



Non-state actors in Senegal

Towards a strategy for political action

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This new series of briefs is designed to facilitate an exchange of information on the role played by non-state actors (NSAs) in implementing the Cotonou Partnership Agreement between the ACP and the EC. Their aim is to cite examples of innovative practices and to demonstrate the challenges facing NSAs as development partners in different countries.

Context

Political and economic perspective

Since gaining independence in 1960, Senegal has had a pluralistic democratic political system, although from 1966 to 1974 it was effectively a one-party state. A multi-party system was not established until 1981. Today, there are more than 60 political parties, 13 of which are represented in the National Assembly. In 2000, power changed hands smoothly and the army did not intervene in the political debate. The new constitution approved by referendum in 2001 guarantees Human rights (as enshrined in numerous international declarations) and the rule of law.

Though officially a secular republic, Senegal has an Islamic majority (more than 90% of the population) and religious brotherhoods have a major influence on society. However, the country is often cited as an example of ethnic and religious tolerance. Nevertheless, for almost 20 years there has been an internal conflict in the Casamance region, where an independence movement is active. A lasting political solution is now emerging with some difficulty, thanks to a process of dialogue in which non-state actors have been involved.

Despite an average growth rate of 5% and 2.56% population growth in 2003, the economy remains fragile, with limited investment, an ill-equipped agricultural sector, disengagement by the central government and inadequate education and health care. Despite reforms, the machinery of government remains cumbersome and corruption is still rife. Finally, tax policy is restrictive, the

financial sector is not very competitive and the country remains heavily dependent on development aid.

Democratisation and decentralisation

Senegal's position is unusual, in that representative democracy was established as soon as the colonial period ended. The development of non-state organisations has enabled civil society to recreate settings in which solidarity can be expressed. Another unusual feature of the country is that it has

more than 30 years' experience of decentralisation. Launched in 1966, this process was boosted by the establishment of 'local authorities in rural areas' in 1972. In 1996, extensive powers and responsibilities were transferred to local government as part of a regionalisation policy. This process of reform has since been monitored by a large number of institutions¹ and local elected representatives have organised themselves into associations.² Since 2001, all issues relating to local government have been handled at central government level by the Ministry of the Interior. Article 3 of the Local Government

Fact file

- Human Development Indicator Rank: 157/173
- Total population (millions) 2002 : 9.9
- Urban population (as % of total), 2002 : 48.9
- GDP per capita (US\$), 2002 : 503
- Life expectancy at birth (years), 2002 : 52.7
- Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births), 2002 : 79

- ODA received per capita (US\$), 2002 : 45.5
- Total debt service (as % of GDP), 2002 : 4.3



Source: Human Development Indicators 2003, UNDP website

Source map: ECDPM

Code prescribes that local governments shall 'involve civil-society organisations and community groups as partners in carrying out economic, educational, social and cultural development projects'. Article 102 of the Constitution of 7 January 2001 states that 'local governments shall form the institutional framework for participation by citizens in the running of public affairs'. If properly implemented, this policy could eventually foster cooperation between government and civil society.

However, the decentralisation policy has run into numerous obstacles against a background of deteriorating public services, which were seriously affected by structural adjustment plans during the 1980-2000 period. Moreover, the transfer of powers has not been accompanied by the allocation of the resources needed in order for those powers to be exercised effectively. In the absence of funds, local authorities are unable to shoulder their increased responsibilities. In addition, the relevance of the new administrative arrangements has been frequently challenged. As stated in the 2002-2007 European cooperation strategy paper, 'in virtually all local authorities, elected representatives and civil society have developed separately in a highly politicised context. There are hardly any mechanisms for local dialogue and consultation. Political disputes and sectarian quarrels would seem to dominate local government, at the expense of a unified, participatory approach to the management of local development.' The only official consultation of non-state actors takes place through regional and departmental development councils (RDCs and DDCs). These are frameworks for decentralised government rather than for an independent dialogue on public policy. At the same time, low pay induces talented people to move elsewhere and contributes to the deterioration of public services. However, decentralisation does allow for the decentralised involvement of non-state actors: initiatives include capacity-building for local elected representatives, for example in cooperation with the African Network for Integrated Development (RADI), and participation in dialogue aimed at drawing up local development plans.

Civil society in Senegal

Civil society in Senegal is extremely heterogeneous, and consists of both formal and informal community groups. The government has officially listed 316 non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as numerous associations, trade unions, media organisations, universities, research centres, umbrella organisations and 'tontines' (informal solidarity groups). These organisations are grouped together in consortia according to status or area of interest. However, the overall picture remains confused and often

fails to reflect the proliferation of local organisations, whose emergence and continued existence depend on the availability of donor funding.

Action by NGOs is governed by the Decree of 30 June 1989, as amended in 1996. NGOs must be approved by the government, acting through the Ministry of Family Affairs and National Solidarity. Civil society in Senegal as a whole faces numerous difficulties. According to a study by Oussouby Touré and Arona Soumaré,³ 'the insidious threat to civil-society organisations lies in [...] the fact that the people who run them want to remain in charge indefinitely [...] and also in the lack of funding available to them, so that their members are appointed according to their availability and tend to spend more time in posts where they are likely to be paid.' This analysis may need some qualification, since commitment to voluntary work often leads to action. As part of the partnership between the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and the European Community (EC), non-state actors have set up a working group to identify the features they have in common. The weaknesses most often mentioned include:

- insufficient skills to take part in technical negotiations or draw up alternative proposals;
- insufficient organisational skills to obtain strategic information and mobilise strong support on issues of common concern;
- no functional, lasting framework for dialogue;
- insufficient institutional support to bear the costs of participation.

Participation in cooperation with the EU

Before Cotonou: a solid basis for the involvement of non-state actors

Cooperation between the European Union and Senegal goes back many years and hence involves institutional actors (i.e. the Delegation of the European Commission and the state) who are fully familiar with the ACP-EC dialogue and how it has evolved. In Senegal, the Delegation of the European Commission has been a driving force behind cooperation with non-state actors. The first European Development Funds (EDFs) have left their mark in the form of major heavy infrastructure projects based on a technological, top-down approach. But since Lomé IV, Senegal has seen a proliferation of micro-projects which have established the principle of support for grass-roots community initiatives. These are the first large-scale programmes to have been based on an overall

decentralised approach to cooperation, and are evidence that both the Senegalese and the European authorities are willing to make changes to EDF cooperation practices. A good deal of money has gone into these projects, and five major NGOs⁴ have worked hard to make this approach an integral part of EDF programmes, carrying out micro-projects in rural areas, 'priority programmes for job creation' in urban areas and support programmes for cultural initiatives. These programmes have enabled elected representatives to play a much more important part in development programmes: in the past 75% of micro-projects were set up by civil society, but today everything is done by elected representatives under the Support Programme for Local Development Initiatives.

The results of these initiatives have been mixed: although they have fostered decentralised cooperation, as endorsed by the European Commission's 1999 orientation note⁵, not enough lessons have been learned from them, and this has made it more difficult to mainstream the participatory approach into the next EDF programmes. In general, its advantages have not been properly exploited even by the Delegation of the European Commission. According to an evaluation of the budget line for decentralised cooperation in Senegal,⁶ elected representatives would be more readily accepted by local people if they took systematic account of traditional associations and authorities. Finally, lack of funding has undermined the long-term viability of the process, especially where budgets are controlled by a single group of actors.

Cotonou: a strategic opportunity for non-state actors

Thanks to the establishment of a tripartite dialogue in Senegal and the gradual organisation of non-state actors, the participation of 'new' actors in the 9th EDF has steadily been institutionalised. Meetings between the National Authorising Officer (NAO), the Delegation of the European Commission and non-state actors during the programming, identification and appraisal stages of programmes eventually brought together 44 members of NGOs and trade unions and 22 members of non-state organisations representing private interests to reflect on strategies and common goals. A total of 30 NGOs,⁷ five representatives of trade unions and the Trade Union Expertise and Counselling Agency (AECS), five representatives of consumer associations⁸ and a young people's representative also took part. Various segments of society were thus involved, but certain key actors were missing: religious and traditional authorities, who are increasingly called on to play a part in public life and whose role is increasingly acknowledged, local elected representatives, training and

research institutions and non-state actors from regions verging on poverty or experiencing it directly.

Programming stage

The NAO (i.e. the Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance) and the Delegation of the European Commission presented the Cotonou Partnership Agreement to non-state actors in Cotonou in October 2000 and in Dakar in February 2001. In June 2001, they held an inaugural meeting to set up a 'central group' that would supervise the preparatory work. Apart from the Delegation of the European Commission and people from various ministries (including the ministries of agriculture, health, economic affairs, infrastructure, trade and education), the institutional actors co-opted representatives of some of the most well known organisations. They were chosen so as to reflect the full diversity of non-state actors, socially disadvantaged groups (women and disabled people) and the various umbrella organisations and consortia. Account was also taken of how conspicuous and accessible they

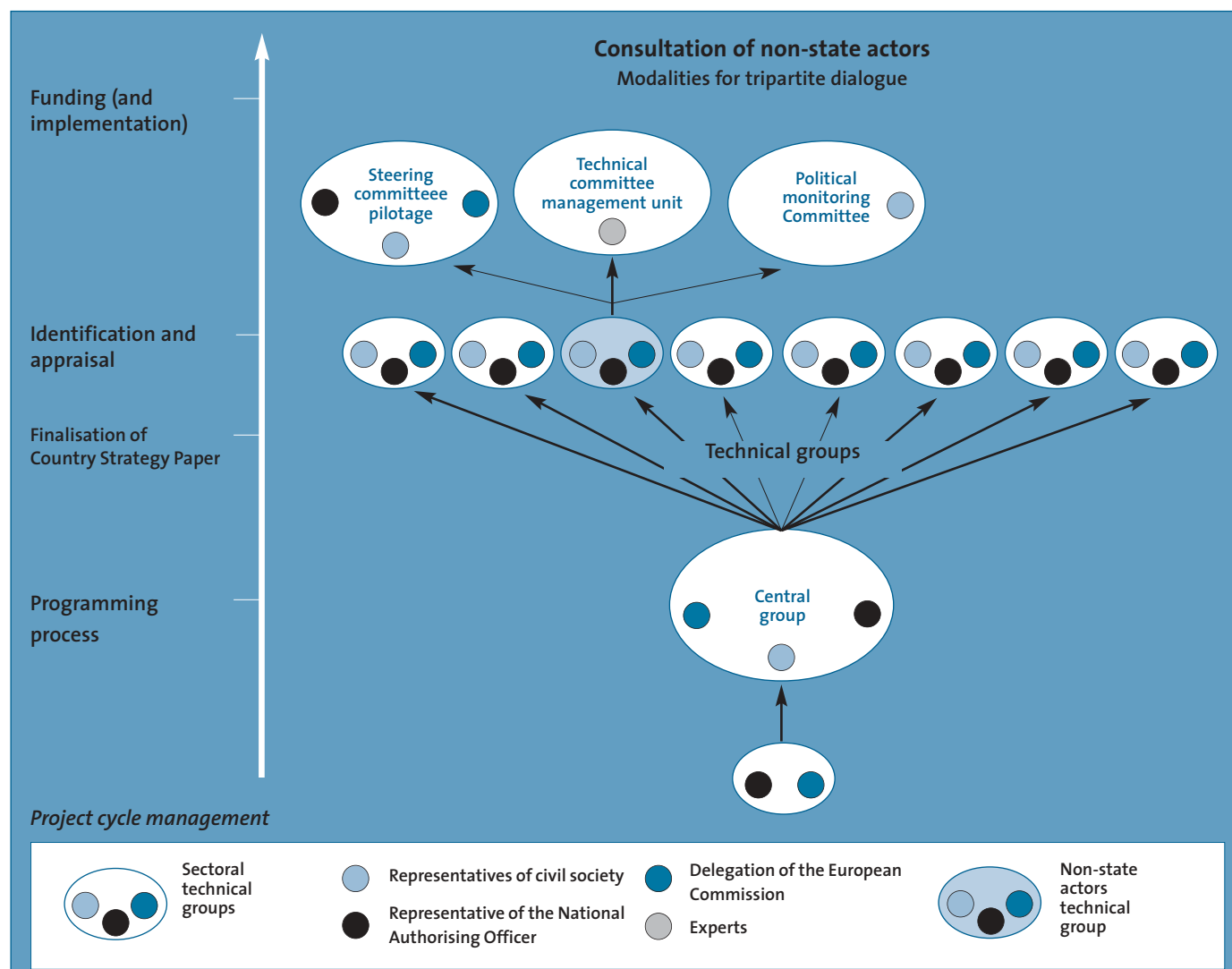
were (i.e. in terms of operating headquarters, and having telephone and Internet connections), as well as their comparative advantages in given areas. Some organisations – the Council of Non-Governmental Organisations in Support of Development (CONGAD), Research and Training Group of Environmental Development in Africa (ENDA-Graf), RADI, AECS, the Federation of NGOs in Senegal (FONGS), the National Employers' Council (CNP) and the National Consumer Council – played a particularly prominent role at the meetings and helped to make the selection. Apart from this, participation remained open to all non-state actors who expressed a wish to be involved: those European NGOs which were not targeted at first set up a joint platform in order to become involved and the Senegalese Association for Family Welfare (ASBEF), to take one example, got directly in touch with the responsible European authorities so that it could participate.

The resulting central group divided its work among eight 'technical groups', one for each focal sector of the NIP: good governance, infrastructure and transport, sanitation, bud-

get support and macroeconomic framework, health and education, non-state actors, trade and culture. These groups drew up proposals for country strategy papers (CSP), which were reviewed by the institutional actors who finalised the document. The CSP and the National Indicative Programme were finally adopted in Brussels in April 2002.

Identification and appraisal stages

During the identification and appraisal stages, the technical groups remained the same and continued to draw up proposals in regular, joint consultation with members of the Delegation of the European Commission and the ministries concerned. During these stages, non-state actors become increasingly involved in the process. For one year, the technical groups met regularly and the quality of their work was greatly appreciated. However, non-state actors had difficulty in acquiring ownership of the project cycle management as formalised by the European Commission. Analyses based on donor tools such as the standard approach using a



'logical framework' did not necessarily correspond with their own analyses of the situation. The appraisal stage thus proved more difficult than the identification stage: whilst non-state actors had no trouble analysing the situation, problems and interests of the various actors, the formalisation of the findings within a logical framework proved to be restrictive. This constrained the input from non-state actors and hence resulted in relatively conventional projects, which some participants found disappointing in comparison with the strength of the initial analyses. However, the Delegation of the European Commission provided plenty of communication tools to help the non-state actors regain ownership of the method: it systematically sent the participants reports on the technical group meetings and, at the end of the appraisal stage, held a three-day workshop for each technical group, outside Dakar, so that a funding document could be finalised with the help of a consultant. Despite all this, after using the method for a year, many of the non-state actors attending the seminar could not see its relevance. The Delegation of the European Commission would certainly have done better to adopt a more interactive approach.

Coordination and organisation of non-state actors

The process

There is no national organisation in Senegal that effectively reflects the full diversity of civil society. There are individual groups of actors (such as NGOs, employers and trade unions), but no overall coordination or organisation. Nevertheless, the NGOs' contribution to the presidential elections in March 2000 (in the shape of the Civil Society Action Front) and the establishment of an ethical committee by CONGAD on 22 November 2001 have helped to enhance their credibility with the government. However, the structuring of non-state actors remains closely linked to the various dialogue settings created as part of cooperation policy (such as the PRSP and ACP-EC cooperation).

Despite considerable investment in a decentralised cooperation approach and in micro-projects, the new policy of involving non-state actors as envisaged by the Cotonou Partnership Agreement has not really taken off. There has been a failure to capitalise on the experience gained, even though local communities, civil-society actors and the Delegation of the European Commission have all worked together on a range of local development projects. Despite this, the involvement of new actors has been described as a model for the region.

Even though the decentralised cooperation approach as such did not actually work, it did lay the foundations for effective, constructive dialogue between the Senegalese government, the Delegation of the European Commission and non-state actors. Institutional actors' experience of micro-projects and decentralised cooperation programmes may explain their open-mindedness, dynamism and readiness to engage in dialogue with the new actors. At the same time, the assumption is that their participation in the partnership with the EC will take the form of a step-by-step approach.

Mandate and role

There is no single umbrella organisation with a mandate to represent civil society in its dealings with donors. However, some organisations have become particularly closely involved in the process, such as CONGAD and FONGS in the NGO sectors.

The Council of Non-Governmental Organisations in Support of Development (CONGAD) seeks to achieve five main objectives:

- developing NGOs' technical skills, institutional and organisational capacity;
- encouraging social, political, economic and cultural dialogue among actors and organising networks and alliances, including among NGOs;
- supporting decentralisation and local development;
- using new information technologies to build NGOs' capacity and raise their profile, capitalising on their experience in doing so;
- encouraging the exchange of information and dialogue at national and regional levels.

The federation of NGOs in Senegal (FONGS), which focuses more on rural areas, aims to increase inter-community solidarity, develop the autonomous skills of rural organisations and encourage its members to assume responsibility by means of communication and training programmes. It performs various activities in this connection: reforestation, training, running 'cereal banks', literacy campaigns, alleviation of women's tasks, land management, etc.

The private sector has been represented mainly by employers' and employees' associations such as the National Employers' Council (CNP) and the Trade Union Expertise and Counselling Agency (AECS). The CNP, which covers various fields, is a coordinating, representative body which gives businesses information, provides them with a framework for dialogue, represents them in dealings with their partners, publishes economic and social studies and helps promote

regional economic integration. For its part, the AECS enhances the capacity of trade union officials by means of a synergetic policy aimed at analysing economic, social and globalisation issues. It is also a tool for mobilisation and lobbying by Senegalese trade unions, as well as a research and counselling centre. The Constitution acknowledges and guarantees the right to form trade unions and to strike. Senegal has several sectoral trade unions and trade union confederations with a strong influence on political and social life.

Representativeness

Such is the diversity of Senegalese civil society that it is difficult to represent it properly. Actors in the NGO sector tend to be preoccupied by their representativeness and legitimacy, and many NGOs seek to take control of federative processes and organisations at the expense of the achievement of common goals. Of these, CONGAD, the Civil Forum and FONGS claim to represent the entire NGO sector. Other civil-society actors are in less of a position to compete, particularly certain federative bodies which are regularly involved in the process (such as the AECS and the CNP).

CONGAD is one of the more representative of the main bodies, since it includes half (165) of the NGOs in the country, but its leadership is challenged by some large organisations which do not belong to it, including the Research and Training Group of Environmental Development in Africa (ENDA-Graf), the Civil Forum and the Platform of European NGOs. However, this does not prevent these organisations from cooperating altogether, as the organisation of civil-society meetings involving close cooperation between CONGAD, ENDA-Graf and the Civil Forum makes clear. Furthermore, some members of umbrella organisations are represented in various bodies. FONGS includes 24 rural organisations from all over Senegal. It has more than 100,000 active members in 2,031 village groups, mainly women (65%). The CNP is a confederation of 20 employers' associations covering more than 650 companies. According to the most recent representativeness survey carried out by the administrative authorities, it is the leading employers' association in Senegal, covering more than 70% of modern manufacturing and more than 80,000 permanent wage-earning jobs. As for the AECS, it is fairly representative, but the level of membership remains low, despite considerable pluralism and the active involvement of trade unions in national dialogue. The quality of such representation is harder to assess (i.e. in terms of the presence of mechanisms for distributing information to members, their ability to analyse and voice members' concerns, etc.). The situation in Senegal is thus very un-

sual, since even before donors established a framework for dialogue there was already a multitude of organisations structured according to the field of interest or to the group of actors at a national level. At the same time, there is no national organisation of non-state actors that specialises in monitoring ACP-EC cooperation. The framework for dialogue established since the Cotonou Partnership Agreement did not therefore initiate the structuring of civil society in Senegal. However, it has increased coherence by establishing a platform for dialogue between many organisations that were already very active at a national level.

Dialogue mechanisms

Dialogue as part of the ACP-EU partnership

Throughout the process, tripartite dialogue (i.e. between non-state actors, the Delegation of the European Commission and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance) has continued within the various technical groups. Although it has worked quite well, it has basically been maintained by the Delegation of the European Commission, as government officials have been reluctant to treat non-state actors as partners. At the same time, they cannot be said to have been obstructionist. They have acknowledged that contributions by non-state actors were decisive during the planning stage and have even described the country strategy paper as a model for the region, allocating it EUR 10 million out of the EUR 35 million earmarked for the promotion of good governance. The members of the Delegation of the European Commission have been particularly active in the case of Senegal. They have taken the process to heart and are attempting to lay the foundations for a participatory approach. Finally, the absence of elected representatives (both local and parliamen-

tary) has been noted during the debates. However, local governments have limited financial, human and logistic resources and few elected representatives have grasped the importance of the participatory approach advocated by the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, even though they have always been invited to attend meetings.

This tripartite dialogue has led to the creation of new dialogue mechanisms:

- a tripartite steering committee (comprising the NAO, the Delegation of the European Commission and non-state actors) to ensure institutional and operational monitoring of the process;
- a technical financial management unit made up of experts responsible for allocating and disbursing funds intended for non-state actors;
- an independent political monitoring committee made up of non-state actors to guarantee ownership of the process.

The original intention was that the political monitoring committee would only be responsible for funds allocated for its own capacity-building. However, the non-state actors involved have asked to be made responsible for their own activities, and this was agreed by the Delegation of the European Commission. They have also managed to ensure that the political monitoring committee is not subordinate to the steering committee, as was originally intended. As these bodies are in the process of being set up, it is too early at this stage to assess their impact on the quality of the dialogue.

Dialogue in the wider context of national policies

In the past, Senegalese NGOs often had a difficult rapport with the government, but things have now changed considerably.

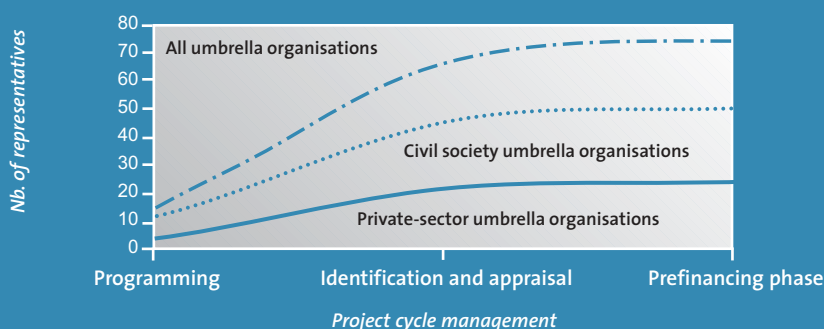
Between 1989 and 1996, there were intense discussions between the government and the NGO community, under the auspices of CONGAD, with the aim of drawing up regulations that would facilitate the work of NGOs and encourage their involvement in the running of public affairs. The adoption of Decree No. 96-103 of 8 February 1996, Section 22 of which establishes a framework for consultations between the government and NGOs, marked a major breakthrough in the political dialogue between the government and civil society. However, the NGOs regard it as being too tentative and it has not been fully implemented. For many years, the involvement of NGOs has been limited to formal meetings initiated by ministries in an atmosphere of mutual distrust that have not been followed up. NGOs feel that the government involves them only in order to satisfy donors' demands and only during the discussion stage rather than the monitoring and evaluation stages, thus considerably restricting the opportunities for any meaningful social input. For its part, the government regards NGOs as disparate, accuses them of lacking professional qualifications and infighting, and even questions their legitimacy. This does not make for effective coordination or regular monitoring of consultations at a national level. However, non-state actors are now building up their negotiating strengths. They are increasingly acknowledged as valuable discussion partners, even in difficult political situations (for instance, they have mediated in the conflict in Casamance).

Dialogue with other donors

Senegal has considerable experience in including non-state actors in dialogue mechanisms. The participatory approach adopted at a national level when the PRSP was drafted on the initiative of the World Bank has been so far the most extensive. It began by making a full inventory of civil-society organisations and making outreach visits to individual organisations in order to provide them with information and terms of reference and tell them what their participation would entail. The national seminar that launched the process in 2001 was attended by more than 200 people. Five thematic groups worked diligently in exchange workshops involving large numbers of non-state actors. Regional agencies prepared consultations with members of parliament, chairpersons of rural councils, mayors, civil-society organisations and the government. In July 2002, however, an inspection report commissioned by the World Bank concluded that grass-roots actors had suffered from a lack of information and that they needed capacity-building and greater openness if they were to be actively involved in social and economic policy-making.

The FAO and the World Bank have jointly

Increased participation in dialogue by non-state actors
(technical groups)



backed the National Council for Rural Consultation and Cooperation (CNCR) in encouraging the involvement of rural organisations in the Agriculture and Producer Organisations support programme. The aim is to improve their ability to analyse agricultural problems, and this has led to in-depth proposals at regional level to protect African products from unfair international competition. The United Nations Development Programme has launched the RAF95 project, which is designed to set up a national civil-society unit to encourage the involvement of civil society in drawing up and implementing development programmes. Also worth mentioning is the support given to trade unions by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in order to enhance officials' capacity and improve coordination. However valuable these initiatives may appear, the question arises as to how they were launched and whether they are designed as strategic responses to demand from beneficiaries.

Key points

- *An innovative and dynamic participation process*

The Delegation of the European Commission and the National Authorising Officer have been extremely active in organising the participation of non-state actors in Senegal. Their decision to distribute the work among technical groups each of which is responsible for a focal sector and to ensure that all three types of actor (i.e. the Delegation of the European Commission, the NAO and non-state actors) are represented within each group at the programming, identification and appraisal stages is entirely innovative. The existence of a separate 'non-state actors group' has raised the question of whether there is political pressure to exclude them from other areas of cooperation. Although it was essential to set up this group so that the new actors and their activities could be structured for the first time, it is a fact that almost all of them have joined either this group or the good governance group. All the working groups are open to everyone, and it is important for non-state actors to be just as fully involved in the infrastructure, sanitation and other groups in future.

- *First steps in partnership*

Participation is something new for all the actors concerned, and it is too early at this stage to speak of a true partnership between the Delegation of the European Commission, the National Authorising Officer and non-state actors. For example,

the working method was imposed by the Delegation of the European Commission, even though it did not feel natural to non-state actors, whose views on the subject were not sought. As Emmanuel Seyni Ndione, executive secretary in charge of ENDA-Graf coordination, points out, what matters most now is that the Delegation of the European Commission should no longer be seen simply as a cash desk for non-state actors, but as a partner with whom there can be a fruitful dialogue. For their part, in order to be credible and to be accepted as fully-fledged partners, non-state actors must build up a strategy for concerted action. The approach based on representativeness should make way for a goal-oriented approach, which means that they must reach political agreement on what needs to be changed. Abdou Salam Fall, a researcher at the Fundamental Institute for Black Africa at Dakar's Cheikh Anta Diop University, stresses that, within each network, the issue of representativeness soon becomes a force that can lead to the fragmentation of civil society. He believes this risk is compounded by the fact that the umbrella organisations involved do not have a tradition of sharing information: for example, there is very little exchange of information between universities and research centres in French-speaking countries.⁹

- *Lack of support and training for non-state actors*

Non-state actors have not been given the logistic or financial resources to organise their participation, despite the fact that this involves both budgetary and human resource costs which cannot be borne by many small organisations – especially those located a long way from Dakar, which is where all the meetings are held. Furthermore, non-state actors do not have an independent forum available to them where they can consult and adopt common positions. This would have saved a good deal of time at the meetings, some of which were little more than wearisome, disorganised 'participatory' free-for-alls. This issue has now been put on the agenda, and has led to the establishment of a tripartite steering committee and the non-state actors' own political monitoring committee. Taking advantage of the programming process for the 9th EDF, the actors have endeavoured to solve this problem by identifying a support programme for non-state actors.

- *Failure to regain ownership of the process*

The absence of key actors from Senegalese society (i.e. religious authorities, local elected representatives, training and research

institutions and regional non-state actors other than their permanent representatives in Dakar) is an initial sign that many actors have failed to regain ownership of the process. In fact, everyone involved deplores the overall failure to get the process going again, whether by the organisers, the umbrella organisations such as CONGAD or individuals operating at a grass-roots level. Those who have participated have essentially been individuals rather than institutions, arousing fears that the process may be monopolised by a small minority. In response to this criticism, various confederations and trade union organisations are now making efforts to get the process going again at a grass-roots level.

The fact that non-state actors have only joined the good governance and non-state actors technical groups is also worrying, as they should really be involved right across the board. They have valuable contributions to make in every area of cooperation (such as infrastructure, transport and sanitation).

- *Lack of long-term views on national policy*

Non-state actors have proved particularly active in the case of Senegal, volunteering to attend all the meetings and producing high-quality written contributions. However, their involvement has remained technical and relatively passive, in the sense that they have not taken any initiatives or anticipated the process. They have failed to propose any public service projects in their fields of activity, even though their direct contact with everyday reality means they often have greater expertise than institutional actors. Non-state actors have taken insufficient advantage of in-depth analyses of their country and have confined themselves to purely functional, financial considerations, without expressing any long-term views on national policy.

Challenges and opportunities

- *Promising new institutional arrangements*

The above has led to the establishment of three new dialogue mechanisms: a tripartite steering committee, a technical finance management unit and an independent political monitoring committee (see section on dialogue mechanisms). These new arrangements are both promising and limited. They are promising because they are evidence of the open-mindedness and dynamism of institutional actors, who are responding swiftly to non-state actors' expectations by

creating new settings for dialogue and organisation. However, they still have many limitations, especially financial ones, since most of their members are unpaid. Moreover, the committee has no control over the allocation or the disbursement of funds and hence limited influence over the choice of projects. Finally, it is expected to be as open as possible to every component of civil society in Senegal. The group's aim is to ensure that non-state actors regain ownership of the entire process and that they take an active part in all the technical groups. Its longer-term goal, on behalf of civil society, is to monitor all national policies associated with Senegal's overall development. The purpose of this is to determine the new actors' capacity to supervise the monitoring and evaluation of ACP-EC cooperation projects and other national development projects.

- *First steps towards a joint strategy on national policy by non-state actors*

The establishment of the political monitoring committee is the first step towards a joint strategy by non-state actors. It is the first consultative body to bring together the full range of non-state actors independently of government and donors alike. The challenge is to ensure that the input of non-state actors is not merely confined to the management of funds intended for their own capacity-building. Instead, they must be involved in all areas (infrastructure, trade, etc.). This points to a strategic change and a new awareness of their role, since there had been a risk that the Delegation of the European Commission would effectively confine them to managing their own specific funds. The new actors now want to demonstrate their expertise in the field of public services. At the moment, however, only those most closely involved in the 9th EDF process are participating, as their technical knowledge of the process enables them to debate public policy in the field of development. They represent only a proportion of the non-state actors involved in the process. The challenge now is to bring in as many actors as possible from the full range of civil society and to make the best use of their skills wherever these can be of value.

- *Co-formulation of public policy, or a challenge to traditional views of development?*

The challenge for non-state actors is to become involved in drawing up and implementing public policy alongside state officials. The 9th EDF has made them more aware of the political and civic dimension of their daily activities, yet only a minority are independently organised. The new actors have influenced the process thanks to speci-

fic input from certain organisations, two of which were actually put in charge of technical groups. They have succeeded in putting their experience in the field of governance to good use and, to some extent, in conveying a different view of development. This has been an experiment in 'learning to formulate things'. However, participation has not been backed up by strong networks that can profoundly affect decisions taken by the Delegation of the European Commission; the latter retains its 'hegemony', since it initiates participation in the process. If they are to participate on an equal footing in the co-formulation of public policy, non-state actors must discuss not only the approach, but also the long-term view. This will require a proactive attitude on the part of the new actors, backed up by strong networks. The challenge is thus to put their day-to-day grass-roots experience to effective use.

- *An official national framework for dialogue?*

Fragmentation is one of the main hindrances to the process. A profusion of initiatives taken by isolated groups of actors has discredited the more dynamic organisations. There is therefore an urgent need for the government and non-state actors to set up an official national framework for dialogue that will enable the various initiatives to be coordinated. National legislation setting out the policy on partnerships between civil society and the state would make it easier for non-state actors to be treated as fully-fledged partners. The government could draw up a partnership charter that would allow for the establishment of lasting links extending beyond personal affinities, leaders' charisma and private interests. This revitalised approach to partnership could involve donors and all the other actors concerned with the development process, allowing responsibilities to be delegated to non-state actors that satisfied the transparency criteria. The recent establishment of the political monitoring committee could make this easier, as it is the first body in which non-state actors and the government can reflect jointly on this new approach to partnership.

- *Ownership of development goals by beneficiaries*

Senegal meets all the conditions for effective ownership of the ACP-EC partnership by its beneficiaries. The case of Senegal is an interesting one to look at, as it shows what can happen when the political will of the Delegation of the European Commission is combined with the dynamism of non-state actors in the new participatory framework.

Following the first flush of enthusiasm sparked off by ACP-EC cooperation and the drafting of the PRSP, non-state actors are now being led to reflect on how they are organised and coordinated and how representative they are, so that they can act more effectively and seize the opportunities they are given. Many bodies, such as the Development Research Institute, ENDA-Graf, CONGAD and FONGS, would like to set up national, regional and local civil-society monitoring centres in order to evaluate participation by civil society in partnerships with donors. Civil-society meetings are also being organised by CONGAD, and the non-state actors' technical group has repeatedly called for a study of representativeness to be carried out by a consultant. These are the first steps towards an in-depth structuring of civil society in Senegal and the effective ownership of development projects at national, regional and local levels. In this connection, the mid-term review of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement could be used to assess the development of relations between the Delegation of the European Commission and non-state actors.

Acknowledgement

The ECDPM and the author gratefully thank officials, individuals and organisations interviewed, and acknowledge their useful suggestions and comment.

The author gives a special word of thanks to Gwénaëlle Corre, the coordinator of this InBrief series, for her methodological support, her advice on the content, and her constant availability.

Notes

- 1 The Inter-ministerial Committee for Territorial Administration, the National Commission for Assistance to Rural Growth Centres, etc.
- 2 The Association of Chairpersons of Rural Councils, the Association of Senegalese Mayors and the Association of Regional Presidents, which together form the House of Local Elected Representatives.
- 3 Oussouby Touré and Arona Soumaré, *Projet 'Renforcement des capacités nationales pour le développement durable': Analyse des processus en cours au Sénégal*, Dakar, February 2003.
- 4 FONGS (Federation of NGOs in Senegal): institutional support for the National Council for Rural Consultation and Cooperation (CNCR); ENDA-Ecopop (Environmental Development in Africa, Urban Popular Economy Section): projects for technical and organisational capacity-building, human resource development and support for local development; ENDA-Graf (Environmental Development in Africa Research and Training Group): programmes for the exchange of human and material resources and inter-NGO mutual support programmes; French Association of Volunteers for Progress: project for the implementation of the decentralised cooperation approach in EDF programmes; CIEPAC (support for local development): integrated local development programme in two departments of Senegal.
- 5 European Commission, *Orientation note on decentralised cooperation*, December 1999.
- 6 COTA-AEDES-GRET-IIED Consortium, *Évaluation de la ligne budgétaire 'Coopération Décentralisée' — Mission Sénégal*, Marc Totte, Laurence Janssens, Mamadou Goita, February 2000.
- 7 Including three representatives of the CONGAD consortium, three representatives of the international NGO ENDA-Graf, five representatives of women's organisations (COSEF, FAFS, FDEA, ASBEF and Profemu), one representative of disabled people (ANHMS), four representatives of Human rights organisations (RADDHO, the Civil Forum and CSDH) and one representative of a continental educational organisation (FAWE).
- 8 Mainly ADEETEL/OIC, which is responsible for protecting the interests of consumers of services provided by the national water, electricity and telephone companies.
- 9 The ACP Civil Society Forum's website: <http://www.mwengo.org/acp/default.htm>

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Additional resources

SENEGAL, CE, Document de stratégie de coopération et programme indicatif national pour la période 2002-2007:

<http://www.delsen.cec.eu.int/fr/telechargements/coopesnUE.pdf>

Senegalese Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper:

<http://www.finances.gouv.sn/dsrpvd.html>

ACP-EU Courier No. 196, January-February 2003, Senegal country report

http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/body/publications/courier/index_196-fr.htm

British Overseas NGOs for Development (BOND), *Recherche sur la participation des acteurs de la société civile dans le processus de prise de décision, de programmation et de mise en œuvre de la coopération de l'Union européenne au Sénégal*, final report, July 2003, Moussa Bâ (sic@sentoo.sn)

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'InBrief' provides summarised background information on the main policy debates and activities in ACP-EU cooperation. These complementary summaries are drawn from consultative processes in which the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) engages with numerous state and non-state actors in the ACP and EC countries. The Centre is a non-partisan organisation that seeks to facilitate international cooperation between the ACP and the EC. Information may be reproduced as long as the source is quoted.

The ECDPM acknowledges the support it receives for the 'InBrief' from the Department for International Development in the United Kingdom, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs in Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands, the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation in Belgium, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Instituto Português de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento in Portugal.

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ISSN 1571-7437