PRACTICE PAPER
Volume **2009** Number **3**

Changing the World by Changing Ourselves: Reflections from a Bunch of BINGOs

Cathy Shutt
September 2009

IDS Institute of Development Studies

About IDS
The Institute of Development Studies is one of the world's leading organisations for research, teaching and communications on international development. Founded in 1966, the Institute enjoys an international reputation based on the quality of its work and the rigour with which it applies academic skills to real world challenges. Its purpose is to understand and explain the world, and to try to change it – to influence as well as to inform.

IDS hosts five dynamic research programmes, five popular postgraduate courses, and a family of world-class web-based knowledge services. These three spheres are integrated in a unique combination – as a development knowledge hub, IDS is connected into and is a convenor of networks throughout the world.

The Institute is home to approximately 80 researchers, 50 knowledge services staff, 50 support staff and about 150 students at any one time. But the IDS community extends far beyond, encompassing an extensive network of partners, former staff and students across the development community worldwide.

About IDS Practice Papers
IDS Practice Papers are academically rigorous pieces aimed at non-academic audiences, such as programme and policy managers. Pitched as information for those on the frontline of development they often have practitioners as co-authors. This series is a bridge between the considered reflection of Working Papers and the policy-oriented In Focus Policy Briefings; and aims for high quality engaged scholarship with the development community.

IDS Institute of Development Studies

For further information on IDS publications and for a free catalogue, contact:
IDS Communication Unit
Institute of Development Studies
at the University of Sussex
Brighton BN1 9RE, UK

Tel: +44 (0) 1273 915637
Fax: +44 (0) 1273 621202
E-mail: bookshop@ids.ac.uk
Web: www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop

IDS is a charitable company, limited by guarantee and registered in England (No. 877338).

IDS PRACTICE PAPER 3

Changing the World by Changing Ourselves: Reflections from a Bunch of BINGOs

Cathy Shutt
September 2009

Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex Brighton BN1 9RE UK

Changing the World by Changing Ourselves: Reflections from a Bunch of BINGOs
Cathy Shutt
IDS Practice Paper 3

First published by the Institute of Development Studies in September 2009
© Institute of Development Studies 2009
ISSN: 2040-0225 ISBN: 978 1 85864 777 0

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.
All rights reserved. Reproduction, copy, transmission, or translation of any part of this publication may be made only under the following conditions:
- with the prior permission of the publisher; or
- with a licence from the Copyright Licensing Agency Ltd., 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 9HE, UK, or from another national licensing agency; or
- under the terms set out below.

This publication is copyright, but may be reproduced by any method without fee for teaching or non-profit purposes, but not for resale. Formal permission is required for all such uses, but normally will be granted immediately. For copying in any other circumstances, or for re-use in other publications, or for translation or adaptation, prior written permission must be obtained from the publisher and a fee may be payable.

Available from:
Communication Unit
Institute of Development Studies
at the University of Sussex
Brighton BN1 9RE, UK
Tel: +44 (0) 1273 915637
Fax: +44 (0) 1273 621202
E-mail: bookshop@ids.ac.uk
Web: www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop

Typeset by IDS, Brighton UK. Printed by Nexus, Brighton UK.
IDS is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England (No. 877338).

Changing the World by Changing Ourselves: Reflections from a Bunch of BINGOs

Cathy Shutt

Summary

This Practice Paper aims to contribute to ongoing reflections and debates taking place among aid practitioners about if, and how, big international NGOs (BINGOs) can be more effective agents of 'progressive social change'. It summarises a series of conversations that took place among seven members of the Institute of Development Studies Participation Power and Social Change team and staff from eight BINGOs between July 2008 and March 2009.

During the conversations, participants considered how internal and external factors influence the potential of BINGOs to contribute to shifts in power relations; greater realisation of rights; and enhanced economic, political and social justice for poor and vulnerable people. All of this was encapsulated in the term 'progressive social change'. At the end of the process, participants agreed that there is considerable scope for many BINGOs to pursue a more progressive agenda. They recommended that similar conversations need to continue and branch out, both in topical range and in participants in order to stimulate the kind of reflection and organisational learning required to do so.

This paper includes accounts of discussions, case studies shared by participants, inputs from academic critiques of BINGOs and practical tools to feed into such deliberations. It explores the types of changes that BINGOs are trying to achieve, the approaches they use – their models of change, and challenges and tensions commonly perceived to prevent BINGOs pursuing more radical social change agendas. Provocative questions are raised as a means to help practitioners identify changes that their organisations need to make in order to more actively pursue social, economic and political justice. In some instances inspiring examples from BINGO participants suggest means to do so. References to organisational theory, meeting discussions and BINGO case studies are used to interrogate assumptions about how large complex organisations behave and to identify lessons that may be used to inform efforts to transform BINGOs into more effective agents of progressive social change.

Keywords: civil society; NGOs; INGOs; organisational change; organisational learning; social change; social justice.

Cathy Shutt is an independent consultant with over 15 years' experience of research and practice within the international aid system. She became part of the Participation, Power and Social Change team that convened the process described in this paper while completing a DPhil on power relationships between local NGOs and their international funders.

Contents

Summary 3
Keywords and author notes 4
Acknowledgements 6
Abbreviations and acronyms 6
1 Introduction 7
2 Reflection on the BINGO process 9
3 What changes are BINGOs trying to achieve? 11
4 BINGOs as agents of change: emerging critiques and concerns 15
5 Matters for debate 17
5.1 Money: does size matter? 18
5.2 Poverty vs. rights: what will donors subscribe to? 19
5.3 Universalist aspirations and the complexity of local contexts 21
5.4 Voices of the people or unrepresentative elites? 22
5.5 Business and BINGOs: corporate engagement 23
5.6 Managerialism: demonstrating accountability and effectiveness 24
5.7 Partnership or patronage: INGO relationships with Southern CSOs 25
5.8 Tough questions and difficult dilemmas 26
6 The changing world outside 27
7 Changing the world within 29
8 Conclusions 33
References 36

Boxes

Box 3.1	Examples of change strategies employed by BINGOs	11
Box 3.2	Theories of social change	14
Box 4.1	Summary of perceived strengths of BINGOs and emerging concerns	16
Box 6.1	Examples of BINGO responses to changes in the world outside	27
Box 7.1	Images of organisations	30
Box 7.2	Examples of BINGO change initiatives	31

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all of those who participated in the BINGO process and made the writing of this paper possible. My sincere appreciation goes to Kate Hamilton for generously allowing me sole authorship of a paper that greatly benefits from her excellent crafting of a discussion paper on which sections four and five of this paper draw. I am also grateful for the valuable, critical comments received from Kate, Belinda Calugas, Rosie McGee, Rosalind Eyben, John Gaventa and Simon Heap following their reviews of earlier outlines and drafts of this paper.

Abbreviations and acronyms

AAI	ActionAid International
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
ALPS	Accountability Learning and Planning System
BINGO	Big International NGOs
BOND	British Overseas NGOs for Development
BRAC	Building Resources Across Communities
IAASTD	International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NCS	National Change Strategy
PPSC	Participation, Power and Social Change

1 Introduction

> In the changing global landscape, what are the pressures and opportunities, now and in the future, that affect the possibilities of big international NGOS (BINGOs) fulfilling their potential for supporting progressive social change?

The above question first emerged during discussions among members of the Participation, Power and Social Change (PPSC) team of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), who came together to share and reflect upon their individual experiences working with various BINGOs. In December 2007, PPSC team members invited staff, whom they already knew, from ActionAid UK, Care UK, Oxfam GB, Plan International and Forum Syd to a preliminary meeting to discuss the potential value of holding a series of conversations among BINGOs to further debate the question.

Participants agreed that the changing global landscape offered BINGOs new challenges and opportunities. Charities were affected by the crisis in democracy and declining trust in public institutions. Political space for transformative work was diminishing, and BINGOs were unsure how to respond to the resurgence of the economic growth agenda in developing countries; the dominating role that large international corporations were playing in global politics; and the impacts of the war on terror.

Conversely, some shifts appeared cause for optimism, promising fresh opportunities for BINGOs. International development actors were adopting the language of politics, rights and citizenship. Public cynicism and anger about the neo-conservative agenda was galvanising collective action in the form of exciting new social alliances. Information and communication technology developments were enabling the mobilisation of global social movements to act as countervailing forces against the strength of corporations and the weakness of some states (versus the excessive power of others) in global arenas. Youth groups, aware of the interconnectedness of the world and how their actions impinge on the lives of others, for example through global warming, were perceived as important potential advocates for climate justice.

BINGO participants reported that colleagues within their organisations were not only discussing the influence of the changing landscape on their work, some were also reflecting on changes within and among INGOs that were seen to both constrain and facilitate the extent to which they were able to contribute to progressive social change. The ‘internationalisation’ of Southern INGOs, e.g. BRAC (Building Resources Across Communities), and decentralisation of Northern INGOs, such as ActionAid, had begun to shift power relations within and among INGOs, partially eroding North-South binaries. However, many BINGO staff were struggling to reconcile pressures for organisational growth with recently adopted rights-based approaches, which marketing departments believed more difficult to ‘sell’ than humanitarian and ‘development’ interventions. Furthermore, the adoption of some management practices and values from both public and corporate sectors, exacerbated by an increasing dependency on money from

official donors, was proving a mixed blessing. Although some believed these approaches offered non-profits potential efficiency and effectiveness gains, management-for-results tools, such as the logical framework, which tend to focus on upward accountability to donors, were reinforcing unequal power relationships between BINGOs and their Southern partners. Meeting participants also felt such tools were compromising 'rights-based approaches' and opportunities for innovation and learning.

The meeting concluded that there would be value in IDS facilitating further dialogue among a group of BINGO staff. This took the form of three meetings, each lasting 24 hours, held at a quiet residential conference centre between July 2008 and March 2009. The objectives of the meetings were to consider if, and how, BINGOs might do more to encourage shifts in power relations that would lead to more equal and solidarity type relationships with other organisations; greater realisation of rights; and enhanced economic, political and social justice for poor and vulnerable people. All of this was encapsulated in the term 'progressive social change'.

Invitations to participate in the meetings deliberately used the language of 'progressive social change' to indicate that conversations were to focus on the political roles of BINGOs as actors interested in addressing the multiple dimensions and structural causes of poverty. In practice, the notion proved problematic as it neither featured in the literature about development, nor the everyday language of the BINGOs represented. Nevertheless, the term was useful for deepening the group's exploration of how change happens. Moreover, rich debate about the meaning and utility of the term, and the nature and degree of the changes being discussed, exposed the context specific and subjective nature of understandings about what constitutes progressive change. This led to the question: in BINGOs operating in different locations, who should decide whether a given change is progressive or not?

Discussions about progressive social change revealed the potential pitfalls of using all-embracing, abstract and normative terminology. In fact, a key lesson to emerge from the BINGO process is that BINGOs need to encourage staff working in different organisational departments and locations to explore and debate their assumptions about the basic terms they use to describe their work, as well as their theories of change. This was reiterated in evaluations at the end of what came to be labelled 'the BINGO process' – participants unanimously agreed that the questions and issues raised during the course of their discussions deserve further debate and action.

Some participants argued that the process could have had more impact if it had been directed at senior management. They thus recommended that BINGO leaders participate in future conversations within and between BINGOs. A concept note recently developed by British Overseas NGOs for Development (BOND) outlines more specific plans about how these suggestions might be taken forward.

This Practice Paper aims to feed into such conversations and facilitate awareness-raising and learning of the kind required of organisations that wish to promote what this paper will henceforth refer to as 'progressive social change'. The second objective is to help practitioners become aware of recent debates

about the changing roles of NGOs and to encourage them to reflect upon the implications of these debates for their practice.

The paper approaches these objectives in the following way. Section two is a critical reflection on the overall BINGO process, alerting readers to its limitations as well as its achievements. Section three explores the changes that the BINGOs involved in this process are pursuing and the ways they are going about them – their models of change, noting that many still have some way to go to align practice with espoused goals. Section four summarises a critique of NGOs identified from a literature review commissioned by IDS during the BINGO process. This leads into a section which provides a more nuanced account of a number of tensions that are commonly perceived to prevent BINGOs responding to criticisms and becoming agents of social change than is found in much of the NGO literature. The discussion raises provocative questions that are intended to stimulate debate among practitioners and help them identify changes that may be necessary if their organisations are to more actively pursue social, economic and political justice. Section six considers the possible implications of recent changes in the external environment for BINGOs wanting to make such shifts. Organisational change is the focus of section seven, which considers how assumptions and insights about organisational behaviour can inform efforts to transform organisations in line with a progressive change agenda. The paper ends by drawing some conclusions from the BINGO process and exploring their implications for BINGOs wanting to become more effective agents of progressive social change.

2 Reflection on the BINGO process

The BINGO process consisted of a series of conversations that took place among seven members of the IDS PPSC team and, on average, two middle management level BINGO staff, whom the team already knew, from ActionAid UK, CARE International, Christian Aid, Helvetas, Oxfam GB, Oxfam Novib, Plan International and Practical Action. Most of these staff had policy formulation, strategy leadership or advocacy roles. There was some degree of continuity in the representatives attending the meetings, although inevitably some individuals were unable to attend every event. Each BINGO invited to join the conversations had an existing relationship with a member of the PPSC team. These relations varied in origin, nature and thickness and may be responsible for some bias in the selection of examples used in this paper.

The IDS PPSC team designed each meeting to encourage discussions around certain key framing questions using participatory exercises and a mixture of inputs from grey and published literature; the experience of individual members of the PPSC team; and case studies prepared by BINGO participants.

When planning the meetings, the IDS team attempted to respond to feedback from BINGO participants. Although these efforts were appreciated, it proved impossible to respond to all of the requests from individuals from such a heterogeneous group of organisations. Some participants saw the process as an opportunity to develop a common political and policy agenda. However, it soon

became evident that members of the process were at quite different stages in their thinking about both 'what' types of social change they were pursuing, and 'how' they should go about it – their models of change. These differences were partly responsible for divergent views among the group about the amount of time that should be devoted to talking about internal and external factors influencing BINGOs' behaviour and the contributions they make to progressive social change.

Final evaluations revealed that the overall process had been of more benefit to some than others and participants had used the space in various ways. Participants from organisations in the Netherlands and Switzerland appreciated the opportunity to find out more about ongoing conversations taking place among BINGOs based in the UK. Most participants enjoyed having fairly informal discussions in a non-competitive, safe space, and this allowed some degree of collective learning across organisational affiliation. ActionAid UK participants took advantage of the time out from daily business to have deep discussions that contributed to their ongoing reflections on the political role of ActionAid UK and its social change objectives in the UK. The seeds of a new and political campaigning vision, 'Making a Real Difference' were developed during the second meeting. Others used some of the ideas and tools (included in this paper) to engage non-participant colleagues in their organisations in discussions about social change. Some cross fertilisation of experience between organisations was also reported – representatives from Christian Aid and Oxfam had visited Practical Action to talk about working with rights, and this had rapidly opened up a space to push forward a rights-based agenda within Practical Action.

A couple of individuals representing organisations that had already spent time reflecting on theories of change felt that the BINGO process had not been sufficiently challenging and would have benefited from more provocative inputs from outside of the NGO world, specifically from the corporate sector. One person also questioned IDS' reasons for convening the process, voicing concerns that the team was trying to prove an underlying hypothesis – that the bigness of BINGOs prevented them from be effective agents of progressive social change.

Although individual members of the IDS team may have held personal assumptions about BINGOs, the eclectic nature of the team meant that they did not share any overall hypothesis about them. The team had originally hoped that the BINGO process would, as well as stimulate learning within and among BINGOs, also inform ongoing conversations among the PPSC team and thus lead to improved practice in their relationships with BINGOs. However, at the end of the series of conversations, IDS team members acknowledged that the events-based shape of the process had pushed them into a planning and servicing mode with the consequence that they had not undertaken as much meta-level, internal reflection and learning between BINGO events as originally hoped. This has been partly remedied by subsequent reflections and processes around the writing of this paper.

IDS was not the only participating organisation that may have fallen short of fulfilling its learning aspirations. The individuals from various BINGOs were intended to function as a learning and steering group to engage a wider audience from within participating organisations. This was made clear in the original statements of intent that each BINGO was asked to draft before joining the

process. Although some of the BINGOs shared tools and information from the meetings with colleagues, this seemed to be the exception rather than the rule. Meeting participants reflected that BINGOs have some way to go to put the rhetoric they employ about being learning organisations into practice; more resources need to be devoted to learning in order to do so.

The IDS team and participating BINGOs may not have entirely achieved their learning aims, but at the end of the process there was consensus that the issues raised need further debate if BINGOs are to entirely free themselves from certain strictures originating in the humanitarian and development sector, and make more significant contributions to progressive social change. This raises an obvious question that needs more consideration: can and should all BINGOs attempt to do so, or is there an argument for some BINGOs, after adequate reflection on the potential costs and benefits, to consciously decide to focus on relief and development work that is not necessarily informed by a progressive social change agenda?

3 What changes are BINGOs trying to achieve?

Conversations early in the process revealed that BINGOs have varied ambitions, and are working at different levels with a variety of change strategies in their development and social justice work.

Box 3.1 Examples of change strategies employed by BINGOs

- *Modest small steps:* work with local communities to ensure they understand their rights and take advantage of decentralisation processes to demand accountability from government
- *Mobilisation through communication of compelling narratives:*
  - *In programme countries:* through social movements
  - *International forums:* individuals have been able to challenge dominant discourses e.g. in relation to food sovereignty during the UN's International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) process
- *Balancing risks and opportunities and identifying potential drivers of change:* using self-interest of the private sector as a driver for social change, e.g. through a campaign to demonstrate that there is a market for fair trade goods
- *Using accidents and luck opportunistically:* developing international campaigns that build on public debates about the global food crisis

- *Developing relationships with established institutions to leverage and maximise impact:* working with schools in the North and having an impact on development education curricula
- *Empowering through dialogue and conscientisation:* several NGOs use Freirian[1] methods to shift village level power relations between men and women
- *Linear technical instrumental approach to problems:* developing interventions that assume increasing women's incomes will lead to more significant impact and social change
- *Marxist models:* using confrontation to challenge inequitable gender relations
- *Rights-based:* a plural approach federating solidarity groups as a basis for women to achieve social and political change
- *Changing ideas and beliefs of individuals:* changing attitudes towards the social acceptability of domestic violence

Some of these strategies were found to be more effective than others and they indicate that INGOs are using multiple theories about how change happens in their work. Discussions about the change strategies they use and an analysis of organisational statements revealed that some have made more progress than others in interrogating and making explicit the theories of social change that underpin their approaches.

After a brief analysis of various organisational documents, including mission statements and strategic plans, meeting participants were able to identify differences between the philosophical underpinnings and theories of change of various BINGOs. However, there were also general trends. Organisational statements appeared characterised by:

- a benign or optimistic rhetoric about the BINGOs' own and other societies
- a lack of clarity about the changes BINGOs are seeking and the means by which these changes are to be achieved
- 'Western liberal values'
- idealistic assumptions of organisational coherence, obscuring the diversity that exists within these complex organisations

1 Freirian methods are based on a popular education philosophy developed by Paulo Freire. They aim to enable learners to move towards critical consciousness and awareness of the power relations that oppress them. This process of conscientisation involves identifying contradictions in experience and taking action against the oppressive elements that are illuminated by new understandings.

- normative assumptions about the behaviour of partners and citizens
- confidence in internal management systems; and
- a sense that BINGOs have far more control over change processes than they do in practice.

While some organisations evidently regularly update missions and values, others are guided by statements that were developed decades ago. In some instances this is because they have continued value and relevance. However, it was also posited that revisiting mission statements can be a political process that requires acknowledging all sorts of tensions and contradictions. Alternatively, a deliberate 'loyalty to yesterday', and a wish to project the idea that BINGOs are built on some solid ideological value base, could be the source of reluctance to alter these key articulations of organisational values. Or perhaps some organisational documents remain unchanged because they are known to have limited influence on organisational practice? Even those BINGOs that make explicit mention of rights-based approaches are finding it challenging to consistently practice them across their complex organisations.

The reasons for apparent gaps between the espoused values and goals of BINGOs and their practice are multiple and complex and will be discussed more fully in the next section. One factor with significant effects on organisational behaviour surfaced during discussions on organisational values and the problematic notion of progressive social change. It is no easy task for any BINGO to develop a vision of empowerment, participation, partnership, and social justice – 'progressive social change' – that has universal resonance among staff and partners and can easily be translated into practice. For example, a recent impact assessment of CARE International's work on women's empowerment revealed diverse understandings of the meaning of empowerment within the organisation.[2] Large complex BINGOs operating in varied contexts struggle to develop missions and change objectives that reflect and respect the diverse understandings and values of staff working in, and coming from, a variety of political, social, economic and cultural contexts. It is particularly difficult as the Northern offices of BINGOs and BINGO headquarters still include few 'Southern' voices.

Another diversifying factor is that staff members working in different parts of large organisations are likely to have different ideas about the strategic change objectives their organisations should try to achieve; they are also likely to have varied ideas about how change happens. This was aptly illustrated during a light hearted quiz that required BINGO participants to select the three theories that they felt best described how history or social change happens from a selection of theories of change, each having implications for those subscribing to them, outlined in the Box 3.2.[3]

2 More information about this impact assessment can be found at: http://pqdl.care.org/sii/pages/overview.aspx (accessed 20 July 2009).

3 The available choices proceed from the assumption that BINGOs could not openly support bloody revolution.

Box 3.2 Theories of social change

1) Society changes through the unintended consequences of the aggregate action of individuals each seeking to achieve their own happiness.

Implications for agents of change: need to support interventions that help create an environment that enables all individuals to pursue their life choices

2) Society changes through progress in knowledge and technological development.

Implications for agents of change: need to support activities that aim for universal access to knowledge and technological development

3) Society changes through transformed beliefs, ideas and values.

Implications for agents of change: need to support those who are influencing/transforming ideas in society

4) Society changes through purposeful collective action.

Implications for agents of change: need to support grass roots mobilisation of people who are living in poverty

5) Society changes through contestation and negotiation.

Implications for agents of change: need to support the change of structures, institutions and power relations that perpetuate poverty and social injustices

Participants found the quiz a useful tool for encouraging more conscious acknowledgement of the implicit theories practitioners apply to their work. It also helped to identify which theories are more consistent with a progressive notion of social change and which are not. The second theory – that social change happens through progress in knowledge and development, for instance, was viewed as fitting better with a technocratic, rather than a political vision of social change. Confusion about whether quiz selections should be based on assumptions about how change actually takes place or normative visions about how individuals would like it to happen, also suggested that BINGO staff need to ensure their strategies are informed by how they actually believe change happens, rather than idealistic models of change.

The quiz and/or similar tools have been used in several BINGOs to positive effect. Staff from Plan shared the quiz with colleagues in international headquarters and IDS has also used it in engagements with Oxfam GB, Novib and several Christian Aid country programmes keen to incorporate stronger change, rights and power focuses in their work. However, the disparity between quiz selections made by various participants in the BINGO process drew attention to possible challenges associated with applying the tool in practice. As an Oxfam GB representative, who had tried to apply theories of change in planning exercises pointed out – the quiz

is useful for surfacing differences of opinions about social change, but the selection of change models may still require some degree of compromise.

The obvious conclusion to these differences in values and understandings of change is that organisation-wide visions, missions and strategies can only be framed in the most general of terms. These need to be translated into more situated and contextual strategic goals after negotiations and compromise between staff working in the various locations where BINGOs operate. However, this can pose problems for organisational brands and legitimacy as will be discussed further below.

4 BINGOs as agents of change: emerging critiques and concerns

BINGO conversations proceeded from the assumption that although the global landscape offers opportunities to contribute to progressive social change, some parts of most of the BINGOs participating in the meetings do not manage to consistently do so. The second and third BINGO meetings created space for participants to undertake a deeper analysis of the reasons why each of their respective organisations might be experiencing these challenges. Their deliberations were stimulated by a co-authored discussion paper commissioned by IDS.[4]

The paper began by contrasting reasons for the popularity of BINGOs in the 1980s with a critique of NGOs that began to emerge during the 1990s. As BINGOs continued to grow in number and size, so did the critical scrutiny directed at them from governments, donors, the public, local NGOs and other activist groups. A summary of the perceived strengths of BINGOs together with emerging critiques found in the literature is presented in Box 4.1.

The literature reviewed for the discussion paper acknowledges that INGOs have made some small contribution to challenging structural inequities that cause millions of people to live in poverty (e.g. Edwards 2005). However, it argues the routes BINGOs have taken to carve out new roles for themselves and grow, largely due to the availability of increased aid budgets, makes some of their claims of independence and moral legitimacy untenable (e.g. Chandhoke 2005; Wild 2006; Tvedt 2006; Mitlin *et al.* 2007; Howell *et al.* 2008). INGOs that have decided to accept money from official donors and the corporate sector are viewed as having become part of the international aid system, an expression of the hegemonic political and economic projects of donor governments (e.g. Slim 2007; Tvedt 2006; Brinkerhoff 2007). In other words, their efforts to survive and grow have cost INGOs their distinctive identity as actors pursuing ‘alternative visions of development’ (Mitlin *et al.* 2007), social, economic and political justice – what the IDS team labelled ‘progressive social change’.

4 The next few sections draw on a paper co-authored by Hamilton and Shutt (2008) that emerged from a brief review of literature contributing to the debate about whether and how INGOs can be social change agents.

Box 4.1 Summary of perceived strengths of BINGOs and emerging concerns

Perceived strengths of INGOs	Emerging critiques and concerns
Deliver projects effectively	Effectiveness assumed but dearth of evidence to support it (Ebrahim 2005; Tvedt 2006); Unable to evaluate effects of advocacy efforts (Anderson 2007)
'Alternative' – stand for a vision of change that is distinct and progressive	Embedded in political economy of hegemonic neoliberal mainstream development process (Tvedt 2006; Mitlin *et al.* 2007); Hypocritical – practice contrary to espoused values (Wild 2006)
Independent actors	Co-opted by desire to grow and dependence on revenue from official donors (Hulme and Edwards 1997; Sogge *et al.* 1996; Smillie 1995)
Circumvent corrupt governments	End up usurping (Green 2008) and humiliating well meaning states; or legitimising negligent states through performing state duties (Slim 2007)
Advocate and influence powerful global decision makers	Powerful and undemocratic (Murphy 2005)
Able to raise awareness and mobilise people to advocate on national and global issues	BINGOs are unaccountable, campaigns based on simplistic analysis that can have detrimental effects on vulnerable groups (Paczynska 2006); Use global campaigns for brand marketing (Slim 2007); Eurocentric (Munck 2006)
Give voice to poor people	Have little impact on changing structures that oppress at various levels (Edwards 2005); Act as proxies for the voice of poor people (Srivastava 2005)
Build capacities of Southern NGOs and movements; play facilitation and partnering roles with Southern organisations	'Partnerships' are unequal because power, money, reporting flows are all one-way (Wallace *et al.* 2006; Ebrahim 2005); Reproduce colonial relations and undermine local civil society actors (Slim 2007)
Leverage business money and influence corporate behaviour	Co-optation, loss of credibility, unable to influence practice (Sayer 2000; Heap 2000)
Provide rapid responses and raise awareness in humanitarian emergencies or conflicts	Use emergency situations to access funds and pursue cash/financial growth targets (McGirk 2005); Usurp and undermine local civil society efforts (Slim 2007); Use emergencies to embed themselves to undertake long term cultural change (Slim 2007)

From this critique flows a provocative position – INGOs will not be able to pursue a more progressive social change agenda if they simply look for improved ways to do the things they already do. Instead, it is argued that self-aware INGOs need to face a choice: to be agents of progressive social change and, in order to do this, transform themselves radically or, alternatively, continue to make modest efforts to ameliorate some of the least defensible aspects of the inequitable global capitalist system of which they are a part, but admitting that this does not really amount to progressive social change.

5 Matters for debate

Reflecting on their reading and experience within BINGOs, the discussion paper authors and the IDS team who commissioned the paper accepted that it could not be taken for granted that BINGOs are agents of progressive social change. However, they felt that some of the literature painted an overly simplistic picture of BINGOs, in particular downplaying the efforts that many are already making to respond to challenges raised in the literature, and the significance of several features, some of which have already been touched upon, that affect their behaviour. The latter are briefly considered here as a prelude to more nuanced discussions of some factors commonly perceived to prevent BINGOs being agents of progressive social change.

First, there are deep and radical differences between international BINGOs – those that wish to pursue a more radical and progressive agenda do not share a common starting point. Each BINGO has a certain amount of room to manoeuvre, which is shaped by its distinct origins and history, which in turn has been influenced by the specific development traditions and perspectives in its Northern host countries. Each BINGO is influenced by the composition of its particular funding portfolio and support base; the breadth of the issues that it considers its 'core business'; its incentive structures; and its approaches, including the ways in which it works through partnerships and alliances.

Having noted this diversity, there are also significant ways in which INGOs shape each other, creating a tendency for them to become more alike, at least superficially. This is largely because INGOs in a given setting compete for funds, supporters and visibility and thus tend to judge themselves by similar criteria. They are also affected by the frequent movement of staff between organisations.

A further point to emerge from the discussion paper and early conversations among BINGO participants is that BINGOs are characterised by considerable internal diversity. These complex organisations cannot be conceived as homogenous bureaucracies, with their different parts obediently carrying out the strategies and policies of a central headquarters. BINGOs are full of tensions that arise from the different values, beliefs, understandings, capacities and personalities of people working for them. These personal differences are often obscured by the intra-organisational differences created through departmental or functional boundaries, as well as by the various geographical locations in which BINGOs operate. However, everyday life in BINGOs is characterised by pressure to resolve, manage or gloss over differences between the way different parts of the organisation behave and the varied ways in which individuals work.

The paper went on to draw on the IDS team's experience and relevant literature to demonstrate how homogenising influences and inter- and intra-organisational diversity exacerbate several complex tensions experienced by BINGOs. A discussion of these dilemmas, which are commonly perceived to act as barriers to INGOs pursuing progressive social change agendas, was used to generate a number of provocative questions intended to stimulate debate amongst BINGO participants and practitioners from other organisations interested in contributing to progressive social change.

Although much rich discussion ensued, the tensions and the provocative questions they raise were only partially explored during the BINGO process. They need to be further unpacked, reflected upon and debated by practitioners. The next few sub-sections, which draw both on the discussion paper and conversations among participants, aim to feed into such deliberations.

5.1 Money: does size matter?

Critics argue that BINGOs should not be pursuing financial growth as an end in itself and that the desire for growth pursued by many has not only obscured and sustained bad practice, but also stifled innovation required to increase qualitative impact (e.g. Edwards 2005; Slim 2007; Mitlin *et al.* 2007).

But why do BINGOs really pursue growth? Some individuals within BINGOs have argued that more aid is not necessarily in the interests of poor people (e.g. Glennie 2008), yet many organisations appear to be driven by financial targets. Staff, particularly those involved in marketing and communications, seem to unquestioningly accept a simplistic argument that all that is needed to improve the lot of poor people is more cash. Furthermore, there is a common belief that budget size correlates with organisational visibility, perceived legitimacy (Mowles 2007), and prospects for policy influence. This is another area where BINGOs certainly shape each other, albeit sometimes unintentionally.

INGO staff frequently justify their organisation's growth targets purely on the basis of comparisons with their peers. Some rationalise participation in expensive competitive bid processes for donor funds with arguments that their organisation can use the money more ethically or to better effect than INGO peers and private consultancy competitors. Others argue that financial engagement with official donors has a programmatic aim and is a route to influence donor spending and make it more consistent with emerging rights-based thinking.

Incentives to increase total income are only part of the story, for within each individual BINGO it is not merely sheer financial size that matters: BINGOs try to raise the type of funds that allow them to pursue their own agendas as opposed to those demanded by official donors or public supporters (see below). Each organisation has its own funding portfolio comprised of a mix of more and less restricted funds and distinct strategies for generating them, which creates significant differences between organisations in terms of which type of funding they will most actively pursue. For example in ActionAid, child sponsorship money is highly restricted and must be spent in communities where sponsored children live, whereas Plan's sponsors agree for their money to be pooled and used where

it is needed most, arguably offering Plan – at least in principle – more financial flexibility and scope to respond quickly to emerging opportunities to pursue radical social change agendas at national and international levels.[5]

The reasons BINGOs pursue absolute financial growth are more complex than they may first appear, and although some participants agreed that pressures for INGOs to grow are problematic, it was argued that BINGOs need to be of a certain size and scale in order to have the kind of influence that can really result in social change. Such tensions around BINGO growth objectives suggest that organisations wanting to pursue the realisation of rights and political, social and economic justice would be well advised to encourage discussions around the following questions:

- What is the relationship between the financial size of an INGO and its capacity to effect progressive social change?
- How can BINGOs establish a funding mix that will maximize opportunities to contribute to more equal partnerships and political, economic and social justice?

Conversations around these questions can be further informed with reference to some of the issues raised in the following sub-sections.

5.2 Poverty vs. rights: what will donors subscribe to?

In recent years, many INGOs have adopted rights-based approaches, some with more unambiguous commitment than others (McGee forthcoming 2010). Yet BINGO decisions to accept money from official donors, whose agendas are mainly driven by the Millennium Development Goals that tend to frame poverty as being about material deprivation, are sometimes cited as inconsistent with progressive rights-based approaches.[6] Critics thus suggest that relationships between donors and INGOs make the latter vehicles of Northern foreign policy, unable to challenge power relations and support radical social change.

In their desire to grow, it is undoubtedly true that many BINGOs are seeking more money from official donors. However, some of this money has, at least until fairly recently, come in the form of framework agreements that can be considered as 'untied' general budget support, pledged by donors to support unspecific, multiple but coherent actions by BINGOs. Moreover, some BINGOs place ceilings on the proportion of gross income that they will accept from such sources in order to maintain a degree of independence. This is one of several reasons that suggest it is simplistic to assume that INGOs receiving funding from institutional donors automatically become the stooges of donor visions. It is equally unhelpful to

5 Plan is currently increasing accountability through moving from global pooling to national pooling – i.e. all of the money generated through sponsorship will have to be spent in the countries where sponsored children live.

6 See Vandermoortele (2007: 24) for a fuller discussion of different perceptions about the MDGs.

assume that such donors are always pursuing inherently less progressive agendas.

INGOs can use official aid to finance quite radical projects that promote political participation, democracy building and citizenship. These projects aim to tackle the systemic causes of poverty. For example, ActionAid has been spending time working with frontline staff, helping them to look beyond the technical confines of a donor funded food security project in Sierra Leone. After a three day reflection, policy and project staff were easily able to see beyond the donor's logical framework and to identify opportunities to use the project to promote women's rights and campaign for more investment in agriculture.

In other cases, it is the donor who is progressive and the INGO that is reluctant to risk more radical action. A DFID-designed project in Sierra Leone cast one participating BINGO in an overtly political role, as an advocate of rights and democratic values. The BINGO staff struggled with this role as they thought it may jeopardise other, less political work they were undertaking in the country.

Financial relationships between official donors and BINGOs cannot always be interpreted as resulting in technical projects that merely aim at short term poverty reduction. Whether BINGOs are able to use official aid for progressive work depends as much on the politics of individual staff in donor organisations and the politics and abilities of INGO staff, as on the official policies and procedures of donor agencies *per se*.

Moreover, BINGOs are not blind to the politics of their aid relationships and do not unwittingly get drawn into unsavoury foreign policy agendas. Reactions to the erstwhile Bush administration's evident coupling of aid with US policy objectives have shown INGOs making increasingly public and difficult choices between taking on generous, but tied American government funding, and expressly avoiding being complicit in US foreign policy (Lister 2004). However, examples shared during BINGO conversations demonstrated that differing values and understandings existing within organisations can prevent such policies being consistently implemented across these complex organisations.

Official aid is not the only money perceived as an obstacle to BINGOs pursuing political rights-based agendas. Many ActionAid staff view official aid as less restricted than the money generated by their particular sponsorship model – BINGO relationships with private supporters can also stifle their attempts to pursue radical agendas. Marketing departments often assume that individual supporters are inherently conservative and more interested in improving the material conditions of poor people than contributing to political change, which prevents BINGOs taking forward more radical advocacy and social change agendas. Participants talked of tensions between programme and marketing departments several times during the BINGO process, and they were not all related to child sponsorship fundraising models. Similar dilemmas have been noted in Christian Aid with reference to its activist programme in Colombia where rights violations are of far greater consequence than material want. The approach Christian Aid takes to accountable governance is believed by some within the organisation to pose problems in communications with supporters (McGee forthcoming).

Some participants argued that their marketing departments may assume supporters are more conservative than they are in practice and ActionAid UK provided an example of its efforts to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the demographics of its (potential) constituency. Participants recommended that BINGOs, wanting to pursue radical rights-based agendas, need to find out more about their supporter base and ask themselves:

- What would happen if INGOs described their work purely in terms of 'rights' and 'political, social and economic justice', rather than 'poverty'? How conservative are supporters and donors in reality?
- What opportunities does the financial crisis present to question dominant assumptions about free market pathways to development and 'poverty reduction' and to shift attention to moral economies and social justice?

5.3 Universalist aspirations and the complexity of local contexts

As unelected organisations, BINGOs gain a degree of normative legitimacy from their overall missions and values (Ossewaarde *et al.* 2008). It is argued that although they are expected to be sensitive to local contexts, their supporters and critics often evaluate their effectiveness against the universal standards articulated in their overall missions and goals (*ibid.*). However, as discussions in section three suggest, it is perhaps unhelpful and unfair to evaluate different parts of the organisation, operating in different contexts, against the same yardsticks.

There are a growing number of publications that draw attention to the differences and tensions that can exist between field offices and INGO headquarters (e.g. Suzuki 1998; McGee forthcoming). These show that local cultural and political traditions can have a greater bearing on the practice of field offices, and their understanding of what the organisation is trying to achieve, than the mission and goals attributed to international BINGO brands.[7]

National and local political situations have significant impacts on whether or not a given INGO can pursue rights-based approaches in any given context, a factor that is often obscured in macro-level analysis of the INGO sector. McGee's forthcoming article about Christian Aid's work in Colombia is an interesting example of how local politics can enable an INGO's rights-based approach. This contrasts with Oxfam's recent experience in Nicaragua where its support for a progressive grassroots women's movement was viewed as being too party political. The current government believed that Oxfam and other INGOs were too involved in what appeared to be anti-government political processes and threatened to expel them from the country.[8]

7 Fuller descriptions of developments in organisational theory can be found in Morgan (1986), Clegg and Hardy (1999), Lewis (2006). Lewis *et al.* (2003) present conceptual frameworks for studying organisation cultures that draw attention to the difference between the espoused values of organisations and their actual practice.

8 The Nicaraguan government subsequently retracted all accusations against Oxfam GB.

Explicit political influences are not the only factors that prevent INGOs taking forward progressive agendas in particular contexts. Research in Cambodia revealed how difficult it can be for national NGO staff, culturally conditioned to accept unequal power relationships, to implement a rights-based approach. Even when staff were able to articulate rights-based rhetoric and embark on global campaigns, embedded cultural power relations that demand respect for powerful politicians meant that they were inclined to censor the voices of angry citizens (Shutt 2008). It is thus not surprising that some staff of international NGOs were less than enthusiastic when their headquarters started to 'impose' rights-based programming on their operations and those of their partners.

INGOs work in diverse political and cultural contexts that are often very messy. They have to adapt approaches to fit dynamic, political spaces that dictate to a certain extent what it means to be progressive in a particular context. Different approaches may need to co-exist within one organisation, jeopardising normative legitimacy as well as raising operational and 'brand' problems when different approaches coincide. These tensions mean BINGOs need to consider the following dilemmas:

- Is it appropriate for an INGO to pursue a given model of 'progressive social change' in all contexts where it works?
- What are the implications of taking a more relativist, adaptive view of progressive social change – i.e. a view determined by the specific context in which action is planned?

5.4 Voices of the people or unrepresentative elites?

INGOs have become widely recognised for their participation in global civil society, a progressive and normative notion that evokes the dissolution of North-South dichotomies and conveys an intellectual commitment to the need for reforms in international institutions for the achievement of human rights. Make Poverty History, a campaign led by INGOs, is often cited as a successful global civil society initiative (e.g. Edwards 2005; Rugendyke 2007).

Despite this recognition, INGOs are accused of being unrepresentative and unaccountable actors in national and international policy spaces (e.g. Murphy 2005; Paczynska 2006); some critics go as far as to say that they are complicit in World Bank efforts to develop an undemocratic global governance system in which elites from business, government and civil society will set globally binding social and economic policies (e.g. Murphy 2005).

Those participating in the BINGO process recognised that INGOs can overshadow other civil society actors in local policy spaces. But at the same time they felt this critique does not recognise the significant efforts that some BINGOs have made, for example in the Global Campaign for Education, to try and make sure that campaigns build on and promote the existing work of Southern civil society actors.[9]

Furthermore, much of the critique inadequately reflects the differences within BINGOs and across regions. BINGOs are staffed by individuals who support

different political positions. Some staff in the South are politically active citizens of the countries in which they operate and, if able to take a lead in policy initiatives, they could help to make their organisations' participation in global policy spaces (slightly) more representative.

Unfortunately, as acknowledged by some participating in the BINGO process, staff in the North continue to assume too much responsibility for designing BINGO advocacy agendas. ActionAid UK, Christian Aid and Oxfam GB are all currently undertaking work to try and institute changes that may encourage the rise of more grassroots and Southern-based advocacy approaches. They are also trying to facilitate better links between community level programme and policy work, while also retaining the ability to take a more 'global' approach to issues like climate change. Nevertheless, these organisations and other BINGOs could still benefit from encouraging staff within their organisations to reflect on the following questions:

- Does INGO advocacy, in the way that it is done and in the issues selected, challenge or perpetuate the uneven power relations that produce poverty and exclusion?
- What would 'socially progressive' advocacy entail: who would speak, where, on what?

5.5 Business and BINGOs: corporate engagement

INGOs have recently begun to undertake new and diverse forms of engagement with corporations. This has ranged from partnering on specific programmes, getting funding from firms through their corporate social responsibility programmes, engaging with them in multi-stakeholder initiatives on global problems to advocating for informal and formal regulation of corporate behaviour.[10]

There is some evidence that INGOs have been successful in encouraging companies to act responsibly in order to avoid the risk of boycotts or other action that threatens profit margins (Bendell cited in Sayer 2007). Yet critics like Alan Fowler (cited in Mitlin *et al.* 2007: 1), argue that INGOs are likely to adopt corporate practices as a result of such relationships, and that they would be better concentrating on global advocacy for more formal regulation of powerful companies (Sayer 2007). Moreover, it is contended that INGOs should exercise similar discretion when they assess the risks of accepting funds from new philanthropic organisations set up by wealthy corporate actors who tend to be more interested in welfare than transformative or redistributive projects underpinned by a social justice agenda (e.g. Edwards 2008).

---

9 See Gaventa and Mayo (2008) ' "Down-up, Up-down and Sideways Change": Linking Local, National and Global Advocacy in The Global Campaign for Education', unpublished Working Paper for a fuller account of this campaign.

10 See Sayer (2007) for a fuller review of literature concerning INGO relationships with corporations.

Some of these critiques do not adequately reflect that INGOs are acutely sensitive to the practical and reputational risks of corporate engagement. Most BINGOs participating in the meetings have gone to considerable trouble to develop due diligence procedures that assess the risks and benefits of partnerships with particular private companies. Nonetheless, the subject of corporate relations causes friction between fundraisers and campaigners (Heap 2000), as well as amongst campaigners themselves, who sometimes argue in similar vein that little is known about the origins of individual supporter donations, and whether they are ethical or not.

Although the issue of relationships with corporations was not extensively discussed during the BINGO process, several participants contended that traditional ideological objections to corporations may blind BINGOs to the possibilities that relationships with the private sector may offer for promoting progressive social change. One participant argued that BINGOs need to spend more time assessing the possible advantage of engaging with the corporate sector, rather than assuming engagement will lead to capture. This means BINGOs need to debate the question:

- Is there a progressive way of engaging with corporates that is effective and legitimate?

5.6 Managerialism: demonstrating accountability and effectiveness [11]

Another concern about INGO relations with the private sector broached at the initial BINGO meeting in December 2007 relates to the permeation of 'business' thinking and language into INGOs' work, partly through private sector presence on boards of directors. For in efforts to meet criticisms about their inability to demonstrate effectiveness, BINGOs have adopted management tools from both business and public sectors that have since become viewed as obstacles to INGOs being agents of progressive social change (e.g. Ebrahim 2005; Wallace *et al.* 2006).

The logical framework, which originated in the public sector, is one tool widely condemned for prioritising 'upward' accountability to donors and encouraging BINGOs to take credit for complex changes and impacts associated with their work in ways that do injustice to their local partners and poor people.[12] The logical framework assumes that change is a technical and controllable linear process, paying inadequate attention to many of the variables that affect organisational behaviour discussed in the BINGO process e.g. differences of understandings among individuals within organisations that can affect and complicate processes

11 Managerialist as a concept is contentious. The first entry on Google defines it as looking at organisational behaviour and theory from the exclusive viewpoint of the manager. Boje, citing Alvesson and Willmott, describes it as about insuring 'the survival growth/profitability of the organization' and satisfying 'the immediate demands of shareholders/customers/ (and to some extent) workers' http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/managerialist.html (accessed 20 July 2009).

12 This is more fully explored in Wallace *et al.* (2006).

of change. The log frame's emphasis on quantitative output indicators can encourage development practitioners to develop narrow understandings of the purpose and success of their work, making it difficult for them to see their roles in relation to the broader change strategies being pursued by their organisations (Ebrahim 2005).

Some INGOs have tried to respond to the above critique and develop innovative approaches, such as ActionAid's Accountability Learning and Planning System (ALPS), which caused some excitement within the INGO sector. ALPS was seen as offering alternative, more appropriate mechanisms for supporting good management in INGOs. However, BINGO participants argued that distinctions between managerialism and other approaches are often made in terms that are far too black and white.

The decentralised nature of ActionAid International (AAI) has meant that ALPs has proven hard to implement consistently and thus, in late 2008, some of ALPS' most ardent supporters believed that AAI could benefit from a more rigorous approach to project management and monitoring and evaluation. AAI is not the only organisation that is reassessing its critique of new managerialism. Similar conversations are going on in Oxfam, particularly about how to get better at identifying results and impact in complex, long-term social change processes. In other words, most BINGOs are still struggling to answer the questions:

- Which management principles and methods are transferable from the private to the voluntary sector experience, and which are not?
- Which management models can be used to reconcile various aspects of organisational ethos such as a commitment to rights, empowerment and participation, with efficiency and effectiveness concerns?

5.7 Partnership or patronage: INGO relationships with Southern CSOs

As Southern civil society organisations have grown in capacity, INGOs have carried out less direct programming and 'partnership' is generally viewed as a desirable approach for BINGOs wishing to pursue social change.

More recently, the nature of the financial and discursive inequity that characterises relationships between international NGOs and local civil society actors, and the effects this inequity can have on practice, has received considerable attention in the literature (e.g. Hudock 1999; Fowler 1998; O'Leary and Meas 2001; Mawdsley *et al.* 2002; Shutt 2006). Ideals encapsulated in the term 'partnership' have seldom been achieved in practice (Brehm 2004). INGOs are inclined to over-shadow local partners in national policy spaces and emergency work, all too often making only cursory reference to 'partners' in their marketing materials (Slim 2007).

Furthermore, the management values and growth objectives adopted by many BINGOs mean that they find it difficult to work with small radical grassroots organisations. BINGOs tend to develop relationships with professional, local NGOs able to absorb and manage large sums of money and deal with donor

application procedures and accountability requirements. Thus BINGOs pressurise partners into conforming with their own professional ways of doing things at the expense of developing more appropriate and situated approaches to their work (Wallace *et al.* 2006). Worse still, they have sometimes ended up policing local NGOs in ways that are diametrically opposed to solidarity type relationships enshrined in a progressive notion of social change (McGee forthcoming). As donors have decentralised, this situation has become even more complex and INGOs increasingly compete with local civil society organisations trying to access donor funds.

Participants agreed that inequity in power relationships between BINGOs and local civil societies are a very real concern. However, once established, such inequity is often reproduced making it is difficult to address. For example, INGOs are regularly invited to events and policy spaces that are closed to their 'partners' raising questions about whether BINGOs should attend and validate this way of working; attend with tokenistic participation by partner representatives; or choose not to participate, knowing that it is unlikely that their partners would be invited instead.

Moreover, partnership challenges tend to be discussed from a rather naïve viewpoint that assumes power inequity in relationships is the only factor preventing local NGOs being effective agents of social change. Some arguments ignore the fact that BINGO country offices are often staffed by local citizens who can be more ardent activists than their 'professional' counterparts who head national NGOs. Indeed, INGOs can be by far the more progressive partner in such relationships and the consequences of reducing their influence may not necessarily result in better impacts on poor people's lives.

Given the above, it seems unwise to assume that more equal partnerships between local and international NGOs will necessarily lead to better outcomes for poor people. The outcomes of these relationships depend greatly on who inhabits the respective organisations and their particular values, incentives and skills. BINGOs need to ask themselves:

- What role should BINGOs play in relation to various types of local civil society organisations in each particular context where they work to best support progressive social change?
- How do BINGOs' financial targets and the management tools they use influence the quality of such relations and their potential to contribute to progressive social change?

5.8 Tough questions and difficult dilemmas

INGOs wanting to become more effective agents of progressive social change face difficult dilemmas, yet many are attempting to respond to the challenges the dilemmas present in ways that are not yet fully reflected in the literature. It is hoped that the above discussion will inspire other practitioners to reflect on the relevance of debates about INGOs for their organisations and perhaps provide ideas about the changes they could make in order to reclaim identities as agents

of alternative development or progressive social change. Such considerations should include an examination of external (environmental) and internal (organisational) factors that can both enhance and limit the abilities of organisations to make the shifts and changes they deem necessary.

6 The changing world outside

Some BINGO participants were concerned that a tendency to focus on internal tensions may divert attention from shifts in the external environment, that present prospects to contribute to change in favour of political, economic, and social justice for poor and vulnerable people. Therefore, much of the second meeting was devoted to considering cutting edge changes in the global landscape that either demand or support BINGO efforts to pursue a progressive social change approach.

At the beginning of the BINGO process, participants had identified a number of shifts that demanded greater attention, such as climate change, the return of the state, the emergence of new powerful philanthropists, e.g. the Gates Foundation, and the rise of China as a development player.[13] In the November meeting several BINGOs presented case studies of initiatives they had taken to respond to some of these changes.

Box 6.1 Examples of BINGO responses to changes in the world outside

Recent environmental changes highlighted in Duncan Green's book *From Poverty to Power* prompted Oxfam GB to consciously reflect on traditional blind spots and assumptions related to certain issues. These included the role that the state plays in change processes. One response to the 'return of the state' was the development of 3–5 year National Change Strategies (NCSs) based on a thorough analysis of poverty in particular political, economic and social contexts. NCSs were a conscious move to define coherent and holistic country-based strategies for social change and equity from community-based initiatives through to policy influencing. The NCSs were also intended to ensure that Oxfam made more substantial efforts to put its rhetoric about working in partnership with others into practice.

Practical Action is responding to the climate change agenda and developing tools that will help people to predict climate changes and make adaptations to reduce their vulnerability to climate change effects. The ascendance of climate change as a global policy issue is viewed as providing Practical Action with opportunities to overcome a historic reticence to speak out on

13 See Edwards (2008) for a fuller discussion on philanthrocapitalism. www.opendemocracy.net/article/globalisation/visions_reflections/philanthrocapitalism_after_the_goldrush (accessed 20 July 2009).

policy issues and make a more substantial contribution to progressive social change (through the climate justice agenda) than it has done previously.

A complex combination of external and internal influences were cited as being responsible for Plan International's shift from providing material support to individual children to a more rights-based approach. Organisational change was said to be shaped by: (1) *The influence of other BINGOs* – often operationalised through staff joining from other organisations; (2) *Innovators* – particularly in country programmes pioneering efforts to involve children in advocacy, etc; (3) *External global events* such as the financial and food crisis. However, the latter was viewed as primarily impacting the organisation's fundraising imperatives, only later prompting analysis about how these significant events will affect the lives of the people with whom Plan works through the development of appropriate programme strategy documents.

By the time the BINGO process came to reflect on these case studies and discuss the 'outside world', public concerns about the speed and severity of the effects of climate change had escalated. In addition, the extent of the devastating repercussions of the financial crisis, which had exposed a changing global economic order with China playing a dominant creditor position, was only just beginning to unfold.

Contrary to some opinions expressed in the literature, BINGO representatives saw their organisations as playing fairly insignificant roles in global change processes. They thus felt there was a need for BINGOs to become far more outward looking and devote more time and energy to understanding the implications of these changes, particularly their roles versus those of other players involved in shaping change e.g. the private sector, China and other nation states. Such research was seen as a necessary prerequisite to deciding how to engage with these various actors in order to strengthen social justice. It is notable that there was little mention of the need to better understand the roles of Southern partners during this discussion.

BINGOs undoubtedly need to spend more time thinking about their roles versus others in supporting progressive social change. However, during BINGO conversations, it became evident that there is much that BINGOs should and are already doing to help ensure that policy responses to global crises are supportive of a real and radical change agenda, rather than some tokenistic attempt by powerful elites to maintain the status quo. Climate change and the financial crisis were seen as entry points for demanding increased accountability from those dominating international political processes as well as chances to create new alliances. Some in the room had (somewhat opportunistically) begun to align and build on existing campaign and lobbying work to advocate for the reform of global financial institutions in ways that had not previously been possible.

During these discussions, it was posited that organisations concerned with progressive social change may spend the majority of their time nipping at the

heels of an inequitable system waiting for 'important moments' when they can really make a difference and contribute to substantial change. The recent election of the Obama administration added to a sense among some meeting participants that the world was at such a moment and there was real opportunity for BINGOs to seize, and become part of, a significant, historical moment of change.

Unfortunately, excitement and optimism was clouded by fears that rather than using the economic crisis and climate change as opportunities to make significant changes to the way BINGOs behave, their desire for financial survival may lead to introspection and extreme risk aversion. Climate change was recognised as presenting prospects to mobilise supporters through the communication of radical messages about global interconnectedness and vulnerability in ways that could lead to changes in the behaviour of northern energy consumers and thus make a contribution to climate justice. However, participants were concerned that the potential potency of the climate change message could be lost if marketers, and other staff interested in financial targets, were to decide that climate change had greater fundraising potential if packaged as a humanitarian issue. Those present at the meeting reiterated that BINGOs need to do more research on the demographics of current and future supporter bases to test the assumptions of their marketing departments.

7 Changing the world within

The (second) November meeting ended with BINGO participants identifying internal changes that their organisations could make to respond to shifts in the world outside that would make them more effective. Although proposals varied according to the particularities of each BINGO represented, it was possible to identify some general trends, such as redefining organisational structures and ways of working that would result in more equal power relations between offices in the North and South, and between BINGOs and partners. Finding more effective ways to work through networks and alliances was another popular theme. In the final BINGO meeting of March 2009, participants began to consider how practitioners could go about initiating and supporting these and other shifts in their respective organisations.

Considering initiating change in large complex organisations is obviously a daunting task for any one individual, but discussions included examples that demonstrated how individual staff can use their agency to contribute to informal organisational change. The cases presented drew attention to the significant role that BINGO country representatives play in managing and mediating organisational power relations and creating space to take progressive agendas forward.

John Gaventa shared his experiences of more formal efforts to align organisations with a progressive social change agenda that illustrated the important, yet difficult role that leaders play in organisational transformation. Reflecting on his time as a member of Oxfam GB's board, he concluded that top-down organisational change directives are likely to be relatively ineffective in large professional BINGOs working in many different contexts. Organisational leaders should therefore focus on creating organisational cultures that allow creative and dynamic staff to pursue opportunities to contribute to more contextually defined progressive social change.

This analysis supported the thesis that large complex organisations do not behave as rational bureaucracies. BINGO participants were thus encouraged to explore their own theoretical assumptions about how organisations behave through reference to several images of organisations (Box 7.1)[14] as a prelude to further discussions about organisational change.

Box 7.1 Images of organisations

- Machines – bureaucratic with an emphasis on goals and a belief in rationality and the power of organisational hierarchy
- Organisms – an ecological emphasis on survival through inter-organ isational relations that develop in relation to their complex environments
- Brains – emphasis on intelligence and single loop learning to correct errors in norms without questioning the relevance of norms
- Cultures – emphasis on socially constructed realities, organisational language and the social aspect of organisations that create systems of shared meanings
- Political systems – emphasis on all organisational behaviour being interest based and shaped by power and conflict. Recognises the power of informal networks
- Psychic prisons – emphasis on unconscious constraints to organisational change. Often need psychotherapy from consultants to move beyond their histories
- Flux and transformation – emphasis on process and organisations being in constant state of flux. Organisations are viewed as part of their environment – there is no binary split between internal and external aspects of an organisation
- Domination – emphasis on discourse in organisations as means and expressions of hegemony and ideology. Certain ways of thinking are admitted and not others

The ‘political system’, ‘culture’ and ‘machine’ metaphors particularly resonated with participants. It was noted that large organisations may have to behave in machine-like and political ways in order to survive in a rapidly changing external environment. Some saw machine-like aspects of organisations as a disadvantage of being big while others, coming from decentralised organisations commented that overly discursive environments, characterised by diversity and dissent, could cause paralysis and prevent BINGOs getting on with changing the world!

Participants were also familiar with constant changes in BINGOs suggested by the

14 These organisational metaphors come from Morgan (1986).

flux and transformation metaphor. A specific mention of predictable, but ineffective changes following the appointment of new leaders supported a growing consensus emerging from those writing about non-profits and organisational change – formal change efforts have not worked because change agents have tended to assume that organisations behave as bureaucratic machines (Lewis 2006; Clarke and Ramalingam 2008).

There is growing evidence that implies organisational change processes and plans must proceed from more nuanced thinking about how non-profits behave. Organisations are complex, political and cultural social systems, which means that formal structures have a limited influence on organisational practice (Clarke and Ramalingam 2008). Organisational cultures (that are often highly fragmented and can operate at very discrete levels e.g. within departments or country programmes); informal networks; and emotional aspects of agency staff are viewed as having a far greater influence on organisational behaviour. Complex systems theory is increasingly being used to incorporate these ideas and to show why planned change does not happen as expected, and why it cannot be entirely controlled.

The relevance of some of these metaphors and ideas from the literature was further illustrated during the analysis of case studies of changes undertaken by participating BINGOs in efforts to make their organisations more effective agents of progressive social change.

Box 7.2 Examples of BINGO change initiatives

Practical Action described its efforts to operationalise a progressive social change aim around the climate change agenda through the convening of UK based and international working groups that had later been judged to be ineffective. Although the UK working group had had some success, it lacked direction, and there was a lack of clarity about aims and where impetus should come from. Frontline staff members in country programmes, enthusiastic about taking the work forward, were not powerful enough to make the necessary decisions to do so. Placing faith in the power of the bureaucratic dimensions of the organisation's hierarchy, decision-making responsibilities were pushed upwards to a more senior management level. Deeper reflections on barriers to change suggested that problems were also due to an organisation culture that was characterised by a lack of ambition and a 'silo' way of working that blocked cross cutting issues.

Oxfam shared a story of change precipitated by the arrival of a new director who sensed a lack of clarity and focus in its country programmes. The idea of developing National Change Strategies was introduced to country programmes not as a top-down, machine-like directive, but in a light touch way – as an invitation with guidelines that emphasised process rather than product. The initiative did not generate the significant resistance or rupture that was anticipated, partly because the timing was right, but also because it was undertaken in a culturally appropriate way and not presented as a major new initiative that may have created fear in some parts of the

organisation. On the contrary, the approach to national change strategies has shifted power relations within Oxfam and re-empowered country offices as an important unit, putting them back in the driving seat in a way that appears consistent with a progressive social change agenda. However, it was noted that the light touch approach meant that the quality of the outcomes varied across country programmes and that a more tightly controlled process may have generated more consistent, good quality outcomes.

Plan told the story of its move away from a technical development programme, framed in terms of poverty, to a rights-based approach. The story showed the ineffectiveness of a top-down machine-like approach to change that had resulted in little effect beyond 'the Centre'. Resource allocations and support for internal learning required for the roll-out of the new programme were inadequate and thus the take-up patchy. Furthermore, an internal financial crisis and the arrival of a new CEO committed to financial growth meant fundraising took priority over the substance of the rights-based programme. Despite these setbacks, a group of individuals inside the organisation with some room to manoeuvre continued to support the institutionalisation of a rights-based philosophy through both formal and informal mechanisms. Thanks largely to their efforts, a new programme framework and effectiveness package has recently been approved. However, the organisational transition has brought the emotional side of organisational life to the fore. The adoption of the rights-based approach has been accompanied by efforts to give frontline staff more flexibility in their roles and this has been unsettling for those used to working in a hierarchical organisation with strict rules and procedures.

The lessons that participants drew from the case studies and theoretical inputs on organisational change demonstrated that organisational change processes are complex and emergent, being affected by an unpredictable mix of internal and external factors. However, they made a number of recommendations that might be applied to efforts to make BINGOs more effective in efforts to promote the realisation of rights and greater political, social and economic justice. It was acknowledged that in order to achieve focus, BINGOs need to distinguish between 'good work' and 'the right work' i.e. that which is the most consistent with their vision of progressive social change. This requires the development of stronger theories of change.

Recommendations of how future change strategies might be improved capitalised on some of the metaphors presented earlier:

- Machine-like – the importance of getting organisational leaders on board to pursue planned change and the development of transition plans
- Political – efforts to align formal and informal leaders of social networks within organisations to support and drive through change

- Cultural – leaders need to nurture organisation cultures that:
  - encourage diversity and provocative debate that is key for learning;
  - allow formal and informal leaders room to manoeuvre to express their creativity and take advantage of opportunities to pursue progressive social change as defined in their respective contexts; and
  - recognise that some individuals are more comfortable with ambiguity and flexibility than others who may find rules and procedures empowering.

An analysis of the case studies of organisational change and discussions of organisational theory highlighted the tough task faced by those who want to initiate and/or support transformation in their respective organisations. BINGO participants noted that successful organisational change requires striking a number of delicate balances:

- between analysis of internal and external environmental factors;
- between over- and under-ambition in change plans;
- between allowing constructive spaces for critical voices and avoiding them being dominated by negative resistance;
- between tight hierarchy and control and loose management that allows diversity and experimentation; and
- between pushing central change processes emanating from Northern offices that may dominate Southern agendas, and allowing change to be the result of the random anarchy of autonomous country programmes.

Given this difficult balancing act, it seems inevitable that organisational change will be messy and painful.

8 Conclusions

This paper set out to share the proceedings of a series of meetings that considered the opportunities and challenges facing BINGOs wanting to play a more significant role in challenging structural inequalities that cause poverty and shifting power relations for greater political, social and economic justice. By so doing, it also aimed to contribute to a greater understanding of the sector than is typically found in much of the INGO literature. This was achieved by providing nuanced accounts of how differences within and between INGOs can both enhance and constrain their abilities to contribute to the progressive social change agendas that many appear to have adopted, partly as a result of institutional isomorphism within the sector.[15]

15 Institutional isomorphism is a term used to describe the tendency of organisations to take on attributes of similar organisations operating in the same field. DiMaggio and Powell (1991) claim that institutional isomorphism arises from competition for political and organisational legitimacy.

The BINGO process illustrated that there is considerable scope for some BINGOs to play more progressive roles than they currently do and to align organisational practice with missions and goals. Importantly, BINGO conversations suggested there is potential merit in 'going back to basics' and encouraging greater debate about the meanings of normative terminology commonly used by BINGO staff, as well as their assumptions about how change happens. Such discussions are an important foundation for the organisational learning that needs to be better resourced if real organisational change is to be made possible.

Inspiring examples of many initiatives being pursued by participants striving to make change happen were shared during BINGO conversations. However, heterogeneity between participating organisations demonstrated that change agents do not start from common positions either in terms of their BINGO's location within the sector, or in terms of their own individual location within their BINGO. Some work within organisations with histories and values, or occupy posts, that make it much easier to take up a radical political agenda than others. Participants from ActionAid UK, for example, arguably the most 'progressive' organisation involved in the BINGO process, occupied senior posts and they thus found it easier than other participants to use the meetings to envision new strategies, which they have subsequently been able to implement, that further the organisation's progressive social change agenda.

Reference to practitioners' experiences and relevant literature showed precisely how difficult organisational change can be in large complex organisations, staffed by individuals from varied backgrounds with different understandings of what they do, operating in a variety of political and cultural contexts. It requires disaggregating and exploring a host of internal and external tensions and assumptions, such as the need to grow; the perceived conservatism of donors and supporters; how representative the organisation is in international policy spaces; the costs and benefits of relations with corporations; and the need to be accountable and demonstrate effectiveness without unduly competing with and reinforcing inequity with Southern civil society organisations. Many of these dilemmas are made more difficult because of the desire to 'keep up with the Joneses' which produces competition within the sector for financial growth and policy visibility.

The global financial crisis provides an opportunity to start reflecting on whether this competition enhances or detracts from the sector's opportunities to contribute to more equal partnerships with organisations in the South and economic, political, and social change and justice for poor and vulnerable people. For along with involuntary reduction in incomes resulting from supporters tightening their belts come opportunities for humble, yet radical, reflections. It is time for some BINGOs to debate the source of their moral legitimacy and to consider whether too much money actually conceals or even encourages poor practice.

BINGOs that decide that they do want to make change (and of course, it may not be appropriate for all to do so), face a daunting task. Reference to organisational theory demonstrates how important it is to devise change strategies based on understandings of how organisations behave in practice. It is vital that BINGO leaders recognise the limited effects that top down change directives are likely to have in these large complex organisations. Organisational transformation requires investment and support at all levels and means striking a number of delicate

balances. Senior leaders must nurture organisational cultures that result in a degree of coherence and ability to contribute to global policy debates, but also space for innovation in response to opportunities that arise in various country contexts.

Those participating in the BINGO process unanimously agreed that if BINGOs are to become more effective agents of social change, similar conversations need to continue and branch out, both in topical range and in participants. Topics that may be added to the list of issues for discussion laid out in Section 5 are:

- Humanitarian priorities – do they compromise the ability of BINGOs that want to take forward a progressive change agenda?
- Organisational values – do they have a real and empowering impact on practice in large complex professional organisations?[16]
- Incentive structures – what incentive structures are appropriate for INGOs pursuing economic and social justice?

People participating in the BINGO process advocated that such discussions should involve a more diverse set of perspectives including those of BINGO leaders, senior managers and staff from operational divisions such as marketing, communications and finance. It was thought to be especially important that discussions be enriched through the participation of representatives from BINGO offices and partner organisations based in 'the South'. They recommended that more inclusive discussions should specifically explore three substantial questions:

- What is the change that we (the sector) want to see? What is the political project?
- What is the role of us and our organisations and their various parts in bringing about that change?
- Are we equipped internally – as individual organisations and as a sector – to play that role and bring about that change – is our internal architecture, our planning framework etc best fit for the purpose?

The first step towards addressing these questions is to foster critical consciousness among strategic actors working within BINGOs, equipping them to advocate internally to greater effect. The BINGO proceedings and a similar series of discussions currently being proposed by BOND aimed at a much larger number of NGOs are both examples of how staff can be equipped for this purpose. These events should be viewed as part of a longer term process to identify possibilities for modifying approaches and ways of working based on realistic assumptions about how large organisations behave and how change happens.

16 Discussions on organisational values might benefit from reference to Mowles (2007).

References

Anderson, I. (2007) 'Global Action: International NGOs and Advocacy', in B. Rugendyke (ed.), *NGOs as Advocates for Development in a Globalising World,* Abingdon and New York: Routledge

Boje, D. (2002) *Managerialist Storytelling,* http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/managerialist.html

Brehm, V. (2004) 'Fostering Autonomy or Creating Dependence?', in V. Brehm, E. Harris- Curtis, L. Padrao and M. Tanner (eds), *Autonomy or Dependence? Case Studies of North-South NGO Partnerships,* Oxford: INTRAC

Brinkerhoff, J.; Smith, S. and Teegen, H. (eds) (2007) *NGOs and the Millennium Development Goals: Citizen Action to Reduce Poverty,* New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Chandhoke, N. (2005) 'What the Hell is "Civil Society?"', *Open Democracy,* www.opendemocracy.net/democracy-open_politics/article_2375.jsp (accessed 20 July 2009)

Clarke, P. and Ramalingam, B. (2008) 'Organisational Change in the Humanitarian Sector', in ALNAP's *7th Review of Humanitarian Action,* ANLAP www.alnap.org/publications/7RHA/index.htm (accessed February 2009)

Clegg, S. and Hardy, C. (eds) (1999) *Studying Organization: Theory and Method,* London: Sage

DiMaggio, P.J. and Powell, W.W. (1991) *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis,* Chicago: University of Chicago

Ebrahim, A. (2005) *NGOs and Organisational Change: Discourse, Reporting, and Learning,* Cambridge: University Press

Edwards, M. (2008) 'Philanthrocapitalism: After the Goldrush', *Open Democracy,* www.opendemocracy.net/article/globalisation/visions_reflections/philanthrocapitalism_after_the_goldrush (accessed 20 July 2009)

—— (2007) 'Have NGOs Made a Difference: From Manchester to Birmingham with an Elephant in the Room', in A. Bebbington, S. Hickey and D. Mitlin (eds), *Can NGOs Make a Difference: The Challenge of Development Alternatives,* London: Zed Books

Fowler, A. (1998) 'Authentic NGDO Partnerships in the New Policy Agenda for International Aid: Dead End or Light Ahead', *Development and Change* 29: 137–59

Gaventa, J. and Mayo M. (2008) ' "Down-up, Up-down and Sideways Change": Linking Local, National and Global Advocacy in the Global Campaign for Education', unpublished working paper, Brighton: IDS

Glennie, J. (2008) *The Trouble with Aid: Why Less Could Mean More for Africa,* London: Zed Books

Green, D. (2008) *From Poverty to Power: How Active Citizens and Effective States can Change the World,* Oxford: Oxfam Publishing

Hamilton, K. and Shutt C. (2008) 'Review of the State of the Debate on Whether and How INGOs can be Social Change Agents', unpublished discussion paper prepared for the BINGO process

Heap, S. (2000) *NGOs Engaging with Business: A World of Difference and a Difference to the World,* INTRAC NGO and Management and Policy Series 11, Oxford: INTRAC

Howell, J.; Ishkanian, A.; Obadare, E.; Seckinelgin, H and Glasius M. (2008) 'The Backlash Against Civil Society in the Wake of the Long War on Terrorism', *Development in Practice* 18.1: 82–93

Hudock, A. (1999) *NGOs and Civil Society: Democracy by Proxy,* Cambridge: Polity Press

Hulme D. and Edwards, M. (eds) (1997) *NGOs States and Donors: Too Close for Comfort?,* New York: Save the Children and St Martin's Press

Lewis, D.; Bebbington, A.; Batterbury, S.; Shah, A.; Olsen, E.; Siddiqi, M.S. and Duvall, S. (2003) 'Practice, Power and Meaning: Frameworks for Studying Organizational Culture in Multi-agency Rural Development Projects', *Journal of International Development* 15: 541–57

Lewis, D. (2006) *The Management of Non-Governmental Development Organizations,* London and New York: Routledge

Lister, S. (2004) *The Future of International NGOs – New Challenges in a Changing World,* for BOND's NGO Futures Programme

Mawdsley, E.; Townsend, J.; Porter, G.; and Oakley, P. (2002) *Knowledge, Power and Development Agendas: NGOs North and South,* Oxford: INTRAC

McGee, R. (forthcoming 2010) 'An International NGO Representative in Colombia: Reflections from Practice', *Development in Practice*

McGirk, J. (2005) *Western NGOs and the Tsunami Test,* www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-climate_change_debate/tsunami_3139.jsp

Mitlin, D.; Hickey, S. and Bebbington, A. (2007) 'Reclaiming Development? NGOs and the Challenge of Alternatives', *World Development* 35.10: 1699–720

Morgan, G. (1986) *Images of Organisation,* London: Sage

Mowles, C. (2007) 'Promises for Transformation: Just How Different are International Development NGOs', *Journal of International Development* 19.3. 401–11

Munck, R. (2006) 'Global Civil Society: Royal Road or Slippery Path?', *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 17.4: 321–31

Murphy, J. (2005) 'The World Bank, INGOs, and Civil Society Converging Agendas? The Case of Universal Basic Education in Niger', *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 16.4: 352–74

O'Leary, M. and Meas, N. (2001) *Learning for Transformation: A Study of the Relationship Between Culture, Values, Experience and Development Practice in Cambodia,* Phnom Penh: Oxfam

Ossewaarde R.; Nijhof, A.; Heyse, L. (2008) 'Dynamics of NGO Legitimacy: How Organising Betrays Core Missions of INGOs', *Public Administration and Development* 28.1: 42–53

Paczynska, A. (2006) 'Transnational NGOs and Local Struggles', *Social Justice Anthropology, Peace and Human Rights* 6.1: 49–74

Rugendyke, B. (ed.) (2007) *NGOs as Advocates for Development in a Globalising World,* Abingdon and New York: Routledge

Sayer, J. (2007) 'Confrontation, Cooperation and Cooptation: NGO Advocacy and Corporations', in B. Rugendyke (ed.), *NGOs as Advocates for Development in a Globalising World,* London: Routledge

Shutt, C. (2008) 'Power and Aid Relations: A Study of Cambodian NGOs and their International Funders', unpublished thesis, Brighton: IDS

—— (2006) 'Money Matters in Aid Relationships', in R. Eyben (ed.), *Relationships for Aid,* London: Earthscan

Slim, H. (2007) *Post-Colonial Dilemmas, International NGOs, Government and Civil Society in War and Disaster*

Smillie, I. (1995) *The Alms Bazaar,* London: Intermediate Technology

Sogge, D.; Biekart, K. and Saxby, J. (eds) (1996) *Compassion and Calculation: The Business of Private Foreign Aid,* London Chicago: Pluto Press

Srivastava, J. (2005) 'NGOs at the World Trade Organization: The "Democratic Dimension"', *Economic and Political Weekly* XL.19: 1952–7

Suzuki, N. (1998) *Inside NGOs: Learning to Manage Conflicts Between Headquarters and Field Offices,* London: Intermediate Technology

Tvedt, T. (2006) 'The International Aid System and the Non-governmental Organisations: A New Research Agenda', *Journal of International Development* 18.5: 677–90

Vandermoortele, J. (2007) 'Can the MDGs Foster a New Partnership' in J. Brinkerhoff, S. Smith, and H. Teegen (eds), *NGOs and the Millennium Development Goals: Citizen Action to Reduce Poverty,* New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Wallace, T.; Bornstein, L. and Chapman, J. (2006) *The Aid Chain: Coercion and Commitment in Development NGOs,* London: Intermediate Technology

Wild, L. (2006) 'The Darker Side of Global Civil Society', *Open Democracy,* www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-think_tank/civil_society_3413.jsp (accessed 21 July 2009)