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**Cross cutting evaluation
of Norwegian People's Aid's
work within the area of
«Organizing for the defence
and control of natural
resources»**

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This evaluation has been carried out for the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) by the Fafo Research Foundation, Oslo. The evaluation is primarily based on a document desk review complemented by Skype interviews with representatives from NPA local offices and selected partner organizations in five case countries (Colombia, Myanmar; Palestine, South Sudan and Zimbabwe). Interviews were also conducted with representatives from NPA's headquarter in Oslo.

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1. Introduction

This report summarizes the main findings from an evaluation of how Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) works towards reaching its visions and objectives with respect to ensuring people's rights, access to, and control over land and natural resources. The main purpose of the evaluation is to provide insight into what works well and what does not work so well with respect to NPA's strategic and practical approaches to reach its visions and objectives within the field of "organizing for the defence and control of natural resources".

The evaluation is primarily based on Skype interviews with representatives from NPA local offices and partner organizations in five country case studies. Information from these interviews has been complemented with information from country programme documents and evaluations. In addition, the evaluation is based on interviews with staff responsible for the respective case countries at NPA's head office in Oslo, and on reviews of policy documents and overall programme reports and evaluations.

1.1. Objectives and evaluation questions

The general objective of the cross cutting evaluation of Norwegian People's Aid's work within the area of "organizing for the defence and control of natural resources" is to assess how NPA's partnerships with local organizations work towards achieving common visions and goals related to a just distribution of access and control over land and natural resources, and how NPA's and the partners' visions and objectives are strategically and practically aligned.

More specifically, the scope of the evaluation is to¹: 1) map the types and characteristics of NPA's support to partners who organize to gain access and control over natural resources; and 2) to assess the quality of the support and the approaches towards achieving strategic and programmatic goals. The specific objectives of the evaluation include: a) to assess the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the different ways partners organize and perform their work; b) to learn and share experiences of good practices; c) Identify and assess any inconsistencies between NPA's and its partners' priorities, approaches and work; d) assess likely impact and attribution of NPA's activity; and e) assess the quality and added value of NPA's support to its partners.

The evaluation will address the following topics:

- The partners' main approaches in the field
- The way the partners organize their work
- The partners' approaches to mobilize people and supportive forces
- The partners' capacities in the field
- The alignment and contradictions between NPA's and the partners' priorities and work
- The match – and mismatches - between the NPA's support and the partners' priorities and needs
- NPA's added value to its partners
- The effectiveness, relevance and contextual adaptability of NPA's and partners' programme management systems
- The contextual relevance of NPA's support to the partners' efforts in organizing people for control over natural resources

¹ From the evaluation's Terms of Reference (ToR)

1.2. Methodology and data sources

The evaluation is based on a case study approach to be able to follow the practical outcomes of the organization's strategic visions and approaches at partner level in different contexts. A case study approach allows in-depth, multi-faceted explorations of complex issues in their real-life settings (Yin 2014). The particular strength of a case study approach is that it focuses on understanding complex interrelationships within their own contexts, rather on revealing universal phenomena across contexts and based on statistical samples. Hence, due to NPAs contextual approach to development, a case study approach was considered to be the most suitable methodology to explore the topics of the evaluation (see section 1.1), with special reference to assessing the contextual adaptability of NPA's approaches to development

A variety in contexts, type of partners and cultures of peoples' mobilization, has been key criteria for the selection of countries for the case studies (case countries). The selected case countries are:

- *Colombia* (representing a strong tradition for people's mobilization in a transition from civil war context)
- *Palestine* (representing a steadfast culture for people's mobilization in a context of strong limitations to movement and access)
- *Zimbabwe* (representing a relatively strong culture for people's mobilization in a context of transition from authoritarian regime)
- *Myanmar* (representing a less developed culture for people's mobilization and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in a context of strong economic and political transition)
- *South Sudan* (representing a weak culture for people's mobilization in a context of state-building)

The primary sources of data with respect to these case countries have been interviews with: a) representatives responsible for the selected case countries at NPA's head office in Oslo; b) representatives at NPA's local offices in the case countries; and 3) representatives from selected number of partner organization in the case countries. All together 23 group or individual interviews have been conducted (5 at NPA's head office, 6 with NPA's local offices, and 12 interviews with partner organizations). With exception of the interviews with NPA's local office and partners in Myanmar, which were carried out during a visit to the country, all interviews with local offices and partners have been carried out via Skype. The interviews have been conducted on basis of semi-structured interview guides, adapted to the three different groups of respondents respectively.

The interviews with partner organizations have been structured around the following topics:

1. Information on the partner organization
 - a. Brief history of the organization
 - b. Areas of work
 - c. Vision and main objectives
 - d. Organizational structure and organization of work
 - e. Sources of funding beyond NPA
2. Strategies, approaches and activities
 - a. Context
 - b. Main challenges (contextual or other)
 - c. Strategy

- d. Prioritized activities in relation to context and challenges
 - e. Collaboration with other actors
 - f. Relationship with authorities
 - g. Main achievements
3. Interaction with NPA
 - a. Background and initiation of partnership (on which basis were you selected?)
 - b. NPA as a strategic partner (type of support and benefits)
 - c. Type and organization of support
 - d. NPA's added value - and compared to other partners/donors
 4. General reflections (Approaches and activities that work well according to overall objectives/visions; Possible improvements)

The interviews with NPA offices have basically covered the same topics, but from the perspective of NPA. Most of the questions have been designed to compare the perspectives and perceptions of partners and NPA representatives, e.g. on visions, challenges, criteria for selecting partners, need of support, added value, etc.

In addition to the interviews carried out, the following main sources of data have been used for the evaluation:

- NPA policy documents and guidelines for work
- Program and organizational evaluation reports
- Program proposals and reports, with main attention to the case countries
- Literature on country contexts
- NPA's partner database (PartnerForm 2016)

Policy documents and guidelines have primarily been used to define the criteria for the evaluation, i.e. to identify the benchmarks of which the different evaluation topics could be evaluated ("measured") against. This includes criteria for; how partners should be selected; how NPA should support partners; how the interaction between NPA and partners should be played out; etc. , as well as NPA's expectations towards their partners on how they should be organized, how they should mobilize people, etc. (see section 2.1).

Evaluation reports and reviews have been used to provide background for the interviews and to verify findings from the case studies against findings from other case studies and more general evaluations of NPA and partner organizations. Programme proposals and reports have mainly been used to identify objectives and type of activities, as well as providing contextual information. This has been complemented by a review of general literature on country contexts.

Lastly, NPA's database on partner organizations (PartnerForm) have been used to map partners according to some key characteristics defined from NPA's policy documents. PartnerForm has also been an evaluation object itself, as the database is considered as an important management tool for NPA if it contains valid, reliable and updated information that can be used for monitoring status and progress towards strategic visions and objectives.

1.3. Limitations of the evaluation

Due to the contextual nature of NPA's approach and a very high number of partners with different characteristics and member networks, an evaluation based on only five country cases and a small number of partner interviews compared to the large number and the diversity of partners and partner networks has clear limitations. Furthermore, some of the key topics of the evaluation, including: the partner's visions, agendas and approaches and their alignment to NPA's visions and strategy; the partners' capacities; and their benefits from the partnership with and support from NPA, is difficult to reveal via project documents and Skype interviews alone. A problem in this respect is that strategies and activities tend to be very clear on paper and partners tend to give answers partly based on strategic considerations and according to what they think the interviewer should hear. More reliable assessments of the topics of this evaluation would require field visits to case countries and interaction with partners. Hence, the ambition for this evaluation should primarily be to reveal possible aspects and topics for more in-depth assessments based on field visits, and to trigger further discussion around findings and recommendations.

2. NPA's strategy towards «Organizing for the defense and control of natural resources»

“What we call Man's power over Nature turns out to be a power exercised by some men over other men with Nature as its instrument” (C. S. Lewis: The Abolition of Man, 1943)

2.1. NPA's strategic goals and approaches

NPA's work towards “organizing for the defence and control of natural resources” is defined as one out of five main challenges prioritized in the organization's international strategy (2016-2019) “Partnership for Democratization”. However, although the activities of NPA's partners' related to the defence and control of natural resources can be seen as a separate thematic area of work, the underlying rationale behind the activities is fully rooted in the organization's general strategic visions and approaches underlying all its work.

2.1.1. NPA's vision and goals

In NPA's international strategy, the organization's vision is stated as showing “*solidarity in practice*”, through partnering with organizations dedicated to defend the rights and interests of marginalized groups. NPA believes that broad popular mobilization and collective organising is essential to ensure lasting change. Furthermore, the organization works with partner organizations rooted in their social, cultural and political contexts - as such organizations are seen as best placed to mobilize people for a just distribution and claim rights vis-à-vis political and business elites and the state.

NPA strives to strengthen the power of people's organizations and movements in contexts where weak democratic structures enable powerful actors and elites to put their own interests over general public concerns. The two overarching goals for the organization's development work are *democratization* and a *just distribution of resources*.

NPA works towards a set of outcomes which supports the partner's abilities to reach the overarching goals. These include: 1) partners are able to mobilize and organize people; 2) Internal democratic structures and practices are enhanced in partner organizations; 3) Partner organizations develop increased influence on policy- and decision-making at local and national level; and 4) NPA and its partners develop increased influence on Norwegian and international policy- and decision-making.

With respect to NPA's work related to land and natural resources, the organizations' strategy states that: “Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) works for a more just distribution of power and resources. We believe that this is a condition for a development that benefits oppressed and/or marginalized people in a society, women as well as men. NPA maintains that natural resources belong to the people and should therefore benefit the common good. An adequate policy framework and mechanisms for participation must be in place to achieve this. A fair distribution of ownership and access to land favours a more just development for those who depend on land as a resource for production (e.g. agriculture, pastoralism, and small businesses). This is crucial for marginalised

groups' access to housing. This is also crucial for food security and economic development. In addition, access to land is fundamental for the identity of social groups and people."²

2.1.2. NPA's approach

The core of NPA's approach towards achieving its visions and overarching goals with respect to international development is to partner with like-minded local organizations and movements, i.e. organizations sharing NPA's overarching vision and objectives, and to assist them in their work towards reaching these common objectives within their own contexts. In doing so, NPA is said to work *with* partners and not *through* partners, and the support and assistance from NPA provided according to the needs and priorities defined by the partner organizations and the political contexts within which they work. As local ownership is seen as the key to sustainable change processes, partners should be fully in the lead of designing and implementing organizational development programs supported by NPA.

In order to empower people to ensure their own rights and to create movements for lasting change, NPA prioritizes to partner with organizations initiated by and representing, marginalized groups and which are able to mobilize people and create collective organizing and people's movements for the common causes. This means that NPA prefer to support and work with so-called grassroots organizations rather than professional NGOs and other development organizations.

NPA also has a political approach to its international development work, meaning that political contexts and realities are taken into account in the support to partners, as well as in programme design and activities. The political context is mapped out by a "context analysis" at the outset of any new engagement in a country by the organizations. This analysis describe actors, power relations, gender structures, distribution of resources and humanitarian vulnerability, and it provides a basis and a rationale for the selection of partners in any given context.

NPA provides support to its partner organizations to mobilize for social and political change according to their needs and contextual priorities. This includes support to: broaden their grassroots'/membership base; enhancing their internal democratic structures and mechanisms; creating political platforms and linking up with networks; develop their technical systems and capabilities; and to develop their strategic capacities to rise, communicate, and advocate issues to wider audiences and decision-makers.

Lastly, it should be mentioned that NPA's contextual approach and the principle of assisting partners according to their own agendas requires a highly flexible and adaptable approach of assistance to partners, as well as to the organization's own strategic work in the different contexts, including the selection and collaboration with partners.

2.1.3. Principles and criteria for partnerships

The selection of partners is crucial to NPA's approach, which is based on establishing "true partnerships" where NPA and the partner organizations share common overarching visions and goals, and where NPA assists the partners' priorities and activities for reaching these goals based on contextual knowledge and realities. In this framework, it can be said that identifying the "right" partners is primary to pre-defining which thematic areas the partners should engage in.

² Source: NPA Strategy on Land and Natural Resources

In addition to the fundamental partner selection criteria of sharing overarching visions and objectives, the other main criteria is that the partner has capacity for mobilizing people and that it has real representation of members or external actors. The organization also needs to have structures and mechanism for internal democracy in place. Other criterions that are assessed prior to a partnership, but which can be developed through the partnership, are: the organizations ability to influence, have impact, and make changes; its capacity to relate to, and make alliances with, other actors; and the technical and administrative competence of the organization.

According to NPA's partnership policy (2009), the organization's partnerships should be based on the following principles:

1. NPA practises partnership with organisations that have compatible visions and values.
2. NPA promotes partnerships based on an active dialogue, mutual trust and accountability, openness, commitment, and respect for each other's autonomy, integrity and identity.
3. NPA recognizes that partnerships are context-specific and must adapt to local conditions with respect to values, economic, social, cultural and political conditions and the strength of civil society.
4. NPAs focus in the partnership process is on the type of partner organization and the role it plays in social and political processes. Projects are tools for agreed action within the partnership.
5. The partnership is subject to dynamic interactions, changes, and external factors, calling for continuous analysis of the context and the relationship.
6. NPA will respect the partner organisations agendas and their varying contexts, avoiding standardised approaches.
7. NPA aspires to have a supportive attitude and approach towards its partners, and aims at strengthening their leading role.
8. NPA acknowledges that varying access to resources and authority may create relationships of inequality between parties, and thereby a traditional donor-recipient relationship. NPA's cooperation with partners aims at reducing such imbalances.

2.2. Partners

2.2.1. Partners profile in brief

Table 2.1 gives an overview of the total number of NPA's partners by the end of 2016. The data are extracted from the organization's own database, "PartnerForm", which contains more than one hundred parameters describing each individual partner, and their activities, of NPA globally. However, when comparing information on the case countries in the database with information from other sources, including the interviews with NPA staff in the respective countries, there is reason to question the accuracy of the information contained in the database.

Furthermore, the definitions of the parameters in the database are not optimal in order to use the information to compare and analyse against the key criteria for partnerships set by NPA (see above). For instance, it is reason to believe that some of the organizations officially classified as NGO's in the database are better classified as People's Organizations due to their real characteristics and compliance with NPA's criteria for such organizations. The simple answer for such mismatches could just be that PO's are not allowed in some countries and that they are forced to register as NGO's to be active and to receive funding and support. Classification of activities, support received, and thematic areas of work, are other examples of challenging parameters in the database. For such

information to be as useful as possible it is important that both the data (input) and the parameters themselves (definitions) are up to date with the newest strategic objectives of the organization. To ensure this, it could be considered to reduce the number of parameters in the database, and focus on core information that is being used and which can be useful, e.g. as global indicators of progress (see recommendation 2 in part 4).

According to the information contained in PartnerForm 2016, NPA had a total of 148 partner organizations by the end of 2017. 115 of these organizations were active in issues related to land and natural resources (registered as “land rights” or “just distribution” in the database). However, only four of these organizations worked exclusively on these issues.

Out of the total number of partners, 56 per cent of the partners were registered as NGOs, while 30 per cent were registered as POs. The 44 POs had a total of nearly 3 million individual members globally (“member individuals”), while the 16 partner umbrella organizations supported by NPA had a total of nearly 1300 member organizations in their networks (“member organizations”). 74 per cent of the total partners carried out internal elections in their organizations.

Table 1: Overview of NPA’s partners by the end of 2017³

	Total partners	Natural Resources partners	Natural resources only	Type of partner organizations				Member Individuals	Member organizations	Partners with internal elections	Budget 2016 (mill NOK)
				Umbrella	NGO	People's Org.	Govt.				
All Countries	148	115	4	16	83	44	4	2 918 884	1 282	109	43,08
Bolivia	7	7	0		1	6		170 000	-	7	2,58
Cambodia	13	11	4	2	10	1		-	266	2	4,22
Colombia	5	5	0	1		4		1 500 000	380	5	0,72
Cuba	8	6	0		1	3	4	400 000	-	4	2,42
Equador	8	8	0	1	1	6		140 000	32	8	2,89
Egypt	3	2	0		3			-	-	3	-
El Salvador	9	8	0	3	1	5		50 000	36	6	2,39
Ethiopia	1	1	0		1			14	-	-	1,15
Guatemala	7	2	0			7		15 000	-	2	1,98
Honduras	7	6	0	2	2	3		121 000	248	6	2,36
Iraq	7	6	0		7			240	-	4	3,41
Lebanon	13	8	0		12	1		160	-	10	1,20
MENA	2	1	0	2				-	45	2	1,50
Mozambique	6	5	0	2	2	2		6 300	22	5	1,20
Myanmar	9	6	0		7	2		7 500	-	7	-
Nicaragua	1	-	0					-	-	-	-
Palestine	10	7	0	1	9			7 700	136	10	5,80
Rwanda	16	13	0		16			420	-	16	4,82
South Africa	2	2	0		1	1		20 500	-	2	0,30
South-Sudan	1	-	0		1			50	-	1	-
Zimbabwe	13	11	0	2	8	3		480 000	117	9	4,14

³ Based on information registered in PartnerForm 2016. The table shows only the number of partners registered in the database for 2016. Partnerships registered as “partnership ended” in 2017 or before have been excluded. New partnerships might have been established after 2016 and these are not registered in the database or included in the table. Information from the case studies indicate that PartnerForm, and, hence, the table, contains many inaccuracies.

2.2.2. Partners' strategies for defense and control of natural resources

The partners' strategies for defense and control of natural resources are generally in line with NPA's overarching strategies and principles for partnerships, i.e. they are highly context specific and directed towards development of grassroot movements and organizations. However, although the partners' work on the ground is adapted to various contexts, the main tools they use to achieve their short and longer-term goals are the same, and together these tools comprise a general strategy that resembles an overarching Theory of Change towards the defense and control of natural resources in any context.

One of these main tools is to influence the development and effectuation of laws and regulatory frameworks that support the rights and claims of NPA's target groups. The contextual challenges varies considerably in this respect. In many countries, such as Colombia, legislation is in place but effectuation is weak. Hence, partner organizations emphasize on challenging practice rather than on development of new regulations, e.g. by supporting target groups to take cases to court and by influencing occupant actors and decision-makers.

In other context, such as in South Sudan, the main challenge is a lack of clear regulatory frameworks and a lack of awareness of existing laws and rights. Hence, partners involve themselves more directly into processes of developing regulatory frameworks and in building awareness among target populations. International legislation and conventions, e.g. on human rights and indigenous peoples' rights, are used as basis for influencing national legislation as well as for challenging existing practice in contexts where there is a lack of national laws or where international law is violated, e.g. in Palestine.

Another main tool used by most partners is to empower target populations and to build awareness on rights and how to respond to issues concerning their land and resources. Again, the partners' approaches towards this goal varies according to context. In countries such as South-Sudan, awareness about legislation and rights is low and partners like the Civil Society Land Alliance emphasis on training community members on land rights and on involving local land authorities in their activities. In contexts where awareness and organizations are stronger, e.g. in Colombia, emphasis is more on political training and on how to secure their rights in practice. Many partners, such as UAWC in Palestine, also carry out more "conventional" community development activities, e.g. agricultural support activities and infrastructure development, as part of empowering communities to secure their rights.

The third main tool used by most partners is to develop strategic networks at local, national and international levels, to support their activities. Such networking activities are diverse, and include: establishing land alliances; setting up networks of complementary like-minded institutions at the national level, such as the Zimbabwe Land and Agrarian Network; and connecting to international movements such as the Via Campesina. In addition, an important tool is to connect target populations with decision-makers and actors influencing their land and resources, e.g. political and private actors.

3. Case country summaries

This part of the report summarizes the information obtained from the interviews with the representatives from NPA local offices and partner organization in the five selected case countries. The number and name of interviewed partner organizations in each case country are listed in appendix 2. The case country summaries have been structured under three main headings based on the evaluation topics listed in section 1.1. A brief introduction to the particular context, challenges, and objectives of NPA's and its partner's engagement in the case country is given under the first heading "Context and challenges". The approaches and work of the partners in addressing the particular context and challenges are assessed under the second heading "Partnerships and approaches", including the compliances between the partner's and NPA's visions, approaches, and principles of partnership. The compliance between the partners' needs for support and the support that NPA offers to them, in addition to an assessment of NPA's added value in the partnerships, is assessed under the third headline "NPA's support and added value". In some interviews particular challenges and suggested improvements were mentioned. These are presented under a fourth heading "Particular challenges and areas of improvement".

3.1. Colombia: Strong tradition for people's mobilization in a transition from civil war context

Context and challenges

Unequal distribution of - and access to - land and resources lies in the hearth of the challenges faced by Colombia with respect to securing peace and development for the population. Figures from the latest agricultural census carried out in the country (2014) shows that 1 per cent of the largest landholdings occupy 81 per cent of all productive land and that this extreme inequality has grown worse over the past half century. Furthermore, marginalized groups, including indigenous populations, Afro-Colombians, marginal farmers, and women, are particularly affected by land grabbing and denied access to land⁴. This is in contrast to the fact that access is secured to these groups by the 1991 constitution and more recently by a separate chapter in the 2016 peace agreement between the government and FARC.

For generations, the country has been dominated by elites, who possess strong political and economic control over state institutions and the land. A "neo-liberal" political system, with few and low taxes, attracts foreign direct investments to trigger economic growth. Laws, regulations and agreements have been developed to secure a fair distribution of the growth and the rights of non-elites, also with important contributions from NPA's partners, but many of these are not enforced or effective and in practice the elites are able to protect their control in spite of the laws and regulations.

In this context, NPA's partners organizations experience that many of the challenges they have worked with have become achievements, but also that the achievements continuously are being turned into new challenges. One example of this is that in the peace process one of NPA's partners, ONIC, created a joint strategy with an Afro descendant organization to demand their inclusion in the

⁴ Oxfam, 2000: Divide and Purchase: How land ownership is being concentrated in Colombia (https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/rr-divide-and-purchase-land-concentration-colombia-270913-en_0.pdf)

peace negotiations. They achieved an ethnic chapter in the peace negotiation, but currently their challenge is to make sure that what has been agreed in the negotiations is actually implemented. In spite of new laws securing the rights of indigenous groups and others, NPA's partners also experience that it is still easy for strong economic interests to grab land. It is also extremely time consuming to take such cases to the court and difficult to reclaim land.

Partnerships and approaches

NPA has five national partner organizations in Colombia, all of which are people's organizations (POs) with memberships and representing marginalized groups. Land rights and issues related to natural resources are the main working areas for the partner organizations, and they were established as a response to particular challenges such as unjust distribution of land and negative impacts of dams and mines.

Two of the partner organizations have been assessed more in depth for this evaluation. These are The National Indigenous Organization, ONIC, and the National Association [of] Peasants Reserves Zones (Asociación Nacional Zonas de Reserva Campesina), ANZORC. Both of these organizations may be described as "ideal" organizations for NPA with respect to the organization's vision and approach towards creating sustainable change.

ONIC is an umbrella organization which gathers together 82 of the 102 indigenous communities of Colombia. The organization is present at national, regional and local level through its members, and ONIC is in charge of coordinating with the different indigenous communities at all these levels. The organization is organized as councils being responsible for and working on different topics, and the work is based on a four year mandate defined by the congress.

Two of the most important tools applied by the organization for mobilization and empowerment of its members are: the coordination of "mingas", which gathers the members for political protest against specific interventions by the government or private sector which threatens indigenous land and way of life; and "The National Indigenous Training School" (EFIN - Escuela de Formación Indígena Nacional), which is a political training school for the organizations' members at local and national level and where the teachers at local level are recruited among the members.

ANZORC gathers 65 *campesino* (peasant) organizations, with the intention of constituting zones of peasants' reserves, which was defined by the Law 160 of 1996. Currently there are 6 such zones in the country and 7 more are being requested. The organization is organized into 7 regional nodes, and National Assemblies are organized twice a year (February and August), during which the political commission also meets and develops a working plan.

ANZORC, as an umbrella organization, coordinates the actions and strategies in the working plan and supports the implementation which is done by each peasant organization at local level, and manages and distributes the funding within the organization for the different activities.

Both ONIC and ANZORC works in dialogue with the national government, and adapts their work plans according to stated government priorities. In ONIC's case they are in dialogue with the government through the recognition of indigenous rights which was granted with the National Constitution of 1991 and which allowed for the creation of a space of discussion between the government and the indigenous groups ("The Permanent Concertation Table"). Both organizations are also taking part in national and international networks of like-minded organizations and groups, including the national

platform, Cumbre agraria campesina, etnica y popular (Agrarian Peasant, Ethnic and People's Summit)

An internal challenge observed by both organizations, as well as by NPA's country office, is that there are administrative deficiencies in their member organizations (peasants' organizations). These deficiencies are primarily related to lack of administrative competence and systems for project management, and which may be improved by training and technical support. ANZORC works actively to improve the administrative capacities of their member organization, primarily through workshops and trainings. NPA's country office also states that building capacity among the partner organizations is a key priority for their work.

NPA's support and added value

According to representatives from both ONIC and ANZORC, NPA's support to the organizations is based on the organizations' expressed needs and work plans. The organizations carry out their own mapping of needs for capacity, and they develop their own plans for capacity building, in processes involving their member organizations. NPA are requested to provide support according to these plans, and provides funding to the activities in addition to connecting the organizations with necessary technical expertise and training resources in dialog with the organizations. The National Indigenous Training School (EFIN) is an example of an activity requested by ONIC and which was established from support provided by NPA.

However, the representatives from both partner organizations highlighted that the support NPA provided beyond the economic and technical support was important and distinguished NPA from other donors. Improved access to international and national networks and decision-makers (e.g. politicians and "diplomats") was mentioned as an important aspect of the partnership with NPA. It was also clearly stated that being a partner of NPA brought respect to the partner organizations due to NPAs high standing internationally and in Colombia.

In addition to linking partner organizations up with networks, the interviewed representatives also emphasized that NPAs support for the organizations to travel and meet like-minded organizations in other countries was very valuable to them. NPA's support in the exchange of experiences with other indigenous groups in the Americas was mentioned as particularly important, and NPA's facilitation of meetings between organizations from Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia was mentioned as an example in this respect. Practical results from the interaction with organizations in other countries were mentioned in relation to the organizations, involvement in the Colombian peace process, e.g. ONIC's stay at the Martin Luther King Centre in Habana during the peace negotiations, which was facilitated by NPA.

It was also clearly stated that NPAs role as a strategic and political partner was very valuable to the partner organizations, and that the partnership with NPA was based on deeper trust and longer-term commitment compared to other donors and partners of the organizations. NPA was perceived as an equal partner in political dialogue, and ideas, and experiences were exchanged both ways. The political dialogue and support from NPA was mentioned as "a strategical referent" by ANZORC. Representatives from both organizations highlighted the common values and visions shared by them and NPA as the core of a good partnership.

Particular challenges and areas of improvement

From the view of NPA's local office for Colombia (based in Quito), a particular challenge related to the partnership with strong political organizations, is that their agenda and activities might be politicized. This is difficult to detect and might create challenges with respect to ensuring clear strategies and work plans towards agreed visions and objectives.

Furthermore, The NPA office expressed a dilemma over whether they should continue to support or abandon partners which they have supported for a long time in order to build their capacity, but which have made little progress and achieved few results.

A third aspect mentioned by NPA's local office was that stronger requirements to carry out activities referred to as "new public management activities", i.e. developing and managing systems for documentation of activities and results, was taking more of their time and resources on the expense of practical follow-up of partners.

3.2. South Sudan: Weak culture for people's mobilization in a context of state-building

Context and challenges

NPA has been present in South Sudan since the start of its Sudan programme in 1986, and started its first development programs after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed between the north and the south in 2005. NPA's present activities related to a just distribution of land and natural resources are based on a country-wide baseline survey on large-scale land acquisition commission by the organization in the year of South Sudan's independence in 2011.

Prior to 2011, NPA supported local CSOs to mobilize around defending rural populations' land rights, which had become under strong pressure from an increase in large-scale land investments before the independence. With support from NPA, these local CSOs formed land alliances in all ten states of the country by the end of 2011, and a national umbrella organization (South Sudan Land Alliances – SSuLA) was formed in 2012. At the same time, NPA also took part in developing the national Land Policy.

South Sudan represents a context where government institutions, regulatory frameworks, and civil society organizations and networks all have to be built from weak starting points. With respect to mobilizing people, the context is also challenging due to low education and little awareness of rights among the target populations, mainly living in rural areas of the country.

Partnerships and approaches

At present NPA run two main programs in South Sudan related to land and natural resources: Securing rural land rights in a context of large-scale land acquisition in South Sudan; and a programme funded within Oil for Development (OfU). Six partners are involved in the land rights programme, while the OfU programme has three partners. Three of the land rights partners are membership networks commonly known as State Land Alliances (SLAs), but which currently have been restructured to form Regional Land Alliances, while the other three are independent CSOs that have been part of SLAs and works on defending land and natural resources rights in the country. The three OfU partners are umbrella organizations.

In the context of mobilizing people for the defence and control of natural resources, the establishment of land alliances is the most relevant to learn from. The mobilization of people's networks has led to emergence of land alliances as strong movement on community land rights advocacy in South Sudan. Over the years the land alliances not only raised rural communities' awareness of land rights, advocated against sell of communities land to investors without consultation, but through advocacy and lobby enabled establishment of local land authorities responsible for fair administration and distribution of land in the rural South Sudan.

Due to recent political changes which led to a division of South Sudan into 32 states, land alliances experienced operational challenges as they could not reach parts of the geographically vast South Sudan. Thus in a bid to supplement the land alliances' efforts in order to reach most part of the country with land rights interventions, three individual CSOs which had been working alongside the land alliances in defence of communities land rights were supported by NPA. This strategy has not only broaden the campaign on communities rights to access and control land, but has increased collaborations between the alliances and CSOs to ensure sustainable effort on the fight for equitable land and resources sharing and management in the country.

At the same time the South Sudan Law Society, which is a membership organization for all lawyers in South Sudan, implements policy advocacy, research and legal aid activities alongside the land alliances in effort to improving the legal system of the country and also contribute to strengthening the capacity of the land alliances. The ability to enable people's alliances work side by side with likeminded CSOs in defending rural population land rights shows the flexibility of NPA's approach with respect to reaching its overarching objectives.

The low capacity of NPA's main partners, the land alliances, is a huge challenge which also influences the interaction with the partners. Based on the interview with one land alliance partners carried out in this evaluation, it is difficult to assess whether the partners' and NPA's visions are aligned. This is further constrained by the limited political space given to CSOs in South Sudan, and a higher focus of the organizations on solving practical land rights cases compared to most other countries where NPA works. However, document sources such as the bylaws of the Land Alliances, indicate that NPA's and the partners' visions are well aligned.

NPA's support and added value

The great need for building capacity of partners in South Sudan influences NPA strategy with respect to provision of trainings. Thus, NPA do not only focus on political trainings for land alliances but also on practical training of partners in order to strengthen their capacity. Due to the need for developing legal frameworks and systems, more attention is also given to advocacy and to influence the development of such frameworks and systems. Hence, while NPA's work in South Sudan focuses on strengthening people's networks or alliances, the organization also supports CSOs to interact with alliances in order to enhance advocacy activities related to rural populations' rights to land and natural resources.

However, as in all the other case countries studied for this evaluation, NPA was considered to be different from other donors by: its flexible and less "micro-managerial" approach; the fact that funding was always combined with close support and dialogue; and the willingness to share and

discuss ideas and approaches on an equal level with partners. Facilitating access to national networks was also mentioned as a key added value of the partnership with NPA.

3.3. Zimbabwe: Strong culture for people's mobilization in a context of transition from authoritarian regime

Context and challenges

Since 2000, large land reforms, as well as significant economic and political reforms, have been carried out in Zimbabwe. However, the results from these reforms have not lived up to expectations and the country faces today a great amount of uncertainty and instability both economically and politically. Politically the newest constitution from 2013 opens for more democracy, including open elections, and the ruling party did seemingly put just distribution of land and resources higher on the agenda. I.e. many laws and regulations are in place, but they are not effective. The country strives with high unemployment and corruption, and elites and multinational companies control much of the land and resources. Ironically, the poorest groups of the population are found in the most resource rich areas of the country, e.g. such as the rural population in Manicaland, which is rich in diamonds.

NPA's partners in Zimbabwe work for the rights of marginalized groups, including women, youth and artisanal small-scale miners, with respect to access to land and resources and the social and economic benefits produced by the utilization of the resources. However, the operation space for peoples' organizations and civil society in these matters is difficult, and the efforts of the government and private sector companies in defending their control are strong, and in some case leads to arrests of activists and protesters.

Partnerships and approaches

NPA has eight partner organizations in Zimbabwe, all of which are membership organizations and directly representing the interests of specific groups. Two of these organizations have been assessed for this evaluation: the Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights) and, more in depth, the African Institute for Agricultural Studies (AIAS).

ZimRights is registered as an NGO, and is Zimbabwe's largest human rights organization with around 250.000 members. The organisation was founded in 1992 for the purpose of ensuring that the Zimbabwean citizens are informed about human rights and are empowered to defend their own rights. From focusing solely on human rights human rights, the organization today also works towards improving the socio-economic lives of marginalized groups, including communities affected by mining, small "illegal" miners, women and their rights and access to land. The latter activity includes mobilizing women and organizing women's groups in ten districts of the country to enable them to develop their own capacity and to lobby their own rights. The activity is carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Land.

ZimRights shares the core visions and approaches with NPA, and feels they are being assisted and backed actively by NPA in their activities. After the 2013 election, ZimRights changed their strategy from mainly being a critical human rights organization to focusing on the effective implementation of

laws and rights that the government has committed to implement, as well as working for including rights of marginalized groups into the national legislation and adapting old laws to a new reality.

NPA's partnership with AIAS represents an interesting approach to a more "evidence-based mobilization", i.e. integrating research and professional knowledge with the activities of CSOs and farmers' organizations, both for advocacy purposes as well as for development of farming practices. AIAS is an independent research institute established in 2003. The partnership with NPA started in 2006 as an informal collaboration, based on a partner assessment carried out by NPA which showed a need for bringing in professional competence to develop its partner organizations and network members. The partnership was formalized in 2012, along with the establishment of the Zimbabwe Land and Agrarian Network (ZiLAN).

ZiLAN is an initiative developed by AIAS in 2012 with the support of NPA. The Network's primary role is to provide a platform for the articulation of problems affecting the Small Farming Sector after Land Resettlement. Working with key actors the Network's mission is to facilitate development and implementation of equitable agrarian policies and promote sustainable land use through information exchange, policy analysis, capacity development and dialogue.

The Network has mobilised researchers, policy analysts and activists in the search for policy solutions to land and agrarian issues. Members of the Network include farmers' and growers' representative bodies, NGOs, and other organisations whose work involves the Small Farming Sector. Financial and business organisations also participate in regular dialogues.

AIAS has contributed in developing NPA's partners in many ways. The institute adds facts to reporting, provides access to international networks, e.g. with FAO, Via Campesina, and research institutions in other countries. It contributes in development of proposals from the network members, provides information to network groups for advocacy purposes, and builds the thematic competence of agricultural CSOs in the network through training.

According to AIAS and NPA representatives, important results from the collaboration have been that: network partners have become better equipped to defend themselves against companies and the government; it has promoted more and better collaboration between the network members; and the members have been enabled to bring their issues to national level policy makers. In addition, the government uses the institute as supervisors, which improves the contact between network members and the government.

NPA's support and added value

NPA's support to its partners in Zimbabwe complies with the guiding principles of the organization. NPA act as a close discussion partner, challenging and assisting the partners according to their own agenda, and not directing them in what to do. NPA also carry out political dialogue with farmers individually, and assesses the capacity of partners and providing capacity accordingly. NPA also promotes a gender focus in the partners' activities.

To reduce the administrative burden on its partners, and allowing them to focus on their mission and activities, NPA stopped requiring the partners to carry out Results-Based management exercises. They found that the activity was time consuming and difficult for some of the partners to use for the partners, and decided to take care of this requirement on behalf of the partners.

According to the partners, NPA is different from other donors by its close contact and dialogue with its partners and by its unconditional support to them. For ZimRights, the political dialogue was mentioned as most important, in addition to working closely together and understanding the context. For AIAS, the provision of international networks was mentioned as the most valuable added value from the partnership with NPA, in addition to the mutual benefits from the interaction with NPA's partners' network nationally

3.4. Myanmar: Less developed culture for people's mobilization and CSOs in a context of strong economic and political transition

Context and challenges

After decades of military rule, the first election in Myanmar in 19 years was held in 2010. A civil government was formed under the leadership of Thein Sein in 2011, although the main opposition party, NLD, led by Aung San Suu Kyi did not participate in the election and the winning party, USDP, had strong links to the military. However, the new government initiated a political and economic reform process, adopted a conciliatory approach toward the opposition and its leader Aung San Suu Kyi, initiated a peace process with the ethnic armed organizations, ordered the release of political prisoners, and lifted restrictions on media and civil society. In the next election in 2015, NLD took a landslide victory and NLD today have the majority in parliament and have formed the current government under the de-facto leadership of Aung San Suu Kyi.

The reform processes and transition from military rule towards democracy provided an historic opportunity for Myanmar to build peaceful and inclusive societies. Yet, Myanmar is still a country merged in conflict and there is no national consensus over state formation and the future of the state. These disagreements are distributed among three main actors that have separate ambitions for the state and future development: The central government and the Bamar majority population; ethnic minority groups in areas that have signed a National Ceasefire Agreements (NCA) with the government, and the groups that are still in conflict with the government and have not signed the NCA. With respect to the central government, there is still a divide between the civil government and the military, and the military still control part of the politics and the economy, including important natural resources and related businesses.

With respect to land rights and a just distribution of resources in this context, powerful economic interests are still in control of important natural resources and land areas, the control over and rights to different land areas is still unsettled, and effective laws and regulations ensuring a just distribution of land and resources are still lacking. This causes a range of different conflicts between different interests at national and local levels, and cases of land grabbing, lack of and uneven compensation for confiscated land, and environmental degradation, are typical issues of which NPA's partner organizations work with within the field of "organizing for the defence and control of natural resources" in Myanmar.

Partnerships and approaches

NPA has a total of 27 partner organizations in Myanmar, out of which four are primarily focusing on issues related to land and natural resources. These are: the Myanmar Alliance for Transparency and Accountability (MATA), which is a national umbrella organization of about 500 CSOs; Advancing Life

and Regenerating Motherland (ALARM), which is an NGO; the Ecology and Economic Development Company Limited (Ecodev), which is a profit-for-purpose organization; and Paung Ku (“connecting”), which is registered as an independent NGO, but which acts a network and supporting organization for around 150 partner CSOs all over Myanmar. Paung Ku, and one of its local partner organizations, Badei Dha Moe (“diversity and peace”); has been selected for a more in-depth study for this evaluation.

In general, the majority of NPA’s partners in Myanmar are more mainstream NGOs than in other countries where the organization works, and compared to the type of organizations with which NPA prefers to work. However, this can to a large degree be explained by the fact that organizations in Myanmar must be officially registered to be able to receive external funding, and that many of the PO’s that were supported before the political and economic reforms started, particularly those representing ethnic groups and areas, did register as NGOs after 2012.

NPA started its support of Paung Ku in 2008, and has been represented in the organization’s board until recently. Paung Ku shares the visions and approaches to development with NPA, and their way of supporting their own partner organizations and community groups is based on the same principles as NPA supports their partner organizations, i.e. by supporting “grassroots” initiatives in a flexible and dynamic manner and by funding, mentoring, managerial and technical support.

Paung Ku develops their own overarching programme for mobilizing and building the capacity of civil society according to their own priorities, and receives funding from several sources beside NPA to implement the program. The organization has a limit to how much funding it can receive from one single partner. Per date, this lit is 30 per cent of the organizations total annual budget, which in 2017 was about 2 million USD. In short, Paung Ku in nearly every way reflects NPA approach to mobilizing people for the defence and control of natural resources, including in their way of supporting and strengthening their CSO partners and in promoting gender perspectives in their partners’ work⁵.

A core principle of the organization’s approach, and what the organization itself sees as their particular strength, is that it should be “responsive, flexible and dynamic”. This implies that Paung Ku Paung Ku works with a large number of partners, and the organization supports per date a network of 160 partner organizations, mainly working at the local level with local issues, such as land grabbing, compensation, end environmental degradation. Most of the partners in the network receive relatively small amounts for funding, and some of them do not receive any funding but just other types of support.

Like most development organizations in Myanmar, NPA and Paung Ku changed their approach quite radically after the initiation of the democratization agenda and the reform process, reflecting that both NPA and its partners are adaptable to changes in political context. From assisting suppressed groups under the military regime, both NPA and Paung Ku today mainly carry out activities in support of democratization and peace, and by supporting development objectives stated by the government. Paung Ku states this very clearly in its strategy, including that their partners should follow a non-confrontational line towards these objectives to receive funding.

NPA’s support and added value

⁵ See Pang Ku’s Strategic Framework 2017-2021 (<http://www.pk-tutorial.com/paung-ku-strategic-framework/>)

The support NPA provides to its partners is quite diverse and flexible, and according to the partners the support is primarily based on their requests and complies well with their needs. Beyond funding, support from NPA to partners includes: technical support and training programs, e.g. on proposal writing, results measurement and reporting, financial management and anti-corruption training; provision of networks and contacts; and advocacy collaboration. From the view of the partners, it was clear that “linking with resources”, including fund, networks and contacts, was more valuable to them than the technical support and trainings. NPA has a separate budget for partners’ capacity building, and partners can apply for funds from this budget.

The views NPA has on their own added value to their partners also comply well with what the partners themselves perceive as the added value of being a partner with NPA in Myanmar. Not surprisingly given the visions of both NPA and Paung Ku, the flexibility and unconditional funding provided by NPA was highly valued, and it was stated the NPA was one of very few funders that provided such kind of support. It was also mentioned that NPA was “willing to take risk” when it came to seizing strategic opportunities that became available from contextual changes.

Beyond the flexibility of funding, it was stated that being a partner with NPA gave legitimacy to the partner organizations. It was also stated that one of the most valuable added values from the partnership with NPA was the contacts and networks that became available for the partners, both internationally and nationally.

3.5. Palestine: Steadfast culture for people’s mobilization in a context of strong limitations to movement and access

Context and challenges

The context of NPA’s work on «organizing for the defence and control of natural resources» in Palestine is quite unique. Firstly, the development opportunities including utilization of land and natural resources are heavily constrained by the Israeli occupation and trade and movement restrictions. Secondly, Palestine is a highly politicised context internally, with many competing political actors, and with three main authorities to relate to: the Palestinian Authority in both the West Bank and Gaza, Hamas as the de-facto authority in Gaza, and the Israeli authorities.

In this context the use of land and access to natural resources are restricted in many ways. This include: Israel’s and the Israeli settlers’ occupation of land; the limitations on accessing fishing areas outside Gaza; the fact that Israel controls the main water resources and restricts the availability of agricultural inputs by trade restrictions; and lack of access to financial means.

In this context, NPA supports local organizations to defend male and female farmers’ and fishermen’s rights and access to resources. The partners’ activities include livelihoods programs; advocacy for laws and regulations that support the needs and rights of marginalized groups; support for cultivation and fisheries; legal aid; as well as international advocacy activities.

UAWC was established in 1986 in response to the vulnerable socio-political circumstance of farmers that resulted from occupation policies in confiscating lands and water in the early eighties and therefore directly harmed the interests of farmers and Palestinians. The Union was founded as a non-profit organization by a group of volunteers and agronomists.

The UAWC will continue its activities to achieve its vision: "Palestinian society that is food secured, enjoys social justice, holds on its land and lives in a democratic Free Palestinian State, enjoys sovereignty over his resources; where farmers both male and female, contribute effectively in all aspects of life."

Partnerships and approaches

The main partner in Palestine with respect to work on land and natural resources is the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC). The organization, and its around 100 employees in the West Bank and Gaza strip, fight for Palestinian farmers' rights and the rights of the Palestinian population under occupation where land and water resources have been confiscated. The organization works both to influence opinion and to mobilize committees in local communities to fight for Palestinian farmers' rights, and runs projects to make the best possible use of land and to utilize land in areas vulnerable to confiscation.

The core units of the organization are the agricultural committees (farmers and fishermen), which are located in both the West Bank and in Gaza. The committees are organizational bodies that support farmers and fishermen in assessing their needs, identifying opportunities, and addressing challenges. The needs are channelled through the various departments of UAWC, which respond to the needs according to their resources. The committees themselves mobilize their members for skills training, capacity building, public awareness campaigns and advocacy work. The organization works in close collaboration with government agencies, including the Ministry of Agriculture, to align its activities with national strategies.

UAWC's visions, approaches and priorities comply well with those of NPA. However, a point that was mentioned by respondents interviewed was that that CSO's in Palestine are difficult to control with respect to political infiltration and motivations. It is difficult to assess this dimension with respect to UAWC and based on Skype interviews only. On paper, UAWC has a democratic structure of governance, and similar to most CSOs in Palestine UAWC have strict criteria for memberships in order to avoid political infiltration.

NPA's support and added value

The main added value that was mentioned in the interviews was that NPA's flexible and unconditional support was particularly valuable and different from many other donors. Another main value mentioned was the access to international networks resulting from the partnership with NPA, e.g. Via Campesina. In addition, NPA conducted an organization review of UAWC at an early stage of the union's development, which together with support to strengthen the administrative and financial systems has been instrumental in developing the union to the scale and influence it has today.

4. Findings and recommendations

4.1. Summary of findings

NPA has a very well thought through overarching “theory of change” for its international development work, and which stands out from the mainstream development organizations’ approaches to development. The feedback from the NPA’s partner organizations interviewed for this evaluation makes it clear that NPA plays an important role in the development of locally based forces and initiatives for structural and lasting change in their own contexts. NPA’s clear principle of supporting internal forces on basis of their own priorities and strategies, and not directing priorities or approaches from the outside, most probably provides power to actors who without NPA’s type of support might have had few opportunities to carry out their work.

The criteria for selecting partner organizations are clearly understood and followed-up by local offices, and all partners reviewed in this evaluation comply in general with the set criteria. However, the type of mobilization mechanisms and membership arrangements varies among the different partners and contexts evaluated. In some countries mobilization is geared towards direct protesting and action, e.g. in Colombia, while in other countries approaches towards mobilization is more passive. In some cases mobilization is primarily promoted through informal networks for exchange of information, while in other cases mobilization is promoted through raising communities’ awareness of rights related to land and resources, e.g. as in South Sudan and Zimbabwe.

The capacity of the partner organizations also varies a great deal. A general but not particularly surprising finding from the interviews is that the “ideal” partners in NPA’s approach, the grassroots organizations, are the organizations that are constrained the most due to lack of capacity. However, it was also expressed by some respondents that when trying to make these organizations more professional they tend to turn, unintentionally, more into mainstream NGO’s - which are not the preferred partners of NPA.

However, there are ways of balancing this “dilemma” by e.g. by bringing in different types of organization in partner networks, e.g. such as the AIAS role in Zimbabwe, inclusion of a human rights organization with strong legal competence in Palestine, and the initiative to bring in professional CSOs such as SSLs to increase the capacity and sustainability of the people’s organizations in South Sudan. It seems like creating partner networks consisting of different types of partners that complement each other leads to more robust powers towards lasting change, and may provide space for the different types of partners to do what they do best.

The alignment between NPA’s and its partner organizations visions and approaches to development is impressively coherent. All partners interviewed expressed deep understanding of the partnership idea and felt that the partnership was established on mutual visions and world views. The alignments between the type of support requested by the partners, beyond funding, and the support provided by NPA was also consistent in all case countries. In short, the principles for partner support seem very well understood by the local NPA staff in the case countries.

There also seems to be great compliance between the added value that NPA strives to provide to partners and the added value that the partners mentioned when they were asked about this. Compared to other donors to the partners, NPA was particularly acknowledged for: being a close and good dialogue partner, particularly on political and strategic issues; providing the partners with

access to national and international networks according to their needs; and not at least being flexible in finding ways to meeting overall objectives and with respect to contextual realities. In this respect, NPA seems in general to comply with its own vision of “working with partners and not through partners”.

The adaptability of partner organizations to changing contexts seems to be good. Examples of adaptability were most specifically mentioned in relation to changes in political contexts. In Zimbabwe Zimrights decided to back new initiatives of democracy and land reforms launched by the new government in 2013, and in Myanmar, Paung Ku decided to back the reforms initiated from 2010 and to follow a non-confrontational line towards the new civil government elected in 2012.

On the other hand, NPA’s overall approach to people’s mobilization (see paragraph 2.1.2) seems less adapted to different country contexts. The overall approach seems to work best in contexts where NPA comes in to support already existing movements in countries where there is a culture for people’s mobilization and movements, and where struggles for structural political change has been going on for a long time, e.g. as in Colombia. The approach seems to fit less with countries with weak culture for grassroots movements, and particularly in countries that are re-built after some sort of collapse, e.g. post conflict countries, and where international development aid actors are the most active.

Although NPA is clear and consistent in supporting partner organizations based on their own agenda and priorities, some organizations interviewed felt that they were involved in too many thematic areas. Representatives from NPA’s local offices also confirmed these statements. A possible explanation might be that many partner organizations have other donors in addition to NPA which have stricter thematic directions for their funding, but it may also reflect that balancing donor priorities and requirements with the partners’ own priorities is becoming more challenging. In the interviews, partners did refer to this as a general problem stemming from their interaction with all donors and partners, and not something that was particularly attributed to their partnership with NPA. However, as this situation will most likely also influence the partners’ ability to work with NPA, steps should be taken to map out the problem, and to discuss ways of mitigating it together with the partners.

The dynamic nature of NPA’s approach and funding, does not easily comply with mechanistic programme management. The distribution of funds among a large number of partners and sub-partners in large networks makes it challenging to control activities and results in detail. It also makes it challenging to ensure that all sub-partners fulfil all of NPA’s partnerships criteria. NPA’s criteria for partnerships and active involvement in the networks is a fundamental requirement for handling this challenge.

4.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings summarized above, the following recommendations are given to inform the future work of NPA within the area of “organizing for the defence and control of natural resources”:

1. Refine and formalize further the organization’s existing strategic approach and core principles towards organizing for the defence and control of natural resources

NPA's approach to international development, including in the area of "organizing for the defence and control of natural resources", is somewhat different from the mainstream development aid NGO. The organization's core principles are to nourish existing forces for sustainable change within the contexts where NPA works; commitment to support the priorities of its partners within these contexts; and providing a high degree of flexibility to the partners in their work towards reaching the overarching objectives of change. These principles are also seen as valuable among many development aid donors. However, more and more of the available funding is being confined to donor priorities and universal thematic areas (particularly related to the SDGs in the time ahead), and these priorities do not always match contextual realities and partners' priorities. In this situation, NPA should prioritize to be upfront in conceptualizing the links between the organization's core principles and present and future donor priorities. Development and formalization of a so-called Theory of Change (ToC)⁶ is a very useful tool in such a process, also with a potential of acting as a conversion tool between partners' and donors' priorities and NPA's overarching approach to sustainable change.

2. Establish a simple set of strategic global indicators to measure and expose progress towards the overarching goals related to the partner organizations' work within the area of organizing for the defence and control of natural resources

In relation to the first recommendation, it could also be useful to define a small set of key global indicators reflecting the core visions and objectives of NPA's approach towards organizing for the defence and control of natural resources. Such a set of indicators should primarily focus on impact, e.g. overall progress in democratization and a just distribution of resources. These indicators should complement the organization's programmatic RBM systems and indicators, and primarily serve the role of being a contextual monitoring tool and to promote NPA's vision of sustainable change. In relation to this recommendation, it is also suggested to improve the structure and management of the partner records/database (Partner Profile) to make it useful for monitoring key partner parameters according to the criteria and goals for partnerships, e.g. the number and type of partners, their "grassroots"/membership base, grade of democratization, etc. Some of these parameters may also serve as global indicators, given that the parameters (indicators) become better aligned with the goals related to partners and partnerships as stated in the Global Strategy.

3. Prioritize, and develop further, NPA's role as a facilitator and coordinator within partnerships, including facilitating support and access to networks, coordination of cooperation between national and international partners, and providing political dialogue and training

All partners interviewed for this evaluation expressed that the main added value of NPA in their work towards organizing for the defence and control of natural resources is the organization's ability to facilitate access to networks and resources beyond mere funding. This includes both access to decision-makers at different levels, like-minded organizations internationally, and other types of organizations and networks in their own countries and regions (see next recommendation). Provision of training courses and capacity building in order to improve the partners' organizational and program management was clearly secondary to this. NPA should seek to further develop this support, e.g. by

⁶ See e.g.: <http://www.theoryofchange.org/>

documenting and sharing useful experiences and lesson among its partners internationally, and possibly by exchanging networks and resources.

4. Consider to expand national partnership networks by including institutions that can build thematic and advocacy capacity of partner organizations, as well as develop their organizational management skills and systems

In some countries NPA has established collaboration with “untraditional” partners, including research institutions, lawyers and media actors, for the main purpose of building capacity of peoples’ organizations and other primary partners. In such cases, the professional partners act as bridges between the primary partner organization at “grassroots” level and the donors and the actors and environments that they want to influence, e.g. the public, politicians or private interests. The professional partners’ role in such networks should be twofold: 1) to build capacity within the primary partner organizations for them to improve their own activity, and 2) to enhance the effects of the primary partners’ efforts by carrying out complementary activities (e.g. advocacy work and reporting).

5. Consider to develop a separate strategy/approach for mobilization in countries and contexts where there is a weak culture for, or low establishment of, people’s organizations

A premise behind NPA’s principles of supporting and nourishing existing forces for change within their own contexts, primarily in the form of peoples’ movements or organizations, is that such forces exist. Hence, the appropriateness and effect of NPA’s general approach is different in different contexts. The main difference is found in countries where there are established cultures for people’s movements, e.g. Latin-American countries, versus countries in strong transition and where both government and peoples’ institutions needs to be built, e.g. South-Sudan. In the latter contexts, development processes are also normally influenced by a large number of international actors, and an “industry” of local NGOs. The “standard” approach of NPA is less adapted to these contexts, and strategies probably need to include “forces” beyond NPA’s normal type of actors (e.g. business actors), a stronger coordination with other development aid actors, and stronger advocacy for the importance of NPA’s approach in these contexts. However, it is important to underline that NPA’s “standard” vision and “grassroots” approach to development is at least as valid in such settings as in countries with stronger cultures of people’s mobilization and organizations, and that NPA is considered as a strong development aid organization also in mainstream development aid countries and NGO contexts.

6. Consider the capacity and the effectiveness of partner organizations being involved in many different thematic areas

Even though NPA is conscious and good in letting their partners define their own priorities, many partners still feel they are forced to work with too many different topics, including topics that are weakly linked to their core vision and objectives. Partly, this problem is linked to the fact that many of NPA’s partner organizations also depend on funding from other donors, but the problem may also be linked to unclear strategic priorities within the organizations, and to weak links between NPA’s and partners’ priorities and reporting requirements of funded activities in particular fields. Whether the partners’ feeling of being forced to work with too many topics is a result of push from donors and

partners or their own inability to make clear priorities is not clear-cut. This issue should be explicitly discussed with the partners in order to map out and to solve the challenge.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Literature, documents and reports reviewed

- David K. Deng 2011 The New Frontier: A baseline survey of large-scale land-based investment in Southern Sudan, NPA Report 1/11 (March)
- Dungu, Victor Bol 2017: Regulatory Framework that Advances Land Rights: A critique of South Sudan Land Act 2009 and the draft Land Policy, South Sudan Law Society (SSLS) (3/8/2017)
- GLO 0612 CS 2016 Results Framework overall 2016-19 (revised)
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Application Overview Budget and Financial Plan Attachment 5_1- 5_5
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Application total CS and OfD Overall activities budget with comments - Attachment 5_7
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Bolivia Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_12
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Bolivia Norad application-part 2 attachment 1_12
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Cambodia Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_18
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Cambodia Norad application part 2 attachment 1_18
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Colombia Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_14
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Colombia Norad application-part 2 attachment 1_14
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Cooperation agreement with Norad application - part 1
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Cuba Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_10
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Cuba Norad application-part 2 attachment 1_10
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Ecuador Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_13
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Ecuador Norad application-part 2 attachment 1_13
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA El Salvador Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_8
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA El Salvador Norad application-part 2 attachment 1_8
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Ethiopia Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_6
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Ethiopia Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_6
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Guatemala Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_7
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Guatemala Norad application-part 2 attachment 1_7
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Honduras Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_9
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Honduras Norad application-part 2 attachment 1_9
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Iraq Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_16
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Iraq Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_16
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Mozambique Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_2
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Mozambique Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_2
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Nicaragua Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_11
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Nicaragua Norad application-part 2 attachment 1_11
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Palestine Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_15
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Palestine Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_15
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Partnership to influence democratisation Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_19
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Partnership to influence democratisation Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_19
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Rwanda Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_4
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Rwanda Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_4
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA South Africa Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_1
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA South Africa Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_1
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA South Sudan Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_5
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Vietnam Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_17
- GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Vietnam Norad application part 2 attachment 1_17

GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Zimbabwe Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_3

GLO 0613 CS 2016 NPA Zimbabwe Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_3

GLO 0613 CS 2016 South Sudan Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_5

GLO 0613 NPA Norad Application 2016-2019 Part 1 attachment 7 Statutes 2011-2015

GLO 0613 NPA Norad Application 2016-2019 Part 1 Attachment 8 Ethical

GLO 0613 NPA Norad Application 2016-2019 Part 1 Attachment 9 Declaration Safety

GLO 0613 OFD 2016 NPA Iraq Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_23

GLO 0613 OFD 2016 NPA Iraq Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_23

GLO 0613 OFD 2016 NPA Lebanon Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_22

GLO 0613 OFD 2016 NPA Lebanon Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_22

GLO 0613 OFD 2016 NPA Mozambique Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_20

GLO 0613 OFD 2016 NPA Mozambique Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_20

GLO 0613 OFD 2016 NPA Myanmar Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_24

GLO 0613 OFD 2016 NPA Myanmar Norad application - part 2 attachment 1_24

GLO 0613 OFD 2016 NPA South Sudan Detailed budget 1 Year attachment 5_6_21

GLO 0613 OFD 2016 NPA South Sudan Norad application – part 2 attachment 1_21

GLO 0613 QZA 11 0896 Final report 2012-2015 to Norad

GLO 0613 QZA 11 0896 OfD Status report 2014 to Norad

GLO 0613 QZA 11 0896 OfD Status report 2015 to Norad

GLO 0613 QZA 11 0896 Periodic Results Report 2012-2014 to Norad

GLO 6013 NPA Norad Application Letter Cooperation Agreement 2016-2019

GLO-0613 SSD-12/0027: Securing Rural Land Rights in the context of large-scale land acquisitions in South Sudan

GLO-0613: Securing Rural Land Rights in A Context of Large-scale Land Acquisition in South Sudan – Phase 3, Revised Project Proposal (2015)

GLO-0613: Securing Rural Land Rights in the Context of Large-scale Land Acquisition in South Sudan, phase 2, Project Proposal (2012)

Jørn Holm-Hansen and Einar Braathen 2014: Working with partners: Mid-term evaluation of Norwegian People’s Aid, NIBR-report 2014:17

Martine Van de Velde 2015: NPA Program Evaluation in Palestine, Development Consulting

Matthew F. Pritchard 2016: Land Disputes in Urban and Peri-Urban South Sudan, NPA

NPA 2009: Norwegian People’s Aid Partnership Policy

NPA 2010: Observing Change: Results based planning, monitoring and reporting (PMR), NPA

NPA 2015: Partnership for Democratization, NPA International Strategy 2016-2019

NPA Norad application 2016-2019 Annual Report 2010 attachment 6_5

NPA Norad application 2016-2019 Annual Report 2011 attachment 6_4

NPA Norad application 2016-2019 Annual Report 2012 attachment 6_3

NPA Norad application 2016-2019 Annual Report 2013 attachment 6_2

NPA Norad application 2016-2019 Annual Report 2014 attachment 6_1

NPA Policy: Land and Natural Resources

NPA Policy: Organization and participation

NPA, 2016: Organisational Development sheets (Draft)

NPA: NPA’s Added Value: An overview (Draft)

Organisational Review of UAWC 2013, Elaine Bradley & Associates, NPA Palestine 2013

Oxfam 2016: Unearthed: Land, power, and inequality in Latin America, Oxfam International

SSuLA/NPA 2014: Large-scale Land Investments in South Sudan, SSuLA and NPA

Yin, Robert. (2014) Case Study Research: Design and Methods. (5th Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Appendix 2: List of interviews

Organization	Respondent	Country	Date	Type
NPA Oslo	Nina Bjerke Tawanda	Norway	04-06.04.2017	Meetings
	Line Katheeb	Norway		
	Helle Berggrav	Norway		
	Magnus Flacké	Norway		
	Claudio Feo	Norway		
NPA Myanmar	Chan Myat Thu	Myanmar	25.05.2017	Meeting
NPA Myanmar	Carine Jaquet	Myanmar	27.10.2017	Meeting
Alarm/EcoDev	Win Myo Thu	Myanmar	30.05.2017	Meeting
Paung Ku		Myanmar	25.05.2017	Meeting
NINU		Myanmar	26.05.2017	Meeting
Badei Dha Moe		Myanmar	29.05.2017	Meeting
Thilawa Social Development Group		Myanmar	01.06.2017	Field visit
NPA Colombia	Cristina Santacruz	Colombia	28.06.2017	Skype
ONIC (EFIN)	Dora Tavera	Colombia		Skype
ANZORC	Carmenza Gómez	Colombia		Skype
ONIC	Luis Fernando Arias	Colombia		Skype
NPA South Sudan	Riek James	South Sudan	03.07.2017	Skype
	Ade Jackson Moses			
	Michelle D'Arcy			
South Sudan Law Society	Victor Lowilla	South Sudan	04.07.2017	Skype
State Land Alliances (Friend of Bapis)	David Nhial, Benjamin Dak	South Sudan	04.07.2017	Skype
NPA Palestine	Mahmoud Hamada	Palestine	04.07.2017	Skype
PAEEP	Diana Kuhail	Palestine	06.07.2017	Skype
Union of Agricultural Work Committees	Doa'a Zayed	Palestine	05.07.2017	Skype
NPA Zimbabwe	Perpetua Bganya	Zimbabwe	13.11.2017	Skype
AIAS	Walter Chambati	Zimbabwe	15.11.2017	Skype
ZimRights		Zimbabwe	14.03.2017	Meeting (Oslo)

Cross cutting evaluation of Norwegian People's Aid's work within the area of «Organizing for the defence



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