

The Africa Liaison Program Initiative
DECEMBER 2000

MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT RELATIONSHIPS

A Report of the ALPI Sub-Regional Conferences

HELD IN:

Lagos, Nigeria
&
Nairobi, Kenya

Prepared by InterAction's Division of Development Policy and Practice



SUMMARY OF THE AFRICA LIAISON PROGRAM INITIATIVE

The **Africa Liaison Program Initiative (ALPI)** is a tripartite effort between three key stakeholders in African development: African non-governmental development organizations, US-based private and voluntary organizations and the US Agency for International Development. With full participation by stakeholders, ALPI has the potential to improve development relationships will make sustainable development in Africa an achievable goal.

Goals and objectives

ALPI is facilitated by program staff at InterAction in a cooperative agreement with USAID. Program objectives are to:

- Create a space for dialogue between these actors;
- Promote equitable, effective and mutually beneficial relationships between key actors;
- Link best development practices to better development policy in the US and Africa;
- Collect and disseminate information best practices, lessons-learned and relevant information.

These objectives contribute to the larger goal of increasing the effectiveness of US Foreign Assistance within the Development Fund for Africa mandate.

Program strategy

ALPI intends to achieve these objectives through a year-round cycle of events: sub-regional conferences in Africa, regional and Africa policy meetings in the US, and meetings and workshops on both continents. These events are linked by online dialogue and information dissemination, follow-up studies, publications, and consultations at the individual organizational level. ALPI's main loci for activity are Washington DC and three sub-regions in Africa; Francophone West Africa, Anglophone West Africa, and Southern and East Africa. Each year there will be one sub-regional conference in each of the three sub-regions. These field-based conferences will be linked to African participation at the InterAction Annual Forum and to meetings and discussions in Washington around that time. In this way, not only will there be a continuum of events and activities over the year, but field oriented discussions at the sub-regional level will directly inform policy discussions in Washington.

Past Conferences and Themes

The first set of sub-regional conferences held in Bamako, Mali; Accra, Ghana; and Harare, Zimbabwe in March 2000 dealt with the theme "**Building Effective and Equitable Partnerships for Sustainable Development in Africa**". At the conferences, NGO and PVO representatives focused on understanding institutional guidelines, values, visions and challenges for development relationships in Africa, and the identification of issues and characteristics of common interest that comprise partnerships. As the dialogue on the "tripartite" relationships progressed, capacity strengthening of African NGOs was identified as a major theme for discussion and thus "**A Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Capacity Strengthening**" became the theme of the InterAction annual Forum. While participants brought their experiences and lessons learned with regard to capacity strengthening from the field to share with policymakers in Washington, they also continually raised the issue of accountability as a key component of effective development relationships. **Mutual accountability in African Development Relationships** was thus identified as a priority issue for inclusion in the ongoing ALPI dialogue and became the theme for sub-regional conferences held in Lagos, Nigeria and Nairobi, Kenya in October 2000. The ALPI discussions have once again influenced InterAction's selection of a theme for the Forum in June 2001, which will be "**Effectiveness for Mutual Accountability.**"

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Africa Liaison Program Initiative hosted its second set of three-day sub-regional conferences in Lagos, Nigeria from October 3-5, 2000 and in Nairobi, Kenya from October 11-13, 2000. The theme for the sub-regional meetings, "A Tripartite Dialogue on Accountability in African Development", was developed from issues highlighted in the first series of sub-regional conferences (March 2000) and the first annual tripartite meeting in Washington (April 2000). The ALPI involves three major stakeholder groups: US PVOs, African NGOs, and USAID, and is managed by InterAction.

Both conferences were similar in format and structure. Beginning with an articulation of a vision for accountability, participants discussed a variety of elements of accountability, which they divided into four sub-categories: programmatic, organizational, financial and regulatory. Programmatic accountability is the responsibility of development stakeholders to deliver the expected outputs and results for programs and projects, and to report on the impact and success of their activities in achieving their specific objectives. Organizational accountability reflects the obligation to adhere to a common vision and mission, and to follow systems, procedures and policies which have been put into place to facilitate responsible action within the organization. Effective communication is a critical part of this process. Financial accountability is concerned primarily with the application of consistent policies and procedures to ensure accurate reporting to all constituencies on the honest and efficient use of resources. Finally, regulatory accountability focuses on compliance with legislation and regulations put in place to monitor responsible governance of organizations and agencies.

The agendas then moved from the formulation of a vision for accountability to discussions of substantive challenges to accountability that arise from real life experience, and to the identification of specific actions to be taken in order to find satisfactory solutions to problems instead of wishing them away. In the process, participants identified themes of common interest, challenges and opportunities emerging from the case studies and discussions. Five case studies were presented at the two conferences (2 in Lagos and 3 in Nairobi) on different aspects of accountability within tripartite development relationships.

One of the principle issues emerging from the case studies was the problem of striking a balance between accounting to donors and beneficiaries. Accountability is almost always skewed "upward" toward those stakeholders who control the resources, while responsibility for accountability is forced downward on the entity that does not control the resources. Communication (both within organizations and between PVOs, USAID, African NGOs, local governments, etc.), capacity strengthening programs, and existence of an enabling environment achieved through effective systems and policies, were also identified as major challenges to mutual accountability.

Along with challenges to accountability, participants identified opportunities for improved accountability among US PVOs, USAID and African NGOs. Consultations, regular meetings, visits, joint program review, planning between partners and stakeholders, open communication, and enabling policies were seen as important opportunities for improving accountability in development relationships.

Through in-depth analysis and prioritization of common interest areas participants identified concrete action items for various constituencies which could be implemented in conjunction with other stakeholders ahead of the upcoming Washington Week and InterAction Forum in June 2001 and the next set of sub-regional conferences in October 2001. Action items as identified by the participants cover a broad range of issues, including the need for: the development of partnership guidelines, assessment of USAID procurement hurdles, continued national and regional dialogue through frequent meetings, mapping of relationships and

existing communication patterns, and increased capacity strengthening for NGOs. Stakeholder groups committed to specific action items with defined responsibilities and timetables, and agreed to provide written reports on their progress to the various ALPI constituencies.

Both the content of the discussions at the conferences and the tasks to which the various ALPI stakeholder groups committed were notable for the depth of their follow-up content. Participants went beyond understanding accountability to talk about substantive issues and ways in which challenges to accountability among partners might realistically be addressed. Recognizing that this rich and lively dialogue is an ongoing process, the actions that participants agreed upon demonstrated an evolution from tasks identified at previous ALPI meetings. This progress was very encouraging, and we hope it will continue into the future.

ACRONYMS

ABIC	Africa Bureau Information Center
ACFVA	Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid
AED	Academy for Educational Development
ALPI	Africa Liaison Program Initiative
APROFES	Association pour la promotion de la femme Sénégalaise
CADECOM	Catholic Development Commission
CAP	Capacity Building Initiative (USAID)
CBO	Community Based Organization
CCA/ONG	Comité de Coordination des Actions des ONG au Mali
CDIE	Center for Development, Information and Evaluation
CONGAD	Conseil des Organisations Non-Gouvernementales d'Appui au Développement
DAP	Development Action Plan
DP	Development Planning
EPED	Environmental Protection and Economic Development (Project)
GAPVOD	Ghana Association of Private Voluntary Organizations in Development
GC	General Counsel
GMTA	Grants Management Technical Assistance
GPRA	Government Performance Results Act
HQ	Headquarters
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
IR	Intermediate Results
ISGM	Institutional Strengthening and Grant Making (Project)
LOP	Life of Project
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MWENGO	Mwelekeo wa NGO
NANGO	National Association of NGOs (Zimbabwe)
NANGOF	Namibia NGOs Forum
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OP	Office of Procurement
OYB	Operational Year Budget
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PPC	Program and Policy Coordination
PVC	Private Voluntary Cooperation
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
REDSO	Regional Economic Development Services Office for East and Southern Africa
SANGOCO	South African NGO Coalition
SD	Sustainable Development
SO	Strategic Objective

TANGO	Tanzania Association of NGOs
UWONET	Uganda Women's Network
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
ZCSD	Zambia Council for Social Development

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the report

The Africa Liaison Program Initiative (ALPI) hosted its second round of sub-regional conferences in Lagos, Nigeria from October 3-5, 2000 and in Nairobi, Kenya from October 11-13, 2000. The theme of the conferences, "A Tripartite Dialogue on Accountability in African Development" emerged from issues highlighted in the first series of sub-regional conferences during March 2000 and the first annual ALPI "Washington Week" in April 2000.

This report aims to share learnings arising from the discussions at the sub-regional conferences and to contribute to thinking on accountability as we prepare for the next InterAction Forum and ALPI Washington Week in June 2001. The report presents a synthesis of discussions at the West African and East and Southern African conferences, beginning with a brief look at how the theme of accountability emerged from ALPI's ongoing dialogue on development relationships in Africa. The report then examines the participants' vision of accountability, including the various elements and relations of accountability and the processes and systems which must be in place for accountability to exist in development relationships. Learnings from case studies presented at the conferences are discussed and used to articulate challenges, opportunities and indicators for accountability. A section on the specific action items identified by participants as steps towards greater accountability follows. Finally, the report offers lessons learned from both conferences and looks at the way forward for the Africa Liaison Program Initiative. Attached to the report are conference notes, agendas, and lists of participants, terms of reference for case study writers, and action items committed to by participants.

In compiling this report, InterAction staff has tried to represent as accurately as possible the voices of the participants as they discussed their relationships and expressed their reflections on accountability. We have also, however, sought to analyze the outcomes of the different conferences and compare the findings with recent literature on this topic in the hope of advancing the thinking on this complex issue of accountability, and laying the groundwork for the multi-stakeholder dialogue on accountability at the 2001 InterAction Forum.

Description of the conferences

The Africa Liaison Program Initiative (ALPI) operates under two basic principles; the first being to create a "safe space" for frank and serious dialogue among the various ALPI stakeholders on the formulation of sound development policies and incorporation of good development practice in the implementation of those policies. ALPI strives to provide an open environment where all participants feel comfortable sharing their views on what are often sensitive issues and are not afraid of retributions. The second basic operating principle of the program is a recognition that despite significant differences in development approach, philosophy, values, and practice among organizations, stakeholders are willing to discuss these differences in the hope that talking and working together to address concrete development problems in Africa will benefit the people they are supposed to serve. The program facilitators kept these principles in mind as they worked out the design of the conferences.

Both the West Africa and East and Southern Africa sub-regional conferences were similar in objective and design. Agendas for both sets of meetings, developed in consultation with the ALPI Advisory Committee members (comprised of USAID, African NGO and US PVO representatives), sought to provide a space for the participants to develop a vision for accountability by examining their own understanding of accountability and the meaning of that often elusive concept for African development. The agendas then moved from the vision exercise to a "reality check", using case studies from the field and participants' own

experiences to compare the vision of accountability as previously articulated with reality. In the process, participants identified themes of common interest, challenges and opportunities emerging from the case studies and discussions. The common interest areas were analyzed in depth, and prioritized before participants discussed concrete action items for various constituencies which could be implemented in conjunction with other stakeholders ahead of the upcoming Washington Week and InterAction Forum in June 2001 and the next set of sub-regional conferences in October 2001. Areas of divergence and grey areas¹ were also identified and agreed upon for examination as the dialogue continues. Further details on the conference programs can be obtained from the attached agendas in Appendix A.

The design of agendas also took into account differences in participating organizations' mandates, missions, objectives and constituencies, priorities, constraints, regulations, backgrounds, cultures, etc. It sought to address individual differences among participants along with the desire for maximum participation and the need to hear a variety of voices and different perspectives. In various sessions, participants first formed stakeholder groups (e.g. African NGO representatives working together, US PVO representatives working together, and USAID mission representatives working together) thus allowing for the various ALPI constituencies to consider the issue of accountability separately. Participants then came together in mixed sub-groups to gain both an understanding of their pre-conceived ideas about accountability and different roles and responsibilities based on stakeholder groups, then to discuss areas of areas of consensus and divergence and obtain consensus from the plenary on issues of common concern.

MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT RELATIONSHIPS

Context of Accountability

Accountability is an important and complex issue that most development stakeholders agree is central to international cooperation and development practice. Over the past decade, as NGOs have increasingly gained power and influence, much of the focus has been on a call for greater accountability. While USAID and other donor agencies continue to reduce their field staff, PVOs are being approached as implementers of development programs in Africa. PVOs, in turn are increasingly collaborating with local African NGOs in their work. In fact, almost 40% of USAID program funds are now being channeled through PVOs and NGOs. As a result of these changing realities, many donor organizations, including USAID, have responded with policies for increased public participation and dissemination of information to a wider development community. Unfortunately, discrepancies between policies and practice have often exacerbated, rather than eased, the tensions between donors and civil society. Similarly, tensions have grown as practitioner NGOs (US PVOs and local NGOs) try to balance levels of accountability to various stakeholders.

Accountability in the context of development relationships in Africa is a somewhat elusive notion, the meaning of which is often interpreted differently by various stakeholder groups engaged in the development process. An understanding of roles and responsibilities of donors, African NGOs, US PVOs, governments, and communities in accounting to one another is not always shared among these different stakeholder groups. Recent thinking and literature, as well as views of practitioners, however, suggest that the concept of "mutual accountability" is

¹ "Grey areas" were those concepts identified by participants which were recognized as important but difficult to define and develop indicators for. Some examples of "grey areas" include: the values of trust and honesty, justice, performance measurements and criteria, institutional capacity, competition among PVOs and NGOs for resources, the financial cost of accountability, and reporting content and requirements.

increasingly becoming central to the debate around accountability. Mutual accountability implies that all stakeholders hold one another answerable for agreed upon actions and results. It is this concept of mutual accountability in African development relationships that ALPI sought to address in the October 2000 sub-regional conferences. Discussions of this idea generated a lot of interest and additional issues that participants recognized need more dialogue in the upcoming months.

The theme of accountability emerged as part of the ongoing ALPI dialogue between African NGOs, US PVOs and USAID. The Africa Liaison Program Initiative was first started with the overarching goal of strengthening development relationships between African NGOs, US PVOs, and USAID missions in Africa towards the provision of more effective US development assistance. The first set of sub-regional conferences held in March 2000 approached these issues under the theme "Building Effective and Equitable Partnerships for Sustainable Development in Africa". At the conferences, NGO and PVO representatives focused on understanding institutional guidelines, values, visions and challenges for development relationships in Africa, and the identification of issues and characteristics of common interest that comprise partnerships. As the dialogue on the "tripartite" relationships progressed, capacity strengthening of African NGOs was identified as the major theme for discussion at the March 2000 sub-regional conferences. Differences in interpretation between US and African NGOs on capacity strengthening was evident, as was a desire to find practical solutions. The emphasis on capacity strengthening at the sub-regional conferences influenced InterAction to address the subject in greater depth at its 2000 Annual Forum. As a result, "A Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Capacity Strengthening" became the theme of the first ALPI "Washington Week" and of sessions facilitated by the Committee on Development Policy and Practice at InterAction's Forum. While participants brought their experiences and lessons learned with regard to capacity strengthening from the field to share with policymakers in Washington, they also continually raised the issue of accountability as a key component of effective development relationships. Accountability was thus identified as a priority issue for inclusion in the ongoing ALPI dialogue, given its centrality to effective cooperation and joint efforts among the African NGOs, US PVOs, and USAID missions working towards sustainable development in Africa.

Vision of Accountability

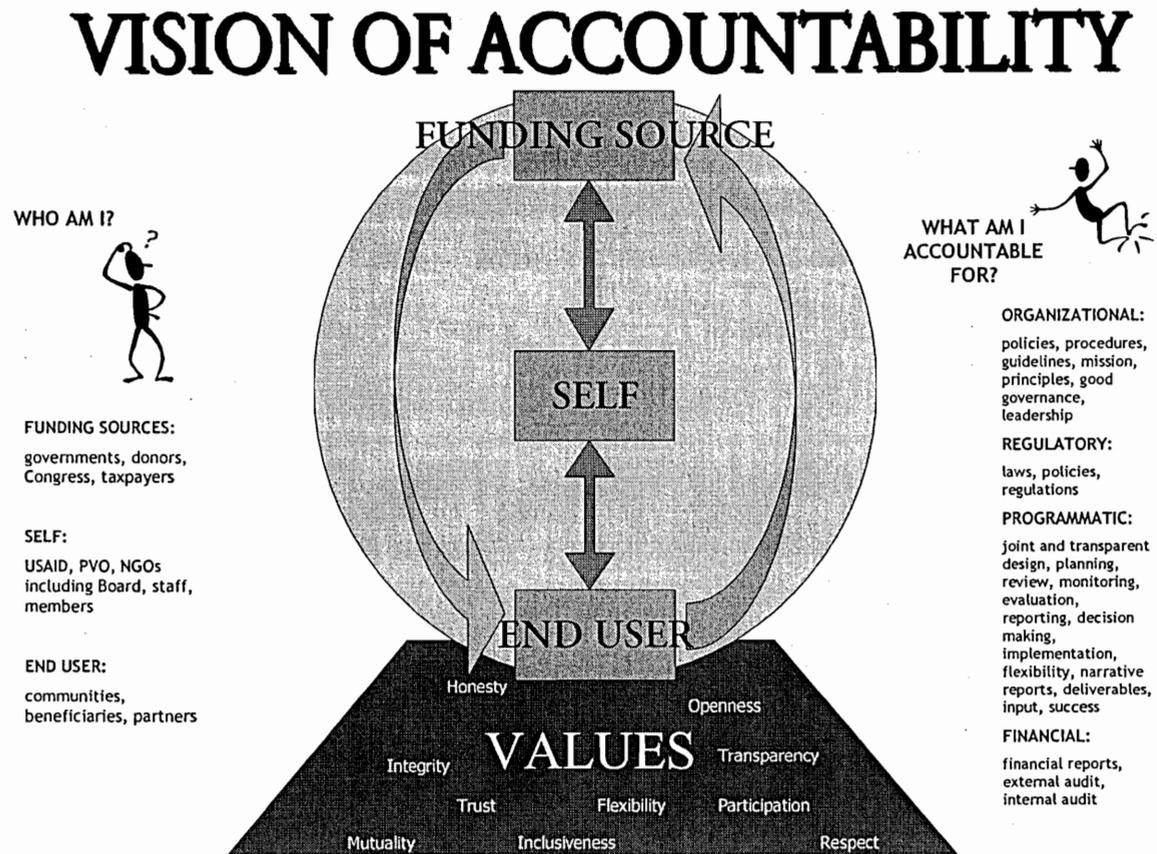
In discussing accountability at the most recent set of sub-regional conferences, participants articulated their respective understandings of accountability, including to whom they are accountable, for what they are accountable, and what processes or mechanisms need to be in place for accountability to work.

Accountability was described as a "chain", in which different stakeholder groups hold different positions. It was noted that all actors in the development process are located somewhere along the chain, where they are held accountable both to those above them and those below them. USAID mission representatives are accountable to USAID Washington, the US Congress, and ultimately, although indirectly, US taxpayers. But they also are accountable to the PVOs and NGOs they work with, as well as program beneficiaries. US PVOs operating in Africa are similarly held accountable to their donor organizations and head offices, as well as the African NGOs they work with and the end users they are trying to serve. African NGO networks report not only to their beneficiaries and NGO members, but also to donor agencies, their collaborators in development, and national governments.

One characteristic these groups (USAID, US PVOs and African NGOs) share in common is an obligation to answer to constituencies both "above and below" them. They also, however, share an obligation to answer to their own organizations internally, or "inwards". Reporting to their own executive boards, staff and members is a critical aspect of accountability.

The diagram below (Diagram 1) was developed as a composite view of the vision of accountability described by participants at both conferences. This framework was used in the analysis of learnings from case studies, challenges and opportunities for accountability described in this report. Boxes represent actors in the development process with arrows pointing to the "directions" in which accountability should occur. The entire relationship, as shown by the circle, relies on a solid base of shared values.

Diagram 1.



While making it clear that different stakeholders in the development process are accountable to a wide array of constituencies, participants to both conferences also identified various types of products that they must account to these groups for. They discussed a variety of elements of accountability, which can basically be divided into four sub-categories: programmatic, organizational, financial and regulatory. *Programmatic accountability* is the responsibility of development stakeholders to deliver the expected outputs and results for programs and projects, and to report on the impact and success of their activities in achieving their specific objectives. *Organizational accountability* reflects the obligation to adhere to a common vision and mission, and to follow systems, procedures and policies which have been put into place to facilitate responsible action within the organization. Effective communication is a critical part of this process. *Financial accountability* is concerned primarily with the application of consistent policies and procedures to ensure accurate reporting to all constituencies on the honest and efficient use of resources. Finally, *regulatory accountability* focuses on compliance with legislation and regulations put in place to monitor responsible governance of organizations and agencies.

Though USAID, US PVOs and African NGOs are all required to account “upwards, downwards, and inwards” in the accountability chain, their own philosophies, interests, and development practices are different, as are those of the constituencies they account to. Thus, interpretations regarding what they are specifically held to account for vary among different groups. A donor, for instance, may be more interested in the financial and regulatory aspects of accountability than the organizational and programmatic. Avina (1993) describes this type of accountability as “functional” accountability - accounting for resources and immediate impacts primarily through narrative and financial reports submitted regularly to an organization’s partners.

Another type of accountability, which is labeled by Avina “strategic accountability”, focuses on long-term analysis of the impact and results of program work on the end user and the communities it is intended to benefit. Organizational and programmatic accountability as interpreted by conference participants fall under this category. Strategic accountability especially concerns the intended beneficiaries of development programs, as it provides a vehicle for determining how projects and activities are impacting organizations themselves as well as local communities and the end users.

Yet while interests in particular aspects of the accountability process may vary among the multiple stakeholder groups, accountability cannot work unless all stakeholders share a set of common values upon which the entire process is based. Whether functional or strategic, accountability practices must rest on a firm base of shared values, including honesty, openness, transparency, flexibility, trust, respect, and participation (see framework above).

At both conferences, indicators developed by participants during the vision exercise to measure the existence and quality of accountability were very broad. For example, participants indicated that “the number of meetings held between the different stakeholder groups in a year” is an indicator of improved accountability, but did not address the factors that would make the meetings successful. Indicators were also often situation-specific or difficult to quantify. For example, some indicators suggested that “development stakeholders need to be open with one another and be able to trust one another,” without giving concrete mechanisms for determining whether those values are present in a relationship. It is intended that the continuing ALPI dialogue will address the issue of developing more concrete, tangible indicators to enable development stakeholders to determine whether or not they are practicing mutual accountability.

Working Definition

Definitions of accountability were reached at both conferences. At the Nairobi sub-regional conference, participants reached a consensus on a “working definition” of accountability as:

“a defined relationship between at least two actors, expressing their shared values, agenda and commitment to integrity and mutual answerability for an agreed upon set of results.”

This definition of accountability focuses on the need to involve all stakeholders (mutual answerability), the need to have the right systems and processes in place (defined relationship) and the importance of adhering to crucial common values (integrity and shared values).

LEARNINGS FROM CASE STUDIES

Case Selection

Calls for case studies were sent to African NGO networks, USAID missions, and US PVOs involved in development programs in Africa with national or regional representations in country. ALPI was looking for at least three case studies per sub-region involving a variety of combinations of stakeholder groups in order to examine variables within different accountability relationships. In some cases, African NGOs had partnered with US PVOs with the support of USAID, in others, NGOs had partnered with PVOs without the support of USAID. One of the concerns of the conference organizers and facilitators in choosing the case studies was to ensure an opportunity to discuss the influence of USAID on the accountability process as experienced in different projects.

Independent case writers prepared the case studies. The terms of reference for case writers are attached to the present report in Appendix D. For each study, an individual with first hand knowledge of the issues involved in the case presented it to the plenary. Presentations were followed by question and answer sessions before a general discussion during which participants also shared their own experiences. Though three case studies were prepared for the West Africa Sub-region, only two were actually presented. The third case study involving Freedom from Hunger was not presented because despite commitments to participation, no stakeholder in that case was available at the conference. In Nairobi at the East and Southern Africa conference, three case studies were presented.

Case Study Summaries

In the interest of brevity, case studies from the Lagos and Nairobi conferences have been summarized below. InterAction staff with the intention of uniformly and concisely highlighting the major issues emerging from each study has prepared the summaries of each case. Any misinterpretation of facts in the cases is unintentional, though we have tried to adhere as presented in the write up and at the conferences.

InterAction is currently developing a repository of best practices and lessons learned through the Committee on Development Policy and Practice (CDPP), which hosts ALPI. These case studies will provide an important contribution to that collection. In addition, ALPI is compiling a publication containing all case studies developed through this Initiative, as well as analysis of some of the learnings from the continuing ALPI dialogue.

Full copies of the case studies presented below may be obtained from InterAction upon request. Please contact Program Manager, Evariste Karangwa at ekarangwa@interaction.org for more information.

WEST AFRICA

KOKARI-CARE International (Niger)

SICR-KOKARI, a local NGO in Niger, entered into a relationship with CARE International to take over in the implementation of a micro-credit project for local women. CARE approached KOKARI with whom it shared a vision, objectives and interests in the area, to repurchase its loan portfolio for 1 CFA . A contract was drawn up by a lawyer for CARE to transfer the portfolio to KOKARI.

Key issues:

- The relationship developed more as a donor-recipient relationship than as a partnership, with KOKARI accepting total responsibility for the project and its success or failure.
- CARE International expressed little concern for the fate of the program once KOKARI had agreed to take it over.
- CARE International did, however, demonstrate appreciation for the value of local NGO's expertise and capacity to implement a program where they had failed.

Oxfam America - APROFES (Senegal)

Oxfam America, a US PVO, developed a relationship with the local African NGO, Association for the Promotion of Senegalese Women (APROFES) which has been in place since 1991. The relationship began when Oxfam, as part of its programmatic development for the West Africa regional office, invited APROFES to attend a partner's meeting and contribute to the definition of Oxfam's mission, objectives and programmatic areas.

Key issues:

- Oxfam expresses mutual accountability in its relationship with APROFES through consultation with beneficiaries; flexibility with funding agreements, budget amendments, and activity and financial reports; continuous assessment of partner needs and concerns; and ongoing capacity strengthening in areas identified by their southern partner.
- Oxfam uniquely demonstrated true mutuality towards APROFES by inviting their local partner to sit down with the PVO and share their own realities and aspirations to help define the future strategies of Oxfam, to which NGOs refer when preparing grant applications.
- Unfortunately, the strong relationship which Oxfam and APROFES have enjoyed for the past decade is now being challenged by internal changes within Oxfam including restructuring and a new focus on "managing for results."

EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Catholic Relief Services and CADECOM (Malawi)

Catholic Relief Services (CRS), a US PVO, established their Malawi office in 1997. From the beginning of their entry into Malawi, concern was expressed from many quarters that CRS clearly define their working relationship with the local NGO, Catholic Development Commission (CADECOM). The two organizations jointly drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), clearly outlining their roles and responsibilities in relation to one another and their development work. This arduous process took over two years of consultations, discussions, and production of drafts. The MOU was finally signed on May 17, 2000.

Key issues:

- CRS and CADECOM recognized the importance of allowing time to work out guidelines for an effective partnership, and clearly delineate roles and responsibilities of each partner.
- This case is significant for its success in bringing together a variety of stakeholders with different missions, objectives, philosophies and programs to resolve a contentious situation and establish a solid framework for cooperation.
- The relationship between CRS and CADECOM is somewhat unique as it developed from a need expressed by both organizations to work out modalities for partnership, rather than as a result of the need to jointly implement a project for which they were receiving funding as most often occurs.

MWENGO-PACT-USAID (Kenya and Zimbabwe)

MWENGO, a regional African NGO, entered into a contract with Pact, a US PVO, to implement the Institutional Strengthening and Grant Making Project (ISGM) which is funded by USAID. The project provides financial and material support to developing African NGOs working in the area of food security and conflict prevention mitigation and response. The agreement with USAID was signed by Pact, and a sub-contract between Pact and MWENGO was subsequently signed by both organizations. In the relationship, Pact was made responsible for grant making, but also was the recipient of overhead funding, while MWENGO was responsible for the capacity strengthening training of southern NGOs.

Key issues:

- This case study is particularly interesting for its involvement of all ALPI stakeholders (US PVOs, African NGOs, and USAID).
- Both MWENGO and Pact expressed “upward” accountability toward their funding source, rather than reciprocating mutual accountability. Contracts signed between Pact and USAID; and MWENGO and Pact were both drafted by the partner with the most power in the relationship rather than mutually negotiated.
- MWENGO showed significant strength in demanding participation and the negotiation and development of joint agreements.
- Both Pact and MWENGO faced significant challenges with the pressure to begin implementation of activities immediately. Initially high staff turnover did not help this process. As a result of the urgency seen by both parties in producing results quickly to meet the terms of the agreement Pact had signed with USAID, sufficient time was not allowed to develop mechanisms for mutual accountability and to nurture the relationship.

ACDI/VOCA (Uganda)

ACDI/VOCA, a US PVO with a local office in Uganda, obtained funding from USAID Uganda to implement the Environmental Protection and Economic Development (EPED) Project. The project focussed on developing effective measures for the reduction of root causes of encroachment and illicit use of protected area resources by providing people with alternative development activities to sustain their livelihood. ACDI/VOCA technical staff are Ugandans with

a good understanding of local dynamics and the needs and requirements of the people. In the EPED project, ACDI/VOCA collaborated very closely with local district government and communities in the planning, negotiation, design, implementation and review of the project, and clearly defined roles and responsibilities of all parties to the relationship from the beginning.

Key issues:

- This case is particularly complex, involving a variety of actors including: USAID, a US PVO, district government, and local communities.
- ACDI/VOCA involved local governments and communities closely in planning, design, implementation and monitoring of the project, to the extent that local communities leaders and district officials participated in the project's Steering Committee meetings.
- ACDI/VOCA experienced significant frustration in trying to fit their integrated project which had been defined by the needs of the people in the community within USAID's narrow strategic objectives and short time frames for implementation.
- ACDI/VOCA, while commendable for their efforts to include local government and communities in all processes, failed to demonstrate accountability downward to the beneficiaries when it came to financial reporting. While expecting complete transparency from district governments on their own budgets and use of financial resources, ACDI/VOCA did not share information with the government officials on expenditure for the project.

Case Analysis

A comparative analysis of the cases using the elements of accountability (organizational, regulatory, programmatic, financial) described in the vision section of this report provides an illustration of how actual experience compares to participants' vision of accountability. It would be desirable to further test the results of the analysis through the production of more cases and greater in-depth analysis of the relationships.

Following is a detailed analysis of learnings (summarized briefly in Table 1 on p. 10) from the five case studies presented at the October sub-regionals by element of accountability (organizational, regulatory, programmatic, and financial).

Organizational Factors

Organizational accountability, as described earlier, relates to an organization's obligation to adhere to a common vision and mission, and to follow systems, procedures and policies which have been put into place to facilitate responsible action within the organization.

Examination of the case studies through the lens of organizational accountability revealed that a gap exists between the vision as articulated by participants and the reality of power dynamics within development relationships. Accountability is almost always skewed upwards towards the stakeholders who control the resources. Simultaneously, responsibility for accountability is forced "downward" on the entity with least power in the relationship, the one that does not control resources. Darcy Ashman, in her paper on strengthening North-South partnerships, describes this concern: "Terms of receiving funding ensure upward accountability to donors and often require the NGO to bear the risk of development activities," (Ashman,

2000, 11). This inherent inequality in development relationships presents a major challenge to mutual accountability.

PVOs and NGOs, however, maintain that they do not have an inherent problem with accounting "upward" to their funding sources, as they are accounting for the benefits they are receiving from the relationship. The difficulty lies with the fact that funds are not the only valuable contribution in development relationships and are not the only aspect to be accounted for. Donors provide funding to NGOs and PVOs to implement programs precisely because NGOs and PVOs have a comparative advantage. NGOs and PVOs have value-added benefits which form part of their contribution to any development effort, and those contributions must be recognized if accountability is to be truly "mutual". In the same way that donors make NGOs and PVOs accountable for financial resources, NGOs and PVOs must be able to make donors more accountable for their contributions, including knowledge of local conditions, development expertise, capacity to implement programs and projects, and connections to and legitimacy among local communities which development programs are trying to serve.

Table 1.

LEARNINGS FROM THE CASE STUDIES	
•	Accountability is almost always skewed upward toward the stakeholder who controls resources
•	Structures, procedures and policies exist, but are put in place to satisfy demands and interests of funding sources
•	PVOs are faced with playing many roles towards NGOs in the development process (partner, competitor, funding source); roles should be clearly negotiated and defined with involvement of all partners
•	Contracts and funding agreements are signed after having been developed by funders rather than negotiated with beneficiaries
•	There is a serious contradiction between the length of projects and the expectation of demonstrated impact
•	All stakeholders acknowledge that end users need to participate, but still end users are not earnestly being brought into the process
•	All stakeholders agree on the need for financial and activity reporting, but those who are reporting have no influence on what will be reported, when, and in what format
•	Parties profess to share values of respect, trust, and openness, but do not support these assertions with actions that reflect these values

All of the PVOs involved in the case studies discussed at both sub-regional conferences have in their missions and philosophies the support of communities in their development through long-term partnerships, and respect for the dignity, values and roles of partners. Their missions also state that they encourage and require individual and collective accountability in the implementation of programs and in decision-making processes.

The case of Oxfam America (Senegal) and APROFES demonstrates the positive impact seen on development relationships when donors are held accountable to their NGO partners. Oxfam, in the role of donor, was responsive to their NGO counterpart, APROFES. The value of APROFES's expertise and capacity was acknowledged by Oxfam to be a critical component of the program's success. Therefore, by answering "downward" to APROFES for its expertise and capacity, and sharing the responsibility for accountability, Oxfam reciprocated the accountability that APROFES was expressing towards them. Similarly, CARE International in Niger demonstrated "downward accountability" by showing that it recognized the importance of local knowledge to its micro-credit program. When earlier attempts by the US PVO to implement this project failed, they sought local expertise to save the program.

The case of ACIDI/VOCA in Uganda also provides a good illustration of the impact community input and local technical expertise (ACIDI/VOCA technical staff are Ugandans) can have on the success of a program. By using local experts, ACIDI/VOCA was able to obtain a good understanding of the dynamics in the area of the project and needs and requirements of the people to be served. This aspect of the case demonstrates that ACIDI/VOCA was accounting

"downwards" to the beneficiaries of the program, but it is not clear the extent to which this was appreciated or required by USAID Uganda as the funding source. In a truly mutual accountable relationship, USAID Uganda would demonstrate its accountability downwards to ACIDI/VOCA and the end-users by wanting to hear as much about community participation and local expertise as about the use of financial resources.

Another challenge to organizational accountability relates to the development of systems and policies that contribute to the sustainability of projects. Organizational policies and procedures for accountability often exist, but are put in place to satisfy the demands and interests of funding sources. Rather than taking into account local conditions and realities, along with the needs and interests of the NGOs and PVOs as organizations themselves, terms for policies and procedures are most often dictated by funding sources without the input of the implementers or beneficiaries. Once again, the responsibility for accountability is determined by the most powerful constituency without input on appropriate mechanisms from those who will be required to make the policies and procedures work. This lack of flexibility to adjust to local realities can make mutual accountability virtually impossible.

ACIDI/VOCA, in the EPED project in Uganda, experienced frustration in accessing funding for an integrated project with interventions that cut across USAID Uganda's strategic objectives. The quality of the proposed project was sacrificed at the expense of satisfying donor demands that the proposal fall within USAID's strategic objectives. The proposal requirements for the project forced ACIDI/VOCA to request funding separately for different parts of the program under different strategic objectives. This heavy-handed bureaucratic process disrupts the project cycle, as partners are unable to synchronize their interventions. By not taking into account the local conditions and peculiar needs of this project, USAID was dictating a policy which did not allow the necessary flexibility for organizational policies and procedures that would allow the most effective implementation of activities.

A further organizational problem relates to the lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities among NGOs and PVOs. According to African NGOs, relationships between US PVOs and African NGOs are often clouded by the multiplicity of roles that PVOs play towards NGOs in the development process. Caught between competing for resources, working together as partners, and occasionally being the source of funding, PVOs are sometimes left with an ambiguous set of responsibilities toward NGOs. NGOs can become frustrated because it is unclear which role a PVO is playing in a given relationship, whether donor, competitor, or partner. If mutual accountability is to work, however, there is an obvious need to clearly negotiate and define the roles of all stakeholders that will be involved in a relationship.

In the case of MWENGO and Pact, for example, the Institutional Strengthening and Grant Making (ISGM) project was conceived as a partnership between MWENGO and PACT. However, the arrangement between them looked initially like two organizations separately employed in the same project rather than equal partners working together towards the same goal. Pact was made responsible for grant making, while MWENGO was responsible for the capacity strengthening training of southern NGOs. Among lessons learned it was revealed that relations among the partners could be improved by collective setting and agreement of roles and responsibilities: "Teamwork can be enhanced through: setting agendas collectively, a better appreciation of roles and responsibilities in the context of overall project goals, acknowledgement of experience, expertise, personalities and individual contributions, mutual support through sharing of frustrations, and sharing of success and credit." Greater dialogue around roles and responsibilities from the beginning of the relationship might have produced a greater understanding among all parties, resulting in less confusion of roles between PACT as a PVO and MWENGO as their southern partner.

By contrast in Senegal, Oxfam and APROFES managed the problem of Oxfam's role as both "donor" and "partner" by engaging in dialogue. APROFES defined its needs independently of

Oxfam's input and then expressed them clearly to Oxfam. The nature of the consultations made it obvious that Oxfam respected the independence and autonomy of APROFES. Roles and responsibilities were made very clear in a written agreement, and though Oxfam was acting as the donor, they were not dominating the power in the relationship. Rather, Oxfam acted as a partner by allowing APROFES to determine how they would implement the program within the framework of the agreement. In this case, the problem of multiplicity of roles of the PVO was eased because they were so clearly defined and negotiated.

Similarly, CRS and CADECOM provide a positive example of one way in which these issues might be resolved. A MOU worked out between CRS and CADECOM, albeit over a protracted time period, clearly outlines roles and responsibilities for each party in their relationship. The MOU equally focuses on the contributions of each of the partners, and prevents them from establishing a donor-recipient relationship. Both partners were clear that it was desirable to enter into a relationship as equal partners where roles and responsibilities were clearly defined and the two parties were not competing for resources.

Regulatory Factors

Regulatory elements of accountability deal with adherence to legislation and policies developed to ensure that development actors answer to one another. Regulatory accountability often deals more with "functional accountability", focussing on accounting for financial resources, resource use and immediate outputs. Regulatory accountability is typically defined by national laws, donor/organizational policies and funding contracts.

One of the major challenges to regulatory accountability involves lack of participation by all stakeholders in the drafting of contracts. When entering into a relationship, organizations are often required to sign funding agreements that have been developed by donors, again, without consultation with all parties to the contract. Rarely are agreements negotiated jointly and agreed upon as Memoranda of Understanding among all groups in the relationship.

In the case study involving USAID, PACT and MWENGO, the funding agreement was signed by PACT with USAID/REDSO Nairobi. A subsequent Memorandum of Understanding was developed by PACT and signed by PACT and MWENGO. This subcontract agreement was drafted by PACT originally without substantive input from MWENGO -- which prohibited the development of systems that would ensure effective development of the project and relationship. MWENGO, however, was unwilling to sign an agreement which did not reflect its needs and concerns in terms of its role and responsibilities within the relationship. MWENGO therefore insisted on drafting another MOU that would include commonly agreed upon roles and responsibilities.

As with MWENGO in Zimbabwe, the local NGO KOKARI in Niger was not consulted on the development of an agreement with CARE International Niger. The agreement between the two organizations was developed by a lawyer for CARE, and focused on CARE's past experiences with the program and the transfer of full responsibility for the micro-credit project to KOKARI, rather than the nature of the future relationship between the two parties. As the case writer described, "There was no clause in the MOU that talked about accountability to one another in their future relations." KOKARI decided independently to share information about their activities with CARE, but the requirement to report, monitor and evaluate project activities was not included in the MOU. This failure to consult with the local NGO in the development of an agreement reflects once again the lack of accountability downward towards the constituency with the least power in the relationship.

By contrast, a positive example of cooperative efforts towards developing a Memorandum of Understanding is seen in the case of Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and CADECOM in Malawi. In this case, the PVO and NGO spent close to two and a half years resolving inter-organizational conflicts, consulting with one another, and finally arriving at an agreement acceptable to all

constituencies. The large amount of time which CRS invested in establishing a solid partnership from the beginning reflects its appreciation of the value of its partner's needs and requirements, and thus is an encouraging example of mutual accountability in nurturing what had been a problematic development relationship.

Similarly, Oxfam America in Senegal consulted closely with APROFES on the mechanisms of their partnership agreement, demonstrating its appreciation for the needs and requirements of the local NGO. The negotiated agreement clearly defined the objectives, activities, grant amounts and monitoring and evaluation systems, allowing each partner to feel a part of the process rather than that terms were dictated by the organization with control over the resources.

Programmatic Factors

Programmatic accountability refers to the responsibility development stakeholders assume to deliver expected outputs and results for programs and projects, and report on their levels of impact and success in terms of meeting their objectives. It also addresses the obligation of stakeholders to report on *how* development programs are planned, implemented and evaluated.

Just as consultation with implementers was a critical issue for regulatory accountability, a significant challenge to programmatic accountability lies with the issue of participation. The need to involve end-users and communities in development processes is widely acknowledged by all stakeholders. Unless stakeholders participate in a process, they will not feel ownership of the project and feel a part of the process. Furthermore, the tools and mechanisms for greater participation are available - and yet, beneficiaries are still not being systematically consulted on development projects and programs. Donors, NGOs and PVOs all enter working relationships without involving end users in the planning, implementation, monitoring and review of the work intended to benefit them.

In the case of CARE International and the local NGO KOKARI, CARE approached KOKARI to repurchase its loan portfolio for a nominal fee. Though CARE came to KOKARI precisely because the two organizations shared a vision, objectives and interests in the area they are working, CARE did not negotiate with KOKARI the circumstances of the agreement for the sale of the portfolio in a participatory process. In the conclusion to the case study, the case writer noted that an important lesson from the relationship is that the two parties need to know each other before entering into a relationship, and then clearly define roles and responsibilities together. Because KOKARI did not participate in either the establishment of the framework for the relationship or the design of the loan scheme itself, odds were already stacked against KOKARI as an implementers of the program despite their good will and intentions to do their best with the program they had inherited.

In the cases of both ACDI/VOCA and Oxfam-APROFES, however, US PVOs consulted extensively with their implementing counterparts during project development, implementation and evaluation. ACDI/VOCA experienced the development of strong relationships with local government and communities through people's participation in the project at all levels of decision making. In addition EPED is implemented by an Ugandan technical staff with a good understanding of the dynamics in the area, and needs and requirements of the people. This has led to more trust among all stakeholders that has made development relationships easier. Oxfam also built a strong relationship with APROFES by not only consulting with APROFES on the development of the project, but also by allowing the local NGO to contribute input to Oxfam's strategic orientation for the West Africa region. As the case writer noted, "[Oxfam's] partners were encouraged to rely on their own realities and aspirations to define the future strategies of Oxfam, to which they refer when preparing grant applications." Because APROFES was involved in the shaping of their partner's strategy and program development, they felt

their participation was valued and were able to feel greater ownership of projects emerging from the partnership.

Another challenge to programmatic accountability is the serious contradiction that often exists between the life of development projects and their expected impact. Donors provide short-term funding for projects that are supposed to show progress on long-term development objectives. The disconnect between the length of time and immense effort required for quality impact and the short timelines placed on projects works against their successful implementation. One of the problems created by short time frames for projects is that it becomes difficult to be honest about progress made as it will almost always fall short of expectations. Another problem is that there is not sufficient time allowed for learning and the recognition of gaps and needs which emerge during implementation. In addition, when partners are concerned about the pressure of implementing many activities in a short time with limited funding, they do not feel confident that there is enough money to achieve their objectives. Thus partners spend more time worrying about the sustainability of project activities than focusing on implementation. Finally, the unrealistic expectations imposed on the implementers by the funders demonstrate a lack of accountability downward by the funding sources.

One of the best examples of the problems created when limited time frames do not correspond to a project's ambitious objectives is the case of the EPED Project in Uganda. Initial funding to ACDI/VOCA to carry out the project was for an 18-month pilot project, but was eventually extended twice to be able to meet larger project goals. If the project had been designed for a period of 4 years from the beginning, smoother implementation of the activities could have occurred, with less effort wasted on the pursuit of extended contracts. The case writer noted that "Longer term funding to a credible implementing agency provides it with more stability and confidence to concentrate on delivery of results and bring activities to a logical conclusion." By not recognizing this need to create a long-term project from the beginning, the donor failed to demonstrate accountability towards the implementing agency and their needs.

In the case of MWENGO and PACT, the pressure to begin implementing the project led partners to focus less on accountability than on starting project activities. Sufficient time was not allowed for consultation and joint development of contracts, structures, systems and channels of communication which would make the project run smoothly and lead to the sustainability of project activities. As the case writer observed, "The sub-contract had to be signed in the shortest possible time to avoid further delays and facilitate for the establishment of the project... The need to move quickly meant that there was little time for the partners to set up and put into place systems that would ensure a smooth development of the project and the partnership." Thus once again, because insufficient time was provided in the project to develop relationships and systems to ensure smooth implementation, partners failed to establish important mechanisms for mutual accountability.

Unlike ACDI/VOCA and PACT-MWENGO, CRS was not facing the same pressures of limited time frames to implement a project, and so took a different approach to establishing their relationship with CADECOM. Despite the fact that working out partnership modalities was a long and arduous process, CRS recognized the value of spending time to figure out roles and responsibilities before entering into implementation of projects with CADECOM. Because they were not under the pressure of a contract obligating them to begin implementing activities immediately, they were able to take the time to establish a Memorandum of Understanding in close consultation with a local NGO and set up mutually accountable systems which would allow them to jointly implement projects smoothly in the future.

In the case of Oxfam-APROFES in Senegal, Oxfam as the donor agency also allowed time for consultation with their implementing partner, as well as time for the further identification of needs and requirements of APROFES to be able to successfully implement their activities and programs. Oxfam provided capacity strengthening training to APROFES which had not been a

part of the initial agreement between the two organizations. Yet because Oxfam allowed the time necessary to continually evaluate and discover needs, they were able to identify shortcomings and rectify problems, contributing to the success of their efforts. This level of responsiveness to their partners needs and capacity-strengthening requirements demonstrates Oxfam's high regard for mutual accountability.

Financial Factors

Financial accountability, as noted earlier, basically deals with the need of stakeholders to report on their use of resources to their various constituencies. An essential component of financial accountability is the development of appropriate and consistent policies and procedures for this type of reporting.

All stakeholders agree that there is a need for both financial and activity reporting, but as with the problem of project agreements, reporting requirements are often decided by those distributing the resources without input from the recipients. Thus, PVOs and NGOs have very little influence on what will be reported, when and in what format. By not consulting with implementers on the development of reporting requirements, donors ignore their responsibility to account "downward" for the needs and situations of those implementing projects.

Though financial and activity reporting requirements were a topic of discussion at both conferences, few case studies gave explicit evidence of financial accountability issues. In the case of ACDI/VOCA, it was noted that financial reports were submitted to both ACDI/VOCA in Washington and USAID Uganda, presumably in different formats to meet their different organizational reporting requirements. As a result of this need to report to multiple constituencies, ACDI/VOCA spent additional time meeting reporting requirements meaning less time for implementation of the project.

Similarly, in the case of PACT-MWENGO-USAID, the case writer observed that "the PACT-MWENGO-USAID partnership was unable to design and elaborate mechanisms for accountability. As a result, accountability seems to start and end with making the donor happy and meeting contractual obligations." Rather than jointly establish requirements for reporting, PACT and MWENGO were both required to report "upward" for finances and activities. Oxfam, on the other hand, did not force pre-determined reporting systems on their implementing partners. By giving APROFES space and flexibility with budget amendments, Oxfam demonstrated accountability downward to their implementing partner.

Values

Stakeholders in the development process also broadly agree that for mutual accountability to work, parties to a relationship must share values of respect, trust and openness. Yet while donors, NGOs and PVOs alike profess to consider these values a critical aspect of accountability in their work, they do not back up their assertions with actions that reflect these values. Values represent possibly the most essential element to making accountability efforts work, but they are also the hardest thing to quantify and measure. As a result, developing a common understanding of the problem and solutions with indicators is a time consuming and difficult task.

An example of a development relationship in which some key values were evidently absent is the study of CARE and KOKARI micro-credit partnership in Niger. In the CARE-KOKARI case, the agreement transferring the loan scheme to KOKARI was developed by a lawyer and did not make provisions for the future of the relationship in the implementation of the loan scheme. Rather, the contract focused on the history of the relationship between CARE and KOKARI and the transfer of responsibility to the local NGO. CARE did not demonstrate sufficient interest in the success or failure of the portfolio after its transfer to KOKARI.

In another example, the EPED Project in Uganda demonstrated a lack of “downward” accountability to the end users and beneficiaries of the program by failing to supply the district government with financial reports. While regularly completing reports for USAID and ACIDI/VOCA Washington according to project requirements, ACIDI/VOCA Uganda showed a lack of transparency and mutuality by not providing the same information to the beneficiaries. As the case writer observed, this situation “creates double standards for requirements for accountability in the relationship given that the district is expected to exhibit a high level of transparency and fully disclose its own budgets and expenditures.” ACIDI/VOCA failed to back up their claims to appreciate the importance of mutuality in development relationships by not fully discussing with the Masindi district government and disclosing expenditures made from the grant.

In some cases development actors are able to cultivate development relationships where organizations demonstrate their commitment to shared values by supporting their assertions with actions that reflect those values. As we have seen previously, the case of Oxfam-APROFES in Senegal offers an excellent example of the commitment by both donor and implementing partner to shared values. By recognizing that APROFES was honest and mature enough to carry out the activities for which funds had been received, Oxfam exhibited key values of trust and respect for their southern partner. Furthermore, by consulting extensively with their partner throughout the design and implementation of activities, Oxfam was able to recognize and respond to the particular needs of APROFES. Not only did Oxfam consult with APROFES on activities that APROFES carried out, Oxfam also solicited input from APROFES on the development of their strategic plan. As the case writer described, in their contributions to the development of the Oxfam Strategic Plan, “partners were encouraged to rely on their own realities and aspirations to define the future strategies of Oxfam America, to which they refer when preparing grant applications.” Thus Oxfam demonstrated a high degree of mutual accountability by respecting their partner and the value of their partner’s contributions to the development of their own institution.

Similarly, in the case of ACIDI/VOCA, extensive participation by district government and the local communities in project design and implementation reflected ACIDI/VOCA’s commitment to values of inclusiveness and mutuality. The fact that ACIDI/VOCA put a great deal of thought and effort into the engagement process and was very sensitive to the needs, ideas and concerns of beneficiaries in designing the program and implementing project activities validates their claim to hold certain values, including participation and respect for the beneficiaries.

Another positive example of a partnership that exhibited evidence of adherence to shared values is the CRS-CADECOM partnership. By taking the time and effort to develop a negotiated Memorandum of Understanding with CADECOM, CRS demonstrated their commitment to the participation of CADECOM throughout the process. In addition, the fact that CRS had “partnership guidelines” in place and actually practiced the principles stated there is a manifestation of their professed values of equality and respect for their local partner organizations.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

"..even if voluntary organizations are not member-controlled, they can still gain in legitimacy by being transparent, accountable and acting in a spirit of genuine partnership with others,"

(Edwards & Hulme, 1996).

One of the most impressive outcomes of the sub-regional conferences was the efficiency with which participants to both conferences moved from the formulation of a vision for accountability to the discussion of substantive challenges to accountability that arise from real life experience, and to the identification of specific actions to be taken in order to find satisfactory solutions to problems instead of wishing them away.

From discussions of the case studies and their own experiences, participants identified major challenges to accountability, and thought about indicators to help measure levels of commitment to accountability by different stakeholders. Participants also looked at opportunities that could be used to address some of the challenges to accountability, and assigned themselves concrete actions to be implemented in the coming months.

The following section presents an analysis of some of these challenges and opportunities, as well as actions identified by participants to address the challenges. In examining this data, we have presented a general description of the issues at hand, supported by concrete examples from the experience of ALPI constituencies and recent literature. For further details on action items committed to by participants at the conferences, refer to Appendix E.

Since the challenges and opportunities as identified by participants cut across the "elements of accountability" (programmatic, organizational, regulatory and financial) defined in the framework, they will be presented as clusters of issues rather than under the different elements as in the case studies section. Where possible, distinctions based on the various elements will be discussed. In the section on "Striking a Balance", tables have been inserted for ease of reference.

Striking a Balance: roles and responsibilities for mutual accountability

Challenges

One of the major challenges to accountability identified by participants at both the Lagos and Nairobi meetings is the difficulty of striking a balance between accounting to donors and the beneficiaries of programs (Table 2). All stakeholders are responsible for accounting to those both above and below them, but those "above" and "below" are different for USAID, US PVOs and African NGOs. For example, USAID accounts to Congress above them, while PVOs account upward to their donors. Each stakeholder is accountable to different people and agencies for different matters (finances, deliverables, impact, etc), resulting in a situation of "multiple accountabilities."

Table 2. Striking balance between donor and beneficiary accountability: challenges

Factor	Challenge
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear vision and mission • Institutionalization of accountability, upward accountability • USAID results frameworks - resources against results • USAID bureaucratic procedures and built-in dependency contradicts self sustainability and leads to a difficult relationship with PVOs • Disconnect between HQ and field in PVOs, especially at decision making levels which contributes to partnership problems • Willingness to change approaches • Unequal power relationship within a partnership • Donor driven agendas: priorities of donors sometimes different from those NGOs and communities • Competition for resources between US PVOs and African NGOs • Inadequate capacities (individual leadership and institutional)
Regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding cycle : 5-7 year strategy but a 2 year funding cycle • Legal frameworks • User-friendly policies, rules and guidelines • Amount of control on grants - cooperative agreements and contracts
Programmatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing varied stakeholder demands - hard to tally the different needs/demands • Agreement on desired results/outcome and genuine participation • Flexible programs to address changes in objectives and personnel • Performance measurement: who defines criteria for measuring performance? • Commitment to process (capacity building) rather than a product (one training) • Addressing myriad problems in communities while maintaining accountability to donors • Accountability to Government is not equally shared by PVOs, NGOs and USAID Institutional capacity • Time constraints due to poor project/donor requirements • Disconnect between life of NGO projects versus project cycle of US PVOs and donors • Donor darlings (DDs) • Time - obligation crunch • PVOs act as gatekeepers, resulting in limited NGO access • Difficult selection of partners and need to understand the culture of the people PVOs work with
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility - within existing procurement policies • Reporting requirements and partners' difficulty meeting reporting deadlines • Financial cost of accountability

As described earlier in the section on a vision for accountability, participants viewed accountability as a chain, along which different stakeholders hold different positions in relation to one another. In the visioning exercise, it was also noted that stakeholders in the African development process are accountable for a wide variety of deliverables to their multiple constituencies. Though *ideally* mutual accountability means that all parties are equally accountable to one another, in reality they are accountable to different constituencies, which are concerned with their delivery of certain products. USAID is accountable both "upwards" to the Congress and US taxpayers, and "downwards" to the southern governments and organizations that they support. US PVOs also answer to the governments of the countries in which they are working and to the African NGOs with which they collaborate, yet they are not accountable for the same deliverables to these constituencies as USAID. Because the nature of their role in their development relationships is different from that of USAID, PVOs are expected to account for different deliverables to their various constituencies than a donor agency would be. Similarly, African NGOs networks have different obligations to the communities they are intending to serve than USAID or PVOs might.

A number of complicating factors arise from the fact that different stakeholders face multiple accountabilities, some of which are described by Michael Edwards and David Hulme (1996) in their article on the impact of official aid on non-governmental organizations. Edwards and Hulme point to the dangers of both "over-accounting" and "under-accounting" by development actors who are faced with multiple accountabilities (Edwards and Hulme, 1996, p. 967). For many organizations, the problem of "over-accounting" is all too familiar. Because there are so many different actors playing different roles in the development process, organizations often get caught up in having to provide too much data to too many constituencies, leaving little time to focus on quality interventions. PVOs and African NGOs are especially prone to these complications, finding themselves spending excessive amounts of time completing financial, narrative, and evaluation reports for a number of donors.

Conversely, a situation whereby stakeholders are held accountable to a multiplicity of constituencies can lead to "under-accounting", as "each overseeing authority assumes another authority is taking a close look at actions and results," (ME and DH, 1996, p. 967). When US PVOs partner with African NGOs for example, a donor might assume that the organizations involved have established a framework for an equitable partnership and that each organization is reviewing and assessing the activities and impact of the other. In reality, organizations that have agreed to work together on a particular program are rarely so transparent and open to one another, and accountability mechanisms which are assumed to be in place may be largely absent.

African NGO representatives at the conferences also spoke to the issue of "under-accounting" by reflecting on the problem of "Donor Darlings" (DDs). Donor Darlings were described as NGOs that continue to receive funding based on past performance and relationships with donor agencies, despite the fact that they may not be best suited to implement a particular program or project. Often these organizations may get away with "under-accounting", as they are not asked to prove their legitimacy and demonstrate their contribution either prior to obtaining funding or throughout a project cycle.

Another problem arising from the situation of multiple accountabilities is the enigma of "multi-faceted PVOs", described by conference participants as organizations that switch between playing the roles of donor, competitor and partner. Many PVOs take on a "patron-client" attitude toward their "partner" NGOs, failing to report to them regularly and involve them in planning, implementation, review and reporting processes. This "donor" personality serves to alienate their would-be partner NGOs. At other times, PVOs can act as competitors with NGOs, fighting for scarce financial resources. In the role of competitor, PVOs often act as "gatekeepers", limiting NGO access to donor agencies and thus creating mistrust. This multiplicity of roles renders their responsibilities as actors in the development process somewhat ambiguous and casts a shadow on open and transparent practices.

The reality that different stakeholder groups are accountable to multiple constituencies for different deliverables also contributes to the common problem of focussing on "upward accountability". Participants repeatedly noted that when stakeholders have a number of groups they are answerable to, the tendency is to focus on reporting to those with control over the resources. Thus, as Edwards and Hulme note, "Many of the concerns expressed about the non-accountability of NGOs relate to the difficulties they face in prioritizing and reconciling these multiple accountabilities. The danger is that accountability will be skewed to the most powerful constituency," (Edwards and Hulme, 1996, p. 968). This tendency to only account "upwards" to donors and those imposing legal requirements (such as governments) prevents the realization of mutual accountability and excludes those who are supposed to be the purpose of development efforts in the first place - the communities and end users themselves.

Those PVOs and NGOs that focus on reporting to donors rather than their beneficiaries are frequently more concerned with their own financial viability than the results of their development efforts. Kamal Malhorta concurred that this perception is a common problem: "Many Southern NGOs... are perceived as accountable only to their Northern funders, contributing not to development alternatives, but only to their own institutional survival, lifestyles and alternative rhetoric," (Malhorta, 1995, p. 3). By concentrating most of their efforts on satisfying those with control over resources, organizations are neglecting the constituencies to which they profess to be most accountable - the people they are trying to serve.

A related challenge was also repeatedly described by participants as "donor-driven accountability" - where donors create the policies and programs that they expect others to implement. Scarcity of resources for development often creates a struggle for power in which donors hold the upper hand. Given this imbalance, donors may use the opportunity to define roles and responsibilities, while not necessarily worrying about the need to consult sufficiently with their implementing partners or the end-users. Lawrence Cumming cites this problem in his essay on mutual accountability, noting "The provider, in other words, has the ability to make demands of the recipient," (Cumming, 1996, p. 14). African NGOs and US PVOs alike pointed to the fact that in the past, their lack of participation in USAID planning processes has resulted in the creation of inequitable and unsustainable development programs where priorities, roles and responsibilities were dictated rather than negotiated.

Another challenge presented by the problem of "donor driven accountability" was also described earlier in the case studies analysis. Short term funding as offered by donor agencies often leads development actors to be more preoccupied with the financial viability of their projects rather than with the implementation of activities. When partners are concerned about the pressure of implementing many activities in a short time with limited funding, they do not feel confident that there is enough money to achieve their objectives. Thus partners spend more time worrying about the sustainability of project activities than focusing on the quality of their interventions. In addition, the unrealistic expectations imposed on the implementers by the funders in this scenario demonstrate a lack of accountability downward by the funding sources.

An additional challenge generated by the problems of "donor-driven accountability" and short term funding arrangements relates to the development of indicators for "strategic accountability". Strategic accountability, which focuses on long-term impacts, is difficult in the work of NGOs, as it concentrates on qualitative changes (e.g. empowerment, gender relations, etc.) that do not lend themselves to quantitative measurements. As Edwards and Hulme described, "The type of appraisal, monitoring and evaluation approaches insisted on by donors... may also distort accountability by overemphasizing short-term quantitative targets and favoring hierarchical management structures - a tendency to 'accountancy' rather than 'accountability,'" (Edwards and Hulme, 1996, p. 968). This focus on short-term, quantitative measurements that many donors possess does not enable organizations to report effectively on the qualitative impact they are having, thus eliminating a very important aspect of accountability.

Opportunities

Opportunities for addressing many of these challenges to mutual accountability were also identified by participants to both conferences (Table 3). Most of the opportunities discussed lie with increased meaningful participation by all constituencies involved in the development process. Participants repeatedly emphasized the need to establish equitable relationships that allow all stakeholders a seat *and* voice at the table. Transparency through joint design, implementation, monitoring, reporting, evaluation and decision making was recommended as one of the most important opportunities to help strike a balance between donor and

beneficiary accountability. Since the key moment for accountability is at the point of strategy definition, all stakeholders involved in a program/project have to participate in the planning and target setting process, and jointly review the progress of their program and relationship.

Table 3. Striking balance between donor and beneficiary accountability: opportunities

Factor	Opportunity
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear vision and mission • Good governance and leadership • Require local participation in the development of activity proposals by PVOs and other intermediaries • Spread positive results of projects to national, regional and international levels • Expansion of impact due to regional and national access • Feedback loop • Formal contracts/MOUs - subject to a periodic review process to adjust to changing conditions • Specifying roles and responsibilities of each party
Regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up of Policies, procedures and guidelines • Opportunity to influence length of programs by USAID
Programmatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency through joint • Planning/Design • Monitoring • Implementation • Evaluation • Reporting • Management and decision-making • Key moment for accountability is at the point of strategy definition • Joint negotiation of results and indicators at strategic objective (SO) and intermediate result (IR) levels • Expanding use of participatory rural assessments and field surveys and assessments to identify needs • Training opportunities to strengthen organizational and programmatic skills
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility regarding deadlines, budgets, grant periods, budget change notification, and approval processes • Detailed bilateral or multilateral financial reports (streamlining reports) • Financial audits to make sure resources are used efficiently

As in the vision exercise, indicators developed for striking a balance between donors and beneficiaries were quite broad (Table 4), but included the need to examine partnership agreements for values of respect, flexibility and equity. It was also suggested that roles and responsibilities for partners must be very clearly defined, and that participatory processes that involve all stakeholders in project design, evaluation and impact are critical.

Table 4. Striking balance between donor and beneficiary accountability: indicators

Factor	Indicator
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organogram in place • How high is turnover? • Are staff policies and effective discipline procedures in place? • Is leadership delivering? • Staff development programs • Steering Committee meeting regularly • Is there openness, flexibility and change within the organization? • Types of policies, systems, procedures and guidelines • Do agreements express values, respect, flexibility for review and equity? • Are roles and responsibilities clear? • Quality of agreements (are they legal, what is the spirit of the agreements?) • Effective Management Information Systems • PVO funding structures should adjust to evolving community needs and dynamic issues at the grassroots level
Regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and types of agreements
Programmatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of opportunities for discussion • Types and mechanisms for conflict resolution • Substance of discussions (determined from participants, agendas, resolutions, minutes, drafts) • Number of times policies are used effectively • Are systems applicable → usable, equitable, meaningful, and inclusive? • Are there openness, flexibility and change? • How many review meetings are you having on systems and policies? • Are the meetings inclusive, participatory, and responsive to change? • Evaluation systems oriented toward qualitative analysis vs. quantitative analysis and impact assessments vs. Input/output assessments • Time frames are unrealistic • Detailed risk assessments • Evidence of joint program reviews and joint annual reviews • Evidence of greater inclusion of beneficiaries in project cycle
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing of accounting for spent funds • Are audits unqualified? • Is proper record keeping happening? • Are audit recommendations being implemented?

One of the ways in which donor agencies may improve accountability to the recipients of funding is by negotiating funding arrangements that provide stability in the long term to focus on implementation, and flexibility in the short term to deal with contextual challenges that might arise.

Another action identified by participants to deal with the issue of defining roles and responsibilities and balancing accountability to donors with the demands of other stakeholders was to hold national meetings in-country to develop frameworks for relationships and national level documents to feed into ALPI meetings, and to understand and explain USAID policies. In Lagos, participants came up with the idea of forming “country teams”, which would function like ALPI but on a local level. Composed of representatives from USAID missions, US PVOs and African NGOs, the country teams would come together on a regular basis to create a safe space where participants could discuss development relationships, including how to improve accountability to one another. Though this recommendation was made in Lagos, participants to the East and Southern Africa sub-regional conference should also consider it as an opportunity.

It was also suggested that regional meetings should take place between NGO networks, and the African NGO networks committed to sharing regional findings at meetings with policymakers in Washington. InterAction was tasked with informing NGOs and PVOs about USAID’s policies for

having greater participation on expanded strategic objective teams, and USAID committed to doing national coalition inventories to discover where they are working with National NGO Consortia.

It was also noted that the development of effective partnership guidelines is key to establishing equitable relationships between the ALPI constituencies. PVOs were tasked with developing minimum standards for participation and advocating for networking and collaboration of US PVOs and African NGOs. USAID agreed to share their partnership guidelines that are being developed.

Improving communication for effective accountability

In addition to the problem of striking a balance between donors and beneficiaries, participants to both conferences identified communication as one of the biggest challenges to mutual accountability. Described as both an internal issue (within organizations) and an external issue (between PVOs, USAID, African NGOs, local governments, etc.), communication was seen as key to ensuring that stakeholders in the development process are able to effectively answer to their multiple constituencies.

Internal Communication

Challenges

In the struggle to strike a balance between donors and the beneficiaries of their programs, development stakeholders often forget one key constituency to whom they are accountable - themselves. The challenge of inter-organizational accountability was described by participants at both conferences as an important issue for USAID, US PVOs, and African NGOs alike. The responsibility to consult with and answer internally to boards of directors, senior management and staff is a crucial aspect of ensuring that organizations are fulfilling their mandates, and yet it is a responsibility that is frequently relegated to "low priority" or ignored entirely. When appropriate and effective policies and systems for the sharing of information and communication are not agreed upon and developed internally, organizations find it difficult to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate programs.

Another of the major challenges to internal organizational accountability is the distance that often exists, both physically and philosophically, between headquarters and field offices. USAID and US PVOs are particularly prone to this problem since their headquarters and field offices are thousands of miles apart, and staff who are in theory working together towards a common goal may rarely have direct contact with one another. Yet the problem, asserts Naoki Suzuki, arises not only from the fact that these two parts of the whole are located so far from one another and have different interests and concerns, but also from the fact that they have "different tasks" (Suzuki, 1998, p. 4). In the case of PVOs, for example, headquarters are primarily concerned with funders, while field offices are concerned with target groups. As a result, the focus of their work and the tasks which each consider priorities may be extremely divergent. When these pre-existing tensions are met with ineffective communication systems, internal sharing of information, dialogue and decision making become extremely difficult and confused. And if headquarters and field offices are unable to understand one another, they are also likely unable to answer effectively to one another, and thus unable to achieve their common mission and goals.

Similarly, USAID missions often experience a disconnect and lack of understanding between their own staff, regional offices, and headquarters in Washington, DC. Because each group within the agency is located in a different place, is assigned different roles and responsibilities, and has different constituencies to which it is primarily accountable, natural tensions emerge.

When systems and policies for communication that are in place fail to help manage these tensions, accountability to one another becomes a daunting task.

African NGOs also experience difficulties related to internal communication, whether they are networks or not. Just as it is crucial for US PVOs and USAID missions to establish effective systems for communication with their own staff and management, NGOs must develop appropriate systems for reporting to their own staff and executive boards that institutionalize mutual accountability. In the case of NGO networks, an additional aspect of internal communication involves communication with their NGO members. Like US PVOs and USAID, African NGO networks must find ways of managing or resolving tensions that arise internally among the secretariat and members given their different tasks and locations.

Opportunities

Opportunities to address internal communication challenges for these various stakeholders clearly exist, but as with opportunities in other areas, indicators remain somewhat vague. Participants to the conferences agreed that organizations and agencies need to do continual self-assessments and self-audits to determine if their organizational communication is effective. As an indicator, however, they suggested that "effective management information systems" are an important way to measure accountability in this area, but did not offer ways in which to measure whether an internal information system is effective.

External Communication

Challenges

Apart from these tensions *within* organizations, problems also frequently arise with external communication among USAID, US PVOs and African NGOs. As described earlier in the section on a vision for accountability, each of these stakeholders is accountable to different constituencies for different deliverables. These differences in roles, responsibilities, and constituencies often lead to difficulty in communicating with one another. Because their priorities and responsibilities are so different, it is frequently hard for these groups to see "eye to eye". It is thus not only hard to answer to one another, but to know how to hold one another accountable for what each group needs. African NGOs and US PVOs, for example, noted that it is sometimes difficult to communicate with USAID because they do not fully understand how the agency operates. When that basic understanding is not shared among all stakeholders in the process, it becomes very problematic for PVOs and NGOs not only to account to USAID, but also to hold USAID accountable to their own organizations.

Another factor that greatly influences the ability of these stakeholders to communicate with one another is the personalities and attitudes of individuals within the organizations. Participants in Nairobi specifically reflected on the problem of individual egos getting in the way of organizations communicating with one another. In one case study, a relationship being developed between a local NGO and a US PVO was impeded by the attitudes of the organizations' directors. When communication among organizations is impeded by individuals' personalities and egos, mutual accountability is sacrificed.

Frequent staff turnover can also create problems for external communication. Many US PVOs and African NGOs expressed frustration with the high turnover rate of USAID staff in missions, noting that it is difficult to establish working relationships when personnel are constantly changing. Just when an organization had made contact and developed a relationship with a USAID employee, the employee would leave, causing the NGO or PVO to have to start over with another person. African NGOs also noted that this problem of high turnover frequently occurs in US PVOs, thus making communication very difficult between PVOs and NGOs.

External communication between African NGOs, US PVOs, USAID and local and national governments is also complicated by the perception among many government officials that NGOs seek funding for programs which do not necessarily fall within official National Development Plans. This problem is exacerbated by "The close identification of NGOs and grassroots organizations with foreign donors [which] may make it difficult for them to establish longer term (sustainable) relationships with national governments and domestic sources of funds," (Edwards and Hulme, 1996, p. 970). NGOs are often perceived by national and local governments as "parasites" which are solely interested in obtaining funding for their programs -- regardless of the purpose of the funding.

A further challenge to communicating with national and local governments occurs when governments believe that NGOs are competing for development resources, especially when they perceive that NGOs programs are not necessarily designed in accordance with national development priorities. This problem is even more serious when it comes to advocacy and human rights groups that may be seen as opposing government rather than constructively contributing to as a watchdog.

Opportunities

To overcome some of these difficulties, participants stressed the need for partners to work to understand one another's processes and systems for communication, and to assess how communications currently happen. They also called for greater information sharing and sharing of experiences and best practices. Some participants suggested that PVOs and NGOs need to initiate networking and collaboration with one another as soon as they enter a country.

As a starting point for addressing the challenges described above, it was suggested that a mapping exercise be carried out as soon as possible. The mapping exercise will be a study examining the terms of and nature of country-level collaboration between USAID and PVOs, USAID and local NGOs, and PVOs and local NGOs. The study will support thoughtful reflection about the current nature of the country-level cooperative environment and provide a structured mechanism for both USAID and NGOs (local and US) to articulate their analysis of the current situation, desired changes; and their perspectives on assuring constructive implementation of new efforts.

In dealing with national and local governments, development stakeholders have an opportunity to engage governments in dialogue and sharing of information to increase mutual understanding. In the process, it is crucial that all stakeholders maintain transparency about their motives and deeds.

Capacity strengthening for accountability

Challenges

Donors and other stakeholders need to be cognizant of the need to develop the capacity of organizations and agencies to be accountable to one another. But another major challenge to accountability identified by the participants was the apparent disconnect between claims and realities of capacity strengthening efforts by US PVOs toward African NGOs and the assumption that US PVOs always have the capacities needed to strengthen those of their southern partners. As previously observed, participants representing USAID, PVOs and African NGO networks have different understandings and expectations for capacity strengthening programs currently implemented in Africa.

African NGO participants reaffirmed what has already been stated that, to date, capacity building has most often been implemented as periodic events rather than long-term processes

and that indicators to monitor and evaluate capacity strengthening programs have been neither consistent nor participatory with regard to national and regional development frameworks. PVOs seem to be more interested in strengthening the financial and administrative skills of their partners so that they can account for the money they are given and can produce good activity and financial reports. An example was given of PVOs strengthening skills in administrative skills exclusively as opposed to programmatic and other organizational needs.

Though there was a consensus that capacity strengthening programs must be planned with joint identification of needs and approaches, and that communities, as well as the "capacity builders", be involved in needs assessments, the recognized reality was that Southern capacity building needs have generally been defined by Northern NGOs. All too often these "needs", such as good monitoring, evaluation, activity and financial reports, serve the interests and needs of Northern NGOs and donors rather than the Southern organizations they are intended for. One of the reasons for this is that US PVOs concerned about the performance and capacity of African NGOs have put in place mechanisms to strengthen their partners, but questions have been raised about whose interest capacity-building programs serve. African NGOs contend that in most cases PVO capacity strengthening efforts equal training workshops or sessions) in systems local NGOs are not familiar with or which they cannot use with other funding sources including foundations, and official bilateral and multilateral donors.

In addition, the short term funding cycles of capacity strengthening efforts are not appropriate to meet the needs for capacity strengthening which are long-term in nature, time consuming and financially expensive. Rather, capacity strengthening must be an ongoing activity that is based on the needs of the beneficiaries rather than the priorities of the donors. In the past, southern NGOs have shown inadequate capacities as institutions. Capacity strengthening efforts have to take that into account and reinforce the capacities of institutions as well as individuals in order to build sustainable structures.

Furthermore, no one PVO can have expertise in all areas identified as critical by those in need of the capacity strengthening efforts and activities. PVOs therefore must be humble and transparent and strengthen their own internal capacity to strengthen that of others by continuously retooling their staff given their new roles and responsibilities in a changing development world.

Opportunities

To deal with the challenges of capacity strengthening in relation to improving accountability, participants recommended the following:

- Internal capacity strengthening:

That USAID provide in-house capacity strengthening which involves communities to help implement the Agency's CAP (Capacity Building) initiative

PVOs to do self-assessments of their own capacities and capacity needs to determine gaps within various organizations. The collection of case studies and information on capacity building from various sources, including the regional International Forum on Capacity Building (IFCB) meetings and global conference in May 2001, was also named as an important task for InterAction and ALPI participants

- NGOs' self-assessments of their own capacities and capacity needs and assessment of the ability of US PVOs to build the capacity of African NGOs before awarding them contracts

- Capacity strengthening (individual or/and organizational) activities must be built in all joint programs and projects thus recognizing the importance of capacity strengthening in development programming
- Finally, one of the important tasks named by participants was the implementation of systems of management training, especially in monitoring and evaluation, to provide more solid, effective mechanisms for constituents to be accountable to one another.

Establishing an enabling environment for mutual accountability

In addition to these challenges of balancing, improving communication, and capacity strengthening, participants noted that accountability cannot occur without establishing an enabling environment, achieved through effective systems and policies. At the same time, these systems and processes must be based on a common set of shared values that must be present for accountability to work.

Structural Challenges

Similar to the problem of communication, creating an enabling environment for accountability requires efforts both internally and externally. For USAID, African NGOs and US PVOs, accountability depends on the effective implementation of mutually agreeable systems and policies both within their organizations and in their relationships with other entities. When these systems and policies are not in place, are unilaterally imposed by one group on the other, or simply do not function as agreed and intended, mutual accountability is threatened.

One of the broader issues related to the creation of an enabling environment is the realization that mutual accountability involves the crucial component of governance. Governance is a complicated concept in its own regard, but involves management practices, democratic procedure, membership and staff reporting practices, board/management relationships, etc.

Adherence to internal systems, policies and frameworks is an essential component of governance. It is also important, however, that organizations comply with laws and policies of a regulatory nature

Governance is also evidently a serious issue that cuts across these issues raised with accountability. The development of effective systems, policies, processes and mechanisms for communication was a concern repeatedly voiced and raised by participants

Systems are the way in which we carry out our work, including mechanisms for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluations. Within these systems, there must be institutionalized ways for constituencies to hold one another accountable, and principles of participation and equality must be central to all these processes. Policies, including both internal organizational policies, and external legal frameworks, must be appropriate, user friendly, equitable, flexible, meaningful and inclusive. Policies must have minimum standards for participation, power recognition and mainstreaming gender, and must include all stakeholders and beneficiaries in the project cycle.

Participants noted that thus far, there has been significant difficulty in influencing USAID policy, and that USAID policies must be contextualized. Missions must be flexible in the implementation of their policies, and must continue to use participatory processes and methods for developing, reviewing and changing their policies.

Opportunities

In order to improve the environment and ways in which they work to make one another more accountable, participants offered a number of important action items, some of which have been mentioned before, but deserve brief mention again here as potential solutions to these particular challenges.

One of the recommendations participants made was for the sharing of information about USAID policy regarding the expanded SO teams that provides for greater participation of all stakeholders.

Many of the values alluded to by participants also have to do with issues of governance and how the characteristics we need to institutionalize in the governing of our organizations to make accountability work. Governance must be about participation.

The development of guidelines for partnerships that are equitable and inclusive was important. Participants also signaled the needs for organizations, including NGOs and PVOs, to develop minimum standards for participation and information sharing for their organizations.

System management training was mentioned as an important part of capacity strengthening initiatives to help ALPI constituencies develop relevant and participatory systems for institutions to carry out their work.

Finally, participants noted that a critical area for improvement is USAID's procurement policies, which need to be assessed and reviewed. Participants urged different PVOs and NGOs to collect case studies on procurement, and USAID to do an inventory of best practices in procurement.

Even having the proper systems and policies in place will not necessarily ensure that stakeholders are accountable to one another, unless key values are shared and practiced. Throughout both conferences, participants reiterated the need for all development actors to commit themselves to values of trust, honesty, openness, transparency, respect, equality, participation, credibility, justice and equity, sustainability, and ownership. These values serve as the base upon which mutual accountability is founded, and only by continuing to practice them can accountability truly work.

Trust is necessary for partners to believe one another and be able to cooperate towards a common goal. Honesty, openness, and transparency are essential so that stakeholders can get to the bottom of problems and concentrate on finding realistic solutions. Respect is required so that partners will appreciate one another's experience and value the contribution of each element to the whole result. Equality, equity and participation are needed to ensure that processes are fair and involve all stakeholders, including those with needs and those who are seeking to meet the needs. It is only by equally involving all stakeholders that they can own accountability processes, which is the only way by which development efforts can be sustainable. Without these critical values, accountability will not work. These are the essentially the glue that will bind the attempts for ALPI constituencies to improve their accountability to one another.

CONFERENCE PROCESS LESSONS LEARNED

In addition to the substantive learnings from the conferences, a number of lessons were learned about process issues which will be used for improving the ALPI dialogue. The suggestions offered below are directed at both InterAction staff and ALPI participants.

One: Tripartite participation is critical to making the ALPI process work. All stakeholder groups (including USAID missions, PVO representatives and African NGOs) have shown great interest, but often participation, especially by US PVOs, is disappointing. InterAction and participating PVOs should strive to get more organizations on board and committed to the ALPI process through networking, meetings and communications. USAID and African NGO networks should also continue to solicit support for ALPI from their own organizations and members. USAID missions and US PVOs should demonstrate their commitment to the ALPI process by sponsoring of their more partners to attend sub-regional conferences, InterAction's Forum, and ALPI Washington Week.

InterAction has specifically committed to increased efforts at outreach to US PVOs over the next few months which is detailed in the Way Forward section below.

Two: Presenters at the conferences should be consulted ahead of time to discuss what they will present and what they need from the conference organizers to make their presentations. This will contribute to both the efficiency and quality of the presentations, whether for case studies, field reports, etc.

Three: Field reports developed by participants should have visual aids (e.g. overhead transparencies) to make reports easier to follow for all participants.

Four: Participants should be challenged to describe the meanings of their jargon/lingo. Acronyms create a barrier to understanding, and a hierarchy of sorts that prevents the free flow of information. This issue should be addressed at the beginning of conferences as a norm for participation.

Five: Representatives from all stakeholder groups should be made to feel comfortable with one another, and to feel they are attending the same conference as equals. At the Nairobi conference, the fact that USAID mission staff stayed in a separate hotel in town created some uneasiness among the other participants. Though unintentional, participants' selection of seating arrangements, with each stakeholder group sitting among others from the same group, reinforced a sense of inequality within the larger group. Participants should be accommodated at the same place and provide an opportunity for more intermingling and informal exchange.

Six: For most case studies, only one or two of the participating organizations/agencies had representatives attend the conferences. In the future, all stakeholders involved in the case should send a representative, so that all perspectives are expressed, contributing to a richer debate.

Seven: In West Africa, language presented a challenge to the proceedings. Despite the fact that translators were present, communication was still difficult, some discussions were delayed by the need to translate into French and/or English, and engagement of the Francophone participants was not optimal.

THE WAY FORWARD

Action Items

Over the next eight months, participants will be working on addressing some of the challenges to accountability by fulfilling the action items identified and agreed upon at the conferences (Appendix E). Despite the fact that both sub-regions did not come up with the same action items, the ideas contained in the table were discussed at both conferences. None of the challenges being addressed through these action items are foreign or strange to any of the various sub-regions and they can therefore be seen as appropriate mechanisms for all ALPI constituencies in all areas of Africa. In the spirit of learning from one another's experiences and ideas, we encourage all ALPI participants to examine the action items detailed in Appendix E and determine ways to incorporate their implementation into their work.

The major action items to which participants committed at the conferences have been grouped into five basic categories. Within each category, specific activities have been assigned (as suggested by participants) to particular ALPI constituencies. We hope and expect that participants at the next set of sub-regional conferences in October 2001 will be able to report on the implementation of all the key actions listed in this table.

The first category of action items surrounds national and regional dialogue between ALPI constituencies. African NGO networks committed to holding national level meetings where frameworks for relationships could be developed, USAID policies could be discussed and understood, and national level documents could be prepared to feed into regional meetings. African NGOs also committed to hold regional level meetings with one another and to report on the findings of these meetings at the ALPI Washington Week in June 2001.

USAID committed to developing and sharing National Coalition Inventories which would include reports and recommendations. InterAction also committed to further national and regional level dialogue among the ALPI constituencies by sharing information about USAID policies for greater participation on strategic objective teams with US PVOs and African NGOs.

The second category of action items relates to the development of partnership guidelines for USAID, African NGOs and US PVOs. USAID is currently in the process of developing a document in collaboration with Academy for Educational Development (AED) on partnership guidelines. They committed to share the document with US PVOs and African NGOs as soon as it has been finalized. InterAction and USAID also committed to identifying PVOs that have umbrella grants (lists of NGOs), and sharing that information with African NGOs.

African NGOs and US PVOs both agreed to work on developing minimum standards for participation, power recognition, mainstreaming gender and information flow. This will be done through dialogue with local partners in development. US PVOs also committed to advocating for the networking and collaboration of their organizations with local African NGOs and to include information about the value of these efforts in their orientation training.

In the third category, participants discussed action items related to capacity strengthening. USAID pledged to help implement their Capacity Building Initiative for missions through in house capacity strengthening, including communities in their effort. InterAction promised to share case studies and learnings from the International Forum on Capacity Building in May 2001. InterAction, as the host of this global forum, will be assisting with the collection and dissemination of best practices in capacity strengthening from both the North and the South.

African NGO networks committed to conduct self-assessments in their organizations and tasked InterAction with follow-up on their progress. They also committed to hold workshops and

training sessions for local Community Based Organizations (CBOs). Local communities and the intermediary organizations providing training should jointly identify capacity strengthening training needs. All stakeholder groups (USAID, US PVOs, and African NGOs) committed to provide system management training, especially in monitoring and evaluation for both their own organizations and beneficiaries of their development work.

The fourth category of action items concerns internal and external communication for accountability. All stakeholder groups agreed that they needed to work on each of the action items identified in this category. All groups committed to developing and testing information tools and systems to improve their internal and external communications. They also agreed to solicit information and disseminate reports more actively, and to share results of internal evaluations of communication systems. All stakeholders committed to define priorities and appropriate mechanisms and strategies for improved communication.

All stakeholder groups also agreed that ALPI should carry out a "mapping" exercise, to assess the current status of relationships among donor agencies, African NGOs, US PVOs, national and local governments, and communities. This mapping exercise, which should be implemented as soon as possible, would provide a vehicle for NGO outreach and capacity strengthening and supplement the regular, systematic ALPI dialogue at the country, sub-regional and Washington levels.

Finally, the fifth category of action items deals with the assessment of procurement hurdles. USAID is developing an inventory of best practices in procurement, and volunteered to share the inventory with ALPI participants as soon as it is complete. African NGO networks and US PVOs also committed to reviewing procurement hurdles which they face and sharing that information at the ALPI Washington Week in June 2001.

All participants to both conferences agreed on the importance of regular reporting to one another and InterAction about progress made on the implementation of these action items. It was suggested that the list serves for the various sub-regions be used for this purpose.

Continuing the Dialogue on Accountability

Though both the Lagos and Nairobi conferences produced important contributions to the dialogue on challenges and opportunities for mutual accountability, they were not conclusive in their findings. As noted repeatedly throughout this report, this complex topic requires a great deal of thought and discussion. This dialogue on accountability will continue in the upcoming months, and will be the focus on InterAction's Annual Forum in June 2001. Some issues which remained "unresolved" and require further dialogue are described below:

One of the issues arising from both conferences was that throughout discussions, lip service was being paid to communities, but concrete action items committed to by participants focused more on USAID, PVOs and NGOs, without mention of how communities can be realistically brought into the accountability process. In the vision exercise, participants talked a lot about accounting "downwards" to communities and end users, but subsequently did not refer to the end-user when discussing case studies and real-life experiences. Communities were also hardly mentioned during the identification of action items to carry forward. Some organizations noted that they are reaching local communities through the organizations they work with, but specific examples were not offered of ways in which mutual accountability with communities is occurring. Developing indicators to be able to measure the level of accountability to local communities and create mechanisms to improve it is an essential part of this continuing dialogue.

Another issue which has been continually mentioned throughout this report is that indicators which were discussed at the conferences were not very specific, or were often based on qualitative changes which are difficult to measure. Though a complicated task, coming up with solid, practical indicators for mutual accountability will be an important task in this dialogue as it progresses.

Where from here? – Future Positive

In the coming year, ALPI has planned a number of important events to carry forward the continuing dialogue on improving US Development Assistance to Africa through exchanges between USAID, US PVOs and African NGOs.

A meeting of the ALPI Advisory Committee is being scheduled for January 2001. At this meeting, Advisory Committee members (consisting of representatives from USAID, US PVOs and African NGOs) will meet in Washington to discuss progress on the Initiative and review ALPI's strategy for the next cycle. Members will also be reviewing the selection criteria for participants to the InterAction Forum and ALPI Washington Week, as well as the sub-regional conferences.

Also during January, InterAction will host a meeting in Washington, DC with US PVOs to share information on the proceedings at the October 2000 sub-regional conferences. The meeting will be a forum for soliciting input on how to strengthen the program, especially with regard to participation by US PVOs, and will reach out to new potential participants. Representatives to the meeting will also be asked to discuss increasing the sponsorship by PVOs of their local development partners to attend the sub-regional conferences. At this meeting, ALPI will solicit ideas for workshops to be held in Washington, DC on topics related to improving development relationships among ALPI constituencies that will advance the ongoing ALPI dialogue.

The global conference of the International Forum on Capacity Building (IFCB) will be held in May 2001 in Washington, DC, and will be the culminating event of a 2+ year initiative on capacity strengthening that involves northern and southern non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and several donors including the World Bank, EC, USAID, DFID, SIDA and UNDP. The discussion of case studies and dissemination of best practices in capacity strengthening from both the North and the South will be shared with ALPI participants electronically and through the InterAction Web site.

In June 2001, the issue of mutual accountability will be brought to the forefront again at ALPI's Washington Week, and the InterAction Annual Forum in Washington, DC. Discussions and learnings from the ALPI dialogue have once again informed the theme of the entire InterAction Forum, which this year will be "Effectiveness through Mutual Accountability". The Forum and Washington Week will draw a variety of speakers and presenters from different stakeholder groups (e.g. donor agencies, NGOs, academia, private sector, unions, etc) in both the North and South to address various aspects of this topic.

The next set of sub-regional conferences will take place in Kampala, Uganda and Dakar, Senegal in October 2001. The theme for the conferences will likely be determined by the outcome of dialogue at the InterAction Forum and ALPI Washington Week.

In between these major events, InterAction will continue with calls for the documentation and dissemination of best practices and organizational learnings on mutual accountability, capacity strengthening, partnerships, and financial sustainability as developed by USAID, US PVOs and African NGOs. Regular communication with ALPI constituencies will also continue through monthly e-bulletins, the ALPI list servs, and email updates.

In the coming months, ALPI will also be coordinating the implementation of “mapping exercises” in the various sub-regions. Data obtained from these exercises will be used to feed into the InterAction Forum and ALPI Washington Week, as well as the next set of sub-regionals.

ALPI is pleased with the progress made in just one year. Much remains to be done, of course, but judging from the commitment and enthusiasm of participants, the openness and frankness of discussions, we are hopeful that much can be achieved in the next two years. Transforming the development relationships in Africa is clearly a long term process and is an excellent illustration of the need for ALPI’s efforts through this initiative. There is need for continuous follow up work to ensure that excitement generated during sub-regional conferences is translated into action and progress.

ALPI is clearly a learning process. It is a unique program that in and of itself is an achievement. Each time it builds on what we have learned in the process, each time producing rich discussions and new insights that contribute to the program goal of transforming development relationships in Africa.

RESOURCES

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APPENDIX A

CONFERENCE AGENDAS

LAGOS SUB REGIONAL CONFERENCE

3-5 October 2000

Federal Palace, Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria

PROGRAM
PROGRAM

TUESDAY, 3 OCTOBER, 2000

08:30 - 09:00	REGISTRATION
09:00 - 10:00	<u>OPENING REMARKS:</u> Evariste Karangwa <i>Program Manager, Africa Liaison Program Initiative, InterAction</i> Ms. Annie Davies <i>Coordinator Development Information Network (DEVNET)</i> Mr. Tom Hobgood <i>Mission Director, USAID Nigeria</i> Ms. Sharon Pauling <i>US PYO/NGO Advisor, USAID Africa Bureau, Washington</i> Mr. Mike Egboh <i>Country Representative, Pathfinder, Nigeria</i> Mr. John Zarafonetis <i>Director, Development Programs, InterAction</i>
10:00 - 10:10	Introductions
10:10 - 10:30	Objectives, Participant's Expectations
10:30 - 10:45	Icebreaker
10:45 - 11:00	TEA BREAK
11:00 - 11:15	Overview of ALPI

11:15 - 12:30	Field Reports
12:30 - 13:30	LUNCH and Evaluation Forms
13:30 - 14:15	Review of Principles of Development Relationships
14:15 - 15:15	Developing a vision for accountability: Stakeholder group work
15:15 - 15:45	Group presentations
15:45 - 16:00	TEA BREAK
16:00 - 16:30	Stakeholder group work
16:30	Wrap up

WEDNESDAY, 4 OCTOBER, 2000

09:00 - 09:30	Group Presentations (from previous day)
09:30 - 10:30	Plenary discussion on vision for accountability
10:30 - 10:45	TEA BREAK
10:45 - 12:30	Case studies on accountability in development relationships
12:30 - 13:30	LUNCH
13:30 - 15:30	Stakeholder group work
15:30 - 16:00	Group presentations
16:00 - 16:15	TEA BREAK
16:15 - 17:15	Plenary session
17:15	Wrap up

THURSDAY, 5 OCTOBER, 2000

09:00 - 10:30	Recommendations and Action Items (group work)
10:30 - 10:45	TEA BREAK
10:45 - 12:30	Group presentations
12:30 - 13:30	LUNCH
13:30 - 15:30	Way Forward/Next steps
15:30	Wrap up

NAIROBI SUB REGIONAL CONFERENCE

11-13 October 2000

Kenya College of Communications Technology, Nairobi, Kenya

PROGRAM PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, 11 OCTOBER, 2000

08:30 - 09:00	REGISTRATION
09:00 - 10:00	<u>OPENING REMARKS:</u> Evariste Karangwa <i>Program Manager, Africa Liaison Program Initiative</i> Mr. Oduor Ongwen <i>Chairperson, Kenya Council of NGOs</i> Ms. Sharon Pauling, <i>US PVO Advisor, USAID Africa Bureau</i> Mr. John Zarafonetis <i>InterAction</i>
10:00 - 10:10	Introductions
10:10 - 10:30	Objectives, Participant's Expectations
10:30 - 10:45	Icebreaker
10:45 - 11:00	TEA BREAK
11:00 - 11:15	Overview of ALPI
11:15 - 12:30	Field Reports
12:30 - 13:30	LUNCH and Evaluation Forms
13:30 - 14:15	Review of Principles of Development Relationships
14:15 - 15:15	Developing a vision for accountability: Stakeholder group work
15:15 - 15:45	Group presentations
15:45 - 16:00	TEA BREAK
16:00 - 16:30	Stakeholder group work
16:30	Wrap up

THURSDAY, 12 OCTOBER, 2000

09:00 - 09:30	Group Presentations (from previous day)
09:30 - 10:30	Plenary discussion on vision for accountability
10:30 - 10:45	TEA BREAK
10:45 - 12:30	Case studies on accountability in development relationships
12:30 - 13:30	LUNCH
13:30 -15:30	Stakeholder group work
15:30 - 16:00	Group presentations
16:00 - 16:15	TEA BREAK
16:15 - 17:15	Plenary session
17:15	Wrap up

FRIDAY, 13 OCTOBER, 2000

09:00 - 10:30	Recommendations and Action Items (group work)
10:30 - 10:45	TEA BREAK
10:45 - 12:30	Group presentations
12:30 - 13:30	LUNCH
13:30 - 15:30	Way Forward/Next steps
15:30	Wrap up

APPENDIX B

LISTS OF PARTICIPANTS

LAGOS SUB-REGIONAL CONFERENCE

October 3-5, 2000
Federal Palace Hotel

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NAIROBI SUB-REGIONAL CONFERENCE

October 11-13, 2000

Kenya College of Communications Technology

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APPENDIX C

CONFERENCE NOTES

LAGOS SUB REGIONAL CONFERENCE NOTES

3-5 October 2000

REMARKS BY TOM HOBGOOD, Mission Director, USAID Nigeria

Tom Hobgood, Mission Director of USAID Nigeria commented on the challenges Nigeria is facing in light of the transition from 15 years of military rule to democracy. Noting that it is the most populous African nation with the second largest economy, Mr. Hobgood called Nigeria a pivotal country for USAID.

Mr. Hobgood commented that accountability increases trust and understanding and is necessary to achieving sustainable development. He urged participants to examine what accountability means for USAID, PVOs, NGOs and individuals. He then asked participants to think about how we see accountability, and how we measure it - whether by inputs, outputs, processes, or all of the above.

Mr. Hobgood thanked all of the participants for coming and for their commitment to the ALPI process.

PARTICIPANTS EXPECTATIONS

- African NGOs image on accountability
- Greater tripartite understanding
- Mutuality of accountability
- Ideas/experience sharing
- Learn best practices
- Improve ownership
- Explore new program opportunities
- Understanding multi-stakeholder perceptions of accountability, multi-value/multi-practice
- Indicators for future action
- Expansion of existing networks
- Better understanding of perception of social justice and peace
- Inter-partner strategies for building and sustaining relationships
- Greater inclusion of labor related issues in civil society dialogue
- Capacity building for accountability

COUNTRY REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

Ely Simpara - CCA/ONG

CCA/ONG disseminated information about ALPI, including CCA/ONG's participation in ALPI activities, with their membership. Meetings were held with USAID which led to better understanding of USAID strategic objectives. Working relations with USAID have improved through this dialogue.

With PVOs, CCA/ONG held a workshop on institutional capacity strengthening (financial and administrative management systems).

At the regional level, CCA/ONG went to Niger to assist with the creation of a national NGO network.

With the government, CCA/ONG opened discussions on the possibility of NGOs accessing state funds.

Ben Sekou Sylla - CENAFOD

CENAFOD disseminated information on ALPI activities to USAID, US PVOs, and local NGOs. CENAFOD produced a report to disseminate information about ALPI and USAID assisted by producing copies of the report for distribution by CENAFOD. Unfortunately, US PVOs by and large did not provide feedback to the report, though one PVO was so disturbed by the report as to sever relations with a local NGO. Based on the lack of response to the report and efforts at organizing national dialogue, it appears US PVOs in Guinea are not demonstrating much interest in exchanges with local NGOs.

A workshop on "Vision of Capacity Strengthening within Partnership Relationships" has been planned but not yet held. USAID is discussing with CENAFOD possible financial support for the workshop.

Binta Sarr and Matar Anta Diop -- CONGAD

US PVOs and local NGOs are meeting on a regular basis. Local NGOs are also meeting with USAID. USAID and the World Bank are currently lobbying the Senegalese Government on behalf of NGOs.

Kofi Adu - GAPVOD

GAPVOD is facilitating the development of a national policy on NGOs.

At the regional level, GAPVOD facilitated meetings between civil society groups on NGO policies and partnerships with government. These regional meetings will lead to a three-day national meeting toward the end of October between NGOs, Government officials, and international organizations (bilateral and multilateral), including USAID. USAID has responded positively and committed to participate.

Formal and informal discussions were held among GAPVOD, US PVOs and the USAID mission, but nothing concrete has emerged from the meetings thus far.

GAPVOD noted that the USAID mission has shown a lack of flexibility for new entrants into the group of NGOs with whom they are currently working. They consider the group large enough as compared to other countries.

Sharon Pauling - USAID, Africa Bureau

USAID is working with its missions to develop guidelines on partnership. The project is being developed in the Bureau for Humanitarian Response with input from the Africa Bureau. USAID is also beginning CAP, a Capacity Building Initiative that is a response to concerns raised in ACVA meetings and the discussions in March surrounding the need for capacity strengthening. CAP was developed from a survey done with all missions globally regarding their capacity building programming needs. With the reduction in force, there is a reduction in direct hires, resulting

in the need to work with more local NGOs. Consequently, USAID is aware of the need to strengthen the capacities of the NGOs they will be working with. The CAP program should be up and running at the beginning of next year, and will provide guidelines to USAID missions, training, and technical assistance on capacity strengthening.

One of the challenges that USAID is seeking to address is the long-term nature of capacity strengthening efforts versus the orientation of USAID toward "managing for results".

USAID HQ is also trying to sensitize missions on concrete issues of capacity strengthening and how to deliver on that. Part of that effort involves sensitizing missions on how to select organizations which can work best with CBOs.

USAID's Africa Bureau is also undertaking training in developing performance monitoring plans and working to support efforts by NGOs to formulate legislation that provides tax incentives for charitable giving. Missions are carrying out inventories on the status of NGO legislation and efforts around charitable giving. Some missions have already responded, and USAID committed to sharing the analysis of that feedback with ALPI participants.

The outcomes of Accra, Bamako and Washington were both sent to West African AID missions.

Evariste Karangwa, InterAction

InterAction held a skills-building session on financial sustainability at the Annual Forum in April 2000. The Coalition also compiled and distributed resources on financial sustainability, as well as called for best practices on financial sustainability from the various ALPI constituencies.

InterAction began producing monthly e-news bulletins in July, containing both updates on ALPI activities and information on publications, events, opportunities, and web resources of interest. Communication with ALPI participants also continues electronically through the ALPI list servs and through reports on the ALPI sub-regional meetings and InterAction Forum which are distributed via email.

Joint planning and design of ALPI activities was realized through: consultation with the ALPI Advisory Committee and sub-regional co-hosts on selection of the conferences themes, venues, co-hosts, and case studies. Communication and planning occurred with the field through regular updates and requests for feedback. In addition, USAID Washington was involved in the planning process.

Finally, InterAction worked on collecting PVO best practices by soliciting case stories from InterAction members, reviewing and summarizing the practices, and calling and visiting US PVOs to request examples of best practices.

1. GROUP WORK BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP ON "DEVELOPING A VISION FOR ACCOUNTABILITY"

1.1 *Why Are We Accountable?*

1.1.1 African NGOs:

- Because we have a mission
- Because we are working with someone else's money (whether donor or members of the NGO coalition)
- Because we are morally obliged and the rules of transparency and integrity demand it

1.1.2 USAID:

- Because it is a legal requirement - Government Performance Results Act (GRPA)
- Because AID needs to be accountable to the people as a fundamental principle of democratic governance and relationships
- To maintain political support for AID funding
- Because accountability leads to lessons learned and improves development program
- Accountability involves both finance and results: i.e. does monetary investment equal to the result or the outcome?

1.1.3 US PVOs:

- Both giver and recipient must be respectful of one another
- Because of the need for mutual understanding, respect and trust
- Because of the need for information sharing, open flow of information
- We need to be transparent
- We must produce results and meet planned objectives
- We need the opportunity for continued analysis and improvement
- Stakeholders must show goodwill towards one another
- Accountability is required for sustainability
- Demonstrated Proper Management Principles
- Compliance: Government/Organizational

1.2 *To Whom Are We Accountable?*

1.2.1 African NGOs:

- All stakeholder groups: beneficiaries, members, donors, etc.

1.2.2 USAID:

- Congress and US tax payers
- End users (beneficiaries)
- Host country governments
- Partners (local and international)
- Missions are accountable to AID in Washington
- Other donors (when coordination works)

1.2.3 US PVOs:

- Beneficiaries: direct and indirect
- Communities
- Donors
- Ourselves personally
- Respective organizations
- Partners on the ground

1.3 *For What Are We Accountable?*

1.3.1 African NGOs:

- Credibility and trust
- Justice
- Sustainability

- Increased responsibility

1.3.2 USAID:

- Results and impact
- Money management → resulting in cost efficiency, cost effectiveness, minimizing fraud
- Transparency → resulting in greater information sharing, better procurement procedures, effective decision making, more effective consultation and communication

1.3.3 US PVOs:

- Resources
- Values
- Attitudes
- Finances
- Personnel
- Standards
- Processes

2. PLENARY SESSION TO IDENTIFY COMMONALITIES, DIVERGENCE AND "GREY AREAS" FROM GROUP WORK

2.1 *Why Are We Accountable?*

2.1.1 Common:

- To build trust
- Because we are working with others' money
- To comply with rules, regulations and laws
- Because our principles and mission demand that we be accountable
- Because we have values of respect and moral trust

2.1.2 Grey Areas:

- Because there are legal requirements
- For greater information sharing
- We respect one another
- To improve programs
- For analysis and improvement

2.2 *To Whom Are We Accountable?*

2.2.1 Common:

- Beneficiaries
- Donors
- Partners
- Constituencies
- Government
- Communities
- Funding sources
- Members

2.2.2 Grey Areas:

- Host country government
- Respective organizations
- Ourselves

2.3 *For What Are We Accountable?*

2.3.1 Common:

- Results
- Impact
- Success
- Finances
- Transparency
- Financial management
- Processes and procedures

2.3.2 Divergence:

- Results
- Impact

2.3.3 Grey Areas:

- Justice
- Credibility
- Values
- Consultation and communication

3. STAKEHOLDER GROUPS IDENTIFYING CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND INDICATORS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AFTER CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS

3.1 *Challenges*

3.1.1 African NGOs:

- Involvement of all partners in beneficiary cycle (program objectives, orientation and return assessment)
- Gaps in program design - communication, monitoring and evaluation not done in consultation with partners in the field
- Lack of or inadequate communication
- Unsure how to benefit from changes and new strategies within PVO
- Uncertain about future direction of relationships/programs
- Sustainability

3.1.2 USAID:

- Limited program and operational expense budget means limited choices in partners and programs
- Most missions have 3-7 year strategies, but 2 year funding cycles
- Congressional earmarks (Democracy and Governance (DG) and EG are shrinking)
- Difficult to find organized and representative networks to consult with

- Partners have difficulty meeting reporting deadlines

3.1.3 US PVOs:

- Selection of partners difficult
- Need to understand the culture of the people PVO is working with
- Imposed project impacts and implementation processes
- Strategic planning objectives versus problems on the ground over time
- PVOs and donors set program areas without deference to beneficiaries
- Lack of prior evaluation and community input given to projects

3.2 *Opportunities*

3.2.1 African NGOs:

- Field surveys and assessments
- Determining impacts and outcomes
- Transparency → including partners in design, monitoring and evaluation, etc.
- Sincerity
- Experience of stakeholders
- Flexibility
- Variations in accounting culture, communication, understanding of time frames and returns to be gained
- Training opportunities
- Skills acquisition
- Construction of project infrastructure
- Funding beginning from project inception

3.2.2 USAID:

- Key moment for accountability is at the point of strategy definition
- Require local participation in the development of activity proposals by PVOs and other intermediaries
- Joint negotiation of results and indicators at strategic objective (SO) and intermediate result (IR) levels
- Opportunities to be flexible regarding deadlines, budgets, grant periods, budget change notification, and approval processes

3.2.3 US PVOs:

- Expanding use of participatory rural assessments to identify need
- Spread positive results of projects to national, regional and international levels
- Expansion of impact due to regional and national access
- Many governments now recognize the value of NGOs and therefore allow them to operate more freely
- Transfer roles/voids left by governments to local groups/NGOs
- Activities enable beneficiaries to gain more control over their own lives
- Provide access to funding in rural areas that would not otherwise be served
- Opportunity to influence length of programs by USAID

3.3 *Indicators*

3.3.1 African NGOs:

- Development of partnerships

- Self sustainability (financial)
- Effective Management Information Systems
- Well structured programs

3.3.2 USAID:

- Meetings to guide consultations
- Evidence of joint program reviews and joint annual reviews

3.3.3 US PVOs:

- Qualitative analysis vs. Quantitative analysis)
- Impact assessments vs. Input/output assessments
- Beneficiaries should have greater inclusion in project design, evaluation, and impact assessment processes
- Programs should be designed more flexibly to address change in objectives, personnel, etc.
- Timing of accounting for spent funds
- Time frames are unrealistic
- Detailed risk assessments
- PVO funding structures should adjust to evolving community needs
- What exists on the ground is sometimes different than what is stated in project documents
- Resisting development trends
- How do we transition from pursuing priorities set by USAID and other donors to what particular communities actually need?
- How do PVOs address the myriad problems in communities while maintaining accountability to donors?
- How can PVOs create flexibility between the central strategic plan objectives and dynamic issues at the grassroots level?
- How can PVOs create an environment that will allow local groups to progress and be more effective
- Get away from "input/output" to "Result/impact" oriented evaluation systems
- Are indicators long-term?
- Growth and increased effectiveness of African Partnerships in the short and long term

4. STAKEHOLDER GROUPS ON NEW LESSONS LEARNED AND ACTION ITEMS

4.1 *Lessons*

4.1.1 African NGOs:

- Universality of accounting principles
- Practice of accountability is reflected differently depending on local context
- Need for clarification of different levels of accountability
- Need for honest and frank communication between stakeholders
- Internal communication is critical
- External communication with donors, government, PVOs and US PVO representatives, community based organizations must be effective
- Internal capacity strengthening of local level committees is important

4.1.2 USAID:

- No clear consensus on the meaning of accountability

- Need for more information sharing, communication and consultation
- Need for more capacity strengthening of African NGOs based on jointly identified needs and approaches

4.1.3 US PVOs:

- Disconnect and unevenness between policies and practices in terms of communications, collaboration and processes
- Recognition of need to collaborate, plan, execute and evaluate programs with participation of all stakeholders
- Value of networking
- Value of sharing of best practices and experiences
- Concept of accountability is still elusive
- Accountability is too often upwardly vertical
- Need for donors to be more accountable to PVOs, NGOs and beneficiaries
- Stakeholders need to revise accountability systems from donor-driven to beneficiary driven systems
- Donors need to change their behavior from a patron-client relationship to partnerships
- Relationships are multi-faceted which is not sustainable → PVOs behave alternately as donors, partners and competitors

4.2 *Actions Items*

4.2.1 African NGOs:

- Regular communication between staff and governing bodies of the organization through meetings, seminars, emails, publications and meetings with donors

4.2.2 USAID:

- Schedule information sharing meetings
- Develop communications strategies
- Incorporate more attention to NGO capacity strengthening in all implementing mechanisms
- Solicit information and disseminate progress reports more proactively

4.2.3 US PVOs:

- Proposed mapping exercise in selected countries
- Strengthen and build consultative groups within countries
- PVOs and NGOs work to find better ways of working within existing structures
- Strengthen and review partnership relationships
- Share processes and practices within our organizations

5. INTEREST GROUPS TO IDENTIFY CONCRETE ACTION ITEMS ON CAPACITY STRENGTHENING, COMMUNICATION, AND STRIKING A BALANCE BETWEEN DONOR & BENEFICIARY ACCOUNTABILITY

5.1 Capacity strengthening

Action	How to	By	Resources Needed	Timeframe
In house capacity strengthening including communities	To implement Capacity Building Initiative (CAP) for missions	USAID		
Incorporate capacity strengthening into implementing means	Will share case studies and information from the IFCB Forum in May 2001	InterAction		
Review and strengthen relationships	Conduct self assessments and reinforcement of action at ALPI	African NGOs		
	To hold workshops and training sessions for CBOs but should be beneficiary consultative training	African NGOs		
	System management training especially in monitoring and evaluation	All partners		

5.2 Communication (internal and external)

Action	How to	By	Resources Needed	Timeframe
Information sharing system	Development and testing of tools	All partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff ▪ Consultant ▪ Funding 	In 4 to 6 months
Assessment of current status of communication with donors, communities, government, others	Mapping exercise	All partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consultant ▪ Funding 	End of 2000
Sharing of the results of the evaluation and definition of priorities and appropriate methods and strategies		All partners Staff (Donors, communities, government, others)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consultant ▪ Funding 	1 st Quarter 2001

5.3 Striking balance between donor and beneficiary accountability

Action	How to	By	Resources Needed	Timeframe
Solicit information and disseminate progress reports more actively	After needs assessment there should be a feed back system to beneficiary	All partners		
Find ways to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All developments actors 	All partners		

Find ways to work better in existing accountability systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All developments actors should solicit feedback on program impact ▪ Minimum standard of information distribution ▪ Multi-phased consultation system 	All partners		
Mapping (selected countries)				
Follow-up and information exchange quarterly meetings				
Training workshops to learn more about stakeholders' expectations				
Participatory evaluation and development of new strategies				

NAIROBI SUB REGIONAL CONFERENCE NOTES

11-13 October 2000

1. COUNTRY REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

1.1 *Antonio Kiala - FONGA, Angola*

FONGA planned a national meeting to bring together all three stakeholders (African NGOs, US PVOs, and USAID) for November 2000.

FONGA also consulted with its members in a self-evaluation exercise which included evaluation of the roles of all organs within FONGA - financial management, planning, monitoring and evaluation, the frequency and quality of reporting, and the participation of various stakeholders including partners and beneficiaries. FONGA members seemed pleased with the evaluation approach. A model developed by PACT was used, which FONGA members used in turn to their own self-evaluations.

1.2 *Oduor Ongwen - Kenya Council of NGOs*

The Kenya Council of NGOs reported that it held a meeting last year to develop a standard "Statement of Recommended Accounting and Audit Practices". The Council has also developed a training program on financial reporting which includes local NGOs.

The Council also embarked on an organization-wide audit to look at the financial affairs of the Council from 1993 to date. The audit was completed in August 2000, and useful feedback came out of the evaluation.

The Council also held regional meetings with other regional NGO networks, particularly on the management of programs. It was noted that serious problems of capacity exist within local NGOs in terms of management of resources. It was agreed with the US PVOs that there is a strong need for capacity strengthening in financial management.

1.3 *Maria Shaba - Tanzania Association of NGOs (TANGO)*

TANGO conducted a few self-auditing workshops for the Board and Secretariat to develop a clear vision, mission and Code of Conduct. TANGO also held workshops with its members to look at the vision and mission of the umbrella body, as well as have members assess their own organizations. It was noted that it is very important to link these workshops with other similar initiatives being implemented now on partnerships and accountability.

TANGO is also working on improving its planning and has agreed to have regular meetings of "NGO Leaders Forums".

1.4 *David Madurai - South African NGO Council (SANGOCO)*

Since Harare SANGOCO completed a planning and audit process, and is working on developing a planning cycle for members that would ensure members plan together to avoid duplication of efforts.

It was noted that SANGOCO is reshaping itself from a front into an organization, concentrating on social welfare programs, food security, land and environmental issues, employment, credit, micro-finance and SMMEs.

SANGOCO also held its annual NGO week in late September 2000, where some 600 participants from US PVOs, government, and donor agencies came together with NGO representatives to discuss issues affecting civil society in South Africa.

1.5 *Sharon Pauling - USAID, Africa Bureau*

USAID is working with its missions to develop guidelines on partnership. The project is being developed in the Bureau for Humanitarian Response with input from the Africa Bureau. USAID is also beginning CAP, a Capacity Building Initiative that is a response to concerns raised in ACVA meetings and the discussions in March surrounding the need for capacity strengthening. CAP was developed from a survey done with all missions globally regarding their capacity building programming needs. The CAP program should be up and running at the beginning of next year, and will provide guidelines to USAID missions, training, and technical assistance on capacity strengthening.

USAID's Africa Bureau is also undertaking training in developing performance monitoring plans and working to support efforts by NGOs to formulate legislation that provides tax incentives for charitable giving. Missions are carrying out inventories on the status of NGO legislation and efforts around charitable giving.

The outcomes of Harare and Washington were both sent to East and Southern African AID missions.

1.6 *Sheila Kawamara - Uganda Women's Network (UWONET)*

UWONET organized a fruitful consultative meeting with the USAID Uganda mission in July and new staff at USAID seemed "on-board" with ALPI. US PVOs, on the other hand, were not as involved in the process, citing that they needed authorization from their headquarters in the US to participate in tripartite meetings.

1.7 *Amos Nakalonga - Zambia Council of Social Development*

The Zambia Council of Social Development has held a series of consultative meetings with stakeholders on developing a common approach to "wealth creation" as opposed to "poverty reduction". The Council has also attempted tripartite meetings at the national level, but has had difficulty in getting all stakeholders to the table.

It was noted that NGOs in Zambia are trying to work with government and donor agencies, while ensuring that through coalitions they are able to speak with one voice on issues of concern to civil society. The Council reported that monthly discussions between the government, donors and NGOs are now taking place.

1.8 *Ruth Mufute - Africare, Zimbabwe*

After the March 2000 sub-regional meetings, Africare and InterAction drafted a letter to US PVOs operating in Zimbabwe which was then attached to minutes of the Harare meeting and sent out. In the letter PVOs were requested to respond prior to the Washington Week and InterAction Forum in April, but neither InterAction nor Africare received a response before April. One of the main problems appeared to be lack of communication between headquarters and field offices. Some PVOs also cited other problems such as floods, elections, etc. as more pressing issues demanding their time and attention.

Africare suggested the possibility of initiating a US PVO forum in each country, as the present lack of communication among PVOs is leading to duplication of efforts and competition for funding.

Africare has also been providing training to NGOs on advocacy skills, and has been trying to involve them in a transparent, participatory process in which Africare is not dictating terms.

1.9 *Evariste Karangwa, InterAction*

InterAction held a skills-building session on financial sustainability at the Annual Forum in April 2000. The Coalition also compiled and distributed resources on financial sustainability, as well as called for best practices on financial sustainability from the various ALPI constituencies.

InterAction began producing monthly e-news bulletins in July, containing both updates on ALPI activities and information on publications, events, opportunities, and web resources of interest. Communication with ALPI participants also continues electronically through the ALPI list serves and through reports on the ALPI sub-regional meetings and InterAction Forum which are distributed via email.

Joint planning and design of ALPI activities was realized through: consultation with the ALPI Advisory Committee and sub-regional co-hosts on selection of the conferences themes, venues, co-hosts, and case studies. Communication and planning occurred with the field through regular updates and requests for feedback. In addition, USAID Washington was involved in the planning process.

Finally, InterAction worked on collecting PVO best practices by soliciting case stories from InterAction members, reviewing and summarizing the practices, and calling and visiting US PVOs to request examples of best practices.

2. **PRESENTATION BY STARK BIDDLE ON "DURABLE PARTNERSHIPS" DOCUMENT BEING DEVELOPED BY AED FOR USAID**

The Academy for Educational Development (AED), a US PVO, has been asked by USAID to design and prepare a guide for USAID personnel that would help them develop and manage effective partnership relations between American and local organizations.

The Guide (currently in draft form) reviews the pros and cons of partnerships to achieve results, provides guidance on determining whether a partnership is likely to be effective, discusses alternative funding strategies and provides a number of suggestions on ways that USAID staff can constructively facilitate and manage a partnership. There are two principal questions in the guide:

- a. Why do some partnerships work so well and others not?
- b. Given the first, what can they do about it? (practical things that can be done to nurture relationships)

The primary audience for the Guide will be the operational units of the Agency and the staff of intermediary organizations. Many of the basic principles will be useful to local organizations.

The Guide is currently being "field tested" both overseas and in Washington with USAID staff and partnering organizations.

3. GROUP WORK BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP ON "DEVELOPING A VISION FOR ACCOUNTABILITY"

3.4 *Key elements of accountability, processes and systems for accountability, challenges and opportunities, what has worked and what has not*

3.4.1 US PVOs:

- Elements of accountability:
 - Financial
 - Programmatic
 - External and internal (organization)
 - Regulatory (legislation, laws, working environment)
- Accountable to whom?
 - Community
 - Donor
 - Self (organization)
 - Governments
 - Collaborators
- How are we accountable?
 - Design
 - Monitoring
 - Implementation
 - Evaluation
 - Reporting
 - Transparency through joint management and decision making
- Challenges:
 - Perception of loss of independence or direction
 - Willingness to change approaches
 - Institutionalization of accountability
 - Financial/organizational survival of agencies
 - Balance between the money the PVO brings in and community input
 - Lack of transparency and commitment
 - Balancing the different needs/demands of donors and government
 - Time constraints due to project/donor requirements

3.4.2 African NGOs (I):

- Key elements of accountability:
 - Organizational
 - Target groups
 - Donors and partners:
 - a) agreement and understanding: no hidden agendas
 - b) needs driven, participatory processes at all stages
 - c) trust and honesty
 - d) pre-identified and agreed upon controls and systems
 - e) structures and human resources

- f) monitoring and evaluation by all stakeholders (organizational, target groups and donors/partners all need to measure what they are doing, also constituencies and our own organizations)
 - g) narrative and financial reporting
 - h) good governance and leadership and ethical management
- Challenges and Opportunities
 - Donor Darlings (DDs) in spite of poor performance → donors keep funding NGOs even though they are not performing because there is a historic relationship, excluding NGOs that might have done better
 - Competition for resources
 - Duplication of efforts
 - NGO and Donor prostitution
 - Donor driven agendas
 - Legal frameworks
 - Governments
 - What works?
 - Honest
 - Pro-poor policies
 - Genuine participation

3.4.3 African NGOs (II):

- Key elements of accountability:
 - Willingness and commitment
 - Honesty
 - Openness
 - Inclusiveness
 - Mutuality
 - Leadership
- Processes and Systems:

Processes

- Planning and target setting, using indicators
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Identification of actors (leaders and implementors)

Systems

- Policies, procedures, guidelines
 - Reports
 - Audit - financial, social and self-assessments
 - Physical verification system to see if what is on paper tallies with what is found on the ground
- Challenges
 - Inadequate capacities (individual leadership and institutional)
 - Stakeholder demands varied and difficult to determine
 - Unclear vision and mission
 - Poverty
 - Inequitable partnerships
 - Opportunities:
 - More dialogue and consultation

- Good experiences, capacities and resources to draw from
- What works:
 - Consultation
 - Openness
 - Willingness to learn
 - Trust and respect
- What does not:
 - Bullying and stereotyping
 - Lack of empathy
 - Exclusion from processes
- Accountable for what?
 - Everything we have an obligation for
 - Results in the end → impact
- Accountable to whom?
 - All stakeholders
 - Society
 - Partners
 - Others
- Accountable how?
 - Reports
 - Results
 - Visits
 - Documentation
 - Communication

3.4.4 USAID:

- Accountable for what?
 - Results
 - Management of resources
 - Internal USAID processes → “R4” (results, report, resource, request)
 - Strategic plan (including US foreign policy)
- Accountable to whom?
 - Customer focus is a core value
 - Team reports to mission which reports to US Embassy which reports to the larger mission which reports to USAID Washington which reports to the US Congress which reports to the US taxpayer
 - Team also reports to host country counterparts who report to intermediaries (can have other partners and implementers, donors, UN, etc) who report to end beneficiaries
- Expressions of Accountability
 - Regular accountability through official reporting mechanism
 - Meetings: consultation, information sharing and feedback
 - Extended strategic objective teams (inclusion of more stakeholders in process)
 - Annual partner consultative meetings
 - Joint program review

- Challenges:
 - Strategic planning
 - Adjusting intermediate results under strategic objectives, based on consultations
 - Time
 - PVOs acting as gatekeepers, limiting NGO access
 - Geographical location
 - Internal USAID budget cuts after approval process has ended
 - Procurement policies: amount of control on cooperative agreements and contracts
 - USAID accountable to beneficiaries through PMP
 - Funding cycle is only 2 years, though strategies are 5-7
 - Local funding environment and US foreign policy determine support (and reduction of support) levels
- Opportunities:
 - Flexibility within existing procurement policies and grant management contracts; option of shifting funds to a different intermediate result
 - Engaging PVOs and NGOs on reporting and strategic planning exercises
 - Building trust

4. GROUP WORK TO IDENTIFY COMMONALITIES, DIVERGENCE AND "GREY AREAS"

4.1 *Group One*

4.1.1 Areas of Consensus:

- Importance of accountability
- High cost of accountability
- Time constraints
- On-going capacity building is crucial
- Limited resources lead to competition
- Need to be accountable to all stakeholders
- Need for reporting on all sides, horizontal and two-way reporting should be done; collaborative and relevant approach to reporting
- Agreement by all partners on the need for dialogue and communication

4.1.2 Areas of Divergence:

- Mechanism for and standardization of financial accountability and performance reports
- PVO acting as "gatekeepers"
- Unfair competition among stakeholders
- Recognition that accountability relationships are mutual
- Operationalization and relevance of intervention

4.1.3 Grey Areas:

- Honesty, trust, transparency and respect as key values
- Performance management (who defines the criteria for measuring performance?)
- Institutional capacity
- Credibility of various stakeholders
- Commitment to process of capacity building as opposed to one time training

4.2 *Group Two*

4.2.1 Areas of Consensus:

- Mutual trust of all stakeholders as an essential condition of accountability
- Time and commitment are essential factors of accountability
- Development agenda is often driven by external factors and interests which are often not reflective of national interests
- Key elements of accountability include: definitional aspects such as financial, programming, monitoring and evaluation, and management as well as core values of trust, respect and equality

4.2.2 Points of Divergence:

- Budget and financial reporting requirements - different requirements from 7 different donors makes it difficult for NGOs to comply
- Sharing best practices is not always practical or feasible from the perspective of NGOs and PVOs (issue of competition for scarce resources sometimes makes it difficult for NGOs or PVOs to be transparent in their sharing of best practices)
- "Top down" approach to accountability is very real, but there is a need to see that all partners in development relationships are equally important and necessary
- Accountability to government is not equally shared by PVOs, NGOs, and USAID

4.2.3 Grey Areas:

- How does USAID function?
- Need for a better understanding of USAID Grants Management Technical Assistance mechanism and need for other models to be disseminated
- Role of US PVOs as gatekeepers → double edged sword as it sometimes facilitates grant making but also concentrates power and limits access
- Standards for quality not equally shared, appreciated or valued
- Need for more elaboration on horizontal versus vertical accountability

4.3 *Group Three*

4.3.1 Areas of Consensus:

- Key elements of accountability include: mutual trust, understanding, honesty, financial, programmatic, an enabling working environment, and organizational accountability
- Processes and systems for accountability that work include: joint planning, monitoring and evaluation, and implementation where roles are properly defined
- Challenges and opportunities include: competition between NGOs and PVOs for resources; legislation frameworks; differing agendas; and transparency

4.3.2 Points of Divergence:

- Levels and directions of accountability are different among different stakeholders

4.3.3 Grey Areas:

- USAID methodology, rules and regulations
- Financial cost of accountability → what does being accountable to different constituencies cost the practitioners?

4.4 *Group Four*

4.4.1 Areas of Consensus:

- Groups appear to agree on whom we are accountable to and for what
- Key elements of accountability include: financial and programmatic issues, community orientation, trust and mutual respect
- There is a need for more interaction and information sharing
- There is a need to better understand USAID missions and NGO structures and processes
- Unhealthy competition exists between US PVOs and African NGOs - are PVOs really interested in partnership?
- Disconnect between headquarters and field in PVOs, especially at the decision making levels which often contributes to partnership problems
- Financial power issues skew development relationships

4.4.2 Points of Divergence:

- Priorities of donors are different from NGOs
- A divergence of criteria for selection of partners leads to "donor darlings"

4.4.3. Grey Areas:

- Projects are needs driven
- USAID's strategic areas are agreed upon in Washington, but provide some flexibility at country level because they are done in consultation with government and partners
- PVOs complain of bureaucratic procedures within USAID that create dependency rather than sustainability
- Co-dependence of USAID and US PVOs blocks capability of local NGOs to access funding

4.5 *Group Five*

4.5.1 Areas of Consensus:

- Accountability downwards is not satisfactory
- Accountability needs to come at the time of planning
- Trust is a key element of accountability

4.5.2 Points of Divergence:

- Competition between US PVOs and local NGOs
- PVOs and NGOs are accountable to more stakeholders than USAID
- Life of NGO projects versus the project cycle of US PVOs and donors and budget cuts

4.5.3 Grey Areas:

- Different accountability frameworks for USAID, PVOs, and NGOs
- There is a different emphasis and orientation on results
- USAID results frameworks which look at resources versus results

5. **GROUP WORK ON KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND INDICATORS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY**

A matrix was presented by the facilitator as shown below. Participants broke into three groups, one each to identify key challenges, opportunities and develop indicators for the various emerging issues.

EMERGING ISSUES

FACTS	ACTIONS	ACTORS	PRACTICES
<u>MOTIVATION</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Values ▪ Recognizing/accepting each other's strengths ▪ Nurture relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share values ▪ Define purpose ▪ Share expectations of relationship ▪ Develop/nurture ▪ Design criteria, priorities 	Any two or more agencies, communities	Trust, openness and transparency
<u>NEEDS</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purpose ▪ Criteria ▪ Priorities 	Agree on type of contract Define roles, responsibilities		Building relations based on communication, dialogue and information sharing
<u>CONTRACTING</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negotiating ▪ Obligations ▪ Responsibilities ▪ Ownership 	Determine and design needed policies, systems, procedures, guidelines		Resolve differences/conflicts
<u>POLICIES</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internal rules and regulations ▪ Systems ▪ Procedures ▪ Guidelines 	Define requirements		Regular meetings, reports, reviews of the relationship
<u>RESOURCES</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Time ▪ Human resources ▪ Finances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determine approaches ▪ Prepare plans and budgets 		Develop institutional memory
<u>MANAGEMENT</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership ▪ Ownership 	Documentation		
<u>DYNAMISM</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Space to negotiate ▪ Open to learning 	Set up the mechanism and structure		Regular review and assess to and improve using lessons

5.1 *Opportunities*

All areas represent opportunities, and opportunities not taken can result in challenges.

Motivation is primary

5.2 *Challenges*

Motivation: time required to nurture relationships is a challenge; need to define and negotiate the appropriate balance between confidentiality and transparency; the need to understand and appreciate cultural differences between partners

Needs: Agreeing on desired results is a challenge; need to recognize the unequal power relationships within a partnership and look at how we can best work within an unequal partnership

Contracting: Need for NGOs and PVO field staff to challenge government and donor procurement policies; difficulty of communities in holding NGOs accountable and in taking ownership of projects and programs; challenge of NGOs to demonstrate community ownership and of donor to use community ownership as a grant incentive

Policies: Inability of NGOs to negotiate good policies; making policies, rules, guidelines, etc. user friendly

Resources: Need for human resource development from all sides; relationship between capacity and resources; difficulty of NGOs, PVOs, and USAID missions to influence USAID financial policies; challenge of raising contribution of counterparts

Management: Challenge of democratizing decision making in organizations and partnerships

Dynamism: Challenge of factoring new learnings into relationships; managing tension that arises out of partnerships

5.3 *Indicators*

Motivation:

1. Number of opportunities for discussion
2. Types and mechanisms for conflict resolution (mediation, arbitration, discussion, traditional methods)
3. Substance of discussions (determined from participants, agendas, resolutions, minutes, drafts)

Needs:

1. Number and types of agreements
2. Quality of agreements (are they legal, what is the spirit of the agreements?)
3. Do agreements express values, respect, flexibility for review and equity?
4. Are roles and responsibilities (acknowledgement of the contribution of each partner) clear?

5. Are material needs met?

Contracting/Policies:

1. Types of policies, systems, procedures and guidelines
2. Number of times policies are used effectively
3. Are systems applicable → usable, equitable, meaningful, and inclusive?
4. Are there openness, flexibility and change?
5. How many review meetings are you having on systems and policies?
6. Are the meetings inclusive, participatory, and responsive to change?

Resources:

1. Are audits unqualified?
2. Is proper record keeping happening?
3. Are audit recommendations being implemented?

Management:

1. Organogram in place
2. How high is turnover?
3. Are staff policies and effective discipline procedures in place?
4. Is leadership delivering?
5. Staff development programs
6. Steering Committee meeting regularly

Dynamism:

1. Is there openness, flexibility and change within the organization?

6. GROUP WORK ON USING CHALLENGES TO IDENTIFY PRIORITY ACTIVITIES

Participants were asked to review and reflect on challenges and based on the challenges, select critical areas in which to develop actions to carry forward.

6.1 Group One - US PVOs

6.1.1 Contracting:

- NGOs and PVOs need to challenge the donor/government procurement paradigm
- PVOs need to retain democratic decision making and not take on donor behaviour
- PVOs need to maintain core value of working with communities
- Mainstream gender into decision making
- Standards need to be disseminated upwards, downwards and horizontally
- Need to publish "horror" stories regarding procurement
- PVOs and NGOs need to diversify sources of funding

6.1.2 Resources:

- Inflexibility of USAID allocation of funds to NGOs and PVOs
- Unequal power relationships between NGOs and PVOs
- Need to define advantages of all partners
- Need for MOUs and TORs
- Establish mechanisms for flow of information and participation
- Include NGOs and PVOs on USAID strategic planning teams

6.1.3 Management:

- Challenge of retaining democratic decision making and resisting taking on donor behavior
- PVOs to adopt minimum standards for participation in decision making
- Mainstream gender into decision making
- Disseminate standards upwards, downwards, and horizontally
- PVOs and NGOs need to lessen dependency on USAID by diversifying sources of funding
- Amount of time needed to nurture relationships (not waiting for Requests for Applications from USAID before developing relationships) → need to collaborate and network with African NGOs, send the right people to meetings to ensure continuity, involve local NGOs in decision making

Indicator: frequency and substance of discussions

- InterAction can publish our stories, best practices, lessons learned so we can develop mechanisms for change

6.1.4 Needs:

- Need to recognize unequal power relationships between NGOs and PVOs
- Need to define advantages of all partners
- Need for MOUs and TORs
- Establish mechanisms for flow of information and participation
- Include NGOs and PVOs on USAID strategic planning teams

6.1.5 Motivation:

- Major challenge is amount of time needed to nurture relationships (not waiting for Requests for Applications from USAID before developing relationships)

6.2 Group Two - USAID

6.2.1 Contracting:

- Self assessment - it is helpful for USAID to hear what are the most onerous aspects of its contracting process
- Cooperative agreements
- If there are multiple partners, also a need for mutual reporting or joint reporting and benchmarks for determining that reporting is being done jointly
- Substantive involvement, more built-in accountability
- Best practices e.g. GMTA concept, umbrella concept
- GMTA Grants Management and Technical Assistance contract -- ships out a lot of procurement, freeing field officers to provide more quality to partnership development

6.2.2 Policies:

- Development of Partnership guidelines
- Creative solutions around the interface between Washington, field offices, PVOs and NGOs
 - Put on annual African mission directors' conference
 - Make key agenda item and take up in terms of policy and action

Would be an identified activity for people to focus on
Ensure equal partnership and participation

6.2.3 Resources:

- USAID will make available the document for the new CAP (Capacity Building Initiative) and request feedback
- Supplementary line items → additional funding for audits built in, as well as supplementary line items for capacity building for accountability

6.2.4 Dynamism:

- Aspect of expanded strategic objective teams, involving more participation from various stakeholder groups; expanded teams help approve activities, review proposals and make recommendations on how to allocate funding
- Inventory of experience with national coalitions; look at what is being done with national coalitions, and where capacity building and working with national coalitions is not part of a country strategy plan, how do we work around that?

6.3 *Group Three - African NGOs*

6.3.1 Contracting and policies:

- Research USAID policies and survey NGOs problems with AID policies/contracts; need for concrete information on situation to be able to speak with authority → need results by March 2001
- Research and develop alternatives that might be easier in terms of funding; provide possible solutions to our funding problems
- Share findings with all stakeholders at national and regional levels → can use the findings as lobbying tools
- National meetings by umbrella groups will feed into regional meetings → ALPI to deal with communication and feed back
- Regional groups to coordinate: Kenya NGO Council, Uganda, SANGOCO, TANGO, NANGO, NANGOF
- National stakeholder meetings with PVOs, NGOs, and USAID must take place in next couple of months
- Resources will have to be one of main agenda items
- Research will have to be discussed, maybe we can work a program out with USAID for polling and research

6.3.2 Management and motivation:

- SANGOCO/MWENGO are developing organizational self audit tool, a computer program that allows NGOs to evaluate their board, staff and organization; the tool can be extended to other partners, should be ready in Feb 2001

7. GROUP WORK ON DEVELOPING ACTION ITEMS

Participants were divided into groups by stakeholder (e.g. USAID, African NGOs and US PVOS) and asked to think about the priority actions emerging from the previous session, identify steps that generate specific outputs, reflect on resources required, and consider potential outputs and recommendations that could be shared with policymakers. Following are the groups' matrixes for this activity.

7.1 Group One - African NGOs

Key Actions - Steps	Key Output	Who responsible	What Resources	When Time frame
1. Develop draft concept paper	USAID policies (contracting)	Louise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Time ▪ Finances ▪ Human resources from USAID 	This afternoon
2. Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report on USAID policies ▪ Dialogue with partners ▪ Alternatives 	NGO Consortia in region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Time ▪ Finances ▪ Human resources from USAID 	Jan-March 2001
3. National meetings tripartite - 17 countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Framework for relationship ▪ National level documents to feed into the region 	Country networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Time ▪ Finances ▪ Human resources from USAID 	Mid December 2000 to March 2001
4. Regional meeting of African NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Harmonize regional report ▪ Election of delegates to DC ▪ Publishing campaign 	Task force with SANGOCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transport ▪ Boarding 	April 2001
5. Presentation of regional findings to Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sharing of issues of concern in the tripartite ▪ Change in USAID policy approach 	Elected representatives	Transport	June 2001

7.2 Group Two - USAID

Key Actions - Steps	Key Output	Who responsible	What Resources	When Time frame
1. Assessment of procurement hurdles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shared protocol ▪ Results will be reported to all stakeholders 	<p>NGOs, common shared task</p> <p>West African partners??</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Africa Bureau InformationCenter / Center for Development InformationEducation ▪ USAID - Human Resources ▪ NGO - Human 	March 2001

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resources ▪ US PVOs - Human Resources ▪ Funds from missions; Regional Center for Southern Africa; Development Planning; Sustainable Development 	
1. Coop agreements: mutual reports PVOs and NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amended standard clause on reporting ▪ Room for other clauses to include outcomes of #1 	General Counsel; Office of Procurement; Program and Policy Coordination; Private Voluntary Cooperation; Development Planning coordinators Development Planning in concert with ALPI participants	Human Resources - Development Planning Human Resources-Development Planning (Advisory Committee on Foreign Voluntary Aid)	Jan 2001 May 2001
3. Inventory of best practices in procurement	Dissemination of best practices	Development Planning - coordination East and Southern Africa - Regional Center for Southern Africa and Regional Economic Development Services Office for East and Southern Africa AND West - Ghana and Senegal	Human resources	Dec 2000
4. Durable partnership guidelines	Document with guidelines	Centre for Development, Information and Evaluation /Academy for Educational Development	None	Jan 2001
5. Effective interface - up the ante	Agenda item at Africa Directors Mission Conference Regional Economic Development	Development Planning Development	Human Resources Human Resources	Feb 2001 Nov 7, 2001 (?)

	Services Office for East and Southern Africa scheduling	Planning with Africa Bureau Information Center		
6. Capacity Building Initiative	Capacity Building Initiative Indefinite Quantity Contract	Private Voluntary Cooperation	5 million - central missions - Human Resources	Jan 2001 ongoing
7. Capacity building line item	Inclusion of item in budgets Policy directive incentive Inclusion in country strategic plans	Missions/Strategic Objectives Sustainable Development Sustainable Development	Operational Year Budget Development Planning & Sustainable Development - Human Resources Development Planning & Sustainable Development - Human Resources	Ongoing May 2001 Ongoing
8. Teamwork and inclusion of all partners	Models of what has worked Training and communication	Centre for Development, Information and Evaluation will solicit from missions and Development Planning Program and Policy Coordination /Tony Pryor	Human Resources Missions and Operational Year Budget	April 2001
9. National Coalition inventory	Report and recommendations ? % towards coalitions from all NGO grants	Regional Center for Southern Africa and West Africa (Ghana and Senegal) Development Planning coordination	Human Resources	Fall 2001

7.3 Group Three - US PVOs

Key Actions - Steps	Key Output	Who responsible	What Resources	When Time frame
1A. collection of good and bad stories	Presentations/publications	InterAction/USAID (hire consultant)	Financial	March 2001
1b. Formal meetings between USAID and PVO field	Understand and explain to partners USAID policies	PVOS with USAID missions And	Internal	April 2001

officers		InterAction to coordinate among its members		
2. Advocate for networking and collaborating of all US PVOs with local NGOs	Inclusion of the value in orientation training	PVOs	Internal	Dec 2000
3. InterAction identify PVOs with umbrella grants	List of PVOs	InterAction/USAID	Internal	Dec 2000
4. PVOs to dialogue with local partners to develop minimum standards for participation, power recognition, mainstreaming gender, mechanisms for flow of information	Grants making Documents clear on participation	PVOs African NGOs	Internal	June 2001
5. Inform NGOs and PVOs, USAID policy on expanded SO teams	Participation on Strategic Objective teams	InterAction	Internal	Dec 2000

Priority actions identified by participants for the Initiative include:

- ALPI activates participation of US PVOs in its vision
- Develop a directory of PVOs and NGOs that partner with USAID
- Develop 3-4 case studies of successful effects to change in organizational behaviour, emphasizing accountability
- Develop benchmarks and indicators for the consultative process
- Institute mechanisms for continuous consultation with national NGO consortia
- Monitor commitments made at workshops with USAID stakeholders
- Keep partners well informed
- Organize central venue for all participants during workshops

8. PLENARY SESSION ON SYNTHESIZING OVERLAPPING ACTION ITEMS

Following the identification by different stakeholder groups of priority action items to carry the initiative forward, participants discussed the consolidation of the actions into a plan as presented below.

OVERLAP OF ACTION ITEMS

	Key Actions - Steps Key Output	Who responsible	What Resources	When Time frame
1. Assessment of procurement hurdles				
USAID proposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shared protocol ▪ Results will be reported to all stakeholders 	NGOs, common shared task West African partners??	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ABIC/CDIE ▪ USAID - HR ▪ NGO - HR ▪ US PVOs - HR ▪ Funds from : missions; RCSA; DP; SD 	March 2001
	Coop agreements: mutual reports PVOs and NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amended standard clause on reporting ▪ Room for other clauses to include outcomes of #1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GC; OP; PPC; PVC; DP coordinators ▪ DP in concert with ALPI participants 	HR-DP HR-DP (ACFVA)
	Inventory of best practices in procurement	Dissemination of best practices	DP - coord ESA - RCSA and REDO West - Ghana and Senegal	HR
PVOs propped	Collection of good and bad stories	Presentations/publications	InterAction/USAID (hire consultant)	Financial
NGOs proposed	Research	Report on USAID policies Dialogue with partners Alternatives	NGO Consortia in region	Time Finances Human from USAID
	Develop draft concept paper (USAID policies contracting)	Louise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Time ▪ Finances/Human resources from USAID 	This afternoon

2. Develop Partnership Guidelines				
USAID proposed	Document with guidelines	CDIE/AED	None	Jan 2001
PVOs proposed with local NGOs	Advocate for networking and collaborating of all US PVOs with local NGOs (Inclusion of the value in orientation training)	PVOs	Internal	Dec 2000
	InterAction identify PVOs with umbrella grants (list of NGOs)	InterAction/USAID	Internal	Dec 2000
	PVOs to develop minimum standards for participation, power recognition, mainstreaming gender, mechanisms for flow of information through dialogue with local partners (Grants making; Documents clear on participation)	PVOs African NGOs	Internal	June 2001

3. National and Regional Dialogue				
USAID proposed	National Coalition Inventory (Report and recommendations ? % towards coalitions from all NGO grants)	RCSA and West Africa (Ghana and Senegal) DP coordination	HR	Fall 2001
PVOs proposed	Inform NGOs and PVOs, USAID policy on expanded SO teams (Participation on SO teams)	InterAction	Internal	Dec 2000
NGOs proposed	National meetings tripartite - 17 countries Framework for relationship; National level documents to feed into the region; Understand and explain to partners USAID policies)	Country networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Time ▪ Finances/Human resources from USAID 	Mid December 2000 to March 2001
	Regional meeting of African NGOs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Harmonize regional report ▪ Election of delegates to DC ▪ Publishing campaign 	Task force with SANGOCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transport ▪ Boarding 	April 2001
	Presentation of regional findings to Washington <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sharing of issues of concern in the tripartite ▪ Change in USAID policy approach 	Elected representatives	Transport	June 2001

Key Actions - Steps	Key Output	Who responsible	What Resources	When Time frame
4. USAID specific				
Increase awareness of ALPI agenda within USAID	Agenda item at Africa Directors Mission Conference	DP	HR	Feb 2001
	REDSO scheduling	DP with ABIC	HR	Nov 7, 2000
CAP	CAP IQC	PVC	5 million - central missions - OYB	Jan 2001 ongoing
Capacity building line item	Inclusion of item in budgets	Missions/SOs	OYB	Ongoing
	Policy directive incentive	AFR/SD	DP & SD - HR	May 2001
	Inclusion in country strategic plans	AFR/SD	DP & SD - HR	Ongoing
Teamwork and inclusion of all partners	Models of what has worked	CDIE will solicit from missions and DP	HR	April 2001
	Training and communication	PPC/Tony Pryor	Missions and OYB	

APPENDIX D

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CASE WRITERS

Purpose

The purpose of the case studies is to form a sound basis for discussions on different aspects of accountability in a development relationship between African NGOs, USPVOs and US missions. Those cases will be discussed at two sub-regional conferences in October in Lagos, Nigeria and Nairobi, Kenya.

These Terms of Reference (TOR) lay out the qualifications for case writers, procedures for writing cases and a suggested format for writing reports.

Qualifications for case writers

- experienced in research, documentation, and report-writing
- ALPI will be responsible for the translation of documents in French into English and vice versa
- Familiar with the cases and knowledgeable about the NGO sector without being direct participants in the case activities:
- They must be credible with key actors from whom they will be seeking information and viewpoints
- At the same time, case writers must be able to tell the story of the case "neutral" ways that outsiders can understand, e.g. language that describes events, rather than ideological or emotional opinions.

Procedures for case writing

- Case writers will be hired and paid by host country team after consultation with InterAction.
- InterAction will provide an orientation to the conceptual framework and case writing process when possible. Otherwise, the host country teams will provide this orientation using these TOR. Case writers will need copies of the TOR and conceptual guidelines.
- Case writers will have direct contact with InterAction to make comments, ask questions, and seek guidance during the case writing process.
- InterAction will review first drafts of case reports and provide feedback to the case writers and host country team. Feedback from InterAction and other sources will be incorporated into the reports before they are finalized.
- Case writers should use the conceptual framework and basic theory of accountability as a guide to gathering information about the case and writing the report.
- A suggested format for the report is included.

Methods of data collection

- Case writers should keep a record of the sources of information (or data) used as a basis for writing the cases. We expect that data will include interviews with key actors and written documents such as memos, minutes of meetings, internal reports, newspaper reports, etc. All major sources of data should be referenced in the case report and a list included at the end of the report.

Outline for case studies

1. INTRODUCTION:
 - Vision, mission and values of organizations involved
 - Each partner's general understanding of accountability (to whom?, for what?)
 - Why is this experience worth sharing?
2. DESCRIPTION OF RELATIONSHIPS:
 - Context (the point at which the idea of a relationship emerged and what motivated it)
 - The engagement process: Formal agreement and its nature; roles and responsibilities of various actors (who defined roles/responsibilities?)
 - Who accounts to whom? For what?
 - M & E of relationships (how are relationships reviewed over time?)
 - Enforcement mechanisms
 - Major achievements/challenges or problems and how do you think these can best be overcome?
 - Key elements of the relationship that made accountability work
3. LESSONS LEARNED AND CONCLUSION
 - Key insights (positive and negative)
 - Implications for policy making/future programming
 - Messages to pass on to others
4. REFERENCES

APPENDIX E

MAJOR ACTION ITEMS FOR LAGOS AND NAIROBI CONFERENCES

MAJOR ACTION ITEMS identified at ALPI sub-regional conferences
Lagos, Nigeria and Nairobi, Kenya
October 2000

	Key Actions	Who responsible	Resources required	Time frame
1. National and Regional Dialogue				
A	National meetings - tripartite, 17 countries (develop framework for relationships, national level documents to feed into meetings, understand and explain USAID policies)	African NGO Networks	Time Financial/Human resources from USAID	Mid December 2000 to March 2001
B	Regional meetings of African NGOs	African NGO Networks - (task force with SANGOCO)	Transport Room and Board	April 2001
C	Presentation of regional findings to Washington (sharing of issues of concern, hope to influence change in USAID policy approach)	African NGO representatives	Transport	June 2001
D	Inform NGOs and PVOs about USAID policy for greater participation on strategic objective (SO) teams	InterAction	Internal	December 2001
E	National Coalition Inventory (reports and recommendations)	USAID RCSA and West Africa (Ghana and Senegal) (requires Development Planning coordination)	Human resources	Fall 2001
2. Develop Partnership Guidelines				
A	Identify PVOs with umbrella grants (list of NGOs)	InterAction/USAID	Internal	December 2000
B	PVOs to develop minimum standards for participation, power recognition, mainstreaming gender, mechanisms for flow of information through dialogue with local partners	PVOs African NGOs	Internal	June 2001
C	Advocate for networking and collaboration of all US PVOs with local NGOs (inclusion of the value in orientation training)	PVOs	Internal	December 2000
D	Document with guidelines on partnership	USAID (Center for Development, Information and Evaluation) and Academy for Educational Development	None	January 2001

	Key actions	Who responsible	Resources required	Time frame
3. Capacity Strengthening				
A	In house capacity strengthening, including communities to help implement Capacity Building Initiative for missions	USAID		
B	Share case studies and information from International Forum on Capacity Building in May 2001	InterAction		
C	Conduct self assessments and reinforcement of action at ALPI	African NGO networks		
D	Hold workshops and training sessions for CBOs but should be beneficiary consultative training	African NGO networks		
E	System management training, especially in monitoring and evaluation	US PVOs, African NGO networks and USAID		
4. Communication (internal and external)				
A	Development and testing of information sharing tools and systems	US PVOs, African NGO networks and USAID	Staff Consultant Financial resources	4-6 months
B	Mapping exercise to assess current status of communication with donors, communities, governments, others	US PVOs, African NGO networks and USAID	Financial resources	December 2000
C	Sharing of the results of the evaluation and definition of priorities and appropriate methods and strategies	US PVOs, African NGO networks and USAID	Consultant Financial resources	March 2001
D	Solicit information and disseminate reports more actively	US PVOs, African NGO networks and USAID		
5. Assessment of procurement hurdles				
A	Inventory of best practices in procurement	USAID (RCSA, REDSO, West - Ghana and Senegal, Development Planning)	Human resources	December 2000
B	Assessment of procurement hurdles by NGOs and PVOs	African NGO networks and US PVOs	Human resources from US PVOs, African NGO networks and USAID	March 2001