. ABM works with the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea (ACPNG) to support church governance, leadership and the delivery of health, education and small-scale livelihood activities. In a country where about 90% of the total population identifies as Christian, about 3% of the population, are members the Anglican denomination, about 220,000 people.

Anglican congregations are served by about 170 priests working in parishes across five dioceses; the dioceses cover the entire PNG mainland and islands. Most of the parishes are located in rural and remote areas where there may be limited public services and transport and communication is difficult. Those in peri-urban settlements in Port Moresby and Lae often experience higher levels of violence and may also have limited services.

Part of ABM's work with ACPNG is funded under the $75 million DFAT PNG Church Partnership Program (CPP) (2004-2016). CPP funds seven Australian church agencies and their counterpart PNG churches to strengthen the delivery of essential community services and support peace, stability and good governance. With about $10 million CPP funding received since 2004, ABM has focused on improving governance, quality and outcomes in Anglican schools, adult literacy programs and HIV services.

ABM also supports community development with a focus on women's skills and ending violence against women. The poor status of women in PNG is a major challenge. Women and girls have substantially less access to health care and education services than men and boys and are substantially under-represented at all levels of government. About two-third of women and girls are reported to have experienced gender-based violence (UNDP 2015).

ACPNG has long supported women in its congregations, for example through the Anglican Mothers Union and through educating and employing women. Over the last eight years, ABM has supported an iterative conversation among ACPNG leaders and community members about gender equality. In 2008, partly as a response to DFAT compliance requirements and partly driven by a concern for its parishioners, the church did a stock take to see how well women's welfare and opportunities were promoted across the church.

Church leaders agreed they wanted to do more to promote women's leadership and respect for women's contributions to the church. They also wanted to enhance the church's response to major issues affecting Anglican communities, such as family violence. Subsequently, in 2010, with ABM's support and in accordance with ACPNG's mission to promote the full participation of all people in the life that God has blessed them with, ACPNG developed a gender policy, one of the first churches in PNG to do so.

Program overview

ACPNG's policy was shaped by the values of "respect and value for human life and dignity of all people" and "uphold Christian values and teaching on the equality of mankind". Based on Christian social teaching as well as the country's constitution, ACPNG's gender policy aimed to guide the church's theological training, teaching of congregations, participation and treatment of women in church institutions and practical community activities to promote gender equality. It was intended that each diocese would develop a strategy to implement the policy.

To help implement the policy, in 2010 the ACPNG national office employed two gender officers with ABM's CPP funding. One is based in Popondota, Oro Province covering the three dioceses in the Papuan Region. In 2011, the gender officer established a Gender Working Group of men and women from congregations located around Popondetta township. Members received training in human rights and advocacy strategies. On a voluntary basis, they travel to parishes to talk peer-to-peer about men and women's equality, children's and human rights, HIV and peace. They also engage communities through "gender Bible study", drama and oration in local languages. The second gender officer is in Mt Hagen, Western Highlands Province covering the two dioceses in the Highlands and New Guinea Islands Region. [13] In Mt Hagen, the gender officer provides awareness and advocacy skills training to women's groups and church youth leaders, organise public events around international days for women and children and teache women basic life skills.

ABM has also worked with the Newton Theological College in Popondetta to incorporate gender equality principles in college resources (e.g. service guides for lay preachers) and train and encourage female students to lead community development and empowerment activities when they are deployed to parishes. In Port Moresby, activities included bringing together 22 members of the clergy and their wives in 2014 to discuss how gender and culture shape people's lives. Participants discussed how ministers and their wives can work together to deliver pastoral care and address gender-related issues.

Additionally, ACPNG and ABM have been part of collaborative efforts by CPP partners to influence how women's empowerment is addressed by churches of all denominations. Ninety per cent of the PNG population identifies as Christian. Church leaders and their Australian partners see, therefore, that churches have a unique opportunity to transform the attitudes and behaviour of people at all levels of society and to promote gender quality as part of living the Gospel (Anderson 2012, 12). CPP established a Gender Reference Group in 2010. Five of the seven churches affiliated with CPP have since developed gender policies which encompass non-discrimination in church employment, except ordained clergy as this is not a policy position churches wish to review. The policies also state the churches' positions against domestic violence. Several churches have also employed gender officers to support policy implementation.

Since October 2014, CPP and PNG church partners have worked to develop a cross-denominational Theology of Gender Equality which affirms gender equality as a Christian and moral imperative, consistent with CPP's existing Theology of Development. CPP has also worked on a strategy for gender equality to encourage church-wide conversation, reflection and learning on gender equality and establish a common vision for activities undertaken by each church. Uniting World connected two Pacific Island theologians (a male theologian from Solomon Islands, a female theologian from Rotuma, Fiji) to different denominational leaders in PNG, allowing them to discuss how the roles and capacities of men and women might be understood through theological teaching.

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[13] Funding and management of these positions was transferred to independently incorporated national NGO Anglicare PNG Inc in 2014 as part of structural changes by ACPNG. Church leaders believed that Anglicare had more capacity to manage CPP programs than the church itself did. Anglicare is an organisation of the church and its board is chaired by the Bishop of Port Moresby. Anglicare works closely with the structures of the church to implement CPP-funded activities.

Analysis

Transformational intent in the program
The intent of ABM, ACPNG and their partners in CPP can be summarised as "to advocate and act to transform human relationships in the family, institutions and society at large to enable mutual dignity, respect, solidarity and the full participation and benefits of holistic, integral and sustainable development to be enjoyed by women and men" (Draft PNG CPP Gender Strategy 2016-2020 2015, 26). The partners are working towards this in a way which encompasses the three elements of the working definition for transformational development.

Qualitative change in people's lives: Partners are working to: increase the leadership and livelihood skills of women; increase understanding amongst congregations about gender issues; reduce and respond better to family violence; and change the attitudes and behaviours of church leaders so they can support women's empowerment in their congregations.

Structural change: The longer-term objectives of this work are: for church leaders and congregation members to support and promote gender equality and healthy, fulfilling relationships between men and women; for women to play leadership roles and be drivers of development in their families, churches and communities; and for church-based social services to meet women's needs and rights and promote gender equality.

Transformational process: ACPNG's discussion of, and support for, efforts to support gender equality started through self-reflection about how well women's welfare and rights were promoted in the Anglican church. Collaborative initiatives among church leaders and CPP partners, with churches sharing their resources across denominations, have enabled church members to share their insights, reflect and form policies using language and methods that resonate with church teaching.

Understanding of transformation
For interviewees in this research, the language of "transformation" was familiar and tied closely to the perspective of faith-based traditions, as discussed in part one of this report. They saw transformation as being about the work of Christ to transform God's creation to "the way it was meant to be". Transformational change was seen to go beyond individual-level change to target deep change to the structures and activities of groups, communities and societies. It was understood to be an ongoing and dynamic process, which needs to work with communities' own starting points. Interviewees believed that the work by PNG churches, supported by CPP, to discuss and support women's empowerment is transformational in scope because it challenges deeply held norms in the churches and in society more broadly.

Progress against intent and lessons learnt
The work on gender equality by ABM/ACPNG and by other churches and CPP partners has grown iteratively. There is no program design for gender work within ABM's program, although church partners' values and commitments have been captured in the new policies and theologies, as well as in ABM's CPP reporting to DFAT. The implicit rationale for the work is that in a country with 90% Christian identification, changes in belief and practice amongst church leaders and members can make a significant difference to women's safety and opportunities.

The researchers have used information gathered in interviews and documents to identify what appears to be a clear theory of change based on a faith-based understanding of transformation. This could be expressed as:

> "Through carefully-paced, theology-based reflection, church leaders can be engaged to consider how they believe, teach and enable women's empowerment in their churches. Attitudinal and practice changes lead by church leaders, combined with practical efforts to strengthen women's skills and raise

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congregation members' awareness of human rights, can support an overall shift in relations between women and men so that all can enjoy "the fullness of life".

It is difficult to assess, from documents and interviews, how widely and deeply the work by churches and their partners has affected church leaders and congregation members. There are anecdotal examples of the impact on some leaders' and community members' beliefs. From the experience to date, it seems likely there will be achievements and set-backs as change occurs over a long period. The churches involved appear to be working with that understanding. A critical issue is likely to be whether and how the churches hold themselves progressively accountable for attitudinal and behaviour change that affects how power is structured between men and women in communities and within church teaching and structures.

ABM, ACPNG, other churches and CPP partners including UnitingWorld and the CPP Church Leaders Council have employed a number of strategies to pursue different elements in the implicit theory of change:

Developing approaches that resonate within the church
CPP partners have worked deliberately with language and strategies that are meaningful for church constituencies. ABM learnt from its earlier HIV/AIDS work that taking a context-based approach was essential for engaging the church in that issue. As gender issues go to the heart of how societies and cultures function, and how religion and faith function within them, discussing gender issues can be sensitive.

The efforts of PNG churches and their Australian partners to promote gender equality reflect their belief that church leadership in social transformation is crucial; transformation cannot be left to government. CPP partners have sought to promote discussion and reflection by church leaders about how men and women might live in "Christian partnerships" as provided for in Scripture (Anderson 2012, 12). Theological reflection has centred on the equal creation of men and women in the image of God and with gifts and capacities that honour God, along with reference to the equal rights that women hold under PNG law.

Uniting World took a key step to encourage theology-based discussion amongst church leaders about gender equality principles and the implications of both challenging current church approaches and allowing them to remain, by arranging for a visit by two Pacific theologians during the CPP biannual forum in October 2014. Interviewees believed that the creation of a safe and encouraging space in which forum participants could discuss Bible teaching with fellow Pacific islanders was a highly strategic act of connection and alliance-building within the church community. Church leaders were said to have been deeply moved and excited about the theologians' understanding of Christian teaching in which women have equal dignity and agency as part of God's people sharing in an "abundant life."

The theologians proposed key elements of a gender equality theology as an extension of the PNG churches' existing Theology of Development. In the year since the forum, the proposed gender theology has been circulated amongst church leaders and members for discussion and feedback, as leaders believe it should be owned across the church. Based on positive feedback received to date, the gender equality theology is expected to be accepted as church policy at the CPP biannual forum in Lae, Morobe Province, in April 2016. Additionally, a CPP gender strategy was also developed after the October 2014 Forum and will be refined once the Theology of Gender Equality is approved. The strategy will be implemented progressively by individual churches and the CPP partnership.

Seeking to change attitudes and knowledge at a pace that brings people on board
PNG Churches and CPP partners have sought to stretch church members and leaders' understanding and beliefs about women and men's roles and rights. They have done so at a pace at which the threat of change would not perceived to be overwhelming, either individually or collectively. One interviewee said a key principle was to start from where people were at and work towards a desired goal; this was explained to

researchers through the image of travelling a transformative journey with a person, rather than forcing the person to take the journey. Earlier talk of "gender" in some churches had led to strong negative reactions, with some leaders walking out of meetings at a word they considered offensive.

CPP partners acknowledge that individual and collective change will be slow because working toward gender equality affects existing distributions of power. They anticipated resistance from some church leaders and congregation members, who in some cases assumed "gender" was only about women's ordination. ACPNG and ABM have used both policy and practical steps to support and reinforce change. At a policy level, working at an appropriate pace has meant framing issues in familiar language and principles, such as a shared interest in "peaceful communities", as well as generating understanding of the consistency between church values and human rights values. Gender officers have used ACPNG church leaders' approval of the gender policy to create a conversation at parish level, while also appealing to parish leaders' interest in "wives and daughters" being treated well.

At a practical level, for ACPNG and ABM, working at pace meant initially supporting uncontroversial activities such as counselling services for women who experienced violence, or strengthening women's traditional skills and livelihood options, such as cooking, sewing and oil-making. Later these opportunities were extended to men while efforts were made to open opportunities for women's representation on church committees. Another practical step to support individual change was convening workshops with clergy, theological students and their wives to discuss how women could contribute to household and community decision-making and to develop ideas for community activities.

Engaging church leaders
CPP partners and their PNG church counterparts made a strategic decision to work with and through church leaders to support women's equality. Interviewees understood that in organisations where authority is hierarchical and there are strong internal cultural norms, change must be adopted and promoted by people invested with authority. For example, a bishop and several male and female lay leaders (two of whom were expatriates and the others PNG nationals) played a catalytic role in mobilising ACPNG to respond to the 2008 gender stock take.

Interviewees felt there had been substantial progress to date. Many ordained and lay leaders across all PNG churches are aware of gender issues and the need to hear women's voices in decision-making. For example, at a gender policy reflection workshop in 2010, Anglican bishops discussed how to implement the policy in the church's work. They recognised that formulating a policy was only a first step towards ensuring the church was just, inclusive and enabled women and men to strengthen the life of the church. Parish clergy were also engaged, for example through annual retreats and International Women's Day and White Ribbon Day activities, while Anglican theological students have been taught about how men and women can relate and contribute to community life. There is also now one woman on the Anglican Church of PNG Provincial Council. The churches' new theology of gender, as well as the CPP gender strategy, will be reference points for engaging church leaders in ongoing work to achieve gender equality.

Interviewees acknowledged that perseverance will be required to build individual support and alliances for change across each church's leadership. The partners' experience shows that interest can decline over time or when particular people change positions, depending on the extent to which leaders value and take pride in efforts to support gender equality. The passage of time since the original ACPNG gender audit in 2008 might have weakened its ability to spur leaders into action. Interviewees said it can also be challenging for leaders to incorporate new issues into their already busy schedules, particularly if they face resistance or wider funding constraints.

In ACPNG, changes in appointment at archbishop and bishop levels shifted the attention given to gender work, while implementation of the gender policy was devolved to gender officers employed by ACPNG with ABM's CPP funding. While one position was filled by the wife of a Bishop, who therefore had some authority, the other position was filled by a young woman who did not have strong authority even among women's groups. Neither perhaps had the authority to support clergy and congregations with the kinds of attitudinal and behavioural change needed.

A key challenge has been managing perceptions that promoting women's empowerment would lead to pressure for women to be ordained. While men and women within churches may discuss women's role in the ministry, CPP partners have been careful to focus on promoting women's lay leadership and training, improving the lives of women and creating peaceful and strong families.

Engaging church members
ACPNG and ABM have worked directly with community members to change knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. They have generated anecdotal evidence of the benefits and challenges of this approach. Over time, members of the Popondetta Gender Working Group developed confidence in their own capacities and in their community engagement. ABM monitoring reports show that in 2013, male and female working group members wanted time to absorb information and come to new personal understandings about gender. By 2014 they had organised community activities for 250 people and modelled new behaviour, for example giving women opportunities to speak in meetings.

Working group members juggled mixed reactions from communities, ranging from support from the Mother's Union to threats of violence from some young people. Some members had also taken on other community roles such as teaching adult literacy or working with the village court to raise law and order awareness in community. Members noted that messages on women's empowerment needed to be integrated into the church's ministry to be heard and listened to by more people. When working group members encountered resistance from parish leaders, they shared information about activities in other parishes. Members also reached out to professionals including teachers who wanted to teach human rights.

Efforts have also been made to target change amongst particular groups in the community. For example, gender officers have spoken at youth conventions about respectful relationships and non-violent conflict resolution. Meanwhile, some older women worried they would lose their own discrete roles and influence in congregations if the relationships between men and women were changed. Gender officers have worked to build understanding that empowerment means recognising all contributions and giving men and women choice about the roles they play. The working group found that men who participated in life skills training gained a better appreciation for skills seen traditionally as women's.

Interviewees commented that gender-related work is highly personal and emotionally charged for church leaders and members. Many men and women are likely to have both perpetrated and been victims of violence at different times in their lives. Underneath the churches' work on gender equality has been an understanding that PNG cultures traditionally provided respect for women and men, but that some of that respect has been lost over time and with the effects of colonisation. Gender officers have sought to communicate women's empowerment as improving the aspects of society that both men and women believe need improving, as a way of reclaiming the fullness of life for all.

Collaborative action across churches and their partners
In addition to action taken within specific churches, the CPP partners have worked collectively to promote steps towards women's empowerment. They formed a gender working group composed of two rotating members from each of the seven CPP partners. This group helped review each church's gender policy,

commissioned the joint gender strategy and advised CPP on gender programming matters. Interviewees noted that it has been challenging for reference group members to do this work on top of their existing roles.

Interviewees believed that the churches' ability to collaborate on gender equality has grown from the broader collaboration CPP has facilitated across the seven churches since 2004. They believed many church members found the experience of working together on gender issues fulfilling and stimulating. For this work to have sustained impacts, however, PNG churches must see this work as their own, not as CPP's.

The interviewees perceived that CPP and church partners are responding to a mix of internal and external pressures for change, with each church potentially shaped by a slightly different mix. They commented that some people in the church may believe gender equality work was driven by CPP partners to meet DFAT funding requirements. There was some pressure from DFAT for CPP to improve its reporting on gender issues. Interviewees also said, however, that for many other people in the churches, the work to improve outcomes for women reflected a desire to see women treated with more respect and dignity and to be involved in decision-making.

Case study 3 - Caritas Australia: improving sexually transmitted infection management in PNG

Summary of type of change targeted

"Supporting transformational change by providing better quality services to people who were previously excluded or under-served, as well as improving social inclusion by empowering service-providers and service-recipients to overcome stigma and discrimination in Papua New Guinea."

Background

Program overview

The "Sexually Transmitted Infections Management Program" (STIMP) was implemented by Caritas Australia and its partners in three provinces in PNG - Southern Highlands Province, Western Highlands Province and Chimbu - from March 2007 to June 2013. The overall goal of STIMP was to contribute to the improved sexual health of men, women and young people in those provinces. The project was one of four service delivery models implemented by five consortia of Australian and PNG organisations and funded under the Australian aid program's PNG Australia Sexual Health Improvement Program (PASHIP).

PASHIP aimed to improve access to services for the management and prevention of sexually-transmitted infections, as well as generate evidence about effective treatment approaches in PNG. HIV prevalence was about 0.6% of the adult population in 2013 (WHO 2015). Rates of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STI) in PNG are among the highest in the Pacific and health indicators are poor overall (UNDP 2015).

With $3 million of Australian Government funding, over $900,000 of Caritas Australia funding and a contribution by Cordaid (Caritas Netherlands), STIMP was implemented by a consortium of faith-based and secular agencies. Caritas Australia provided program design and overall management. The Catholic Church Health Service (CCHS), which provides 28% of all health services in PNG and which Caritas Australia had supported since 2003, implemented the program in association with its primary health care facilities. The Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM) provided technical assistance in program management and capacity building for health care workers, building on its existing clinical mentoring work in PNG.[14]

Caritas Australia's analysis showed that sexual health in PNG could only be tackled through a comprehensive approach. Through STIMP, therefore, Caritas Australia and its partners sought to improve the delivery of health services and to understand the social factors contributing to high STI & HIV prevalence and low treatment rates, including stigma and discrimination. While PASHIP and its component programs lacked a strong monitoring and evaluation framework and quantitative data collection (Lowe et al 2012, 9), a 2012 end-of-program review of PASHIP and a mid-2013 evaluation of STIMP found that STIMP had improved sexual health services in the three target provinces. Outcomes included:

- *Better infrastructure and service integration*: STIMP funded the building and refurbishment of treatment rooms, six laboratories and staff housing connected to CCHS rural hospitals and health centres across seven sites in three provinces. It also provided laboratory equipment. This enabled enhanced syndromic management of STIs in rural and remote areas for the first time. (Leach & Lalor, 2013, 20-21).

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[14] The National Catholic Family Life Apostolate of PNG and Solomon Islands, the PNG Catholic HIV/AIDS Services Incorporated (CHASI) and Catholic Health Australia (through its member organisations St Vincents and Mater Health Sydney) also provided program support (Leach & Lalor 2013, 8).

- *Improved staff capacity to manage STIs and other sexual health issues:* STIMP funded several STI and HIV training courses and supported approximately 30 mentoring visits to doctors, nurses, community health workers and laboratory staff at CCHS facilities by ASHM clinical and laboratory mentors. Approximately 200 participating PNG health care workers and laboratory assistants reported increased skills in diagnosis, testing, record keeping and patient advice, in line with PNG National Guidelines. They also reported increased skills working with survivors of sexual assault and said they appreciated the opportunity to learn new skills. A positive, unexpected project outcome was that health care workers and laboratory assistants reported feeling more confident and proud of their work, more likely to solve problems actively, use laboratory testing in diagnosis and take a stronger patient-centred approach (Caritas Australia 2013, 9, 35).

- *Improved access by patients:* Increases in patient numbers and infection trends could not be quantified accurately due to poor data collection, as noted above. The evaluation team was satisfied, however, by STIMP staff observations that patient numbers had increased. For example, the numbers of men receiving information and taking STI and other tests increased through new men's clinics staffed by male nurses. Many of those men also encouraged their partners to be tested. Some STI/HIV-positive mothers shared their stories to encourage prospective mothers to be tested, in turn also challenging stigma and discrimination. CCHS staff also reached out to young people through awareness-raising in schools and churches, but it was difficult to increase the numbers accessing services. Staff felt more comprehensive welfare outreach was needed for young people (Leach & Lalor, 2013, 24-26).

- *Greater understanding of sexual health drivers:* The program commissioned action research into the socio-cultural factors affecting sexual health in the three provinces. The evaluation assessed that the research not only provided a new resource to guide future programs but had encouraged health care workers to collect data and analyse it to understand how to improve their services (Leach & Lalor, 2013, 26-27). A challenge faced by the program was how to distribute sensitive research results.

- *Reduced stigma and discrimination for people with STIs:* The evaluation and Caritas Australia' reporting found that the program had improved the attitudes and behaviours of CCHS health care workers towards people with STIs and HIV. Results from a baseline and follow-up survey (four years on) indicated that health care workers who received ongoing mentoring showed a marked decrease in fear and negative judgement of patients with STIs/HIV, which had previously affected their interaction with patients. This shift in attitudes was a significant achievement: it enabled better delivery of care and was seen to have, potentially, a broader influence as health care workers are often leaders in their communities.

  Efforts at education in the broader community to reduce stigma and discrimination were less successful. Resources to work in schools and communities were limited, although the research results were shared in some communities nearby the health centres. The two-person team also invested substantial time working in the Catholic Teachers' College to improve the knowledge and attitudes of future teachers. Overall, the goal to reduce stigma and discrimination was considered to be overly ambitious for the length and resourcing of the program (Caritas Australia 2013, 27).

Analysis

Transformational intent in the program

While there were both achievements and limitations to STIMP's results (discussed above), Caritas Australia and its STIMP partners appear to have targeted the three elements of transformational development.

Qualitative change in people's lives: By providing STI testing, counselling and education, STIMP improved the sexual health of people in rural and remote PNG provinces.

Structural change: STIMP sought to ensure that one of the largest health care services in PNG could provide timely, high-quality sexual health services and that it had a stronger foundation overall. STIMP partners did so by: building or upgrading testing and treatment facilities linked to primary health care centres; training staff; researching factors affecting sexual health; and supporting relationships between Catholic and government health services. STIMP also sought to reduce discriminatory attitudes held by health care workers towards people with STIs, enabling them to deliver better patient care.

Transformational process: The activities and personal qualities of staff reflected a transformational process. For example, sustained mentoring by Australian professionals to PNG health care workers was seen to have made a real difference to the confidence and sense of worth of those health care workers. Humility, patience and collaboration were seen as key personal attributes that enabled the partnerships to work effectively in difficult environments.

Progress against intent and lessons learnt

Three interviewees said the concept of 'transformational development' was not one they were familiar with before the research project. They believed it would capture the idea of working over a long time period to empower individuals, families or communities to make lasting changes in their lives. Transformation was a very meaningful concept for the fourth interviewee, who, informed by liberation theology, saw it as a constructive, liberating form of change that comes from within. The interviewees believed the STIMP program was transformational because although it was introduced by outside actors, it ended by working for change from within the Catholic Church Health System. It achieved that transition by taking practical steps to improve health services and working iteratively to build relationships and connect different people and elements of the health system.

Based on interviews and documents reviewed, there were several strategies employed by Caritas Australia and partners, across at least three domains in the Rao & Kelleher model, which supported STIMP's contribution towards transformational change:

- *Extending existing service systems* - The STIMP program sought to deliver effective and sustainable services by attaching STI testing and treatment facilities to CCHS services. As noted above, CCHS delivers nearly 30% of health services in PNG. An important principle for STIMP was to extend sexual health services into remote areas. It also sought to integrate them into antenatal, out-patient and primary health care practices by working with the CCHS network and engaging its staff.

   The evaluation did note that after the program's completion there was a risk STI testing and laboratory equipment would not be available or maintained, although CCHS intentions to do so (Leach & Lalor 2013, 29). Interviewees said that CCHS has retained staff trained by STIMP, continued to provide STI testing and treatment and had begun conducting STI services in other provinces, including a men's clinic and improved laboratory services. Drawing on other funding streams, Caritas Australia has maintained its support for laboratory mentoring by ASHM. ASHM has also independently supported its clinical mentoring and training role.

- *Strengthening and working through relationships between partner organisations and their staff* - Interviewees believed a critical aspect of the program was its networked approach, which allowed both reach and qualitative impacts. The six partners that delivered STIMP worked with a large network of stakeholders to extend the program's influence. Interviewees believed that existing relationships between Caritas Australia, ASHM, CCHS and other organisations (through prior and continuing health and HIV programs) provided a baseline of trust and continuity on which STIMP activities could be built and maintained.

Interviewees said that program stakeholders knew that Caritas Australia and ASHM (individual staff and the organisations) had a long-term commitment to support health in remote areas, spanning over ten years. Stakeholders were also said to have appreciated the approachability and humility of Caritas Australia and ASHM staff. The mentoring program allowed program partners to show health care workers and patients that they were committed to them over a long period, compared to other organisations who were perceived to have 'promised but not delivered'. Client surveys carried out in 2012 showed high levels of satisfaction across the three project sites. Flexibility, commitment and patience were seen by interviewees as important personal attributes of program staff.

The central program relationship was with CCHS services in each of the provinces, established. Promoting the sustainability and capacity of CCHS as a whole was an original underlying goal of the program. This led to design choices such as engaging existing CCHS medical and administrative staff in STIMP's STI work. Interviewees believe that STIMP helped boost the service capacities of CCHS broadly, as well as in specific project sites. For example, all staff in Hela and Southern Highlands province received STI/HIV training, not just those at the specified clinic sites.

Other relationships were between STIMP partners and the PNG Government, PNG Sexual Health Society and Oil Search. STIMP invited staff from those agencies to its training, and shared information about its approach. Spin-off benefits included mentoring and training with members of the PNG Sexual Health Society, contributing to the Society's capacity to provide STI and HIV training and accreditation to a range of stakeholders across PNG, including CCHS.

While STIMP worked within government health guidelines and with an agreed mandate, government staff did not participate significantly in STIMP. The evaluation found no evidence of STIMP having affected government health policy or service capacities. This was not a focus of the program, but might be considered as an issue in future program designs. Interviewees also noted that it had been difficult to extend services and education out into communities. They said that working with community members to understand their needs better could be a future focus. This would also be important if future programs wished to have a greater impact on the complex behaviours and attitudes which affect STI and HIV prevalence, as well as stigma and discrimination towards people with infections.

- *Working adaptively to deliver health care in remote and challenging contexts.* An important feature of STIMP, for interviewees, was its commitment to strengthening health delivery in remote and rural areas. These areas generally lacked good facilities, qualified staff and adequate drug supplies (Caritas Australia design 11-12). Interviewees believe that STIMP demonstrated the feasibility of delivering comprehensive health care in challenging, resource-limited contexts. For example, STIMP demonstrated that it is possible to staff and equip remote laboratory services and provide effective diagnostic support. This support improved patient care where previously health care workers relied only on clinical assessments.

  PNG and Australian program staff and mentors adapted to challenges with communication and travel, working in areas that often had significant security risks. They sought to pace their work to match the needs and capacities of patients and health care workers. They also chose program models that could support health care workers who were fairly isolated, or who had high turn-over rates. Periodic mentoring visits over a sustained period were seen as more relevant in that context than stand-alone short training courses which would allow limited follow-up.

- *Building the confidence and competence of primary health care workers* to improve their attitudes and practices in relation to patients. Interviewees felt that this was among the most, if not the most, important element of STIMP, particularly as health care workers often have a strong desire and capacity to lead at community level but feel isolated and under-resourced. As noted earlier, STIMP helped improve the skills

and attitudes of health care workers by providing training, exchanges and mentoring as well as opportunities for CCHS health care workers to show-case their skills to PNG and Pacific visitors. One STIMP site is now being used as a best-practice integrated theory and practice training facility, with visits from medical staff from other parts of PNG and the Pacific. Interviewees said that staff and community members at the site were proud that people from other countries were visiting them.

- *Sharing a concern for human welfare and dignity that was common across faith-based and secular partners*– Interviewees believed that a shared value and respect for human life, dignity and welfare was an important ingredient in the program's approach and results. For some partners, those values derived from their shared Catholic identity. While the source of values was different for secular partners, all believed that this common concern for human welfare and dignity supported a sense of common purpose and collaboration that benefited the program. Respect for the people they were working with and recognition of their cultural and religious context supported positive working relationships with health staff and community members.

Interviewees also noted the practical benefits of working with CCHS. For example, the church has strong internal networks, leaders based in remote parishes, a long term presence and strong trust from community members. STIMP was able to draw on these resources in remote areas to deliver supplies and share information. Conversely, a challenge was sharing sensitive research findings about the drivers of sexual health issues. Developing the ability of key program partners to respond to potentially challenging information will be important for transformational programs which, by targeting underlying issues may not always sit comfortably for partners.

Case study 4 - Oxfam Australia: promoting the Free Prior and Informed Consent of communities affected by large projects

Summary of type of change targeted

"Supporting transformational change by (1) building the knowledge, capabilities and networks of civil society to support communities, including Indigenous Peoples, hold government and companies accountable to enshrined rights to free, prior and informed consent; and (2) working to increase the willingness of, and action by, governments and companies to acknowledge the rights of Indigenous Peoples and project-affected communities, and to change the way they manage large-scale projects to uphold those rights."

Background

Issue context

Natural resource development and extraction is a major issue for Indigenous Peoples around the world, many of whom live on land rich in natural resources. For example, about 50% of world-wide gold production, 70% of copper production and 70% of uranium extraction occurs on Indigenous People's lands (IWGIA 2012, 1). Natural resource development, as well as large infrastructure projects, can therefore have significant effects upon the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Enshrined in multilateral human rights treaties, including the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and International Labor Organisation Convention 169, these individual and collective rights relate to property, culture, religion, health and self-determination, including in relation to the use of lands, territories and natural resources (UNGA 2012, 13).

Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) is one of the rights in UNDRIP. It serves as a minimum standard to help protect those substantive rights, although it is not the only means by which to realise them. The FPIC principle requires that governments and companies engage in meaningful, timely consultation and negotiation with Indigenous Peoples over land and resources use and human resettlement, with Indigenous Peoples reserving the right to withhold or withdraw their consent (Greenspan 2013, 2; UNGA 2012, 13). Beyond its importance for Indigenous Peoples, FPIC is seen by some as a sustainable development principle of broader relevance for all project-affected people (Greenspan 2013, 2). FPIC is reflected in multilateral environmental agreements and rights covenants (Okara 2012, 5-12).

Globally, there have been positive shifts in relation to Indigenous rights and large projects. Indigenous People themselves are often owners of, or participants in, natural resource development. Governments and companies are increasingly recognising that large projects can have negative impacts for Indigenous Peoples and some have adopted industry standards and policies (UNGA 2012, 7). FPIC is incorporated into the International Finance Corporation's social safeguards, for example. Yet less than 25% of 200 Australian extractives companies surveyed by Oxfam Australia in 2012 had made public policies recognising Indigenous rights (Davies et al 2013, 2). World-wide, there have been many documented cases of intimidation, violence and repression against Indigenous Peoples who oppose extractive projects (UNGA 2013, 7). Left unaddressed, the imbalance of negotiating and authorising power between Indigenous Peoples and governments and firms can prevent Indigenous People's rights being upheld (UNGA 2012, 17).

Program background

Oxfam Australia has worked to promote understanding and implementation of the FPIC principle for Indigenous and other project-affected peoples for over fifteen years. In 2007 it selected gender equality and Indigenous rights as cross-cutting themes in its broader strategy to influence how human rights and environmental concerns are protected and how the benefits of development are shared (e.g. through taxation of multinational companies). The strategy focused on large-scale natural resource and development projects in Asia, the Pacific and Africa. Oxfam Australia's efforts include sustained research and advocacy work in the mining and hydropower sectors and on safeguards in international finance institutions.

Oxfam Australia's broad strategy is delivered by targeting three types of change: research, dialogue and campaigning to improve the policy and practice of industry as well as of governments and inter-governmental organisations (such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Asian Development Bank and International Finance Corporation); and supporting the capacities, advocacy and community engagement of CSOs in partner countries, including Indigenous People's organisations (IPOs). The researchers have reviewed the objectives and results of a discretely-funded civil society project that forms part of Oxfam's overall engagement on natural resource management, active citizenship and governance. The analysis below does consider the project in the context of interviewees' reflections on Oxfam's broader work.

Overview of the program
The "Building Regional Understanding of Free, Prior and Informed Consent Program" was implemented during 2011-2014 with funding of AUD212,648 from DFAT's Australian NGO Cooperation Program. The program aimed to build national and regional CSOs' understanding of Indigenous Peoples' right to FPIC and related human rights in the Asia-Pacific region. The anticipated project results were that, based on their enhanced understanding, CSOs would be able to support Indigenous Peoples and other project-affected peoples to hold their governments and private sector companies accountable for fulfilling FPIC rights. This design reflected Oxfam Australia's respect for the credibility and content of local voices in development processes.

As shown in an independent project evaluation conducted in July 2014, the project delivered numerous activities with a limited budget and part-time staffing. It developed and disseminated resources about FPIC to CSOs in the Asia-Pacific, including a "Community Guide to FPIC", FPIC Flashcards, and the "FPIC Trainer's Manual". These have since been translated into more than 20 languages. The project was supported with ANCP funding and delivered in partnership with the University of New South Wales' Diplomacy Training Program, the EarthRights International EarthRights Mekong School, the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, the Turubu Eco Forest Development Program and the Central Sepik Rural Development Foundation in PNG and Oxfam country offices.

By July 2014 the project had delivered short training workshops to 307 participants from 77 CSOs in 19 countries in Asia, including in Indonesia and Mekong countries, as well as in PNG. Since then, Oxfam Australia has also delivered three trainings in Mozambique in support of the extractives, livelihoods and governance programs. The program also supported training and workshops in India. The work was implemented jointly by two teams in Oxfam Australia's Melbourne office. They cooperated with country offices in the Mekong, PNG and Mozambique whose country strategies included advocacy on extractive and national resource industries. With a smaller budget available in 2015, the main activities continuing are the translation of program materials and technical support to country offices who work with local partners and advocates on land, livelihoods, governance and natural resource management issues in which FPIC is relevant.

The CSO training project has been implemented as part of, but funded separately from, the broader policy and advocacy work by Oxfam Australia and Oxfam America (which also has a program that addresses the policies and practices of mining companies). That advocacy and coalition-building work helps create and support a broader enabling environment for CSOs and Indigenous Peoples who work to be heard at a local level and to influence regional and global forums. The broader work has included: research on companies' policies and practices affecting Indigenous People's rights; direct engagement on policy issues; multi-stakeholder workshops convened under Chatham House rules; engagement with the OECD Investment Committee to develop guidance for industry; policy advice; influencing industry peak bodies and IGOs; and participation in multi-stakeholder standard-setting processes such as the Hydro Sustainability Assessment Protocol negotiation.

Analysis

Transformational intent in the program
The intent of the Building Regional Understanding of FPIC project, along with Oxfam Australia's broader policy work on the rights of project-affected people in large-scale development projects, encompasses the three elements of the working definition for transformational development.

- *Qualitative change in people's lives*: through training, the program seeks to build the capacities of Indigenous Peoples, project affected communities and the organisations that work with them to exercise their rights.

- *Structural change*: through direct policy engagement and campaigning, as well as by supporting the capacities of Indigenous Peoples and other project-affected communities, Oxfam Australia seeks to build government, IGO and private sector awareness of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and project-affected communities in natural resource and large-scale development projects, including FPIC. Oxfam Australia also seeks to change policy and practice so that all project-affected communities, including Indigenous Peoples and women, experience better outcomes from development.

- *Transformational process*: Oxfam Australia does not claim to represent Indigenous Peoples, communities or partners. Instead, the program has sought to promote the voices of Indigenous Peoples, project-affected people and the CSOs that work with them by strengthening their capacities and brokering opportunities for them to influence government, IGOs and private sector stakeholders. The extent to which Oxfam has developed and is adapting its approach based on demand, input and feedback from Indigenous Peoples and local CSOs is not clearly stated in project documents. The Trainers Manual was developed in direct response to demand from local CSOs for additional resources. Training programs are developed with input from local partners to ensure they are context-specific, including the use of theatre and storytelling as an effective and cultural relevant way to share information and help people learn.

Progress against intent and lessons learnt

Understanding of transformation
The FPIC program and Oxfam Australia's related policy engagement work incorporates an understanding of transformation that is similar to the insights of critical theory. Interviewees stated that, in keeping with their organisational mission and their own experience, they understood transformational development to involve changes to the "rules of the game" and the power of those who make and enforce the rules so that marginalised people can define and drive change themselves, to benefit their lives.

Oxfam Australia has used a number of strategies in its work which are consistent with that understanding.

Relationship-building
Oxfam Australia has sought to work with Indigenous People, project-affected people and the organisations that work with them while not seeking to represent them or to be seen to represent them to industry stakeholders. This reflects Oxfam's program-wide approach to working in partnerships. Oxfam Australia has sought to be a broker between CSOs/communities and industry, IGOs and governments where its technical expertise and sustained engagement have been seen to give it the credibility to do so. It has sought to work with CSOs who are already active in particular places, helping strengthen their knowledge while seeking to support relationships between local, regional and peak CSOs.

For example, participants in the Mekong regional training workshops included local CSOs already undertaking advocacy work on dams planned for the Mekong and Salaween rivers and mining and gas projects in Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar. These include 3SPN, NGO Forum, Development Partnership in Action, Highlanders Association, Mother Nature, Equitable Cambodia, and the Indigenous Community Support Organisation

(ICSO). By supporting CSOs, including peak bodies, which are already active and have the reach to disseminate information and leverage relationships, Oxfam Australia's training support enables CSOs to share relevant expertise and try to strengthen their negotiating positions as coalitions vis-a-vis powerful stakeholders.

Working sensitively to context
Indigenous Peoples and other project-affected communities advocating for their rights regarding the use of their lands, resources and territories may face violent recrimination for doing so. Furthermore, local community organisations and human rights defenders can also face significant risks. To minimise the threat to community and CSO members, Oxfam Australia has employed experienced staff, worked on FPIC and Indigenous Rights in the context of sustained country programs that have a strong knowledge of context, and aimed to adapt its training and campaigning approach to take account of particular sensitivities and local laws. For example, in Cambodia, an NGO was able to bring a case against ANZ Bank in relation to land-use, in part because of support from the FPIC program. Shrinking space for civil society to work safely in the Mekong region has meant, however, that in other cases Oxfam Australia's support and local CSOs' activities had to be delivered with less visibility.

Working at multiple levels
Oxfam Australia has aimed to maximise its influence by using multiple entry points, linking local and global issues and attempting change through both bottom-up empowerment and top-down accountability. It has supported CSOs/communities through training, resources and alliance-building while also engaging with and campaigning to industry and government to change their understanding and respect for Indigenous Peoples as rights-holders. This also aims to support shorter-term effect (e.g. through a specific campaign) as well as longer-term influence (e.g. through sustained policy engagement). The interests and power of governments, companies and international organisations which own and manage large-scale development projects are strong, however. Even with a multi-level approach to influencing policy and practice, it is likely to take a long time to see the implementation of FPIC across all large development projects.

Taking the long-view
The FPIC project has grown from Oxfam's wider work over fifteen years on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and other project-affected people, for example on the World Commission on Dams and IFI safeguards. It also took advantage of awareness of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and ILO Declaration 169 to support momentum around that Declaration's objectives. Progress against the program's aims can be said to be incremental, partly because of the context: FPIC flies in the face of vested interests slow to release power and in some cases, advocates face danger. Examples of influence, such as on the policies of the International Council on Mining and Metals, are seen by Oxfam Australia to show the ability to transform the balance of power.

Such gains are difficult and take time. Oxfam Australia sees incremental influence as positive and realistic. For example, in Cambodia local CSOs ran a nuanced campaign on FPIC to support communities affected by a dam. The dam-building went ahead but the CSOs were able to influence associated issues, such as compensation for displaced people. Oxfam Australia also uses different advocacy strategies, from "name and shame" to policy engagement, depending on how influence can best be realised in particular circumstances. Similarly, in its role on the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Forum, Oxfam persuaded most, but not all, parties to support Indigenous rights; this proved enough support to have the Protocol passed with recognition of Free, Prior and Informed Consent included for Indigenous Peoples and in the case of involuntary resettlement. More work is needed, however, to build all stakeholders' support.

Managing expectations of programs
Given the reality that change is slow, sensitive and difficult, program design for this kind of work needs to consider carefully what can be achieved within the time frames and limited resources of particular projects.

The three-year, $200,000 Building Regional Understanding of FPIC project was designed within a context of long-term broader policy work by Oxfam Australia, giving it a specific mandate to support training and development of materials. All of the training participants surveyed for the Independent Evaluation reported having a better understanding of FPIC and its legal bases. They felt more confident in their ability to advocate for community rights, while two-thirds said they used the FPIC tools in their work, for example in leaflets, radio programs and social media postings (Kelly 2014, 20).

At the same time, the evaluation found that the program's theory of change lacked a robust articulation of how capacity change was expected to occur, how it would be supported by Oxfam Australia beyond short training inputs (Kelly 2014, 10) and the conditions under which improved civil society capacity might be expected to have substantial impacts on the decision-making and negotiating environment around large development projects. While CSO participants reported they appreciated the opportunity to form new networks, there was no evidence at the time of the evaluation that new partnerships had been formed and sustained (Kelly 2014, 28).

These challenges demonstrate the need to consider, as with all development programming, how particular parameters of funding, timing and approach can support progress towards transformational intentions and what their limitations might be. They also suggest that an important task for agencies is maintaining appropriate budgeting, design quality and organisational support for activities that may take a long time to reveal their impacts.

Case study 5 - Oxfam Australia: supporting coalitions to improve climate change adaptation in Vanuatu

Summary of type of change targeted
"Supporting transformational change by: (1) supporting community-based disaster preparedness and adaptation to climate change; (2) facilitating collaboration among civil society actors to share their knowledge and build their advocacy skills on climate change and disaster resilience issues; and (3) brokering collaboration between civil society and government actors to ensure climate change policy-making is informed by community experience and to strengthen representation internationally."

Background
Program overview
Vanuatu is generally vulnerable to a range of natural hazards and is already experiencing changes in climate which are expected to worsen. These include rising temperatures, higher than average sea level rises and intensifying cyclones and storms, all of which affect food security and livelihoods. In March 2015, Cyclone Pam devastated the country, severely damaging infrastructure and agriculture, although casualties were low (Maclellan 2015, 10-11, 42).

The 2012-2014 DFAT-funded Vanuatu NGO Climate Change Adaptation Program "*Yumi stap redi long klaemet jenis*" aimed to increase the resilience and improve the capacities of women, men and young people in Vanuatu to respond to natural disasters and the unavoidable impacts of climate change. With a budget of A$2,027,519, the program was coordinated by Oxfam Australia and implemented by Oxfam and four consortium partners - CARE International, Save the Children, Vanuatu Red Cross and Vanuatu Rural Development Training Centres Association. A sixth partner, the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), provided technical assistance.

Consortium partners worked with 5,064 women, men and young people in 39 communities across 12 islands in the provinces of Torba, Tarea, Shefa and Penama. In line with national adaptation priorities, they supported practical community-based adaptation measures in health, water and hygiene, agriculture and disaster risk reduction. An independent end-of-program evaluation in March 2015 found that as a result of the program's awareness raising and training activities, community members had increased knowledge of weather, climate variability, climate change and adaptation options. They shared information through community noticeboards, written resources produced by the consortium partners and through community disaster and climate change committees. Both men and women felt more informed as a result of the program's efforts, although men tended to have more information (Sterrett 2015, 22-23).

Additionally, the evaluation found that many community members had taken actions to adapt to climate change. For example, community members in Motalava protected coastline by establishing a nursery to grow seedlings to plant in saline and exposed areas, and set up rainwater harvesting systems at schools. In Tanna, community members revived traditional practices of food preservation and revised cropping calendars to take climate science into account. The benefits of such activities not only included practical outcomes, but stronger community capacities to work together and greater opportunities for women and young people to participate in decision-making (Sterrett 2015, 24-26).

In addition to building adaptive capacities at the local level, the program aimed to enhance collaboration among civil society and government stakeholders. Oxfam Australia supported the formation of the Vanuatu Climate Action Network (VCAN) with the intention to generate local and national data and facilitate information sharing, program coordination, input into adaptation planning and collective action. This was a

deliberate, strategic effort to support local capacities and coalitions, complementing community-based adaptation activities (Maclellan 2015, 5, 35).

VCAN brings together at least twenty ni-Vanuatu CSOs. The independent evaluation found results including: the network had strengthened inter-organisational partnerships and mutual understanding of other members' capabilities; agencies wishing to implement climate change adaptation (CCA) activities consulted with VCAN to ensure they would complement existing efforts; VCAN members were included in climate change research by UN agencies and NGOs; the national government engaged with VCAN on CCA planning; and collaborative efforts in Vanuatu had been extended regionally through the establishment of the Pacific Islands Climate Action Network (PICAN) (Sterrett 2015, 28).

Analysis

Transformational intent in the program
The work by consortium partners appears to have targeted all three levels in the working definition of transformational development. Although the initial design envisaged supporting some coalition-building and policy work, the scope and innovation of these efforts emerged during the program.

Qualitative change in people's lives: The program sought to extend development benefits in ways that improved community members' resilience to climate change and disasters. This included enhanced water security, diversifying crop production, training in cyclone-resistant building construction and coastal protection. Through community-based CCA, the program aimed to enhance the knowledge and capabilities of women, men and young people to shape decision-making and take adaptation action.

Structural change: Through alliance-building among CSOs and between government and civil society, the program sought to enhance collaboration across sector and technical specialities, diversify and strengthen the voices contributing to national planning and Vanuatu's representation at international negotiations, and ensure national policy was informed by community-level knowledge and experience.

Transformational process: Oxfam Australia worked behind-the-scenes to support opportunities and build capabilities for trust-building and collaboration among and between civil society and government. It sought to position itself as a partner rather than as a leader, promoting the visibility and voices of ni-Vanuatu actors to build a network that was likely to have stronger support by ni-Vanuatu stakeholders.

The community-based CCA activities supported by the consortium's six partners were essential in supporting the first and second elements of transformational development. While acknowledging those contributions, the analysis below focuses on the coalition-forming work and the way it was supported by Oxfam Australia.

Understanding of transformation
Interviewees said their understanding of transformation reflected their organisation's analysis of how positive change occurs. They said that Oxfam Australia's work was underpinned by a view that while individuals and communities could make positive changes in their own lives, systemic change was needed to overcome the broader constraints and inequalities that have an impact on people's human rights and opportunities. Interviewees felt it was important to understand how decisions are made, by whom and in whose interests – in other words, how power is arranged – and to support change at multiple levels. These views reflect the insights of critical theory and feminist theories discussed earlier.

Progress against intent and lessons learnt
Key strategies employed by Oxfam Australia to support coalition-building and policy influence were:

Creating mechanisms for collaboration within civil society and between government and civil society

Oxfam Australia's decision to broker the establishment of the Vanuatu Climate Change Action network drew on its proposition that information sharing and collaboration between stakeholders could make a real difference to climate change adaptation policy and action in Vanuatu. Oxfam Australia observed that development collaboration was generally weaker than it could have been in a small country, and that collective learning and action might maximise limited resources, improve the consistency of CCA efforts and strengthen the skills of national stakeholders. Furthermore, an innovative collaboration that Oxfam Australia coordinated between national and international NGOs, UN agencies and the Red Cross movement, the Vanuatu Humanitarian Team, had started to show positive results and generated learning about how a climate change network might operate.[15]

VCAN draws together over 20 CSOs working in Vanuatu. While this includes INGOs, and UN and donor agencies also attend meetings, most members are ni-Vanuatu CSOs. The network is lead by Oxfam Australia's national staff and staff from local CSOs, with meetings held in Bislama. Through meetings and online information sharing, VCAN has become a mechanism by which CSOs have come to know each other, learnt about each other's work and generated new knowledge (Sterrett 2015, 28). In order to build and maintain interest in VCAN, Oxfam Australia sought to demonstrate its potential benefits to local CSOs. These included opportunities for individuals and organisations to enhance their knowledge and skills, share ideas to tackle the problems organisations were working on, and create the sense of being part of a larger movement of change.

VCAN also connects civil society to government. Interviewees believed VCAN is seen by government as the coordinating mechanism to consult on the government's priority issues of climate change and disaster preparedness, even after some tightening of NGO activities in response to the massive influx of agencies following Cyclone Pam. The Government and VCAN have worked together to expand opportunities for communities and civil society to influence national policy and planning, as well as to expand civil society understanding and influencing of government processes.

For example, VCAN, sitting on the policy steering committee for the National Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Action Plan, facilitated civil society input into consultations on the policy. It shaped the adaptation and monitoring and evaluation sections (Sterrett 2015, 31) to ensure that communities were positioned as key stakeholders. The Government invited VCAN, along with the VHT, to take a permanent seat on the National Advisory Board on climate change and disaster management. It also now refers proposed NGO and international agency climate change activities to VCAN to ensure they complement existing initiatives.

Interviewees said that the government's inclusion of VCAN in key policy steps reflected its interest in the knowledge and experience that CSOs could contribute from their community-based adaptation programming. Some of the benefits of the collaboration appear to have been realised during the response to Cyclone Pam. Early assessments suggest that the work of the adaptation program and the partners in VCAN and VHT were important in helping save lives. Improvements in education, coordination and early warning appear to have made a significant difference to how communities prepared for and dealt with the effects of the cyclone (Maclellan 2015, 3).[16]

As a broader reflection, it's worth noting that VCAN was a new network, initiated by an INGO. While Oxfam Australia's original intention had been to work with existing civil society coordination mechanisms and introduce CCA collaboration through them, its analysis suggested that existing mechanisms did not have the organisational strength or perceived legitimacy to pursue climate change work effectively. Interviewees

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[15] Established in 2011, the VHT aimed to support humanitarian coordination and disaster preparedness among non-government agencies and improve engagement with the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO). Over a number of years, Oxfam observed significant improvements in relationships that assisted how government and non-government agencies responded to disasters, with early indications that these mechanisms played a role in responses to Cyclone Pam in 2015 (Maclellan 2015).

[16] Oxfam has commissioned research into the national and local responses to Cyclone Pam; it will be undertaken in late 2015 and early 2016.

believed that VCAN was unlikely to be fully self-sustaining after the first three years operation and would need Oxfam Australia's ongoing support. Such sustainability challenges are common in civil society collaborations, including in settings where international agencies support domestic civil society networks. This suggests that potential partners must consider issues of long-term viability and legitimacy, even as they seek to be responsive to opportunities to support emerging coalitions.

Building trust and perceived legitimacy between government and civil society

Trust among members and with other stakeholders is essential for a network like VCAN to gain and maintain permission to operate. Oxfam Australia believes that the work to set up and support VCAN has had a transformative effect on how government and civil society interact in Vanuatu, with more areas of government seeking to engage with CSOs. For example, the Department of Women's Affairs in the Ministry of Justice worked with civil society in the National Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy Working Committee (Oxfam Australia 2015, 15).

Interviewees said that Oxfam Australia worked with VCAN members to build constructive relationships with government officials. These relationships formed a basis for the interactions described in the previous point. Key steps for building trust between VCAN and government were seen by interviewees to have been: demonstrating shared strategic objectives (community-based adaptation and emissions reductions by high-polluting countries); building close working relationships through an open attitude, two-way visits and joint participation in learning events and planning; providing constructive feedback on policy issues (e.g. draft legislation); and showing that strengthening civil society capacities on climate change provided a source of expertise that government and communities could access on an ongoing basis (rather than relying on internationals).

Additionally, interviewees believed that VCAN showed the government how civil society could help achieve its objectives. For example, CSOs demonstrated their ability to implement the government's adaptation priorities at community level while also helping government reach a wide range of stakeholders for policy consultation. Additionally, VCAN benefited from the relationships and access established by the VHT, which had two staff members placed in NDMO, and could facilitate close working interaction. Interviewees believe the Vanuatu government recognises its long-term relationship with VCAN and VHT as important: the role of the two networks in representing civil society, advocating and influencing decision-making is noted in the Government of Vanuatu's 2016-2030 Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy, released in late 2015.[17]

Supporting policy links

A key strategy pursued by Oxfam Australia and VCAN partners to strengthen the program's policy influence was to create opportunities to share information and experience across different levels of practice. For example, VCAN was able to feed evidence from community-level adaptation into national policy discussions. Vanuatu's experiences with VCAN generated interest across the Pacific region. Oxfam Australia was asked by the members of the Pacific Island Climate Action Network (PICAN) to support a similar model of coordination at a regional level. That network subsequently contributed to the development of Pacific Island statements and collective positions at international climate change meetings (Oxfam Australia 2015, 16). Oxfam Australia continues to support PICAN in its regional programming.

Oxfam Australia and VCAN also took advantage of the trust and collaboration built between government and civil society to support Vanuatu's international climate change policy and representation at negotiations. With DFAT's permission to reallocate some funds from under-spent areas of the program budget, Oxfam Australia,

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[17] The role of VCAN and VHT in representing civil society, advocating and influencing decision-making is noted in the Government of Vanuatu's 2016-2013 Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy, released in late 2015. http://www.nab.vu/sites/all/files/vanuatu_cc_drr_policy_minus_att4v4.pdf

VCAN, GIZ and the National Advisory Board worked together to strengthen Vanuatu's international negotiating strategy. This included VCAN facilitating input from communities into national negotiation positions, through workshops, youth symposia and talk back radio shows. As a result of the collaboration, Vanuatu made its first ever submissions to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and sent a more representative, better prepared delegation to negotiations. The 2013 delegation included women for the first time (seven of 15 delegates), as well as youth, civil society and private sector representatives working together with government representatives (Sterrett 2015, 29).

These efforts to support collaboration across levels, countries and sectors were seen by interviewees as key strategies to build long-lasting, accessible capabilities for preparing and responding to climate change and disasters. These efforts also responded to the international nature of the policy issues – domestic action in Vanuatu alone will not be enough to prevent it experiencing the unavoidable effects of climate change.

As INGO partner, taking a low profile and resourcing collaboration and networking over a medium time frame

As noted above, a key driver for Oxfam Australia initiating VCAN was its observation that stronger civil society collaboration in Vanuatu might enable CSOs to have greater program and policy impact. An additional driver was Oxfam Australia's assessment of its own role as an INGO in Vanuatu. Oxfam Australia has a long-term commitment to its operations in Vanuatu, which has traditionally included service delivery through partner organisations. Oxfam Australia felt it could play a unique role, drawing on its strengths to contribute strategically to national priorities by brokering dialogue among CSOs and with government on climate change.

Interviewees said that playing a facilitative, rather than a delivery role, through the VHT and VCAN, required Oxfam Australia to be deliberate about how individual staff members and the organisation operated. Initially Oxfam Australia drove the establishment of VCAN and its staff engaged actively with CSOs and government to encourage their participation. Oxfam Australia funded and set up opportunities for collaboration. However, Oxfam Australia did not brand the network and activities as its own and it sought to maintain a low profile, particularly in terms of international staff. Meetings were held in Bislama and Oxfam Australia encouraged national staff from other INGOs to participate. Interviewees felt it was important that VCAN be understood as a nationally-owned and driven network. Leadership by strong national staff of Oxfam Australia and ni-Vanuatu CSOs enabled network members to engage more closely with government officials and gave the network greater legitimacy.

At the same time, Oxfam Australia did engage actively with its consortium partners and its donor, DFAT, to maintain their support. Interviewees said that it takes dedicated staffing and funding to support an effective network. While establishing a civil society network had been part of the original design, interviewees credited DFAT staff with giving the consortium the flexibility to support the full scope of VCAN's work as opportunities emerged. Interviewees noted that it can be difficult to maintain internal organisational and donor support for work which is seen to have intangible benefits. They noted that the social capital and outcomes of a network like VCAN take time to emerge and consolidate; it is important that all parties have realistic expectations of the timeframe in which change can be realised. As noted earlier, a key issue for Oxfam Australia to consider is what kind of involvement it will maintain in future, how long it will maintain funding to VCAN and what the indications will be that the network is strong enough to flourish on its own.

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