

Fourth Annual Report Web Update

GTF003 Conciliation Resources: Increasing government accountability in conflict zones through public participation in policymaking

Conciliation Resources' GTF funded programme is operational in four regions: East and Central Africa; Fiji; the Georgian–Abkhaz context; and West Africa. Poor governance is often both a root cause of conflict and a major barrier to building lasting peace. The programme's purpose is to encourage increased public participation in policymaking, leading to greater government responsiveness and accountability.

Thanks to this funding, we support over a dozen diverse civil society organisations, building their capacities to transform conflicts.

Conciliation Resources is using innovative methods to inform and influence policymaking. In Fiji the Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF) has worked to strengthen the ability of communities to advocate for human rights, good governance and greater racial tolerance. By including rural areas CCF has made it possible for marginalised communities to participate in local politics and feed ideas into the countrywide constitutional reform process.

We are supporting border communities in marginalised areas of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea to enable citizens to demand accountability from government. They are seeking to change the attitudes of officials towards peoples' needs and priorities. Working with community groups we have helped in the creation of district platforms for dialogue to enable communities to monitor and track how development funds are spent. We've encouraged policymakers across the region to understand the stresses experienced by border communities and improve the behaviour of officials towards them. Building public awareness and skills to understand how government works and their rights to services is new to these communities who have endured years of conflict.

In the Georgian–Abkhaz context, members of the Synergy network of internally displaced people influenced local authorities in the planning and spending of budgets for services to benefit local displaced communities directly. Displaced people have gained increased recognition of their needs and have learnt to hold local government institutions to account on issues that affect them. Through developing cooperative relationships with local authorities they have experienced improvements in their standard of living and positive changes in the way they are perceived. Practical results are being achieved, such as the allocation of public money to improve living conditions for displaced people, alongside moves towards recognition of their citizenship rights.

In South Sudan connections are being built between civil society and regional government in the areas in which the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) is operating. Women have organised into community groups recognised by government so they can access and monitor community development funds. In northern Uganda a post-conflict concern is the denial of land rights to women and others displaced by the long-running LRA conflict, who do not know the boundaries of their land. These people are stronger and more confident through inclusion as monitors and paralegals in their communities.

The overall impact of these programmes is that those with little power – women, widows, ethnic minorities, youth, and the displaced – can voice their concerns and participate in political processes. They are learning to engage effectively with policymakers in decision-making on issues that impact their everyday lives.

For more information and to read the Annual Reports and Mid-Term Review, please visit [here](#). To read more about our work on governance and accountability, go to <http://www.c-r.org/theme/governance-peacebuilding>



Between April 2011 and March 2012, Citizen's Constitution Forum (CCF) conducted a total of 47 Community Education Workshops across Tailevu, Naitasiri, Ba and Ra provinces in Fiji, involving 1648 local community members.