

Draft for Internal Discussion
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**Identifying, building upon, and enhancing the capacities of civil
society organizations for sustainable disaster risk management and
human development in the selected districts
(Strategy Document)**

Author:
Abdul Shakoor Sindhu
National Project Advisor
Child Centred Disaster Risk Management Project

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This document has been produced as a strategy paper for informing and guiding the 'civil society component' of CCDRM project; being implemented simultaneously in Districts of Thatta, Muzaffargarh and Rajanpur by Indus Consortium. The project is technically and financially supported by Plan Pakistan. The strategy contained in the document is an outcome of a series of consultations and discussions held between representatives of Indus Consortium's member organizations and Plan Pakistan's concerned staff. We duly acknowledge the contributions of all those who have inspired, contributed with their worthy ideas, concerns and suggestions for the preparation of this document.



Part 1: Introduction and the Context

1. Background and Introduction

There lie long, complex, cumbersome but interesting debates and ideas on the concept of 'civil society'. Going into the details of these debates and ideas, does not fulfil the purpose of this document. However to begin with and for the sake of its supposed and potential users'/readers' understanding; functional definitions of the concept are given. Adding to this, it also appears to be logical to have an understanding of the sub-concepts that are employed to construct the discourses and perspectives on 'civil society'.

1.1. Defining the civil society:

In Pakistan, the term 'civil society' has been in vogue only for the (last couple) of decades or so. It is yet to gain currency in popular parlance. The term has as yet no equivalent in any of the country's many vernacular languages (1). This reflects an overall lack of attention the concept has received from social scientists and development practitioners in our part of the world. For developing the material on the project in Urdu, RDPI, has however translated the term civil society as '*Sheheri Tanzeemain*' or '*Shehrion ki tanzeemain*' (Citizens' organizations).

A large variety of definitions are available on the term 'civil society'. We are copying here, three of them.

The London School of Economics' Centre for Civil Society defines civil society as:

Civil society refers to the arena of un-coerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in the degree of

formality, autonomy and power.

A document produced by NGO Resource Centre, Karachi, defines civil society as:

Civil society is an umbrella term for a range of non state and non market citizen organizations and initiatives, networks and alliances operating in broad spectrum of social, economic and cultural fields.

The Wikipedia article on civil society covers the terms as:

Civil society is composed of the totality of voluntary civic and social organizations and institutions that form the basis of a functioning society as opposed to the force-backed structures of a state (regardless of that state's political system) and commercial institutions of the market.

1.2. Composition of the Civil Society

According to London School of Economics' Centre for Civil Society, the civil society is populated with organizations, such as registered charities, development non-governmental organizations, community groups, women's organization, faith based organizations, professional associations, trade unions, and self help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups.

According to NGORC, the civil society comprises of both formal and informal associations/organizations. The formal includes political parties, non government organizations, trade unions, professional associations, philanthropies, academia, independent and quasi-independent pressure groups, think tanks etc. The traditional and informal ones include faith based organizations, shrines, seminaries, neighbourhood associations, burial societies, councils of elders

(jirgas) and saving groups.

However CIVICUS's definition of civil society does not include political parties because their *raison d'être* is the acquisition of state power. It also excludes formal media due to its for-profit nature (2).

The article on civil society appearing on Wikipedia, exemplifies civil society with following institutions:

- Academia
- Activist groups
- Charities
- Citizens' militia
- Civic groups
- Clubs (sports, social etc)
- Community foundations
- Community organizations
- Consumers' organizations
- Cooperatives
- Cultural groups
- Environmental groups
- Foundations
- Intermediary organizations for the voluntary and non-profit sector
- Men's and women's groups
- Non- governmental organizations (NGOs)
- Non profit organizations (NPOs)
- Policy institutions
- Private voluntary organizations (PVOs)
- Professional associations
- Religious organizations
- Support groups
- Trade unions
- Voluntary associations

1.3. Understanding the dimensions of civil society

History:

Although the term 'civil society' has been coined in not a very distant past; as a concept and an idea, its roots, especially in the western thought and literature, span over more than 2000 years. The available literature on civil society contains a

number of sub concepts that are found to have been used to explain the relationship between people, state and society. This section presents an overview of these thoughts and concepts.

Although social movements and public action have been and are a hallmark of almost all the societies, the documentary evidence or literature often referred to, mostly covers the western thoughts and societies. With this background, there are three periods or turning points, the thoughts on civil society can be divided into-the classical period, the French revolution, and the fall of communist blocks in USSR and Eastern Europe.

In the classical period, the philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle saw society and state as integral. They argued that there is no distinction between state and society and state represents the civil form of society and civility stands for the requirements for 'good citizenship'. Human beings by virtue of their being social have a capacity to voluntarily gather for the common causes. Socrates believed that individuals or people in a particular society have conflicting interests. He opined that conflicts in a society can be resolved by 'dialectic' or constructive dialogue to reach at or uncover the truth. He adds that dialectic is imperative to ensure civility in the polis and good life. For Plato, an ideal state is a just society in which people dedicate themselves to common good and justice. Aristotle argued that a polis is an 'association of associations' that enables citizens to share in the virtuous task of ruling and being ruled.

Till the renaissance in Europe, the classical thought continued to prevail. Till that time the rulers were backed by ideas of divinity or divine authority which gave them absolute power over their subjects/ruled ones. The rulers till that time also enjoyed the backing of Church or religious establishment. The French Revolution gave an unprecedented impetus to people and political thinkers, especially in the west, to question and challenges the absolutist nature of the state powers and cooption between

rulers and the Church. People and thinkers alike began to demand more and more public space for people to nurture democracy or people's rule.

The ending of the cold war between capitalist and communist blocks in 1989-90, led to the emergence of new sovereign states in former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. To gain the space left by the communism, the capital forces came up with the Washington Consensus to offer conditional loans through Washington based institutions- World Bank, IMF and US Treasury Department. The critics are of the view that Washington Consensus was followed by a mushroom growth of non-government organizations through out the developing world. They base their argument on the fact that the Consensus spelled out three priorities- stabilize, liberalize, and privatize, which in turn translated into squeezing the role of state/government as it was the hallmark of communist state i.e. to have centralization and control over the economy and society. The recipe to gain the space to be left out by the state came in the shape of financing the non-government organizations.

1.4. Explaining the civil society

Michael Edward-Director of Ford Foundation, in his book titled Civil Society, presents three perspectives to explain the phenomenon called civil society.

These three perspectives include:

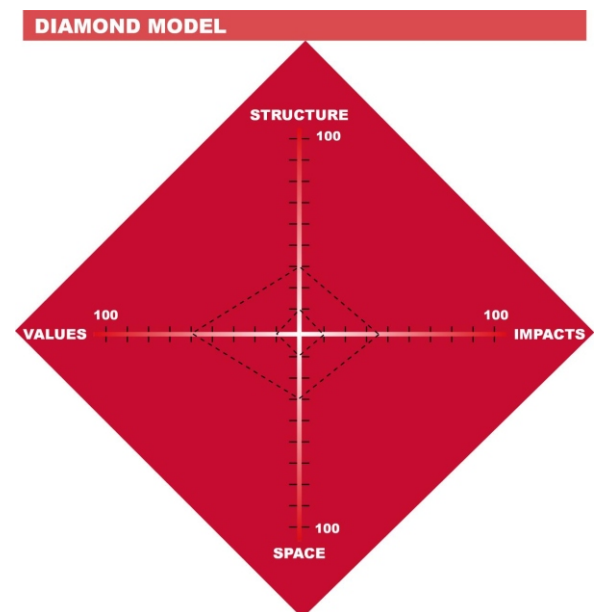
1. Civil society as an associational life
2. Civil society as a 'good society'
3. Civil society as a public space.

An NGORC report titled 'Civil Society in Pakistan' uses the diamond model developed by CIVICUS to assess the civil society in Pakistan. The model employs four scales, representing structure, space, values and impacts. Each of these concepts is described as:

1. **Structure:** *number, geographical/regional and sectoral distribution, resources, membership, and networking etc.*

2. **Space:** *The legal, political and socio-cultural environment that civil society operates in. It includes laws and regulations, respect for volunteering and public spiritedness in the society.*
3. **Values:** *The values, norms and attitudes that civil society represents and propagates. It includes promotion of human rights, gender equity, tolerance, sustainable development, transparency and accountability, internal democracy etc.*
4. **Impact:** *The contribution of civil society to various social, economic and political problems, its role in the agenda-setting, policy-making, implementation and monitoring. It also analyses responsiveness of civil society organization towards their constituents.*

Fig 1.1: The Diamond Model



This model employs the four dimensions as described above. Each dimension has a scale of 1 to 100 with 100 is the point of excellence.

Fig 1.2: The Civil Society

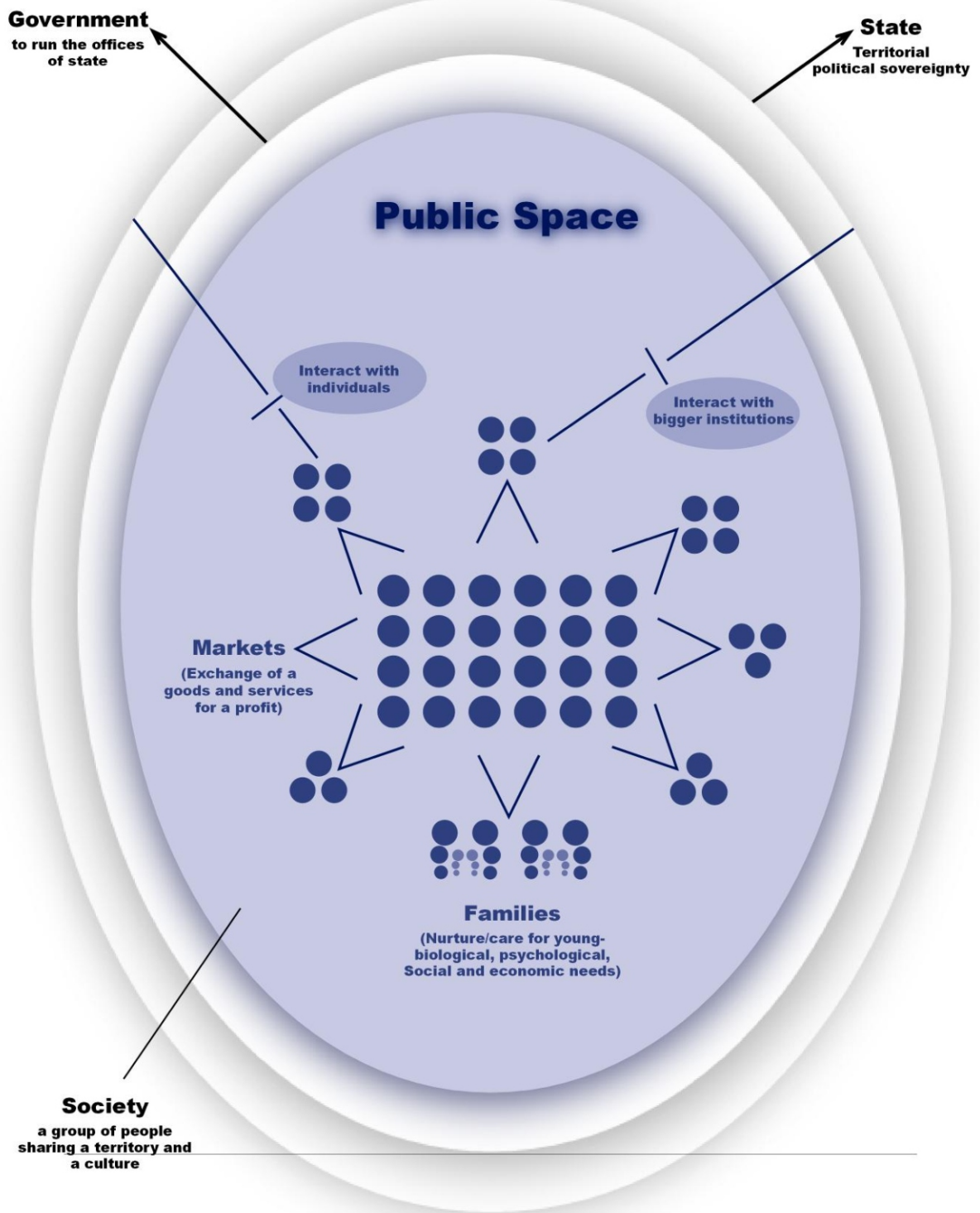


Fig 1.2 highlights all the major concepts associated with 'civil society'. It shows the relationship between different actors and how among them, civil society emerges and operates. The definitions employed to describe these actors are given below. The figure shows that individuals or people interact with one another in the public space for a variety of purposes. They form families for reproduction or to fulfil their biological needs. Meanwhile families are also the source of fulfilling people's psychological, social, and economic needs. People also indulge in economic activity or exchange of goods and services for a profit or living. These activities evolve and sustain markets. Besides these two institutions i.e. markets and families, people or individuals voluntarily associate with one another thanks to common interests, values, and objectives. This voluntary association of people is the centre point for the emergence and operation of civil society organizations (formal and informal).

State: *A territorial political unit having sovereignty. In its widest sense, state refers to any self governing set of people organized so that they deal with others as a unity. It is a territorial unit ordered by a sovereign power, and today involves officeholders, a home territory, soldiers distinctively equipped to distinguish them from others, ambassadors, flags and so on. Before the emergence of nation states, quite large areas had been either unclaimed and uninhabited, or inhabited by nomadic and wandering people who were not organized as states.*

Government: *The Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences gives four definitions of the term 'Government'. These include:*

- 1. The process of governing-the authoritative exercise of power*
- 2. A condition of an ordered rule*
- 3. The people who fill the positions of authority (offices of government) in a society*
- 4. The structure and arrangement of offices of*

government and the relationship between the government and the governed.

The existence of some institution of sovereign government is a distinguishing feature of the state.

Society: *A relatively independent, self-perpetuating group of people who occupy the same territory and participate in a common culture.*

Market: *Markets are a medium for exchange of goods and services between buyers and sellers where transactions between the two parties can be conducted*

Family: *A social group whose members are related by ancestry, marriage, or adoption and who live together, cooperate economically, and care for the young.*



: The Project's Approach Towards Civil Society

2.1. Why Civil Society?

The development organizations involved in mobilization and community work employ a common strategy to make communities participate in the development process. They (organizations) do so by helping communities or people get organized i.e. form some sort of an organization. Behind this creation of an organization there lies a very simple logic- let the people have a representative institution to communicate and make decisions on their behalf. This institution, whatever one gives it a name, acts an intermediary between a particular organization (external agency, say an NGO) and the individuals or people. This logic also forms the basis for a democratic setup where people elect their representatives to represent them in the parliament /law making institutions, form and run government and safeguard their short term and long term interests.

As explained in the previous sections, people or human beings being social in nature have certain tendencies. These include but, definitely not limited to:

1. Tendency to associate voluntarily for a common cause or around shared goals or values beyond economic gains and their families (associational life)
2. Tendency to cherish living in a good society where order, justice and peace prevail
3. Tendency to appreciate making decisions without external influence and interference by the state and market institutions (to have personal liberties and maximum public space to make these decisions)

These three tendencies of people/individuals or perspectives on civil society are synthesised in this simple statement:

People tend to have a public space in which they could freely associate/organized to lead a good social life. This statement makes the foundation stone of project's engagement and capacity building strategy for CSOs.

Figure 1.3 presents this statement:

Fig 2.1: Synthesis of three perspectives on Civil Society

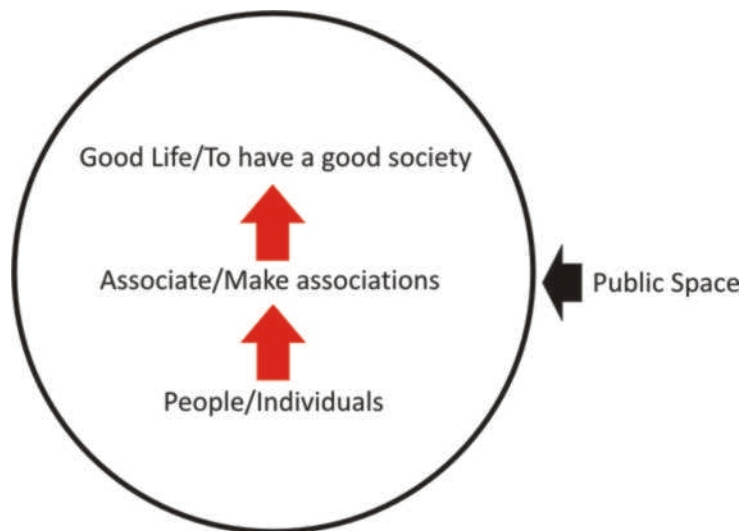
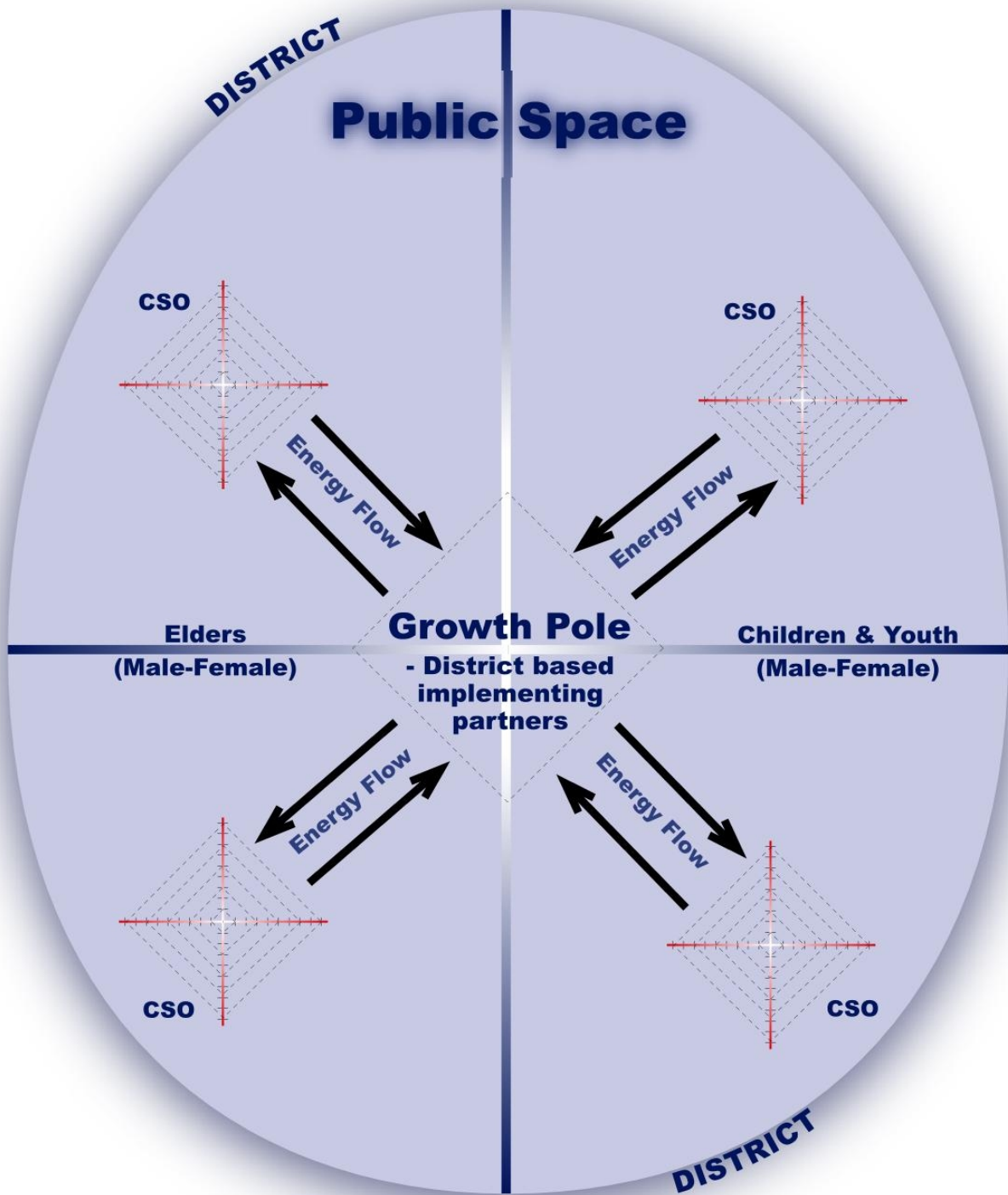


Fig 2.2: Approach to engage and build capacities of CSOs



2.2. CSO Capacity Building Approach

Fig 2.2 shows the theoretical scheme of developing the civil society in a particular district selected for the implementation of the project. It synthesizes two approaches or theories- the growth pole theory employed in economic development and land-use planning, and the diamond model described earlier. The scheme involves a growth pole (Indus Consortium's district based implementing partner in a particular district) and civil society organizations in that district as subject or target point to bring about positive change in that district for sustainable DRM and human development. Assuming that the growth pole has a bigger size of its diamond and other civil society organizations have a much smaller size of their respective diamonds, the energy or support (in shape of knowledge, experiences, systems etc) will

be provided or flown from the bigger diamond to the smaller ones. It is also assumed that this support or energy flow will help the CSOs gradually increase the size of their diamonds by moving along the paths of excellence in all the four directions- structure, space, values and impacts. It is also assumed that once the size of these diamonds improves, the CSO will be better able to operate more efficiently and effectively creating better impacts in their areas of operations.

2.3. CSO Capacity Building Process

Table 2.1 describes the steps involved in the capacity building process of CSOs (the five CSOs to be selected in each district for comprehensive capacity building package).

Table 2.1: CSO Capacity Building Process

Steps	Process	Remarks
1. Mapping the civil society in the selected districts.	A research study covering all the selected districts to understand and document the structure, space, values and impacts of the civil society in a given district.	Ideally the research study should have informed the identification and selection of CSOs. However, due to time constraint the organizations have been identified and selected in each district. The identification and selection process adopted for this, has been documented. However the proposed research shall be made part of the research agenda set for this project. The results will be employed in the due course of the project.
2. Identification of potential CSOs	Informed from the research study, identifying the potential CSOs to involve in the institutional development and capacity building process/exercise to be followed.	Please see the above comment.
3. Selection of CSOs	Based upon the vision and objectives of the project, atleast 5 CSO are selected from each of the selected districts.	Please see the above comment.

Table 2.1. (Continue from the previous page)

Steps	Process	Remarks
4. Capacity assessment of selected CSOs.	A comprehensive capacity assessment criterion is developed to identify, build upon and develop the capacities of the selected districts.	A capacity assessment criterion has been drafted. Please see annexure.. It is proposed that capacity assessment exercise should be undertaken by Institutional Development Expert (to be engaged)
5. Systems development for selected CSOs.	In the light of capacity assessment exercise, development of systems found to be required by the selected CSOs.	The system development component is proposed to be sublet to an Institutional Development Expert (Individual or an Institution like Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy or NGORC etc)
6. Training	The training component will have two components: training on CCCD, DRM and CCDRM, and training on newly developed/improved systems.	The training component on making CSOs understand the concepts and processes of CCCD, Decentralized DRM and CCDRM is proposed to be undertaken by the relevant staff from Indus Consortium and Plan Pakistan. Whereas the training on newly developed systems, is proposed to be undertaken by the Institutional Development Expert/consultant.
7. Incorporation/adoption of newly developed systems.	Facilitate and mentor the CSOs to become conversant with the learnt concepts and developed systems.	The Indus Consortium's member organization in a particular district with its Capacity Building Unit will carry out this task in the long run.

Table 2.2 (please see the attached file) describes the steps involved in the CSO capacity building process and Fig 2.3 present a detailed plan for building their capacities and role of each stakeholder/institution in this process (Please see the attached file for the plan). Here are the details:

The CSOs in each district are divided into four categories:

1. The community based institutions
 - 1.1. Community based organizations/Village development organizations
 - 1.2. Village Disaster Management Committees
 - 1.3. Children and youth groups in each village
 - 1.4. Union council level forum/networks
 - 1.5. District level community organizations' networks
2. Atleast five CSOs selected for a comprehensive capacity building package
3. Media
 - 3.1. District Press clubs
 - 3.2. Young journalists
4. Other CSOs
 - 4.1. Merchant or traders associations
 - 4.2. Lawyers forums/bar councils
 - 4.3. Citizen clubs (like Rotary Club or Lion Club)

- 4.4. Sports Clubs
- 4.5. Doctor's associations
- 4.6. Teachers' associations
- 4.7. Farmers associations
- 4.8. Student associations
- 4.9. Labour/trade unions
- 4.10. Faith based/religious organizations
- 4.11. Youth organizations
- 4.12. Neighbourhood associations/Mohalla level groups (if they exist)

The overall goal of the this strategy is the sustainable human development in each district. Since the project has been designed to concentrate on three pillars- disaster (flood) prone communities, CSOs and Local Governments, for each pillar a sub goal has been set as:

CSOs: Informed, capacitated, resourceful, efficient and effective civil society

Communities: Disaster resilient and humanly developed (enhanced human development) communities

Local Government: Disaster and development responsive local governance