



PRACTICE NOTE

Aid Effectiveness – Role of Civic Driven Change

Drafted by Glenn Bond, Save the Children Australia as notes from "Aid Effectiveness Seminar" by Professor Alan Fowler, held at AusAID, Canberra, 9 September 2008.

The role of Civic Driven Change (CDC) in assessing aid effectiveness.

Professor Fowler summarised a twelve-month process coordinated through the Institute of Social Studies in Den Haag considering the role of Civic Driven Change (CDC) in assessing aid effectiveness. The premise is that neither a "state" discourse (around governance and capacity) nor a "market" discourse (generally linked to economic growth) has proven adequate in explaining aid performance. The argument is that people and their actions are marginalised when the discussion is limited to these forms. The pool of experts involved has come up with a range of common platforms regarding the inclusive nature of civic participation and the need to move away from the focus on 'civil society' as a third sector towards the notion of 'civic agency' (people as a fundamental feature of all socio-political processes).

Research on 'horizontal development'

This study began with an exploration of poor-to-poor development (the way poor people contribute to the development of their own communities independently of external aid providers) in four African countries. Alan was in Australia in 2007 talking about the book that emerged from this ("The Poor Philanthropist") and its implications on design, monitoring and evaluation of aid projects. In the time since, the research has advanced the notion of Philanthropy of Community (POC) to explore the different dimensions of horizontal development and how these might compete or contradict dominant approaches applied by NGOs, donors and other players.

Further information:

A series of essays produced under the Civic Driven Change Initiative on expressions of civic agency, erosion of civic agency and possibilities for Civic Driven Change can be downloaded from www.iss.nl/cdc

2007 book *The Poor Philanthropist* is available electronically at:

http://www.gsb.uct.ac.za/gsbwebb/userfiles/Poor_philanthropist_screen.pdf

Endorsed at the ACFID Development Practice Committee (DPC) Meeting May 2009