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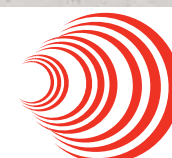
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NCVO/ESRC NGPA seminar series

# Collaboration without borders

What can UK organisations learn about  
collaboration from international NGOs?



**Non-Governmental  
Public Action  
Programme**



# Collaboration without borders

What can UK organisations learn about collaboration from international NGOs?

This report is a summary of the presentations and discussion at the seminar which took place on 4 June 2008 at NCVO.

The seminar was the first of a series of seminars jointly organised by NCVO and the ESRC Non-Governmental Public Action (NGPA) research programme at the Centre for Civil Society (LSE).

The seminar series aims to:

- Promote dialogue, exchange and learning between academics and practitioners bringing the findings of the NGPA research programme closer to civil society organisations in the UK
- Promote international dialogue, exchange and learning bringing lessons from abroad closer to civil society organisations in the UK
- Promote learning drawn from examples of civil society in the Global South

bringing together practitioners, academics and policy-makers and providing them with the opportunity to share insights and take part in a stimulating discussion.

# Introduction

In an era of globalisation in which the world is becoming increasingly connected and interdependent, many of the biggest and most complex challenges facing the UK, such as poverty and climate change, are also global. In response to these global challenges and the changing nature of governance, civil society organisations in different parts of the world are increasingly working together, establishing formal transnational alliances or collaborating perhaps more informally through networks.

This seminar aimed to explore the implications of working collaboratively and engaging with a range of partners and stakeholders at local, national and global levels.

The speakers were:

- **Dr Brian Doherty** from Keele University, who presented some of the key findings from his research, which looks at the relationship between southern and northern environmental groups within the Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) network.
- **Prof. Richard Crook** from the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, who examined how civil society actors engage with multi-level policy processes which bridge southern and northern contexts and the impacts of those engagements.
- **Chris Stalker** from campaign4impact, who drew out the common themes between the two presentations and the implications for policy and practice.

**Dr Karl Wilding** from NCVO chaired and facilitated the seminar.

## In a nutshell

■ The most important thing is to very clearly identify what you are trying to achieve and then identify partners that have the same objectives.

■ Processes and structures help partners negotiate a common identity.

■ Participatory processes provide partners with the opportunity to express differences. If a network or a partnership takes for granted its common ground and does not continually critically analyse it, then its capacity to respond to change will diminish.

■ Participation amongst partners is not an equal process. The choice of language and the way ICT is used can enhance participation but can also reinforce certain inequalities.

■ Face-to-face interaction remains key to building trust between partners.

■ Organisations are rooted in their particular circumstances and affected by those constraints. The impact organisations can have is often limited by hostile external conditions.

■ Insider and outsider approaches vary according to objectives but also according to context, particularly regime context. In hostile regimes, very little is achieved unless an organisation adopts some form of insider approach.

■ The most effective organisations are those that have a real southern base and have worked through locally based groups. Even if these groups have some form of local validity they can only be effective if they operate in an environment where it is possible for them to take action.

■ No matter how much money a local group has it does not 'buy' influence. Once an organisation is present in another country it is at the mercy of the local political system.

■ Northern resources are best used for leverage in northern and international arenas.

■ International campaigns need to be embedded in local spaces, organisations and institutions.

■ No matter how skilled or well funded an organisation is, if it does not have good local 'rootedness' it will not achieve its objectives.



# Friends of the Earth International: How does a decentralized 70 country federation work?

Dr Brian Doherty, Keele University

## Project objectives

The objectives of the research project were:

- To gather new empirical evidence of network ties, resource and information flows within a trans-national environmental network.
- To explore the varieties of ways in which environmentalism, social justice and social transformation are articulated within Friends of the Earth International (FoEI).
- To assess the degree of common ground between northern and southern nodes of the network.
- To explain the boundaries of the collective identity of FoEI.

## History and structure of FoEI

The FoEI network started over 30 years ago in four northern countries. It is now a 70 country federation of national environmental groups with 1,020 staff. In each country there is a substantial connection to grassroots organisations.

The majority of the members come from southern countries, but there is a strong base in Europe, with 31 member countries. Having a southern majority is particularly interesting because of the network’s internal decision-making process. Decisions are usually reached through consensus but when voting occurs, it works through a system of one country-one vote.

FoEI has positioned itself as an environmental justice organisation, explicitly opposed to neoliberalism and in alliance with many outsider social movements. It could probably be characterised, especially in more recent years, as holding a more radical position than some individual member countries such as FoE England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Compared to other big environmental transnational networks (such as World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Greenpeace) FoEI is much more about grassroots involvement.

It differs from other networks in several ways: it has strong membership in southern countries who have had a significant influence on its recent strategic development; it is decentralised and its key decisions are made by national groups in annual meetings rather than by an appointed board; and new members have to demonstrate their prior history of campaigning on FoEI’s mission before they can be accepted. More than others, FoEI requires the negotiation of a common identity and strategy.

## FoEI overall strategic plan

The sovereignty of national groups makes the agreement of policy and strategy more demanding for FoEI. It invests significant resources in its internal debates and participatory processes.

Managing internal political diversity in order to develop common strategies is a central purpose of the network and it has been able to deal with North-South tensions through its strategic planning process.

In 2002/3, FoEI experienced an internal crisis between northern and southern members. Once trust was rebuilt, FoEI decided to formulate a clearer strategic plan. Three themes (mobilise, resist and transform) were agreed at the annual meeting in Abuja (Nigeria) two years ago and these are primarily organising themes for the network. This process has helped members negotiate a common identity and find a way of expressing it.

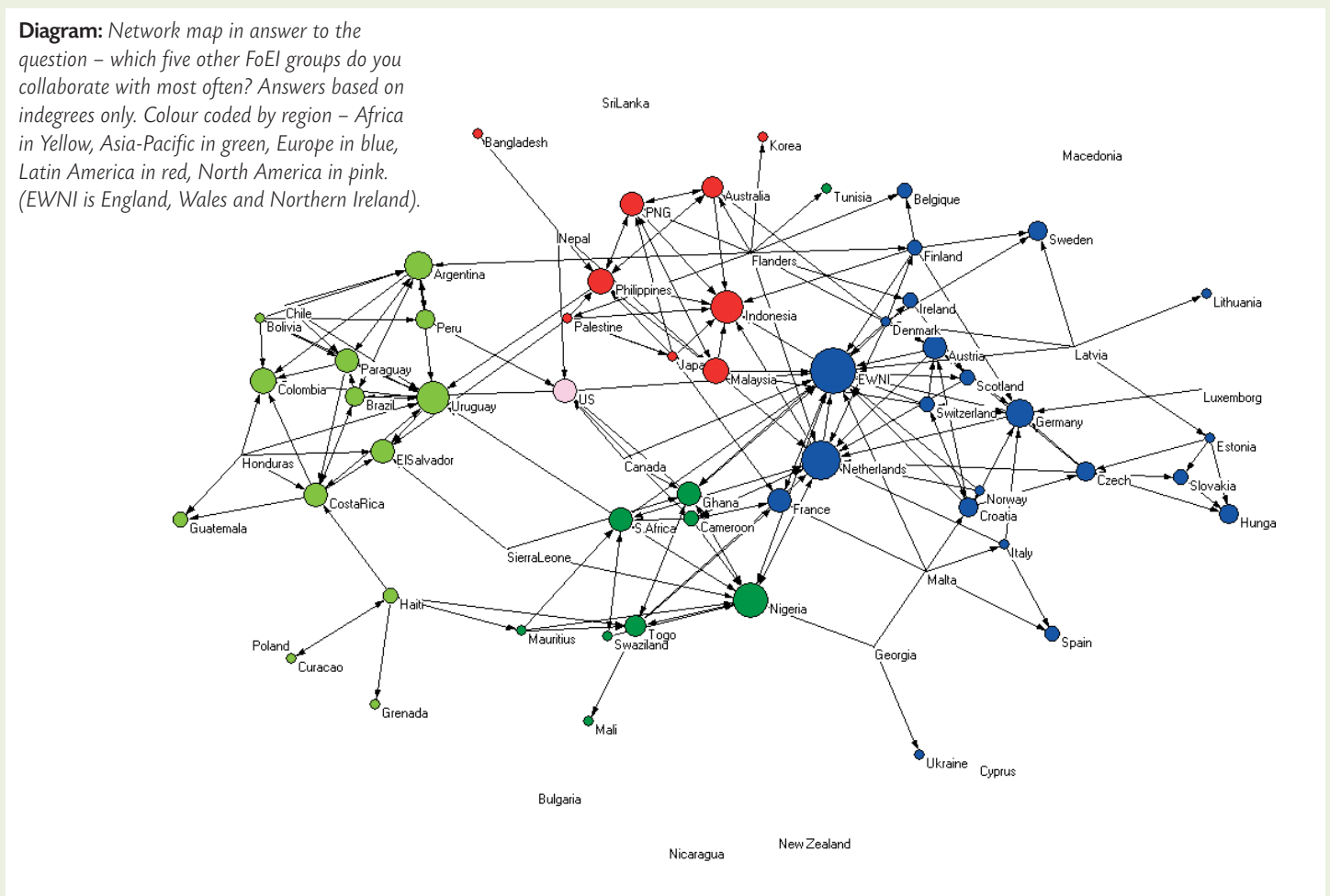
## Regionalisation

Regional structures (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe and Latin America) have developed particular significance as an intermediate level between the national and the international levels. The pattern of collaborative ties concentrated in regions (see diagram opposite) and regional differences are more significant on many issues than North-South differences. Internal processes have re-enforced the regionalisation of the network, which emerged in response to the power of a relatively institutionalised region in Europe. The European region began having a formal structure much earlier than others, principally because of the role it played at the European Union level.

When internal debates took place about whether northern and southern countries had sufficient common interests to work together, members could have chosen to discuss this in terms of their political positions (radical vs reformist) or along a North-South divide, however they chose to do this around regions.

## Relationships amongst member countries

The research team produced a number of diagrams that looked at they way the network functioned. For example, member countries were asked to pick their five most frequent collaborators within the FoEI network. Respondents’ principle working relationships were with member countries within their region. The diagram shows that no region is isolated and that there are ties cutting across regions. For instance, staff exchanges between different countries (e.g. between El Salvador and Sierra Leone FoE) cut outside the normal pattern of regional working.



## Communications

Good communication is vital to the running of a large network. There are three official languages at FoEI: English, French and Spanish. FoEI is committed to producing documents and messages in different languages. Sometimes even email debates are translated.

The network is relatively under-resourced compared to other international networks, so to commit significant resources to communicating in three languages is a sign that the network wants to be as inclusive as possible. However, this does not work perfectly. English is dominant and some groups do not work well in any of the three languages, which impacts on their

involvement. This shows that participation is not always an equal process.

Skype is becoming particularly important, especially for the international secretariat of FoEI. However, it is a very net dependent process, and has limitations in terms of the quality of the relationships you can develop. Email across time zones has interesting implications for when debates are live on email lists. When there were debates in the network over whether northern and southern countries had sufficient common interests, much of the discussion was by email. However, the rebuilding of trust within the network was through face-to-face meetings. In response to this internal crisis a special meeting was held in Catahana

(Colombia) in 2003. It was from that meeting that trust-building, the emphasis on regional processes and the strategic plan were developed.

## Alliances and action

When member countries were asked whether they received information from other members within the network, a very dense map was produced showing a great deal of network exchange.

Countries from every region were amongst the 10 most frequently selected countries. England, Wales and Northern Ireland, overall, were the most nominated. The Netherlands

also appears at the top. Other influential players within the network are Indonesia in Asia-Pacific, South Africa and Nigeria in Africa, Uruguay and Colombia in Latin America and the USA.

**FoEI’s strategy is dependent on the network’s capacity to develop effective alliances with groups that are consistent with its aims and strategic plan.**

Respondents were asked what kind of contacts they had most regularly with a range of potential allies. There were some quite significant regional differences. Women’s groups, religious and human rights groups were much stronger allies in Africa and Asia-Pacific than in other regions. In Europe and North America, there were stronger ties with development campaigners, trade unions and political parties. The relationship members had with the media was another important difference. There was far more press work in the North than in the South.

**FoEI campaigns**

FoEI focuses on a number of campaign themes:

- Food and sustainable agriculture
- Climate and energy
- Forest and biodiversity
- Extractive Industries
- Water campaign
- Economic justice – resisting neoliberalism

In terms of campaigning, FoEI sees itself as an ‘outsider’ organisation. It is critical of most of the principle drivers of existing economic regimes. Although it doesn’t seek to be an ‘insider’ organisation, there is an interesting North-South difference due to context. For many organisations in the South, their principle working relationship is typically with local communities that seek assistance and are engaged in some form of struggle against

corporate interests. In the North, the principle activity of members is around lobbying, media work, and other relatively conventional forms of protest. Nowhere in the network is there strong direct action radical protest. However, in the South, members are more likely to be linked to community groups that may be involved in those kinds of protest.

**Economic justice – resisting neoliberalism programme as an example**

This campaign theme reflects how FoEI defines itself. It came out of existing campaigns on international financial institutions and corporates, and was originally suggested by the Asia-Pacific region. Given that the network’s principle strategy is to work from the bottom-up, it is not always clear how international campaigns can happen. FoEI is currently trying to put more emphasis on working in local spaces and less on working in international forums.

At the moment, each region interprets the theme slightly differently. In Europe it is about economic justice. In Latin America, as members are generally more radical, it is about resisting neoliberalism.

Asia-Pacific is relatively invisible in this process, even though they suggested the theme in the first place. This is due to the lack of staff capacity. Groups in general in Asia-Pacific and to some extent in Africa have found it difficult to commit to the international campaigns because they are very fieldwork orientated organisations and more likely to prioritise the work they do with local communities. Members in these regions are looking at ways in which they can link the work they do locally to the transnationally defined campaign themes, without necessarily having to respond in the same way as other regions.

**How much depth is there to transnational collective activist identity?**

Although member organisations of this international network are trying to work together, national obligations remain strong. The research shows that FoEI is not yet a global environmental movement. This is partly because, unlike other environmental organisations, it is a participatory network that provides its members with the opportunity to express their differences.

# South-North non-governmental networks, policy processes and policy outcomes

Prof. Richard Crook, Institute of Commonwealth Studies

**Background**

This research project looked at 14 different organisations, spread across six countries, both international and southern based. It has involved seven researchers, a team of six at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies (predominately political analysts) and a practitioner from Oxfam.

The project originated from a feeling of dissatisfaction with current modes of analysis of non-governmental public actors (NGPAs), the emphasis particularly on transnational advocacy coalitions and the fixation perhaps on success as simply getting a policy declaration from the UN or another international institution.

**Main research questions**

The primary aim of the research was to understand how NGPAs engage with multi-level policy processes which bridge southern and northern contexts, and to investigate the impacts and outcomes of those engagements.

The main research questions were:

- What is the impact of the NGPAs on these policy processes?
- How effective are NGPAs in engaging with policy outcomes and implementation?
- What explains variations in their effectiveness?

The research design looked at seven matched pairs of NGPA cases. All cases involved some degree of North-South linkage. They covered three main issue areas: human rights, human development and human security.

The researchers categorised the cases by the primary focus of their level of action (international, national and local), the target of their influence or what they were trying to influence, and the type of campaign. They were paired also according to what the researchers thought were differences in their success.

**The case studies**

**Influencing policy at international levels**

- The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI): HQ set up in Delhi
- Para 55’ Commonwealth HIV-AIDs medical policy campaign group, formed in Durban in 1999
- Partnership Africa Canada, blood diamonds and the ‘Kimberley Process’
- Alliance of Small Island States/Small Island Developing States Network
- Oxfam’s Make Trade Fair Campaign: the garment workers campaign in Sri Lanka
- Oxfam’s Make Trade Fair Campaign: the trade and agriculture campaign in India

**Influencing national governments: changing the law**

- Sisters in Islam in Malaysia and Women Living Under Muslim laws
- The Pakistan-based Anti-Tobacco Coalition, in alliance with ASH (UK)

**Influencing national governments: development and good governance**

- PRIA in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh (India)
- Ghana Association of Private Voluntary Associations in Development, Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC) and Centre for Democratic Development (CDD)
- Rwanda-based LandNet land reform network
- Rwanda-based Penal Reform International plus local NGOs monitoring and advocacy for post-conflict local customary justice system (gacaca)

**Influencing local governments: transnational community-based associations**

- Ghanaian UK-based ‘hometown’ associations: the La Mansaamo Kpee and the Peki Union
- Indian UK-based migrant associations from Kerala: the Malayalee Association UK and the Sri Narayan Guru Mission, London



## What differences in effectiveness did the cases show?

Effectiveness was defined in terms of responsiveness, policy outcomes and sustainable engagement in implementation – i.e. Did the NGPA achieve any of the policy measures that it wanted to achieve? Was it able to push and influence the process of implementation and the remaking and amendments of policy which occur when practice happens?

The most effective organisations in the groups studied were:

- Partnership Africa Canada (Kimberley process group) and the Commonwealth Human Rights initiative were both groups which not only got an international policy agreed but also got it implemented.
- The Indian Advocacy and Research group (PRIA) achieved considerable influence over implementation and feedback at a local level in two Indian States.

The following groups had limited success and achieved what might be called limited legal victories: The Pakistan anti-tobacco campaign, Sisters in Islam, LandNet, and Centre for Democratic Development in Ghana.

## Key factors in explaining effectiveness

The study shows that northern dominance is a myth and the notion of a ‘virtual’ global civil society an exaggeration. The most effective groups in this study were those that had a real southern base. Many southern organisations rely on international funding and resources of various kinds. These resources focus on the NGPA-to-NGPA relationship. No matter how much money a local NGPA has it does not buy influence with the local government and can actually be a double-edged weapon. In some instances, northern connections or support can prevent organisations gaining access. Depending on the degree of paranoia and suspicion of the national government, it

often produces hostility and exclusion. This was the case for many of the groups in the study, particularly for those in Rwanda where any attempt to gain access to the policy process was regarded as an attempt by donors to sidetrack the government.

The other point made here is that even if you look at the transnational community-based groups in London, they turned out to have very little impact on how development politics operated in their home communities. They provided small amounts of money and support but the local politics was dominant.

Northern resources are best used for leverage in northern and international arenas. For instance, much of the success encountered by the Partnership Africa Canada group was due to the fact that it was in alliance with Global Witness which managed to stir up huge consumer concern about blood diamonds in northern consumer markets.

## Moving from advocacy to implementation and monitoring: real differences

Many NGPAs do not make the transition from advocacy to implementation because they do not have the organisational skills and leadership. But even when they do have those skills and leadership this is not enough.

**No matter how skilled or well funded an organisation is, if it does not have a good local ‘rootedness’ in the southern community it is not going to achieve its objectives.**

## Strategic responses to regime context

Regime context is clearly one of the most important factors in gauging the likelihood of success of any NGPA campaign because the ability of governments, in particular in

southern countries, to exclude is very powerful. It is critical to look at strategies for responding to the regime context and gaining access to influence the policy process. Dominant party regimes can be especially difficult, but even in competitive democracies there can be exclusion particularly because of the premium that is put on elections, electoral strategies and the politicisation of access to patronage.

## Dealing with ‘hostile’ regimes: how to gain access?

Whether an organisation should confront or collaborate remains a key issue. With the most hostile regimes an organisation has to pursue a more insiderist track. This was for example the case of Sisters in Islam, which was the most successful NGPA in a hostile regime.

A number of indirect strategies might be more appropriate:

- **Role combination** – mixing advocacy with some more inoffensive activities like service provision or capacity building. PRIA in India has been able to do this.
- **Shifting register** – addressing different audiences or interlocutors, with different kinds of messages. But this is risky and can backfire. Only a few of the organisations in the study managed to do this.
- **Division of labour** – making some strategic alliances. Penal Reform International in Rwanda managed to work, for a brief period, with a group called Avocats sans Frontieres (Lawyers without Borders) a ‘safer’ organisation that was not quite so hated by government. Partnership Africa Canada worked well with Global Witness. Partnership Africa Canada was the think-tank with the insider connections and Global Witness were the trouble makers, who roused up consumers in Western countries.

These strategies can be used to get around the problems of a hostile regime, however they are difficult and complex.

# Policy and practice response

Chris Stalker, campaign4impact

Chris Stalker’s response looked at what the implications of the research findings of the two projects might be for practitioners, particularly in terms of campaigning and advocacy.

## Common themes

A number of common themes across the two presentations were identified:

- **Structures and process**  
Both presentations showed how important it was for organisations to have appropriate structures and processes in order to articulate shared values and purposes.
- **Policy, politics and power (the three Ps)**  
On power, there were some interesting findings on external power relationships and state regimes. The presentations both highlighted the need for political skills and political stakeholder analysis at national levels. As for internal power relationships, they showed how complex group dynamics and decision-making processes could be within organisations, networks and coalitions.
- **Strategy and tactics**  
Strategy and tactics are related to policy, politics and power. Neither of the presenters used these words but clearly there were differences in approaches due to differences in theories and models of change. The North-South distinctions that were highlighted seem to imply that social movements were more prevalent in the South, whereas northern campaigning and advocacy adopted more insider approaches.
- **Sustainability**  
Both presenters touched upon sustainability. Systemic change is long-term and needs to be sustainable. There is also something about sustainability in relation to the extent to which campaigning and advocacy brings about social change, and how sustainable that social change is.

## Accountability and trusts

The final theme both speakers touched on was the issue of holding together collaborations, alliances, networks and partnerships, and how accountability, trust in good governance and transparency in decision-making contributed to this. The example of the ‘internal crisis’, for example in FoEI, was particularly interesting in that it was only resolved through face-to-face meetings, and frank discussions around critical issues, budgets and priorities. The risk of increased accountability is a crucial issue and an important emerging trend. The pressure for accountability to external stakeholders can sometimes undermine the mutual accountability of internal organisations and the alliance within the network.

## Good practice learning

In terms of good practice learning there are four principles that can be drawn from the two projects:

- **Changes in global governance and political space can provide new openings for ‘effective’ campaigns and advocacy**  
The role of new advocates in a more globalised world, such as business or progressive philanthropists, is particularly interesting. Other trends in global governance worth looking at are changes in communication technologies (e.g. the use of Skype with FoEI) and the regionalisation of policy and the way that civil society is responding to this (e.g. EU codes of conduct).
- **Rarely does citizen mobilisation create policy change alone**  
Alliance building is critical and may contribute to greater participation. This is particularly well illustrated in the work of John Gaventa at the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University, looking at civil society and the space it operates in, in relation to states and institutions. Both presentations showed that alliance building is really effective when it happens both horizontally, with a

range of different partners, and vertically, at different institutional levels (international, regional, national and local). It is worth exploring the implications of alliance building for campaigners and advocates in the UK, and thinking about how horizontal alliance building for advocacy and social movements can be transferred to the national level.

- **International allies, international treaties and international political pressure can strengthen domestic coalitions nationally and locally**  
A real opportunity here is the extent to which the human rights good governance international framework is reflected through those levels regionally and nationally. It is still yet to be used properly in the UK, for example, in human rights based approaches to public policy development, campaigning and advocacy.
- **Campaigns and advocacy ‘success’ can be understood in many different ways and will vary across the actors in the campaign**  
A key challenge is that success can mean different things to different people, depending on their interpretation of what they are trying to achieve in the first place.

**In general, the more the campaign is rooted in diverse and broad based coalitions, the more likely change will be sustained.**

There is an interesting ongoing debate about campaigning and advocacy and models of change – whether people are trying to achieve institutional policy and practice change or whether they are trying to bring about a social movement that can in turn bring cultural, societal and political change. The trick is to aim to do both at the same time, and think about the relationship and synergies between them.







you are wasting your money. Even if they do have some form of local validity, they have to operate in an environment where there is some possibility of taking action. Nigeria, for instance, has a fairly anarchic open political system in which you can bring political pressure if you are politically active locally. Plus in Nigeria there is still the possibility of bringing cases in the courts.

What more can organisations do in the North, other than send locally based groups some money? What they could do is rouse up massive campaigns in Britain.

*Comment [FoE representative]: In effect, FoEI did both.*

**RC** You have to do both. It is a division of labour as highlighted earlier; a coalition where you each do what you are best at doing. Sending locally based groups money is fine, but it is not going to do anything unless the local conditions are right for that money to be used effectively.

[responding to the question on the impact of the research project]: As academics, our first mission was to try and understand what was going on. The ESRC NGPA programme was fairly unusual because it specified that all research projects had to engage with the subjects of the study, right from the start. It was like action research in a sense. It is too early to say what has changed as the final report has not been completed yet. The subjects of the research were invited to a workshop in London, which for many academics is probably a very risky thing to do! The researchers presented them with their research findings to date, and asked for feedback. It was a very fascinating and useful discussion, and we all learnt a lot.

**Question: At what stage did you invite them?**

**RC** The workshop took place in September last year, about three quarters of the way through the study when there were some actual results to report back.

**Question: Did it help you to reframe? What came out of the workshop?**

**RC** There were a lot of interesting insights and some reframing. There was some concern about the danger to people, to the practitioners themselves if the findings were communicated on the web, which we took on board very seriously. These are ethical and research issues that you have to be aware of and take into account.

We were not there to preach to them. The workshop participants were telling us more what their organisations should be doing. What they did learn from us was a range of things to do with organisation and the northern perspective. In a couple of cases, the research had the impact of reviving organisations that otherwise might have disappeared – being studied can make you feel worthwhile.

**CS** [on earlier points]: From a practitioners’ perspective, there are two things which are potential challenges or risks – one is about networks and alliances, and the other about ‘outsider’ organisational theory.

It seems to me a question of sequencing in planning. If you have answered questions about your political, strategic and tactical positioning in relation to the change that you are trying to achieve, then sometimes that may very well mean that you are an outsider organisation. In other cases it may mean you need to have a more insider approach.

For the networks and alliance one, again it depends on the change that you want to achieve. There is a sequence in the questions that organisations need to ask themselves – ‘What are we trying to change?’ followed by ‘Who do we want to work with in order to achieve that change?’. The two questions should always be followed in that sequence.

Do you need to work with partners? In most cases the answer will be ‘yes’. There are other important questions which are often forgotten – ‘Who are our opponents?’ and

‘What allies do we need to work with to suppress the voice of opponents?’.

**BD** [responding to question on research and impact]: We certainly don’t automatically have a right to do research on organisations, you have to earn that right, and it does depend on the context and the kind of organisation you are working with. In the case of this project, I am working with an organisation that I am very supportive of as well, so I think that I am doing research with them, for them to some extent, but also on them, and those are complicated things to do.

The impetus for the research originally came from a FoE national group that contacted me and my colleague Tim Doyle. Some of our interim reports are currently being considered by the international secretariat, and we are also committed to feeding back to the individuals and the national groups that we have spoken to.

**Question: How much influence have you seen involvement in international coalitions having on the way issues are framed at domestic level? How much do stronger organisations at a regional level push the way they perceive issues, and the way they frame issues? What positive and negative impacts does that have domestically on other countries?**

**Question: How can organisations from one country deal with the absence of organisations working on those issues in other countries?**

**Question: Often to get a policy change you have a make a significant number of compromises to do that. Could you say a little bit more about how the groups you defined as successful dealt with compromise and accountability to groups on behalf of whom they were advocating on/with?**

*Comment: The discussion seems to have focused on collaboration for campaigns. Our interest in collaboration is more operational and more about*

*collaboration to leverage capacity in order to deal with crisis of increasing complexity, and in distributive problems solving – how small organisations can tackle big complex problems. Part of the puzzle seems to be how organisations collaborate with non traditional partners. Much of your research has been on collaboration between like-minded organisations.*

**Question: Do you have any examples of organisations that have been able to find non-traditional partners to bring in sources of information or knowledge perspectives that they might not ordinarily have?**

*Comment: I was very interested in what was said about regional issues of leaders and peripheral organisations. You gave the example of one organisation where there was a major learning experience that they shared with another organisation to support them. This sounds rather like organisational altruism. It might be generosity, it might be purely fortuitous. In a regional context, do peripheral organisations actively model themselves on the leaders and are we able to call upon that support?*

**RC** How much influence do international coalitions have on how issues are framed at domestic levels? The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, because it worked effectively at an international level first through the Commonwealth itself, and then institutionalised itself in fairly piecemeal ways through a series of countries, was able to influence the way things were framed. Partnership Africa Canada, because it was a really high quality academic think-tank as well as an advocacy organisation, was very successful at engaging not just with the multi-national companies, but with the governments in South Africa and Botswana, and other diamond producing countries. These are quite rare achievements.

Implementation and making compromises – very little gets achieved unless you have got some insiderism, particularly in the kind of context and regimes that we were looking at.

From the policy process perspective you have to access the policy community, and once you are in the policy community, you start accepting some of their assumptions. So there are bound to be some compromises, especially in these incredibly difficult, complex and hostile situations.

It is different if you are engaged in what amounts to a political campaign. If you are engaged in something that involves a mass membership, a social movement, you can start to confront governments, because then you become like an opposition political party. Is an NGPA a political party? It could well be – but then you are getting into that realm of political action rather than being a pressure group.

**BD** [regarding collaborations with non-traditional partners]: The thing to remember is that the lion’s share of FoE national groups’ work is about relationships and alliances with groups other than environmental campaigners. There is some interesting work on community forestry and capacity building. The one example that springs to mind, because it is very recent, is from FoE Indonesia. They did some capacity building work, immediately after the tsunami and were a conduit for certain kinds of resources, because they established a working relationship with Islamic groups. But they got criticised by the Australian Senate for it and spent two months fire-fighting that image.

[regarding regional working]: It is really different in different regions. There is not one model. In a way, the virtue of regionalisation is that the regional processes are structured partly to provide support, partly to assess new members. You don’t get chosen by an international organisation. You apply to join as an existing national group but you have to be assessed and part of the assessment process includes your regional partners.

# Biographies

**Dr Brian Doherty**  
Keele University

Dr Brian Doherty is a Senior Lecturer in Politics and a member of the Centre for Research on Environmental Action and Thought at Keele University. His research centres on the following areas: green/ environmental movements; protest and social movements; political violence; and radical ideologies. His recent funded research projects include: direct action activist networks in Manchester, Oxford and North Wales (ESRC Democracy and Participation Programme, 2000-2002); understanding Special Interest Groups (UK Environment Agency, 2002-2004); and Friends of the Earth International: negotiating a transnational identity (ESRC Non-Governmental Public Action Programme, 2006-2008). His key publications are: *Beyond Borders: Environmental Movements and Transnational Politics*, edited with Tim Doyle (2008); and *Ideas and Actions in the Green Movement* (2002). He also works as an academic advisor with a range of environmental activist groups.

**Prof. Richard Crook**  
Institute of Commonwealth Studies

Director of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies since August 2006, Professor Crook was the first Emeka Anyaoku Professor of Commonwealth Studies at the Institute, and lectures on the MSc in Globalization and Development. He holds a PhD from London University (LSE); and is the co-author of *Democracy and Decentralisation in South Asia and West Africa* (1998) and *The Law, Legal Institutions and the Protection of Land Rights in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire* (2007). He previously taught at the University of Birmingham (Centre of West African Studies), Glasgow University and the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University. His areas of specialisation include: governance and administration (particularly decentralisation); state-civil society relations, public service reform and access to justice and land rights (particularly in West Africa and South Asia).

**Chris Stalker**  
campaign4impact

Chris Stalker has worked in the voluntary and charity sector for nearly twenty years and is now a consultant specialising in campaigns and advocacy, strategy and evaluation. He also lectures in International Human Rights at Kingston University and provides campaign and political advice to charity clients of Bates, Wells and Braithwaite. He was the founder, in 2005, of the Campaigning Effectiveness programme based at NCVO and led its work to support and strengthen the capacity of the sector to campaign effectively for social and political change. As NCVO Head of Campaigns and Communications, appointed in May 2003, Chris was responsible for external relations, ensuring that the sector was fully represented and influential in Westminster, Brussels and the media. He joined NCVO from Amnesty International UK where he was Head of Campaigns for three years. Previously, he worked for Oxfam for 11 years on high-impact issue-campaigns.

**Dr Karl Wilding**  
NCVO

Dr Karl Wilding is NCVO's Head of Research. His research interests include mapping the changing third sector economy and the relationship between new technologies and philanthropy. He is a trustee of the Association for Research in the Voluntary and Community Sector (ARVAC), and of St Albans CVS, and an Honorary Senior Visiting Fellow at the Centre for Charity Effectiveness, Cass Business School in London. He is also a co-investigator for the ESRC/OTS Giving and Philanthropy Research Centre.



NCVO is the umbrella body for the voluntary sector in England. We work to support the voluntary sector and to create an environment in which voluntary organisations can flourish.

NCVO has over 6,600 members. With over 280,000 individuals and over 13 million volunteers working for our members, we represent and support almost half the voluntary sector workforce. Our goal is to support members by creating an environment in which voluntary organisations can flourish and develop. Join online at [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/membership](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/membership)

NCVO's research aims to support the development of effective policy and practice in the voluntary and community sector by building a relevant and robust evidence base. For more information about NCVO's research, go to [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/research](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/research)

The Non-Governmental Public Action Research Programme is an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) initiative directed from the London School of Economics and Political Science which aims to better understand the impact of public action by non-governmental actors.

We fund a wide range of researchers working in the UK and internationally. The researchers are based in universities, think-tanks, civil society organisations, projects and networks around the world. The NGPA programme helps researchers gather data and build theories of social change using a range of approaches including ethnography, international comparative analysis of political and economic data and organisational sociology. It also supports them to present their ideas and information to a range of audiences.

We are actively building links and sharing learning between researchers, policy makers and practitioners in the field of non-governmental public action. We do this using a variety of methods, including organising workshops, publishing papers and presenting findings at conferences and meetings.

The director of the NGPA programme, Professor Jude Howell, is based at the Centre for Civil Society, in the department of Social Policy at the London School of Economics. For more information about the Centre, go to [www.lse.ac.uk/ccs](http://www.lse.ac.uk/ccs)