

# **ACT UBUMBANO PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION REPORT**

*The imperative of a solidarity that  
deconstructs, re-imagines and  
reconstructs*

*For the period February 2017 to  
November 2018*

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## **Executive Summary**

The manifestations of neo-liberal capitalism continues to generate inequality and poverty. Its manifestations deepens dehumanisation, in particular for women and youth and generates riches for a few in the South and in the North. Resistance to this paradigm is unfolding in the North and the South. This context provides opportunities for people to people solidarity.

Three European development agencies have joined South(ern) partners, who are NGO's, formations and movements to work together and seek new forms of solidarity. The ACT Ubumbano solidarity initiative is based on principled frameworks, for both the North and South, and a transformational and emancipatory approach. Its orientation analyses the root causes of problems, espouses a reflective and learning process, which accompanies, supports and is in solidarity with the struggles for social justice led by the poor. Gender justice, economic justice and environmental justice are the ACT Ubumbano pillars.

A key element in this process is "Solidarity Hubs" that brings together partners from the North and South to critically reflect on their practice of social justice, reflect on the global and structural drivers of injustice and emerge with new solidarity action that is rooted in the communities they seek to serve.

ACT Ubumbano is just over two years old and the evaluation views this as a foundation phase. Substantial effort has been focussed on conceptual clarity, building relationships of trust and honest constructive discussions to enable each partner to examine their practice and change in order to be more effective in their support and solidarity with the struggles of the poor. The solidarity hubs and learning events are constructive spaces and learning events to share, reflect and learn. An important result is the relationships that have been built and the foundation of a constructive and progressive culture, shaped by the values of ACT Ubumbano.

The evaluation has found that the identity of ACT Ubumbano is clear, more so to partners who share the ACT Ubumbano orientation. The documentation of this phase is sound. This critical mass of organisations form a core that has substantially shaped ACT Ubumbano. They have been consistent, value this space, learn, share and place more energy in the unfolding solidarity process.

All programmes are conceptualised and driven by partners. Process organisations are not easy to understand and much more work is needed to continue to make ACT Ubumbano understood by some partners and other stakeholders, in particular those who currently display more of a projectivized orientation. The broadening of ACT Ubumbano will be important.

This is a new initiative, taking place in a development world that has entrenched the inequality of power relations between the Northern development agencies and Southern NGO's, movements and formations. Linear funding frames are imposed especially if there is back donor funding. These frames are not suitable for a transformative and emancipatory approach and display weaknesses in eliciting the quality of processes, work and progress with regard to transformational social change.

The European partners have shown their commitment to this process, have adopted the Kopanong Principles and are individually grappling with their practice and changing.

The evaluation recommends that the European Partners formulate a similar programme in the North with a clear strategy, programme and institutional capacity to address the change that is necessary in their practice. This will provide a path that will also lead to transformational solidarity and funding and assert the principle of equality on a common journey. An important aspect for the North and the South is refining/redefining planning and learning systems that are more conducive and supportive of a transformational and emancipatory praxis. This also applies to ACT Ubumbano as documenting the conception phase was easier and an appropriate system is needed as solidarity initiatives unfold. This will contribute substantially to assert the relevance and demonstrate the qualitative aspects of NGO partners and movements that lead struggles in an increasingly repressive terrain.

Social movements who speak truth to power and challenge power for a dignified place in this world are often met with brute force. Protecting the Defender is one the four themes of ACT Ubumbano, the others are: Learning from our Practice; Connecting People Globally and Resourcing Solidarity. Protecting the Defender needs to be further conceptualised informed by a deeper understanding of repression, securitisation and expressed within the frame of a defensive strategy.

Social justice partners are operating in a situation where funding is getting less. Therefore, resourcing solidarity is important. The call to action fund has stimulated a range of collaborative solidarity initiatives. More space is needed to discuss and to develop a strategy to address this crisis.

ACT Ubumbano has convened a community organising learning event which stimulated good reflections and learnings. Strategic issues to support strengthening the practice of community organising emerged with clarity. Follow-up is important and so is documenting the progress and resonance of these learning events. Localised follow-up learning events with partners and social movements will be in closer proximity to struggles and could stimulate organic solidarity.

The gender justice pillar has taken off with a range of vibrant activities led by a partner driven task team. It has brought to the fore the centrality of gender justice. Results have been achieved, there is increased collaboration and follow-up. Documenting this will be important. The evaluation recommends that gender justice and all pillars be informed by a deeper structural and feminist analysis.

The innovative Voice App has also borne some results. It has tremendous potential for solidarity building but is not used effectively by partners and social movements who have many stories to tell.

The effectiveness of ACT Ubumbano also depends on the participation of partners and the space that NGO partner management can give to this process under increased pressurised conditions. Management practice is one area that needs attention and space needs to be created to refine practice. Partners need to include solidarity as part of work and include solidarity building in their strategic and operational planning. ACT Ubumbano needs to develop a strategy to broaden the quality and quantity of partner participation.

Faith Based Organisations comprise a substantial number of partners and many are supported by the European partners who have a Christian faith orientation. This critical mass in the transformative social justice sector has an important role to play in stimulating the prophetic voice of the church to be in solidarity with the struggles for social justice.

It is important that the process dimension to solidarity initiatives be refined. A learning event needs a preparatory phase, and documented follow-up phase. In this way Act Ubumbano can measure the resonance of its work and the qualitative impact of process work. In this regard knowledge management and generation is an important part of Act Ubumbano's work and needs to be further conceptualised and activated with adequate capacity. The scoping report on the baseline with partners provides a sound basis to build on.

This phase has laid a solid foundation and this report provides analysis, findings and recommendations that can consolidate and advance the work of ACT Ubumbano to make a more substantial contribution to building a new type of solidarity that is relevant in a changing world.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations need to be studied carefully to draw out some of the specific's that cannot go into broad recommendations. It does provide analytical material to shape moving forward, consolidating and advancing current work.

## **RECOMMENDATION 1 – IDENTITY AND BROADENING THE ACT UBUMBANO ALLIANCE**

This evaluation affirms the work done thus far with regard to conceptual clarity and emerging solidarity initiatives. It should continue to creatively and more vigorously convey/engage its identity to a range of players, to enable its orientation to increasingly be understood, supported and generate participation. ACT Ubumbano should broaden its reach of its orientation both quantitatively and qualitatively by:

- 1.1 The clip on the website is a good explanation and should be further developed and distributed.
- 1.2 A consolidated information stating, What is and why ACT Ubumbano? What is it not? Its significance in the current context? What it hopes to achieve? How it goes about achieving what it sets out to achieve? The progress made thus far. The gains from participation by NGO's, social movements and the Northern partners. The gender justice work with organic follow-up led by partners could be an example of how broadening could take place within the frame and orientation of ACT Ubumbano.
- 1.3 The scoping report provides a good basis for a force field analysis (dart-board approach), and strategy for field work to broadening the base.
- 1.4 Continued exposure and processes (not events) will be important, hearing the powerful voice of base groups, and a more base-group orientation. ACT Ubumbano events/processes need to increasingly be reflective of the voices of the poor and its proximity to struggles will be important.  
  
Few community based activists were at the launch of Ubumbano Voice and more at the community organising hub. Some suggested that the launch could have been held in a community and done more creatively due to being in close proximity to a struggle.
- 1.5 Increasing the voices of the poor expressing themselves and engaging each other and partners (like the organising learning), perhaps one or two base partners who can benefit from attending the deeply engaging and analytical Advisory Group meetings, which are deeply analytical and engaging.
- 1.6 Maintaining and developing the methodology of reflection, learning and sharing should always be part of ACT Ubumbano processes. The manner in which ACT Ubumbano actions unfold should be maintained. It is organic orientation should be strengthened as it moves from a predominantly conceptualisation phase to organic solidarity initiatives. It should start with reflection and not with actions. By reflecting, strategic issues are identified to be taken forward to enhance struggles and change/refine practice.
- 1.7 Explore local follow-up with regard to for example, community organising learning event which had the participation of both NGO partners and the formations they work with. If three or four partners who work with movements and formations, convene a process of a learning and sharing event, this could set the basis for organic solidarity among the formations and greater collaboration amongst the NGO's.

## **RECOMMENDATION 2 - THE CENTRALITY OF PARTNER PARTICIPATION AND OWNERSHIP**

### **This recommendation is linked to Recommendation 1**

Partners in their strategic and operational planning should include solidarity as an objective or sub-objective and funding partners in the North should be open to funding this as a budget line. In addition, funds can be drawn from the ACT Ubumbano solidarity funds. Ideally, if projected in strategic plans, it will give a longer term trajectory for both partners in the North and South.

ACT Ubumbano should refine its field work strategy informed by its developing baseline and unfolding processes. Consistent contact, further building relationships, communication, advancing and consolidating emerging solidarity initiatives will all be key moving forward.

Getting the message out clearly not just to management but to partner field staff and movements/formations will be important in that they are more in touch with the ground and could include this in their thinking, analysis and programme work. Therefore, getting ACT Ubumbano understood and activated as broadly as possible in a critical mass of organisations will be important.

### **RECOMMENDATION 3 - THE PILLARS**

The evaluation affirms the pillars, gender, economic, environmental justice.

All pillars should develop a framework that reflect the following:

- be rooted in sound analysis of context (root causes)
- be in alignment, is reflective of and promotes the principled frameworks, transformative approach and emancipatory praxis (see 1.3)
- should not be predominantly NGO driven
- reflects a change of practice at a number of levels NGO's, formation/movements and E3
- be organic in how it unfolds
- be situated in an appropriate emancipatory planning, documenting and learning system to measure the resonance and impact of solidarity initiatives, and to continuously generate the strategic issues for consolidating and advancing work.

### **RECOMMENDATION 4 – FAITH BASED ORGANISATIONS**

ACT has a critical mass of FBO's organisations and a broader network of other FBO's that it can draw in. The FBO's have the potential to clearly cut through the neo-liberal context, analyse the church sectors response (see 4.5) and provide a clear analysis that shows the imperative of social justice that is transformative and emancipatory. The entry point of gender justice and the work done with FBO can also provide entry points.

That this process be informed by a root cause/structural analysis and is within the frame of ACT Ubumbano's transformative and emancipatory approach.

That this space should provide guidance with regard to the prophetic voice of the church and the option to stand in solidarity with the poor in a manner that reflects a transformative and emancipatory orientation.

The following questions arising from the analysis (see 4.5) are important for the FBO's:

- Was/Is "critical solidarity" with the neo-liberal paradigm a weak strategic choice?  
What was the justification for critical solidarity within the frame of the neo-liberal paradigm and all its manifestations? What lessons can be drawn?
- To what extent has this "critical solidarity" generally demobilised the social justice dimension in the church?
- If the positioning was clearly anti-neoliberal to what extent could the church have been prophetic and confronted and organised against neo-liberalism and its manifestations?
- Given the current context how should the churches position itself?
- What role can the FBO's play in formulating a transformative response that can give clarity to the prophetic voice?
- Is there a critical mass that can be activated and what are the key elements that can frame a strategy?

## **RECOMMENDATION 5 - ONGOING KNOWLEDGE GENERATION**

The ACT Ubumbano has a good baseline from the scoping study; however baseline is not static<sup>1</sup>. ACT Ubumbano should view this as an ongoing area of work and should explore the tool of Participatory Action Research. Future areas that could be covered with regard to baseline, further scoping and knowledge generation:

- ✓ Reflect a more root cause analysis of the country situations and partner understanding/analysis of the problems/issues that they work on;
- ✓ Reflect the extent of partner alignment to the orientation of ACT Ubumbano;
- ✓ Show how partners understand solidarity and the solidarity initiatives they are currently involved in, including those outside of ACT Ubumbano;
- ✓ Reflect the resonance and impact of ACT Ubumbano with regard to solidarity initiatives, eg. what happened after your story was on the app? What resonance did the community organising learning event have?
- ✓ Increase its competence to demonstrate the quality of social justice work and process work within the transformation and emancipatory paradigm.

It should address this by conceptualising and develop a system of Emancipatory Planning and Learning in ACT Ubumbano and support partners to enable more effective reflection of the qualitative dimension to social change;

- ✓ Generate knowledge development and production on solidarity and an emancipatory praxis;
- ✓ Generate knowledge and qualitative information analysis, eliciting strategic issues that need to be taken to the Advisory Group, fed into programme activity, shaping organic activities and generally consolidating and advancing the ACT Ubumbano solidarity orientation and initiative;
- ✓ Trace progress of strategic issues identified and activated both in the North and South.

This is a critical aspect of generating knowledge that will assert the centrality of the transformative and emancipatory frame of this initiative and could provide valuable material for the strategy to “claw back from transformational funding towards transformative funding” in the North.

This recommendation needs further conceptualisation and capacity will be needed to activate this as the current staff cannot carry out this area of work.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Baseline is against or towards, a pole, a vision, a concept or strategic objectives. These poles are not static but dynamic and changing both in evolving of vision, concepts (including ideology) and strategy around for example, agrarian transformation in a complex operational environment. For example, the critical mass of cadre can grow in their conceptual understanding of the context, conditions and deepen their analysis of their problems, develop confidence, develop various technical/organising/political skills, begin a programme of action that addresses various problems, constraints, challenges and drives the initiative towards addressing the objectives of their programmes which can lead towards alliance building. The variables of process and complexities make this analysis especially if practiced in action/learning mode dynamic and powerful, and it sharpens strategic competence (ability to manage and even turn internal and external challenges into opportunities to advance struggles).

## **RECOMMENDATION 6 – PRACTICE - ADDRESSING THE PRESSURE ON MANAGEMENT IN NGO'S**

Directors and managers are busy and it is necessary to find ways of managing and/or refining organisations for increased sustainability and resilience.

Management are part of the advisory group, participate in many of the processes of ACT Ubumbano and they are critical with regard to the strengthening of this sector under increasing difficult conditions

ACT Ubumbano should create the space for management to reflect, learn and share practice with the purpose of refining management practice in an increasingly difficult environment for NGO's

This should result in;

- The refining of management practice in the current context;
- Supporting organisational change and renewal in some instances;
- A strategy to deal with the funding crisis, defining ACT Ubumbanos role in this strategy and developing funding stability.
- The growing alignment with and involvement in Act Ubumbano and viewed as part of NGO work;
- Building organisational cultures that are reflective of transformation and emancipation.
- In some instances, it may be useful to look at conflict sensitivity, addressing latent conflict, and conflict transformation.

## **RECOMMENDATION 7 - PRACTICE - COMMUNITY ORGANISING**

The Community organising learning event raised a number of critical issues that activists identified that need to be addressed with regard to refining organising practice. Follow-up is important.

This follow-up could take the form of localised learning events that could be an ongoing space in closer proximity to struggles and has the potential to generate peer solidarity.

Some of the complexities with regard to strengthening organising have been raised in hub processes including the learning event<sup>2</sup>. These could form a set of strategic analysis areas/questions and at some point to reflect on progress with regard to these issues. This will also assist to measure change in this important sector of Act Ubumbano. These include :

- single issue organising;
- lack of alliances;
- the need for a more structural analysis
- the difficulties in translating protests into sustained struggle;
- male dominant leaders with the mass being the face of woman;
- the importance of strategy and tactics when engaging and confronting power or wanting to take power at local level;
- autocratic and centralised leadership versus more egalitarian structures;
- advancing on a number victories and gains in a resilient and more pro-active manner;
- some NGO's in their practice creating dependency and demobilising agency, like some who say they amplify the voice of the poor as if the poor do not have their own voice.
- some movements are very under resourced as compared to NGO's.
- contending with repression and the need for a defensive strategy<sup>3</sup>
- Reviewing and refining the practice of movements and formations

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<sup>2</sup> See Report, Act Alliance, Ubumbano Learning Event, community organising, solidarity in action, December 2017

<sup>3</sup> This has emerged from the evaluation process and goes beyond Protecting the Defender

These issues and emerging issues need to be addressed if there is to be expanding resilient, effective social movements with increased allied social weight to challenge power and work towards effective transformative change. This will be an important space for reflection going forward and contribute to a stronger voice of the organised poor.

ACT Ubumbano and partners like for example in the Gender justice pillar should formulate a set of strategic analysis questions and areas.

### **RECOMMENDATION 8 – STRATEGY AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE KOPANONG PRINCIPLES**

That ACT UBUMBANO formulates a concept, strategy and institutional capacity to enable the E3 partners to more effectively address the Kopanong principles and develop a vigorous programme of conceptualisation, solidarity hub development, and action, informed by the issues raised in this report.

That it draws from ACT Ubumbano partners in the South for guidance and support.

That it embarks on a strategic study to look at the context, how the E3 are changing towards the ACT solidarity orientation, constraints, possibilities, potential, risks, opportunities, allies, etc and key elements that can inform a strategy.

This study should have a strong element of terrain analysis to assist identify various supportive factors/organisations/people, to inform strategy. That in conducting this study which should cover the three E3 countries, there should also be engagement with base organisations involved in struggles and their possible alignment to the ACT Ubumbano solidarity orientation. It should reflect elements of Participatory Action Research.

The team should comprise “expertise” which should include partners from the North and South and be done in a participatory and innovative manner that in many ways does some of the groundwork.

It should lead to a strategy.

If this recommendation is accepted, there should be one advisory group and the evaluation suggests that the overall co-ordinator be based in the South.

### **RECOMMENDATION 9 - A PROACTIVE RESPONSE TO REPRESSION – MOVING BEYOND PROTECTING THE DEFENDERS?**

That ACT Ubumbano creates the space together with partners, E3 and social movements to conceptualise and activate as part of its programme a defensive strategy<sup>4</sup>

It draws from the experience of movements who have borne the brunt of repression and the manner in which they organise in defence of their struggles.

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<sup>4</sup> A defensive strategy is not passive, it is understanding the terrain of struggle and various actors and forces that can repress that struggle. It involves pre-empting how those forces can react and preparing for it. Eg. Legal support, the community being the ears and eyes of leadership (intelligence), exposing publicity in the North and South, alliance building, counter-intelligence, turning responses of the dominant class into opportunities, solidarity activation on different fronts – opening space and taking opportunity from repression and thus refining evolving tactics (it is ultimately a contestation with power) etc

## ACRONYMS

BfdW	Brot für die Welt
BRICS	Brazil Russia India China South Africa
CA	Christian Aid
CBO's	Community Based Organisations
CLP	Church land Programme
CoS	Church of Sweden
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreements
ESAP	Zimbabwe's Economic and Structural Adjustment Program
E3	European Partners , Brot für die Welt, Christian Aid and Church of Sweden
ELCSA	Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa
FBO's	Faith Based Organisations
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
ICCO	Inter Church Organisation for Development Cooperation
MDG's	Millennium Development Goals
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD/DAC	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's ( <i>OECD</i> ) Development Assistance Committee ( <i>DAC</i> )
PACSA	Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Awareness
PME	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SDG's	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
SANERELA	South Africa Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS
WWSOSA	We will Speak Out South Africa
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Trade Union Congress
ZELA	Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association
ZIMCODD	Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development

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## **1. BACKGROUND AND INFORMATION**

### **1.1 Background**

ACT Alliance is a global coalition of 146 churches and church related organisations working together in over 100 countries to create positive and substantial change in the lives of the poor and marginalised people. The network is supported by a global secretariat.

In response to changing global conditions, and to effectively amplify the impact of their work, three European development agencies who are part of the ACT Alliance are joined with 30 South(ern) African partners to explore new ways of working and seek new forms of solidarity. The European development agencies are Christian Aid, Brot fur die Welt, and Church of Sweden, and are referred to as the E3.

The partners in the South are mainly from South Africa and a few from Zimbabwe with some contact in Swaziland and Mozambique. These include partners in the South who are not funded by the E3 and increasingly, grassroots formations/social movements who have been part of ACT Ubumbano processes and see themselves as part of this solidarity initiative.

This network is predominantly South African and develops organic alliances with like-minded partners in Southern Africa. As such it is not a "regional project or a continental project". The path as to whether it develops into a regional initiative will be shaped as the process unfolds<sup>5</sup>.

A key element in this process is the centrality of 'Solidarity Hubs' that bring together European and South(ern) African organisations and churches, movements and allies from other parts of the world, to critically reflect on their practice of social justice, reflect on global and structural drivers of injustice, and emerge with new solidarity action that is rooted in the communities they seek to serve.

The process started in 2015/2016, two significant processes took place that set the basis for this initiative. In October 2016, Southern partners agreed on principles for participation as outlined below in (1.3.1).

In March 2017, Northern partners formulated the Kopanong principles, as outlined in (1.3.1), agreed to host and fund the initiative.

### **1.2 ACT Ubumbano Pillars and Themes**

ACT Ubumbano is a new project, just over two years old. Substantial time was spent in reaching conceptual clarity and frameworks to guide the process of solidarity building.

#### ***ACT Ubumbano has the following pillars:***

- Gender Justice
- Economic Justice
- Environmental Justice

#### ***ACT Ubumbano has the following themes:***

- *Promoting Community Voice and Action*

Being in solidarity with struggles of the poor is central to the orientation of ACT UBUMBANO. Supporting community struggles and contributing to communities strengthening their struggles and voice is central to fundamental social change. In this regard the solidarity hubs and learning events have been

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<sup>5</sup> From discussion on feedback from the draft report with ACT Ubumbano staff.

important spaces for sharing, analysis, reflection and learning. There is an app Ubumbano Voice which seeks to give voice to community struggles.

- *Learning from our Practice*

Both in the North and the South, Funding/Solidarity partners, NGO's, CBO's, FBO's and social movements need to examine and critically reflect, change/refine their practice so that movements and struggles are strengthened and experience a broadening of solidarity. This has been a subject of some deep discussions in ACT Ubumbano solidarity hubs and learning events, like the community organising event.

- *Protecting the Defenders*

This theme emerged from the solidarity hub and learning events and illustrates the bottom up process of addressing a critical issue.

Repression intensifies as power feels threatened and many activists are losing their lives, especially in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Many more live in fear and therefore this is highly relevant as a key focus area of solidarity.

- *Connecting People Globally*

There is currently a global connection with the E3 and partners both at bilateral and ACT Ubumbano levels.

There is a global system with massive resources, institution, capacity and skills both to continue with its ideological and repressive control. Alliances at all levels become important. Exposures, including the solidarity exposure to Zimbabwe, in the run-up to 2018 elections and building linkages with struggles in Brazil are some of the activities in building solidarity connections.

- *Resourcing Solidarity*

ACT UBUMBANO is not premised on funding efficiency with partners in the South and the E3. It is premised on redefining solidarity and the possibilities of more emancipatory funding models. Central to this process has been substantial effort by staff to build relationships and creating the conditions conducive to enable partners in the North and South to trust the process and develop constructive spaces for discussion. E3 and Southern partners discuss funding conditions and in particular addressing the power imbalance (see Kopanong principles in 1.3.2). Collaborative programmes and funding, and a solidarity fund, named call to action, are some of the activities.

The activities of the change process are outlined in the timeline in 1.3.4.

### **1.3 Principled Frameworks, a Transformative Approach and an Emancipatory Praxis**

Two important frames were developed very early in the process for both the South(ern) African and European Partners to guide the process. In addition to the evaluation questions, these are important frames for the evaluation. These frames were useful in the design of the evaluation process and in drawing out the strategic issues going forward.

#### ***1.3.1 Principles defined by South(ern) African organisations to guide the Process – October 2016***

<sup>6</sup>In the course of consultation and consensus building, Southern African organisations met in October 2016 and established principles to guide the process:

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<sup>6</sup> The following are parts of document compiled by Ashley-Green Thompson, from different documents in the ACT Change process and captures the core motivations for embarking on this journey

1. Any new arrangement should be built on international solidarity as the primary basis. Other considerations such as changed dynamics in European funding realities should be secondary.
2. Don't make European crises African ones and expect local partners to be responsible for finding solutions. The corollary is that the crisis in Europe must not take away from the historical duty of solidarity owed to the people of Africa.
3. However, the struggle to assert our humanity is global, and there should be solidarity arrangements that work in both directions.
4. African civil society organisations don't want to lose the individual relationships of solidarity they have built over time with <sup>7</sup>E8 partners and their constituencies in the north. This applies even in situations where there is no longer a funding arrangement.
5. We must apply the principle of the common good to challenge the rise in self-interest in European aid policy. Africans need to challenge the econometric analysis by European partners that informs the shift away from programmes in places that have middle income country status.
6. To build greater trust, there must be transparency in what our different interests in this pilot process are.
7. Any new agenda / model for collaboration that is developed must be defined together with local partners. Ownership by local actors is key. In this, Africans must have space to find the areas they want to work together on – this must not be abrogated to European partners.
8. Collaboration models should not result in lowest common denominator approaches where agreement among multiple partners is gained at the expense of innovation and risk. The need for a diversity of approaches to change remains for any new agenda / entity, including commitment to support very specific and issue based initiatives.
9. Whatever is decided must not result in competition for resources between different communities of poor people globally.
10. The European partners should take ownership of the funding aspects on a new entity / model. The aspects relating to convening of platforms must not be about Europeans making space for locals but must rather be led by Africans. They must be the basis for learning and discerning and generating local knowledge. Furthermore, they must be a space for learning from the struggles of other global south realities, and where European partners can take away for their struggles in their home countries.
11. Mutual respect, particularly for African customs and cultures and identity, to shape the model that takes us forward.
12. A feature of the model is dialogue – it is informed as we go along. It is developed in dialogue. We develop the path by walking it together.

### ***1.3.2 The Kopanong Principles of the European Partners – March 2017***

The European partners met in March 2017 and made the following commitments [edited at the end of 2017 to align with the passage of time], called the Kopanong Principles:

- A. We commit to promote a strategic and transformative relationship with Southern African partners, which go beyond transactional funding.
- B. We build our future partnership on solidarity, with a strong commitment to change the power dynamics and being more accountable to partners.
- C. Our new model will be jointly owned, but driven by southern partners, and we do not subscribe to the top-down models driven by many INGOs.

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<sup>7</sup> A broader group of protestant partners in Europe, five are not part of this initiative and are probably not present in South Africa, with the exception of NCA. NCA withdrew from the process.

- D. Our new model has a regional advocacy focus and include both South African and Southern African partners with a regional focus and/or national programmes that links to regional priorities.
- E. We engage in strategic partnerships with both ACT Alliance members and faith-based organisations, but also organisations, networks and movements without a direct affiliation to the church.
- F. Whatever model – we strongly commit to instate a local independent advisory committee consisting of national and regional partners.
- G. 2018 is considered an interim transition arrangement. In early 2018 we will agree a transition timeline to define clear decision-making moments towards agreeing the model for 2019.
- H. During early 2018 we intend to formalize an interim governance structure for the 2018 interim phase with the advisory board, and at a later moment revisit the governance for 2019. Either case will consist of a combination of E3 partners and Southern African members.
- I. We commit to sustain funding levels during change process (2017-2018)
- J. We commit to secure funding for the change manager and change process (2017-2018)

### ***1.3.3 A transformative approach and an emancipatory praxis***

The review of ACT Ubumbano, its conceptualisation, orientation and programmes is also assessed within the transformative and emancipatory praxis frame. The evaluation questions are shaped by the identity, orientation of ACT Ubumbano and how it expresses its identity through its programmes.

#### ***A transformative approach***

Throughout the unfolding process of ACT Ubumbano, there is a critique of neo-liberal capitalism and the critical importance of the poor and marginalised organising and mobilising for transformative change. This critique of neo-liberal capitalist globalisation and espousing an emancipatory praxis, comes through clearly in the ACT Ubumbano report – Inequality and the struggle for humanity in Southern Africa, documenting a process of solidarity<sup>8</sup>.

A transformative approach/analysis gets to the root causes of problems and proposes solutions that effect structural changes and thus contribute to a re-ordering of society that will impact positively on social justice, gender justice and peace, and significantly improve the quality of the lives of the poor and marginalised, in particular women, youth and their environment.

#### ***An emancipatory praxis***

The participating NGO and E3 partners are in support of and in solidarity with struggles. Many of the key participants have an approach of accompanying struggles through a praxis that is emancipatory.

Praxis is central to any initiative that espouses the centrality of people's voice. An emancipatory praxis does not substitute, create dependence and treat the oppressed as subjects for project delivery. Emancipatory praxis for NGO's is a reflective learning process which attempts to accompany, support and be in solidarity with the struggles of the poor and marginalized/working class.

The concept praxis dates back to Plato, Aristotle and was further developed by amongst others, Marx and Gramsci. Paulo Freire's definition of praxis in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, is most appropriate "reflection and action directed at the structures to be transformed." And states further "Through praxis, oppressed

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<sup>8</sup> Note: There is a particularly strong critique of capitalism on page 18 and 19 of this report. (2017) Act Ubumbano, Inequality and the Struggle for humanity in South Africa, documenting a process of solidarity.

people can acquire a critical awareness (consciousness/conscientisation (writers note)) of their own condition, and, with their allies, struggle for liberation.” It is often referred to action/reflection or action/learning or see judge act as a continuous process as the journey of struggle and social justice unfolds. The see-judge-act methodology has been adopted as one of the methodologies in ACT Ubumbano processes.

### ***ACT Ubumbano and the SDG’s***

One of E3 partners sees the SDG’s as central to its work and this is acknowledged. In feedback on the draft evaluation report, there were several suggestions to include the SDG analysis. The evaluation has not come across this as a central part of the overall ACT Ubumbano analysis, orientation and identity.

The ACT Ubumbano gender justice concept note<sup>9</sup>, reflects SDG’s as part of the gender justice work. This report analyses the gender justice within the root cause/transformational frame (see 1.3.3). This analysis is repeated under the section on effectiveness (see 6.5). Whilst SDG’s are important milestones for measurement of human development progress and frames for proposals and funding, SDG’s like the MDG’s do not look at the root causes<sup>10</sup> and suggest a transformational path to eradicate, for example poverty and equality<sup>11</sup>.

The full realization of human rights and social justice requires a massive roll-back of international and intra-national inequalities, which the SDGs fail to demand. A power analysis is necessary. Therefore, the evaluation has found that given the transformational orientation of ACT Ubumbano, SDG’s does seem to be part of ACT Ubumbano’s overall analysis.

This does not mean the SDG’s are not to be engaged or referred to. It does provide tactical space to engage and challenge power. However it remains a tactic and not a strategy with regard to a social justice orientation that is transformational.

### **1.3.4 Timeline of ACT Alliance Change Process – August 2016 - October 2018**

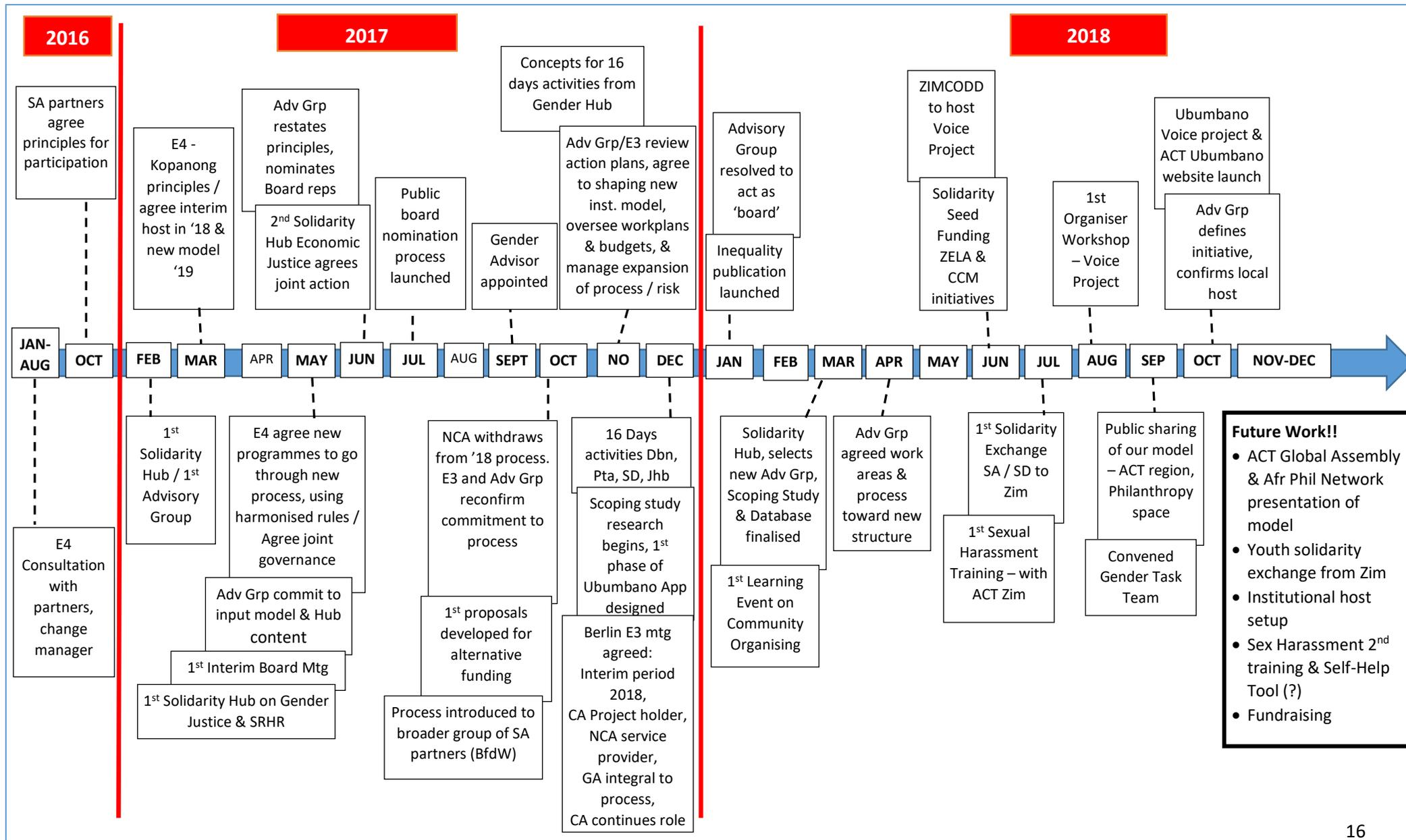
The time-line below provides a useful unfolding summary of processes and activities over the two year period.

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<sup>9</sup> ACT Ubumbano, South and Southern Africa, Gender and SRHR Concept

<sup>10</sup> Ranjani K.Murthy, 2018, CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING ON SDG FROM A GENDER LENS, Women 2030, Ekta and HRF Reflecting on targets and indicators of SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls

<sup>11</sup> See: A Critique of the Sustainable Development Goals’ Potential to Realize the Human Rights of All: Why being better than the MDGs is not good enough. [https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/campuspress.yale.edu/dist/6/1129/files/2015/10/SDG-HR\\_Rev-Jan-25-uugh97.pdf](https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/campuspress.yale.edu/dist/6/1129/files/2015/10/SDG-HR_Rev-Jan-25-uugh97.pdf)



## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

- ***The review has two core objectives:***
  - ✓ Assess the progress made in the multi-stakeholder process of setting up a new joint solidarity initiative, and
  - ✓ Assess the extent to which that initiative is developing new ways of collaboration, reflection and innovation in the field of social justice in South and Southern Africa
  
- ***Additional secondary objectives are to:***
  - ✓ Produce a mapping of the ways the initiative has contributed to increasing the voice of silenced communities
  - ✓ Assess the relevance of the tools / instruments / inputs developed for the project e.g. Solidarity Hub, learning exchange approach, community voice, etc
  - ✓ Provide actionable recommendations on how to entrench the model, increase participation, strengthen or institutionalise the space for reflection, and enhance the objectives of the initiative

### 2.1 Evaluation/Review Questions

Has the 'Joint Solidarity' process added value as a way of working and collaborating since the inaugural Solidarity Hub of March 2017?

- How successful has the process been in improving collaboration between the northern and southern partners and among the northern partners?
- What replicable, relevant examples in designing innovative ways of collaboration and development work are emerging from the process?
- What additional value has the process and emerging Solidarity Hub yielded for participating southern CSOs and the European Agencies compared to the usual individual bilateral programmes of the European Agencies?

Has the 'Joint Solidarity' process led to emerging civil society collaboration, community involvement and increasing community voice?

- What are the successes and challenges in terms of involving communities and improving civil society exchange and collaboration?
- Looking forward: What are the main challenges and opportunities of the projects and the recommendations for the next phase?

## 3. METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation examines the progress made, challenges encountered as framed by the evaluation questions and with regard to the reasons for embarking on this process. The evaluation is also informed by point 1.3, Principled Frameworks, a Transformative Approach and an Emancipatory Praxis.

This process was also a space for deeper analysis, reflection and learning, drawing out strategic issues that can impact on the increased relevance and effectiveness of ACT Ubumbano.

The methods employed in the evaluation attempted not to contradict the praxis of ACT Ubumbano. For example, the methodology employed in ACT processes is participatory, stimulating a deeper reflection and analysis. The focus discussion methodology of the evaluation with an independent reflector was in line with ACT Ubumbano methodology.

This report as compared to a "project evaluation" is more analytical attempting to provide informed analysis, findings and recommendations in the context of complex environments, terrains and variables. It has attempted to be honest and open with back-up within the scope of the evaluation objectives, questions and frames (see 1.3). In addition, to findings and analysis, the report will raise issues and questions that in the view of the evaluation is of importance with regard to the areas covered in the evaluation.

### **3.1 The methodology had the following steps:**

A comprehensive desktop analysis of over 45 documents and a range of appropriate reading, see Appendix 1

Orientation meetings with staff, see Appendix 2.

Instrument design, See Appendix 3

Focus discussions with staff guided by an instrument

Convened three Focus Group Discussions with partners in Harare, Zimbabwe; and in Johannesburg and Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. The focus group discussions used independent reflectors from outside the ACT Ubumbano network to share their reflections, See Appendix 2

Discussions with Advisory Group Members, See Appendix 2

Discussion with E 3 partners – Officers, Appendix 2

Discussion with the working group – Appendix 2

Discussion with both staff together – Appendix 2

Further telephonic discussions with staff

Interviews with three facilitators of ACT hubs and learning events and one person in the philanthropy sector – Appendix 2

Further interviews with two activists

An initial thoughts document of nine pages was submitted to the Change Manager and was used as a basis for a follow-up discussion.

Draft Report

Feedback from ACT Ubumbano working group and staff

Discussion with staff to go through the comments from Working Group and staff

### **3.2 Analysis and Critical Review of Methodology**

All discussions were engaging and analytical, raising a number of issues reflected in this report.

- All participants were free to express themselves.
- The level of participation in the focus group discussions was good with vibrant analytical discussions on the context, the orientation and programme of ACT Ubumbano. The independent reflectors added additional insights and strengthened the participatory methodology.
- The KZN focus discussion was vibrant, a few apologies were received. There was good discussion with CLP, PACSA, UKZN. The reflector who was the Programme Manager at AFRA, is an experienced activist and former organiser and provided good insights. The focus

discussion was kindly hosted by CLP. A discussion was held with the WWSOSA Director (also an advisory group member) after the focus group discussion.

- The Gauteng focus group discussion a vibrant discussion with ILRIG, INERELA, BENCHMARKS FOUNDATION, CAOSA, two community activists from formation/movements (one being part of the Ubumbano Voice,) Workers World Media Production, and two programme officers from Afrikagrupperna. The independent reflector was from Afrikagrupperna. These reflections were also informed by Afrikagrupperna's North South solidarity thinking. The focus discussion was kindly hosted at the Afrikagrupperna's regional office.
- The Zimbabwe focus group discussion was kindly hosted at ZELA and had two participants. One participant from ZIMCODD who has not been centrally involved in Act Ubumbano, as compared to the Director (who was on leave) and the Officer involved in Ubumbano Voice, neither was ZELA present.

One activist from Bubi travelled to the focus group discussion and was part of the Community Organising learning event and Ubumbano Voice. We had a short useful discussion due to time constraints. One understands that this was a busy period. It was unfortunate that those who are centrally involved in this initiative from Zimbabwe did not participate, despite early arrangements being made and confirmations provided. It is also not an efficient use of resources expended on travel. It was difficult to get a skype follow-up due to the rush at the end of the year.

- The evaluation took place during the last quarter of the year which is a busy period for staff, the facilitator and participating partners. The evaluation is thankful and appreciative of the deep level of open discussions. More time was needed especially for the draft report and a few (two/three) follow-up discussions before the completion of the draft report. This was difficult as some of the possible informants were on leave. The evaluation did hold five follow-up discussions with informants in the post draft stage.
- Feedback on the draft was comprehensive and engaging. However, the feedback was from staff and the E3. Due to time constraints and the Christmas closure it was decided that it may not be useful to circulate the draft to the broader advisory group. This is a gap.
- The final report, given the complexity of this initiative and the need for a coherent flow, took much more time to complete.

An evaluation in a process orientated initiative can make firm recommendations but also raise questions.

Despite the limitations, the sound documentation of ACT Ubumbano and the deep analytical discussions with all informants, has provided for the eliciting of sound analysis, findings and recommendations. It provides important material for the next phase of ACT Ubumbano.

## **4. CONTEXT, TERRAIN ANALYSIS AND THE RELEVANCE OF ACT UBUMBANO**

### **4.1 Introduction**

A global solidarity initiative for social justice like ACT Ubumbano, with a transformative approach and an emancipatory praxis is situated in complex contexts and terrains. It is important to reflect a short analysis of these contexts and terrains informed by and emerging from the evaluation process.

This section tries to summarise the global, some regional and continental. However, it strongly leans towards a South African contextual analysis. As referred to in (1.1), ACT Ubumbano is a predominantly South African initiative with emerging linkages with partners in the region. It is not a regional initiative. A regional initiative should reflect a regional composition.

**In this section the analysis covers:**

4.2 The broader context

4.3 Zimbabwe

4.4 The context of increased marginalisation and oppression of woman

4.5 The rise of the right, social conservatism and the positioning of the Church

4.6 The context of social movements, terrain of organising and formations fighting for social justice

4.7 The NGO partner context

4.8 The context in Europe

4.9 The context of the E3 partners

The reason for addressing these areas is that besides relevance, each context impacts on the current and future relevance and effectiveness of the work of Act Ubumbano, the NGO partners, the community partners/formations/social movements and the E3. This context analysis also raises challenges, opportunities and strategic issues.

**4.2 The Broader Context**

Over 30 years of neo-liberal globalisation has resulted in some of the following:

- gross and entrenched structural inequality and poverty<sup>12</sup>, more so for women and youth;
- massive wealth accumulation of a few;
- entrenched patriarchy and marginalisation of women and youth;
- growing securitisation<sup>13</sup> and repression;
- conflict and war;
- trade wars;
- a restructuring of labour reflecting the increased vulnerability and precarious nature of work; in particular for woman and youth;
- the entrenchment of the dirty energy and extractive path; and
- environmental degradation and a climate change crisis.

These manifestations are apparent to varying degrees both in the North and the South.

Globalisation is backed and supported by a powerful and well-resourced ideological and repressive machinery. This includes political, religious, education, military, industrial, cultural and financial institutions (including the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organisation, international banks and finance institutions amongst others) and the G8 states.

The rise of BRICS to challenge the economic dominance provided an opportunity to change power relations. This could have been possible if BRICS was constituted by governments that espouse

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<sup>12</sup> Oxfam (2019), Public Good Or Private Wealth, Oxfam briefing paper, January 2019, [www.oxfam.org](http://www.oxfam.org).

<sup>13</sup> See, Right 2Know, some of the areas of focus are transparency and constitutional rights; the conduct of security structures, particularly around surveillance and conduct of police around the policing of protests.

alternatives to neo-liberalism. They do not. They all espouse a neo-liberal economic policy and have not fundamentally changed power relations<sup>14</sup>. BRICS nations are now in competition with the dominant developed countries for Africa's resources<sup>15</sup>.

On the continent, concerns have been raised that the AfCTFA (Africa Continental Free Trade Area) could also re-enforce the dominance of stronger economies like South Africa, Egypt and Nigeria and pave the way for more BRICS intervention<sup>16</sup>. The situation looks grave in the context of the complexities of various bilateral trade agreements, manifestations of neo-liberalism like the restructuring of the poor and marginalised/working class and the resultant weakening of the union movement on the continent.

In the Southern African region there has generally been an elite transition led by former liberation movements reflecting many of the manifestations of neo-liberalism (see 4.2).

In the post Cotonou process the EU is demanding unfettered access to natural resources<sup>17</sup> (SEATINI 2017). Bilateral agreements, EPA's, the post Cotonou processes have given space for the dominant economies to further entrench the trade imbalance on the continent and the SADC region<sup>18</sup>. In 2009 Zimbabwe signed the IEPA(Interim Economic Partnership Agreement). Six countries in Southern Africa have signed the final comprehensive EPA<sup>19</sup>. Many of solidarity partners in the North were involved in solidarity work together with Southern partners campaigning against the EPA's with very little success.

### 4.3 Zimbabwe

Act Ubumbano has two partners who have been an integral part of ACT Ubumbano, ZIMCODD and ZELA. These partners are well established NGO's with strong relationships with base groups/formation in the field of social justice, economic justice, gender justice and environmental justice and have been part of solidarity initiatives facilitated by ACT Ubumbano.

In 1993 Zimbabwe adopted as policy the IMF/World bank inspired Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). As with many other countries in Africa and in the South, the adoption of neo-liberal economic policies impacted negatively on the poor, hastened the elite transition in Zimbabwe, deepened poverty and inequality, broadened the gap between the rich and the poor and re-enforced structural economic problems that continue to hinder the development of the country. The economy is one of the most informal on the continent<sup>20</sup>.

Ever since ESAP Zimbabwe has been in a spiralling economic, political and social crisis which is well documented and so are the alternatives to neo-liberalism<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Vijay Prashad (2013), *Neo-Liberalism with Southern Characteristics, The Rise of BRICS*, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, New York.

<sup>15</sup> BRICS: An Anti- capitalist Critique, November 3, 2015. by Ana Garcia (Editor), Patrick Bond (Editor)

<sup>16</sup> See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMikUjPSHYM>, Global Development and AFCFTA by Jane Nalunga of SEATINI Uganda, a good summary of some key points regarding the complexities of the myriad of trade agreements and institutions.

<sup>17</sup> According to Admire Mutizwa, SEATINI Zimbabwe and trade expert, who attended the ACP meeting in Ghana (2017).

<sup>18</sup> The tragedy of EPA's in Eastern and Southern Africa: Signing away people's livelihoods, An ANSA analytical paper, September 2009.

<sup>19</sup> 2018, The countries being, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland.

<sup>20</sup> According to The Labour Force Survey of 2014, ZIMSTAT, There are 6. 27 million people with some form of employment in Zimbabwe, 94.5% of them are in the Informal Sector.

<sup>21</sup> Editors, Godfrey Kanyenze, Timothy Kondo, Prosper Chitambara and Jos Martins (2011), *Beyond the Enclave. Towards a pro-poor and Inclusive Development Strategy for Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press in association with Alternatives to Neo-liberalism in Southern Africa, Labour and Economic Development Research Institute, Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions.

The crisis in Zimbabwe has severely damaged the agricultural and manufacturing industry. South African companies continue to export large quantities of goods to Zimbabwe. As a solidarity partner during the liberation struggle, South Africa has not focussed on supporting the revival of primary, secondary and tertiary productive sectors. Rather together with its BRICS partners and the local elite it has substantially turned Zimbabwe into a "supermarket shelf for their products". All this has been exacerbated by the predictable spiralling liquidity/financial crisis. The main form of currency trade is outside the banking system and on the parallel market.

The military coup in the ruling party was a sign of short-lived relief, celebration and hope. President Mnangagwa has said the economy is open for business! This mantra will not necessarily revive the productive sectors and the type of investment could continue to re-enforce structural economic problems, including poverty and inequality. The short lived hope has been shattered by the post-election violence and massive repression, including horrific rape of women by the military. The recent mass action in response to the 150% fuel price increase and poverty, has been met with brutal repression. The space for freedom of expression, the space for women's place in a struggle for justice is severely curtailed.

Zimbabwe needs a democratic, transparent and accountable system of governance that drives sustainable economic growth. This should lead to a revival of the agricultural and manufacturing sectors in a manner that builds the economic independence, strength and growth of the Zimbabwean economy. It should create employment and development opportunities for the poor in both the urban and rural areas. Zimbabwe is certainly not short of resources including huge deposits of minerals which are being exploited by the elite and foreign companies. Therefore, its trade policy navigating the complex world of multiple trade agreements is absolutely critical. In order for government to be held to account, the voice of the organised marginalised and poor need to be heard more cohesively in voicing their concerns, demands and rights. In this regard emerging Coalitions have an important role to play.

Hope lies with and is reflected in a number of formations in the rural and urban setting organising themselves for survival, development and growth from the bottom-up. These formations include trade unions, trader organisations, formations in the extractives, youth, women, agrarian, cultural and civics/resident's associations. It is the manifestations of the context that provide the issues on which the poor, in particular woman and youth, can organise and mobilise themselves for a better life. These areas of struggle will face an uphill battle in an increased repressive context. Continued solidarity is vital.

#### **4.4 The Context of Increased Marginalisation and Oppression of Women.**

Gender justice is one of the key pillars of ACT Ubumbano and intersects with all other pillars and work of Act Ubumbano.

Women carry the burden as a result of the neo-liberal project. Women:

- are often in the frontline of the struggles for social justice but not always in their rightful place as leaders of organisations, formations and movements;
  - carry the burden generated by the predatory, extractive and the dirty energy nature and mode of capital;
  - provide free labour to maintain a violent extractive system and are pushed to the margins of society;
-

- are increasingly subject to vulnerable, dangerous and precarious work, erosion of SRHR, bear the primary and secondary impact of HIV;
- are subject to increased GBV, are the primary and secondary victims and survivors in conflict situations and organised violence and torture, increased rape, sexual crimes, hate crimes and sexual exploitation;
- bear the brunt of the consequences of commodification of basic and essential services; and
- bear the brunt of dehumanisation and increased erosion of women's human rights and dignity.

Capitalist globalisation and its manifestations as stated above (4.2) and the cyclical re-enforcement of patriarchy expands the band of pressure and oppression of woman who continue to boldly be mother/parent, farmer, worker, organiser and carer.

#### **4.5 The Rise of the Right, Social Conservatism and the Positioning of the Church**

ACT Ubumbano and the broader ACT alliance has a significant number of partners who are FBO's. They have played a critical role in solidarity in the struggle for liberation and continue to be involved in development and social justice issues. The solidarity partners in Europe, including the E3, followed and in many ways were directed by the struggles on the ground during the struggle for national liberation.

A worrying trend has been the rise of the right in for example, Europe (the Swedish elections being the latest), the United States, Brazil and India and the role religion plays in social conservatism. Social conservatism and retrogressive culture is on the rise and reflected in growing racism, right-wing religious fundamentalism, xenophobia, homophobia, GBV and misogyny.

Of deep concern is the rise of identity politics<sup>22</sup>, particularly in South Africa. Identity politics and issues just like state capture, the growing hype with the 2019 elections in South Africa, distracts communities and to some extent activists from the fundamental causes and the imperative of addressing the manifestations of capitalist globalisation.

In particular, this report raises the rise of the religious right, particularly in poor and marginalised communities as this impacts on the consciousness of a substantial section of the working class. One of the manifestations of the neo-liberal project over the last 30 – 40 years is the rise of thousands of churches that contribute to nullifying people's consciousness and seeks comfort in religion as a solution to their problems.

This church generally in its theological orientation is substantially connected to "individual sin" and "individual salvation". It generally ignores the structural dimension to society and the collective responsibility to address systemic injustice and therefore the imperative to work for social justice<sup>23</sup>. In many of its welfare, development and project responses it generally does not look at the structural dimensions to problems.

The focus on the individual and personal salvation is increasingly being expressed through the church of opportunism as the poor get poorer, inequality, poverty, stress and trauma rises in society and a

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<sup>22</sup> The gravitation towards restrictive forms of recognition and resistance based on nation, race, sexual orientation, sect, ethnicity, etc as opposed to the universality of human dignity.

<sup>23</sup> It is noted that South Africa had a strong liberation theology component (very much drawn from Black theology and liberation theology in Latin America and the Philippines) and a section of the church played a substantial role in liberating South Africa from apartheid. This also included Young Christian Workers who played to some extent a catalytic role in building the workers movement.

substantial mass of people become vulnerable. The vulnerable in society are part of a growing market for spiritual exploitation and manipulation. In many poor communities, the mushrooming of churches is also part of survivalist economics.

The right wing religious shift is a global phenomenon that was also behind bringing Trump into power<sup>24</sup>. Former President Zuma also worked with a conservative church sector as one of his bases. The difference with Trump and Zuma is that the conservative church in the USA has substantial capital behind Trump.

Under the leadership of President Jacob Zuma, there was a shift to a more factional relationship and allegiance mainly with the conservative Pentecostal, Evangelical, Charismatic and African Independent Churches through NICSA (National inter-Faith Council of South Africa). Zuma ignored various efforts made by the institutional church to engage. NICSA set up a counter organisation to the mainstream churches. Particularly in the Zuma period, the institutional church was and in many ways is still out-manoeuvred.

One of the most organised council of churches in the region is the vibrant Zimbabwe Council of Churches, which has been on the periphery of ACT Ubumbano processes and could make a useful contribution to ACT Ubumbano and solidarity work with FBO's. Its strategic focus areas of work are, Christian Unity and Social Cohesion, Citizenship and Good Governance, Economic Justice and Youth Empowerment.

### ***The role of a section of the social justice component in the institutional church in demobilising the poor and marginalised?***

During this evaluation, comments were made regarding the dividing line between oppressor and oppressed was clear during the struggle against apartheid.

For a number of <sup>25</sup>activists, social movements and organisations the dividing line between a system that enriched a few and generated increased poverty was clear with the adoption of GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution Plan). Today we see the manifestations of neo-liberalism (see 4.2 and 6.5) .

The position of critical solidarity with the government is still heard in some quarters of the church. This was the position of bodies like the SACC. From a social justice orientation position and with the necessity of independent gravitas, reflection is necessary.

### ***An example of demobilisation***

Demobilisation is caused by a range of factors including:

- the post-apartheid transition that did not build on the massive internal mobilisation against apartheid and supporting mass organisation towards reconstruction;
- some of the practice of NGO's in that they substitute and create dependency and not support the building of agency;
- transactional funding; and
- the struggle to survive poverty.

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<sup>24</sup> See; <http://theconversation.com/how-the-religious-right-shaped-american-politics-6-essential-reads-89005>

<sup>25</sup> Movements like Anti-Privatisation Forum, Jubilee South Africa, Anti- Eviction Campaign, and organisations like ILRIG (International Labour Research and Information Group), Khanya College, AIDC (Alternative Information and Development Centre) (some of whom are partners to the E3)

On a broader contextual level the example below is important and perhaps is a historical lesson to learnt from. Demobilisation is a critical issue with regard to the building of agency. In this context the enabling processes of ACT Ubumbano to support the building of agency is important.

The “critical solidarity” of COSATU and the SACP as part of the alliance in the view of the evaluation played a substantial role in opening the door post GEAR to co-opt a number of leaders into the dominant class, some of the best examples include President Cyril Ramaphosa, a former trade unionist who was worth US\$700 million by Forbes in 2013 and Saki Macazoma, formerly from the church, one of the four BEE Mongols<sup>26</sup>.

More substantially, going into the alliance drove the largest labour federation away:

- from its class orientation;
- from a rooted working class and transformative agenda;
- and lost track and lacked strategy with regard to the changing nature of work and increased unemployment, vulnerability and precariousness of labour.

Even though there is pressure from the bottom with increased protests, broad sections of the poor and marginalised have been demobilised and in many ways, minds have been demobilised thus making the building of agency much more difficult.

The ZCTU in Zimbabwe was seriously affected by the collapse of the economy with a great loss of membership. It remains relevant because it adapted to the changed conditions. ZCTU initiated and works closely with ZCIEA<sup>27</sup> which is now an independent union of informal trader associations. ZCTU also recently called for the protest/stay-away against the recent petrol price hike, which is also a reflection of its and other civil society mobilising capabilities.

#### **4.6 The Context of Social Movements, Terrain of Organising and Formations Fighting for Social Justice**

Act Ubumbano works with NGO partners who support social movements and with formations who struggle for social justice, formations and movements have participated and processes and there are partnerships of solidarity with the E3,

We have seen the rise and implosion of social movements like the APF, Jubilee and Soweto Concerned Residents, soon after the shift to GEAR. In Zimbabwe, we saw the rise and fall of the National Constitutional Assembly in Zimbabwe, in the period just after the formation of the MDC. There are significant lessons that can be drawn from the past period for NGO’s that support movement building and for formations and movements who are part of ACT Ubumbano.

There are many emerging formations and movements, both in the urban and rural context. Many of the ACT Ubumbano partners and CBO’s are involved in valiant multi-sectoral struggles on many fronts on economic, environmental and gender justice.

These formations and social movements are the sources of hope for a better world, from Abahlali baseMjondolo, to women’s groups in the villages in Zimbabwe, the Rojava Revolution in the North of

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<sup>26</sup> Saki Macozoma, Patrice Motsepe, Tokyo Sexwale and Cyril Ramaphosa

<sup>27</sup> Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations (ZCIEA) a national membership organisation representing Informal Trader Associations of Zimbabwe. It currently has over 200 000 members the vast majority being women.

Syria, the various Rural Women's Assemblies in the region, agrarian movements, powerful woman's groups in the DRC (in particular eastern) working in the most frightening conditions, formations around mining, church groups, many formations in Latin America and South East Asia and movements in Europe and North America.

In this resistance lies the hope of a more just world. We see rising, gender, labour and austerity protests in Europe and India and hopefully gains and more sustained organising will be made from some of the biggest mass being mobilised, in particular, in India on labour<sup>28</sup> and on gender justice<sup>29</sup>.

In this resistance in the North and South like possibilities for people to people solidarity. There is the example of solidarity with Systembolaget<sup>30</sup> workers in Sweden who supported the wine farm workers in South African and Chile and were in turn supported by the wine-workers in the South when they had their labour action.

Some of the partners are supporting movements in a vicious system. The state and its surrogates has demonstrated through repression and securitisation that it can and will brutally control dissent. There is also co-option and sophisticated tactics in containing struggle. The state predominantly serves capital<sup>31</sup> and defends the interest of the dominant class.

Repression manifests on the ground with an increasingly violent contestation for power at local and regional levels in South Africa. There is increased intra-party violence, with KZN once again the killing fields. We have also seen intra-party violence in Zimbabwe and the brutal massacre of protesters with live ammunition after the elections. In addition, when movements like Abahlali in KZN and other communities, including mining communities are a substantial threat to corrupt power, activists are assassinated. As an activist once said, "if they killing their own what chance do we have"

#### **4.7 NGO partner Context**

Refining the practice of NGO partners has been identified as one of the areas of work of ACT Ubumbano.

The Southern partners are a mixture of NGO's, FBO's and some formations and social movements as per the Act Ubumbano scoping report<sup>32</sup>. Some partners adopt a more emancipatory praxis of accompanying struggles of the poor, walking alongside these struggles and do not substitute or drive struggles. They are in solidarity with struggles.

Some partners are more in the service/project delivery dimension. Many partners are in close proximity to communities/sectors and struggles.

Generally, organisations are under increased pressure with regard to funding. Those with a broad portfolio of funding are more stable. But this stability, at times results in management, some of whom are highly experienced in programming, being bogged down by administration.

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<sup>28</sup><https://notesfrombelow.org/article/india-general-strike-2019>; It is estimated on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of January 2019, 150 Million workers went on strike against privatisation, casualisation, demands for minimum wage, threat to worker rights

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.newsclick.in/gender-justice-over-3-million-women-form-womens-wall-across-kerala> Estimated over 3 million women in the state of Kerala in India formed a human chain for over 600 kilometres protesting and calling for gender justice. They were supported by a parallel chain by men and were also supported by the progressive government in Kerala state,

<sup>30</sup> A government-owned chain of alcohol stores. It is the only retail store allowed to sell alcoholic beverages that contain more than 3.5% alcohol.

<sup>31</sup> The manifestations of neo-liberalism as illustrated in point 4.1 above, the growing poverty and inequality and the extreme and growing gap between the rich and poor as pointed out in OXFAM reports, the growing securitisation and repression as seen over this period in Zimbabwe and South Africa provides sufficient evidence to suggest this.

<sup>32</sup> Act Alliance South Africa, Report on the mapping of organisations involved in Community Organising and Social Justice in Southern Africa, May 2018, Esibayeni Group (Pty) Ltd.

Some are in survival mode. This is time consuming and could result in a more inward focus and there is always a danger of the acceptance of certain types of conditional project funding. This can drive organisations away from their strategic orientation.

Some are more emancipatory and participative in the manner in which they are managed and governed.

A few have been through internal conflicts which has been energy sapping, time consuming and at times damaging to individual and organisational reputations.

Directors and management in the above context are under a lot of pressure.

#### **4.8 The context in Europe**

The manifestation of neo-liberalism in Europe is unfolding with frightening consequences. Of particular concern is the rise of right wing nationalism driven by the manifestations of neo-liberalism and resulting in hostility to immigration, islamophobia, racism, and Euro/EU-scepticism. Some of this is illustrated as follows:

- The far right Alternative for Germany entered the federal parliament for the first time in 2017 and is the largest opposition party;
- The Freedom Party in Austria is now the junior partner in a coalition government with the conservatives;
- The UK Independence Party is on the rise and there are worrying acts and signs of right wing terrorism; and
- These shifts are also taking place in Italy, Denmark, Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Finland, Greece and Cyprus

The Swedish context is an example as it is not possible in this report to go into a detailed country analysis of the other E2 partners.

In 2002 the Swedish top 1 % owned 18% of all household wealth and by 2017 it had risen to 42%<sup>33</sup>. This is a sad retrogression as there was a valiant non-violent struggle to fight the 1%. In the 1930's the strikers that were killed in Ådalen sparked a nationwide general strike. This mass mobilisation to confront poverty, kicked the 1% out and substantially changed the country around that nearly eliminated poverty with a strong public service dimension.

The coming of neo-liberalism has reversed those heroic gains of struggle. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) expressed solidarity<sup>34</sup> with SAC – Syndikaliserna, other grassroots unions and Swedish workers protest and struggle and this in some way illustrates the extent of the shift to neo-liberalism, “We note that the Swedish government, in collaboration with big business and mainstream trade unions are proposing legislation that would severely restrict the right of workers to take industrial action in defence of their interests.

We consider this attack on Swedish workers as a form of class war more to be expected from authoritarian regimes than from a social democratic government and union bureaucracies who are in clear collaboration with the capitalist class.”

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<sup>33</sup> (October 2018) Goran Therborn, Twilight of Swedish Social Democracy, new Left Review

<sup>34</sup> See, IWW expression of solidarity with SAC - <https://www.iww.org/pt>

Can the spirit of the 1930's be revived for unless there is struggle the retrogression will continue and Sweden will begin to look more like us in the South? Education standards are falling. Capitalist globalisation manifests itself in different ways in a township in South Africa, a high density suburb in Zimbabwe and in Sweden<sup>35</sup>.

In the UK recently over 500 precarious workers<sup>36</sup> marched in London calling for an end to precarious work. There are possible organic linkages with struggles supported by the <sup>37</sup>Casual Workers Advice Office based in Johannesburg that does sterling work with supporting the organising of precarious workers.

Despite the rise of the right and the shifts as a result of the latest Swedish election and probably with its weakest performance of the Social Democrats in the election, there is hope in workers, movements emerging in Europe, challenging the right wingers, and raising their issues. France is a case in point.

#### **4.9 The context of the E3 partners**

The European partners (E3) are deeply concerned about social justice. They come from a history of solidarity with the liberation struggles of the frontline state and against apartheid. However, their programmes and resources are substantially orientated towards funding and solidarity in the South with some involvement and programmes in the North and building linkages with the South.

Feedback on the draft report has raised some questions about this. The evaluation acknowledges that its primary focus was to look at the programmes in the South and not the North in relation to the framework as set out in the Kopanong Principles.

This is a gap and weaknesses in this process. The world is changing and the manifestations of neo-liberalism are also unfolding in the North and so is resistance. There are great opportunities to support growing local struggles in the North and to link these struggles in solidarity with struggles in the South.

If there is broad agreement on the state of the world then a fundamental question is what is the positioning of the E3 and how will the Kopanong principles be implemented?

To varying degrees the E3 have linkages with social justice struggles in the North, are building linkages or an intention to link communities in the North and South on shared issues.

They are also involved in global struggles, for example on tax injustice and climate change. CoS has a powerful church base and takes up local social struggles. "CA is an international development organisation; the mandate is to focus on that rather than northern local issues. This allows connecting with local European issues, but not primarily actively get involved in some of the UK issues (other local NGOs fulfil that role)."

This needs to be shared, discussed and reflected on in the hub so that the work and change in orientation and the complexities that the E3 faced can be understood and appreciated.

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<sup>35</sup> Since 2000, education standards have fallen more than any other country ranked by the OECD using tests known as the Programme for International Student Assessment (Pisa). 2013 results rated Sweden below Denmark, Finland and Norway on reading maths and science and worse than the UK. In 2014, 14% of students performed too poorly to qualify for secondary school. The OECD 2016 report shows that Sweden spends 6.8% as a percentage of GDP and the OECD average is 5.6%.

<sup>36</sup><https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/uber-protest-court-of-appeal-economy-drivers-workers-rights-london-a8609341.html>

<sup>37</sup> [www.cwao.org.za](http://www.cwao.org.za), It provides free *advice* and support to *workers*, privileging *casual*, contract, labour broker and other precarious *workers* and is central to mobilised labour action for this sector

The evaluation will thus maintain that currently, in some ways, ACT Ubumbano is a reflection of an imbalanced focus on the South.

A substantial focus of the E3 work is funding, grant making, grant management. Compliance with back donor requirements consumes a considerable amount of their resources and programme activity. In one instance an E3 programme officer would like to be more involved but the huge portfolio of partners that the programme officer is responsible for and compliance consumes the bulk of time.

As social justice organisations, it is more difficult for the E3 to raise funds as against the more transactional and welfare orientated organisations. They also have challenges with regard to demonstrating the imperative of process work/social justice work in a funding world where the quantitative dimension is emphasised and tangible outcomes and impact is sought.

Of concern is that the officers who are/ have been involved in Act Ubumbano constitute a thin and fragile layer and it is critical that a critical mass who share the ACT Ubumbano orientation is developed.

This thin layer at times are more exposed to the South as project officers as compared to the rest of their staff or bureaucracy, depending on the organisation, there is generally an "ideological distance" between partners in the South and North. The analysis of the state of the world and the critique of Neo-liberalism is substantially generated in the South, so is the concept like emancipatory praxis.

## **5. THE IDENTITY OF ACT UBUMBANO – its understanding and participation**

### **5.1 Process organisations need to be understood and frameworks needs to be clear**

Process organisations are generally not easily understood. They are at times viewed as loose and lacking purpose. Organic process in the absence of an ideological and programme frame can be viewed as loose.

- Substantial time has been spent working on the identity of ACT Ubumbano. The evaluation has found the identity of ACT Ubumbano to be clear:
  - ✓ It is a solidarity initiative, South-North, South-South and hopefully a more North-North initiative that is informed by a sound analysis of the changed context and the centrality of being in solidarity with peoples struggles as agents of transformative change.
  - ✓ It expresses a programme of solidarity through the pillars of gender justice, economic justice and environmental justice and its identified themes (see 1.2). Activities are discussed within these frames and collectively agreed on.
  - ✓ It allows for activities to emerge within this ideological and programme frame and this provides the basis for formulating and discussion on strategic analysis questions beyond the conventional questions. Some of the responses of these strategic analysis questions have emerged in the hubs, learning and advisory group meetings which have been well facilitated. See section on Efficiency.
  - ✓ It has a strong reflective and learning component which has resonance, a concept that cannot be fully measured, however systems should be developed as part of reclaiming planning and learning sovereignty to reflect qualitative change.

## **5.2 Why is ACT Ubumbano still not understood by some partners?**

### ***Ideological congruence***

Partners who have an emancipatory approach, a process orientation, a strong history of activism and those increasingly leaning towards this orientation, experience more congruence with ACT Ubumbano. They have shared and learnt from each other in the hub processes.

ACT Ubumbano is still not understood by some partners, maybe even within some sections of some of the E3. Potential funders may have difficulty in understanding its orientation.

An emancipatory praxis is also premised on transformative politics and what some would term the politics of dignity. Therefore, it is highly political with an emerging ideology that challenges power. If there is a lack of a political orientation and activism on the part of some partners and potential, then there will be difficulty in understanding ACT Ubumbano.

However, it is important not to dismiss criticism solely as not understanding. One informant raised the call by ACT Ubumbano for partners to be innovative and raised the importance of ACT Ubumbano to understand and appreciate that in some instances there are high levels of innovation amongst some partners.

Another point raised was: Are there implications for other participating partners funding if ACT Ubumbano raises increasingly more funding from the same funding partners? And should the funding for gender justice go directly to partners?

### ***Does ACT Ubumbano have direction?***

ACT Ubumbano does not lack direction in the absence of a set of activities. The direction is provided by its frame. The analysis, values and principle pillars are clear and its organic nature contributes to the five theme areas which accumulatively should impact on the type of solidarity that it hopes to achieve. Programmes are organic and follow-up and processes going forward are shaped by those who are central to that particular process.

Substantial time has been spent on working on the identity and the contextual analysis that gives relevance to the identity. The evaluation will contend that given the complexities this was an important process and result and is now accompanied by increased activity. A result? Indeed, if in a complex environment, it is not clear who you are? why you exist? and what you hope to achieve and how you are to achieve? you are bound to be floundering.

## **5.3 Building Relationships and safe spaces within an emerging frame builds participation**

Building relationships of trust with partners and safe spaces for more open expression, have also accompanied this process and the importance of this should not be underestimated. This is a result. .

ACT Ubumbano has largely overcome the initial suspicion from some of the partners it works with<sup>38</sup>. One informant stated that it creates more work for partners and as it develops it will create even more work for partners. One of arguments informing this initiative is that organisations should not be distracted from their core work and ACT Ubumbano should not be seen as a drain on its resources

Increased ownership by partners and seeing ACT Ubumbano as an essential part of their work will be important. In addition, relationships based on emerging ideological and strategy congruence, conceptual clarity and a critical degree of partner congruence reduces conflict and gives a clear basis

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<sup>38</sup> It seems this also included some partners who would have ideological congruence with ACT Ubumbano.

for focus in constructive spaces. Once again, this should not be underestimated. There is a constructive and challenging culture emerging. This is a result.

It is important to act within a clear framework and further develop the framework and culture as ACT Ubumbano and partners walk the path. What ACT Ubumbano is, is mentioned in almost all documents that go out and is well illustrated on the website. Identity is not static and will be/should be refined as the process unfolds.

For those who still grapple with understanding ACT Ubumbano, the evaluation will suggest a careful study of the document – Inequality and the Struggle for humanity in Southern Africa, documenting a process of building Solidarity in Southern Africa. It is a bit complex but that is the nature of the environment and the process. In the view of the evaluation this is a seminal document on redefining solidarity. In entering, the next phase of action a second document maybe useful, drawing from activity thus far, this report and the emerging strategy frame going forward.

A good indication of progress is the affirmation of the current culture. One community based participant expressed amazement that “funders” and organisation can talk as equals. Going forward and addressing the “hard issues” of change it will be important to affirm and re-enforce this culture.

#### **5.4 Why are partners in ACT Ubumbano?**

This raises the question, which has also been raised in one of the focus group discussions, as to why some partners are in ACT Ubumbano? It is and could be viewed by some partners as a donor initiative and some partners could be present because their funding partners are involved. This comes through in the scoping report<sup>39</sup>.

In addition, some of the partners in the South get into a comfort zone, may find the initiative too radical and are comfortable with a project orientation. This could occur even though an emancipatory praxis maybe understood/partially understood by these partners. It needs to be appreciated change does come with risks and change is not always easy. The management of the organisation may appreciate the need for change, however moving the ship around can be a mammoth task fraught with risks.

In addition, some partners could be to some extent dependent on conditional project funding and would not want to threaten their survival by tackling process work and qualitative change, which is a more difficult to attract funding and report on. Turning a ship around in stormy waters is a process which needs to be carefully managed. Those that decide to do so should be supported.

There may be short term gains for some participants but ACT Ubumbano perspective is more long-term and the long term benefits for solidarity and funding in the context of solidarity needs to be more appreciated and worked for by all partners in the North and South.

#### **5.5 In a world that needs global solidarity the identity of ACT Ubumbano is lob-sided towards the South.**

As one participant said “Now that we are clear on all the soft stuff. Let us tackle the hard stuff”<sup>40</sup>. This long term view needs further conceptualisation and strategy. It needs an equal

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<sup>39</sup> May 2018, ACT Alliance, Report on the Mapping of Organisations involved in Community Organising and Social Justice in Southern Africa, May 2018, ACT Alliance South Africa, Esibayeni Group (Pty) Ltd.

<sup>40</sup> Substantial time was spent on conceptualisation and frameworks. This participant was referring to the hard change that needs to take place in practice or NGO partners, E3, movements and formations.

conceptualisation, strategy, programme and institutional capacity in the North to activate the Kopanong principles and whatever else emerges with a clear strategy.

In other words, if there is no comprehensive strategy and programme to claw back in the North supported by the South, the right wing shift will continue largely unabated in relation to the predominant transactional development paradigm and the "smallness" and fragility to some extent of the E3 will be entrenched and the critical mass of activists could be more frustrated. This will re-enforce pre-dominant look south orientation as the programme develops.

This change in relation to a strategy and institution will assert the principle of equality. A strategic question for the European partners is how does ACT Ubumbano in Europe position itself in this "claw back" . Who are its allies, networks supportive spaces and does this all contribute to substantially influencing the "claw back" programme? Substantial support will be needed by the South in assisting the European leg to get going.

### **5.6 Will it be an exclusive club?**

There will be partners who will gravitate more towards ACT Ubumbano and be central to its programmes. They are bound to benefit more from ACT Ubumbano and in the process should benefit other partners, as long as they take up activities that adds value to the solidarity orientation of ACT Ubumbano and do so in a collaborative manner.

There is a danger that there could be "the in group". The role of this critical mass in ACT Ubumbano should be to influence other members to change practice increasingly towards the transformative and emancipatory dimension. Emancipation will not come on a plate but emerges through struggles and alliances that shift power to the poor and marginalised.

## **6. EFFECTIVENESS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In analysing effectiveness, some of which has been covered in the sections above, the following is important:

- ACT Ubumbano is a new process initiative, is just over two years old and the bulk of its work should be viewed substantially as an explorative, learning and foundation phase to act with clarity.
- This was initially an exploratory process that grappled and reached conceptual clarity and congruence with a number of partners with not all necessarily sharing or understanding the orientation but sufficient congruence and participation of a critical mass of organisations to move forward. It started with E 5 which included NCA and ICCO, who both withdrew from the process at different moments.
- The substantial time spent on creating a safe space for discussion has resulted in clarity of identity and some of the strategic issues that need to be addressed by all parts of ACT Ubumbano. This is clearly illustrated as referred to in the section under identity in the report and in particular the report, Inequality and the struggle for humanity in Southern Africa – Documenting a process of solidarity building.
- In this period ACT Ubumbano has started "the facilitating of programme activity", moving beyond conceptual clarity in 2018. Processes like the organising hub learning event,

facilitating the gender justice work, call to action funding, Ubumbano Voice and exposures are processes/activities to address issues emerging from reflection spaces.

In reviewing this section, the starting point was not activity but methodology and process. A table was designed and could not be filled in due to various pressures but was used as a basis for a staff focus discussion. It is attached in Appendix 5. This is a tool developed for process organisations.

## 6.2 Some of the methods employed in the period under review:

***"We are now not just looking at our victories, problems and challenges – we are also looking at our practice as a social movement"***

A community activist who spoke at one of the hubs spaces was highly impressed with the sense of equality and nature of the discussion, the openness to look at practice, without the element of competition and this has helped him to take this orientation back to his movement and get them to review their practice. ***Informant - Activist, leader – Urban Land Movement***

- Creating safe and conducive spaces for deep discussions, learning and sharing on solidarity and constructive discussions with funding/solidarity partners from the North.
- Facilitation of hubs, advisory group meetings and learning events by skilled outside facilitators who have shown the ability to ask sharp critical questions and consolidate information emerging from participatory process. This has contributed substantially to a sound culture in ACT Ubumbano processes.
- Staff are in the background during activities, getting skilled facilitators and participants to set the agenda, this is easier as skilled facilitators raise the critical questions independently.
- Building relationships – through contact, communication, partner visits, hub-activities, regular updates and demonstrating accountability.
- A strong sense of a clearly worked out mandate's and a strong sense of accountability in relation to reporting back and the regular updates by the staff to partners.
- The use of the see, judge, act method
- Sound documentation of the process thus far, good minutes and records so that the emerging process can be tracked, information consolidated and further developed. This is taken forward in the section on knowledge.
- Scoping of 30 partners involved in Act Ubumbano and a deeper focus with five partners.
- ACT Ubumbano Voice App.
- Exposures
- Solidarity Funding within the framework and orientation of ACT Ubumbano

## 6.3 The Scoping Report - Knowledge Generation and Management

***"We cannot transform society or the world at large if we do not produce new knowledge about our times, our cultures, our economies and politics"***

Act Ubumbano Report, Inequality and the struggle for humanity in Southern Africa – Documenting a process of solidarity building.

This evaluation affirms the methodology of scoping as an important methodology for ACT Ubumbano to understand its terrain, South(ern)African partners. The scoping report reflects sound research methodology.

The scoping exercise shows a variety of organisations, understandings and methods of work ranging from partners that espouse an emancipatory praxis, to the project delivery approach.

It should be an ongoing, baseline development and knowledge generation process within ACT Ubumbano and adapted to the unfolding work and phases of ACT Ubumbano.

The study has useful information about the partners. However, it could have been more refined and with closer alignment to the ACT solidarity orientation, thus adding more value.

The study itself displays some project delivery language, like beneficiaries and clients, lacks a firm critique of neo-liberalism, (the country context analysis could also be strengthened) and a critique of log-frames, noting that this study was not an evaluation.

ACT Ubumbano is centred on a structural analysis, refining solidarity and giving voice to organised movements and formations to control their development, rights and emancipation. Such studies are important for programme strategy. The interactive data base could be a useful resource for partners if used effectively.

This is an important area of work for ACT Ubumbano going forward. ACT Ubumbano is currently generating information and knowledge and needs to look at capacity to identify and measure resonance and follow-up after "events" so that ACT does not fall into the event/workshop orientation but rather keeps to its organic, learning and process orientation

The knowledge generated could be of great importance to the 'claw back' lobby and advocacy work of the ACT Ubumbano European partners to reassert the social justice agenda with the back donors and building increased alliances.

#### **6.4 Ubumbano Learning Event - Community Organising: Solidarity in Action**

*"Nobody in the world, nobody in history, has ever gotten their freedom by appealing to the moral sense of the people who were oppressing them." Assata Shakur*

*"Civil society organisations all over the world need to do more of this. We have all become so caught up in the 'doing'—the delivery of outputs, measurement of outcomes and completing projects and reports—that we have very little time to take stock of our practice.*

*We need to stop more often to reflect on our ways of working, to ask ourselves: Do our actions remain true to the values and principles that underpin development work? Are we truly delivering on our mandate to create positive change in a way that reinforces the agency of individuals and the collectives within which they choose to cooperate? Are we addressing fundamental issues of power and control?*

*The deep questions of development that we need to ask regularly, and answer honestly, are the ones that make us uncomfortable. They should not be avoided if we are to remain true to our values—if we are to live by the principles of solidarity."* **ACT Alliance, Ubumbano Learning Event, Community Organising: Solidarity in action**

The above quotation points to the importance of spaces for reflection and learning in all organisations and formations involved in social justice. It is of concern, if partners and social movements are not creating the time and space for deeper reflection as this could impact on the quality of the conceptualisation, praxis and practice of community organising or supporting community organising in an increasingly complex and dangerous context. Praxis is refined through reflection.

The report on this learning event reflects intense discussions and reflects some of the contradictions with an emancipatory process that were raised and discussed. This report also demonstrates that there has generally been:

- a lack of deep reflection and clearer conceptualisation of people centred and driven community organising that walks the path together with peoples struggles, and in close proximity to difficult struggles;
- to varying degrees, an orientation that does not impose being conscious of our own ignorance and willing to learn with communities; and
- the lack of adequate structural analysis, terrain analysis and deepening the structural analysis in a changing world.

This event provided an empowering space for discussion and was found to be useful by informants those who participated. In one instance, an activist from the mining sector said that listening, learning and interacting has assisted with confidence as an organiser and leader in the artisanal mining sector in Zimbabwe and has impacted on how her organisation organises.

The learning event was facilitated with good methodology reflective of the values of ACT Ubumbano, eliciting the agenda from participants.

This learning event was attended by a good balance of community based formations/social movements and NGO's and with close on to a 50% gender balance.

This was a short space ( 2 days) given the range of issues raised and discussed regarding praxis and context. A number of strategic issues and key principles in organising were surfaced, discussed but more time was needed to consolidate these issues.

An additional day could have consolidated some of the principles and strategic issues in organising and strengthened structural analysis/power analysis, although the report does pick-up on some power analysis.

Organising and mobilising peoples agency should be situated more centrally in a power analysis, a balance of forces analysis. Emancipatory politics is about contestation with power. This analysis opens up the importance of being pro-active and asserting the organising principle. "the strategy and tactics of the oppressed should be within the experience of the oppressed but outside the experience of the oppressor".

This learning event also identified areas and processes for follow-up with regard to further reflection and taking the issues forward in relation to strengthening organising. This is a good start but what is the follow-up? What is the role of a preparation phase, then the learning event and then the follow-up? What is the resonance of this learning event? Once again, this raises the importance of partners and ACT Ubumbano refining the process of learning events to elicit the qualitative dimension.

Perhaps, there is need to break the workshop orientation if we are to be able to measure resonance. A preparatory phase would be useful not just in relation to mandates (an issue raised in this workshop), but discussion in participating organisations prior to the event and follow-up discussions

after the event. Again, it raised the question as to how strategy unfolds in supporting (noting the organic nature) this element of community voice, emancipatory praxis and solidarity in action. What is the follow-up?

As the solidarity programme emerges like this learning event and the gender justice events, they organically provide areas for follow-up which should be led by partners. This organic development would be more rooted and measurable if rooted in preparation, follow-up and change in organisations. Linkages to the Ubumbano Voice has taken place minimally and should be a logical extension of such events.

## 6.5 Gender Justice

The appointment of a gender activist as a staff member has strengthened the gender justice pillar and is changing the male domination of ACT Ubumbano - *informant*

This aspect of the partner led ACT Ubumbano's activity has taken off with a range of activities that were convened by partners with good potential to take gender justice work forward. There is follow-up that is organically taking place. Good work has been done and this section of the report goes into some detail regarding the importance of situating these gains within a frame of structural analysis and further stimulating an emancipatory praxis.

The following partners led events to raise awareness and conversations on violence against women and children:

- Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa (ELCSA),
- Gender Links (GL),
- National Alliance for the Development of Community Advice Offices (NADCAO),
- South Africa Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS (SANERELA),
- We will Speak Out South Africa (WWSOSA),
- Women and Girl Leaders (WGL).

The FBO's and the church provides a useful space to raise and address gender justice issues.

The survivor led process with WWSOSA was powerful and saw leadership being challenged by survivors. The WWSOSA event was survivor led and created lots of discussion, some rupture, apologies and undertakings to move forward. A number of follow-up events have taken place.

In the Eastern Cape, a number of the issues raised are being followed up including the formation of young women's forums opening up potential for a movement. This needs to be documented, linked to Ubumbano Voice and supported.

16 days of Activism is an event. It is not a strategy. ACT Ubumbano saw this as an entry point for longer term work so that it does not end up being a once off event and it is encouraging to see follow-up. When documented more adequately, many more gains will be illustrated and it has tremendous potential to further pursue this work in the church.

It is easy to get caught up in the project orientation and lose track of the ACT Ubumbano solidarity orientation of supporting an emancipatory process and people's voices, in particular the voices of woman who struggle against patriarchy. Also, there has been a number of NGO's in this sector that display the features of project delivery – dishing out workshops – “civic education” “platforms” - without stimulating the building of agency and movement that is orientated towards addressing the root causes of gender oppression.

On the other hand, there are woman movements, including rural women's movements, care worker movements and various other formations and movements at community/sector level who are powerful in addressing GBV, patriarchy and SRHR at community level with a stronger feminist and structural dimension. One such movement is the Rural Women's Assembly.

As illustrated in the context section, the impact of neo-liberalism over the last 40 years has affected women extremely, pushing women into the survivalist informal economy, being increasingly vulnerable and increasingly primary and secondary victims and survivors of armed conflict and Organised Violence and Torture.

Sudan is a good example and had one of the most powerful women's movements in the 1970's and 1980's on the continent. The Sudanese Women's Union of the 70's and 80's<sup>41</sup> played a substantial and rooted role in taking up many gender issues, in addition to their solidarity work with Congo, South Africa and Palestine.

The decimation of the economy through neo-liberalism, social conservatism and the reinforcement of patriarchy was a huge factor impacting negatively on the position of woman in society and breaking these movements, turning them into victims and survivors. Women were pushed onto the margins of the economy.

Is this not a similar case in Southern African countries, and particularly acute in Zimbabwe?

The projectivisation of woman's rights around GBV, FGM, SRHR, strongly supported by INGO's from the North, at times informed by the MDG's and SDG's and numerous protocols, has substantially contributed in a shift away from supporting movement building. In many instances this orientation has skirted and missed the fundamental root causes, patriarchy and the role of culture. The projectivisation approach has generally been substantially effective in driving back the emancipation of woman from the politics. Sudan is a case in point.

FGM, SRHR, GBV and sexuality cannot be compartmentalised, it needs to centrally move beyond the protocols (which tactically can be important) and the human rights discourse to include class, race, economy, politics and culture. These critical issues can be used as entry points but needs to lead to a systemic orientation.

Sexuality needs to reflect an emancipatory dimension that favours radical cultural change demonstrating a new way of viewing people and the world. Therefore "the gender issues" cannot be separated from migration, mining, food sovereignty, trade imbalances, land, water, energy, seed, the changing nature of the food value chain, the precarious nature of work for women, the structure of the economy and the current "development model" that avoids the structural dimension.

"In this context, the rhetoric of gender mainstreaming becomes a box-ticking exercise while minimising the root causes of women's subordination and the politics behind that subordination. The few publicly-aware activists become the outsiders, bearers of bad news, and are often labelled as too difficult - too political<sup>42</sup>".

The analysis in the concept note centres in part on the SDG 5<sup>43</sup>. While this is a milestone that can be used tactically in engaging funders, it is not central/a major part of the ACT Ubumbano analytical

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<sup>41</sup> Amira Osman, Beyond the pan-Africanist agenda: Sudanese women's movement, achievements and challenges, [http://www.agi.ac.za/sites/default/files/image\\_tool/images/429/feminist\\_africa\\_journals/archive/02/features\\_-\\_reflections\\_on\\_the\\_sudanese\\_womengcos\\_movement\\_0.pdf](http://www.agi.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/429/feminist_africa_journals/archive/02/features_-_reflections_on_the_sudanese_womengcos_movement_0.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> Hala Al-Karib, The dangers of NGO-sation of women rights in Africa, Al Jazeera, 13 December 2018.

<sup>43</sup> Reflecting on targets and indicators of SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls, Ranjani K. Murthy, 2018, CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING ON SDG FROM A GENDER LENS Women 2030, Ekta and HRF

frame (see 1.3.3; 4.2; and 4.4). Even though patriarchy and some structural dimensions are mentioned in other ACT Ubumbano documentation, it is not central to the analysis.

The importance of own analysis and the ones we present for funding, needs to be distinguished.

Given the transformation and structural nature of gender oppression and for example SRHR, a more root cause analysis is necessary. The problems are structural. A root cause analysis informs transformative actions that are emancipatory. Some of this was apparent in the March 2017 platform. More structural analytical points were made, agency and accompaniment was discussed. Rooting the pillars in a strong political-economy and feminist analysis should be more central in ACT Ubumbano for a closer alignment with overall transformative and emancipatory orientation of ACT Ubumbano.

The gender task team which has a survivor as a member needs to make further gains from good work done thus far within the frame being raised in this section of the report. Going forward, increasingly formations will see themselves as part of ACT Ubumbano<sup>44</sup> and spaces need to be made for community voices so that the various structures include these voices.

## 6.6 Ubumbano Voice

*"The sharing of stories is a form of solidarity. If the media does not report we can make our own noise. Activists/ordinary people writing what they feel from the ground, telling their own struggles from different sectors. It breaks the perception that we cannot narrate our own story."*

*"Other movements have contacted us after reading our story we are now going to meet them."*

**Activist Urban Land Movement**

*"Through the App we got media coverage, the councillor met with us and a resolution was passed in the municipal council to build a waste/environmental buy back centre"*

**Activist -Community Monitor Mining environmental degradation.**

Ubumbano voice is a few months old, is already showing results<sup>45</sup> and has tremendous potential in giving voice to peoples struggles and victories. Further results can be elicited, through documentation. A lot of media work went into this process of launching and activating the Ubumbano voice.

However, it is dependent on partner and community formation participation like other aspects of ACT Ubumbano. Working closely with several partners of ACT Ubumbano over the last decade, there are dozens of stories of struggles that need to be told. Powerful stories will not be told if they do not get

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<sup>44</sup> Note: The manner in which activists have spoken about Act Ubumbano in the evaluation process: for example often using the term "as a member of Act Ubumbano" reflected a conducive space to interact respectfully and to be treated with dignity.

<sup>45</sup> Listening to the recording of the municipal council meeting provided to me by the community monitor activist, has led to a resolution in council that these buy back centres will be built in seven communities. It is important for communities to monitor and make sure that this does happen.

onto Ubumbano voice. Stories told and interaction with stories could be of effective assistance to giving voice but also make a contribution to struggles and solidarity.

### **6.7 The PME/ Planning, Reflection and Learning state in NGO's**

Redefining and refining an emancipatory planning and learning paradigm is a critical issue. If social justice organisations are to demonstrate social change, how organisations analyse, plan, act, reflect and learn is critical. The linear log-frame type modalities are limiting and restrictive in planning, acting, reflecting and learning in social justice work.

ACT Ubumbano and partners are to some extent are caught up with the language and frames of project delivery even if they practice an emancipatory praxis.

In many instances, the funding planning and reporting frames are not conducive to a social justice orientation with solidarity as a central component. They are part of back-donor requirements and currently beyond the control of funding partners who receive back-donor funding within the frame of OECD/DAC criteria, which are relevance<sup>46</sup>, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability.

Use of planning language like beneficiary/clients/inputs/outputs/outcomes/intended/unintended outcomes/best practice and exit strategy are some of the language that partners need to contend with. Funding is generally granted largely within this discourse of language and framed around the OECD/DAC criteria.

#### ***An alternative discourse is necessary for example:***

- There is at times a focus on outcomes whereas with peoples movements that confront and/or engage power, language like:
  - ✓ what advances, progress and gains have been made? Why?
  - ✓ What are the challenges and constraints? Why?
  - ✓ Is the balance of forces changing as a result of struggles and victories? How
- SMART objectives and indicators can be very UNSMART in a volatile context;
- Intended and unintended consequences does not make sense in a volatile unpredictable, variable and at times highly repressive context in which many ACT Ubumbano are confronted with. For example, assassinations of activists are they unintended?
- Best practice should be confined to an exact science like accounting, noting that there can be good practice and there can be learning and sharing from good practice.
- There is no exit (strategy) from the struggle for social justice alliances should grow and roles can change.

#### ***Therefore the linear input/output/outcome/impact orientation, depending on its variants and how they are adapted:***

- Can at times be inadequate on contextual analysis, be it local, national, global, sector, terrain analysis (not the comprehensive contextual analysis in point 2 above);
- Does not adequately bring on board internal challenges – weaknesses, strengths, challenges;

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<sup>46</sup> Note: These are important areas however with an emancipatory praxis and transformative approach, the specifics of for example relevance and effectiveness will be different. Areas like context analysis, terrain analysis, a balance of forces analysis, positioning, strategy and tactics, building a critical mass, defensive strategy in relation to repression, are some of the specifics that would be more relevant.

- Does not adequately elicit the strategic issues from the external and internal contextual analysis;
- Does not adequately assist with formulating strategic objectives informed by the strategic issues;
- Does not adequately look carefully at strategy and methodologies; In a situation where strategy and tactics are central.
- Does not adequately identify processes and indicators that bring out the qualitative dimension to work. For example moving beyond measuring work against static indicators (sometimes defined a few years ago) and looking at progress, advances, gains, the impact of process work, challenges against planning objectives and emerging objectives and indicators. All this is important to bring out the qualitative dimension to work.

A fundamental question is what role this paradigm has played in demobilising the building of movement. This is one of the “hard issues” that possibly ACT Ubumbano could address linked to practice and refining practice through appropriate planning and learning systems that are more supportive of building the power and voice of the poor.

### **6.8 Funding**

ACT UMBUMBANO is not premised on funding efficiency with partners in the South and the three partners in the North. Other models have resulted in this and re-enforced the transactional orientation<sup>47</sup>. It is premised on redefining solidarity and the possibilities of more emancipatory funding models.

#### ***What is the response of ACT Ubumbano to the growing funding crisis?***

South Africa, Botswana and Namibia are being viewed as “middle income” countries and some funders have pulled out, are contemplating pulling out, or cutting down on funding. Economic indicators mask the reality of the lives of the poor and marginalised including the repression confronting many people’s organisations/movements.

The solidarity hub presents an opportunity to raise awareness and deepen the understanding of partners in the North and South that structural problems have been entrenched not just in South(ern) Africa but also on the continent. In addition, poverty and inequality is entrenched and growing, and the poor are organising and mobilising for social justice in a complex context and need solidarity and support.

The solidarity hub has the potential to break the dependence on funding from the North and explore new models.

Although it may be said by some, that ACT Ubumbano is not about funding, it is also about funding and the stability of partners in a shrinking funding context. One informant felt strongly that there should be a coherent programme in ACT Ubumbano to address the crisis.

If a sector is seriously affected by the funding crisis, is it not important to create space to reflect on this and develop a holistic approach to addressing this crisis?

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<sup>47</sup> See, Act Ubumbano Notes from visit to JCP Zambia on 23-24 April 2018

### ***Has ACT Ubumbano been effective in changing power relations?***

In response to some of the analysis in the point above in the draft report, an informant from the E3 responded as follows:

*"the question is what do we do with this analysis? Are we conscious, but reproducing it?... What consequences are we ready to take?"*

The adoption of the linear log-frame type modalities has catapulted some of the partners with a strong historical background of solidarity work during the struggle against apartheid and national liberation in the region to wield substantial influence through linear frames. It opens the door to control and power. This again raises the importance of addressing planning and learning systems, developing emancipatory planning and learning systems (point above) as part of the process of addressing the power imbalance and demonstrative qualitative social change.

However, the Northern partners<sup>48</sup> in the Solidarity Hub are trying to work differently, work more flexibly, in part, informed by the reflections, learning and work of the solidarity hub and are looking at partnerships of solidarity based on the principle of equality despite these constraints.

The continued support for the process by the E3 and their willingness to work differently is informed by the Kopanong principles is an indication of this. Informed by their commitment, they see and are working towards transforming their organisations, for example one of the E3 partner's focus is now on social justice and another is going through an organisational transformation<sup>49</sup>.

The evaluation affirms the efforts of the individual E3 partners, progress made and the flexibility. These important individual steps however generally the power balance has not change as the problem is structural.

The ideological and programmatic frame and the developing of its institutional capacity in the North need attention. Strategy is central in "clawing back" lost ground to reclaim solidarity funding models that reflect dignity, shared power based on ideological and strategy congruence. When two or three are gathered in the name of being in deep solidarity for social justice with an emancipatory orientation (amidst a tide that is predominantly not), strategy and tactics will be crucial in opening up, widening and qualitatively consolidating and advancing the space.

Partners like BfdW are huge and turning a ship around is certainly not easy. How is the critical mass in BfdW who are supportive, but very tied up in the bureaucracy supported? If there is substantial change with regard to the flawed economic indicator analysis and the adoption of a more root cause, transformative analysis, and support for bottom up movement building and emancipatory praxis, it opens up many new possibilities for funding and creative fundraising in the North with support from the South.

### ***Call to action funding***

ACT Ubumbano has correctly been cautious as how it gets involved in funding. This should be an ongoing discussion so as to avoid the pitfalls that others have fallen into like competitiveness and conflict.

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<sup>48</sup> See, Article, May 2018, Church Land Programme, Solidarity Relationships, Gerhard Buttner, Christian Aid South Africa Programme Manager,

<sup>49</sup> From evaluation interviews with E3 Partners, although the evaluation did not have the time to go into the details of the conceptualisation, and nature of these shifts, progress and constraints

The call to action fund is small amounts of funding that stimulate collaborative solidarity initiatives. It has clear criteria as outlined in the Solidarity Seed Fund Assessment form. Documenting activities on the basis of the first six criteria will provide important knowledge. In order to avoid the "event" orientation a process, praxis and follow-up dimension could be added to assessment form. The joint initiative with ZELA and Women in Mining has also delivered results and has contributed to the struggle in Bubi<sup>50</sup>.

Act Ubumbano has encouraged and supported collaborative funding initiatives. The gender justice work provides a good basis for longer-term collaborative funding that can address the criteria in the assessment form.

### **6.9 NGO Cooperation and Bi-laterals**

The extent to which participating NGO's co-operate with each other varies from partner to partner. In some instances NGO's readily co-operate with those who share their broad orientation. This is their prerogative and ideally it should be organic and be of benefit to the partners who are co-operating. To varying degrees, some NGO's have become siloed, territorial and "protective of their" knowledge and funding arrangements in a context where funding resources are less and more competitive.

ACT Ubumbano has provided the space and the orientation for collaboration around a shared orientation and the importance of refining/change of practice by all sectors involved which would give more voice and strength to struggles for social justice.

Collaboration has taken place at hubs and learning events. However, as suggested in other parts of the report, if follow-up was more localised and organically followed up after "events" this would stimulate collaboration and broadening the network. The gender justice work provides substantial potential for both, building on the good work that has been done thus far.

Benchmarks and ZELA cooperate with other organisations on TNATAZAMA – which is a network of Southern African communities living near mines. It looks vibrant with active posting of stories.

The CLP/Christian Aid/Irish Methodist Church provide flexible funding with a sound understanding of peoples agency and an unfolding process of empowerment led by the formations themselves and CLP accompanying. There has been exposures to these formations and a strong solidarity link developed. This has assisted to CA to remain present in South Africa. This is an important case study for further analysis.

In some instances, solidarity with like-minded partners especially North-South are generally not part of programmes with objectives/sub-objectives and informed by the changing context and a refined concept of solidarity. Some partners have solidarity linkages in the North, host interns, and programmes of exchanges. These at times tend to be more events/exposures and support for victims and survivors of repression, rather than an unfolding longer term processes of solidarity.

These initiatives of exchanges and internship also tend to reflect the imbalance between the North and South. The better resourced North is able to finance or self-finance interns and activists as compared to the South. Neither do some of the partners in the South generally pick-up on the importance of including exposure to the North adequately in their programmes, for some this does not make sense as funding is a constraint.

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<sup>50</sup> According to the informant in the Zimbabwe Focus discussion, we should not underestimate the peer learning and confidence that has developed as a result of ACT processes on this activist.

### ***The impact of ACT Ubumbano on bilateral relationship with the E3***

The extent to which the ACT Ubumbano process has impacted on bi-lateral relationships is not easy to measure. Many of the partners have longstanding relationships of partnership with the E3 based on solid partnerships and relationships.

The resonance of ACT Ubumbano is difficult to measure, however the constructive space for open discussions around power shifts and the solidarity orientation should have resonance but is difficult to measure. The other factor is that at times the project officer allocated to an NGO partner may not be involved in ACT Ubumbano so when it comes to discussing partnerships, the ACT Ubumbano link is sometimes missing.

However, if there was a programme, with clear strategy and institutional capacity to address and put into practice the Kopanong principles its resonance and the impact of these important principles will be more felt and more likely to impact on stronger bi-laterals.

## **7. EFFICIENCY, INSTITUTION, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The staff of ACT Ubumbano collectively have substantial skills and experience. More so they fit with the praxis of ACT Ubumbano, are open to learning, display sound analytical/strategy skills and management skills. They have developed sound relationships with partners, communicate well with partners, including regular updates and document the various activities well, particularly in the conception phase. There is a good paper trail in the organisation. In the event of staff leaving the historical record is in place.

Processes and events are well organised and resources are used efficiently.

In the period under review, the management relationship has been somewhat outside the orientation of ACT Ubumbano. It's been a bit messy but the messiness has been well managed. The Change Manager was "employed" by Christian Aid and was therefore directly accountable to the Christian Aid Project Officer. However, they both seemed to have managed this well. The administration was vested with NCA till the end of 2018.

Under a new arrangement the administration of ACT Ubumbano will now be vested with Church Land Programme. This is a well-established and managed NGO with sound praxis and a very progressive organisational culture<sup>51</sup>. This move will be useful going into the next phase were the hard issues need to be addressed and ACT Ubumbano will be tested.

### **7.2 Governance**

Act Ubumbano is not a traditional NGO and has taken on a governance form that is appropriate to its orientation. Content has come before structure. The Advisory Group was developed organically and comprises both E3 and representatives of South(ern) African partners.

From the documentation of Advisory group meetings and the participation of the Advisory Group members in the evaluation, this is a powerful group that understands their role, at an individual and collective level and effectively contribute towards the relevance and effectiveness of ACT Ubumbano.

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<sup>51</sup> The evaluation facilitator has facilitated two external evaluations of CLP and has been recently part of joint North South Misereor evaluation of a CLP project

The E3 have played an important role in this initial phase and two members form part of a working group that support staff in the interim between the broader advisory group meetings. Southern partners have expressed their non-availability to play this role, due to understandable work pressures. However, this is unfortunate. Even though the working group does not make key decisions, it does place two of the E3 partners in a "dominant" position. The principle is that this is a joint project and therefore the principle needs to be expressed through all structures.

Going forward, the evaluation is of the view that the working group is not necessary. The advisory group provides direction, a space for accountability and strategy refinement. Various task teams will play an important role going forward. Hub spaces have also provided broader direction and accountability.

Managers should manage and ACT Ubumbano is fortunate to have two experienced staff. If necessary, there are a range of experienced leadership among both sets of partners and they could provide good use as sounding boards, a role that the current working committee plays. However, this is a matter that Act Ubumbano needs to deal with.

However, governance arrangements could change depending on how some of the recommendations from the evaluation are discussed, accepted, rejected or refined. This evaluation calls for a similar process in the North with a hub and institutional capacity to take the challenges forward in particular, the implementation of the Kopanong principles with a clearer strategy informed by conditions in the North.

Therefore, the evaluation is of the opinion that joint governance will be important. How this works needs to be a subject of thorough discussion. Will there be one overall co-ordinator? It will indeed be a strong statement with regard to power relations if the overall Co-ordinator was based in the South with a broader joint advisory group, which is in place anyway.

### **7.3 Sustainability**

The sustainability of this solidarity initiative is dependent on a number of factors, these include the following areas:

#### ***Finance***

The E3 partners have provided funding. It is hoped that funding would continue. If the recommendation regarding a more organised, supportive and strategic initiative takes place in the North, more funding will be needed.

A coherent, congruent and cohesive programme in the North will bear benefits for both the North and South and make a substantial contribution to a new type of solidarity and social justice from local to global based on the principles and orientation of ACT Ubumbano.

With sound demonstration of the qualitative dimension to social justice, this initiative will place itself in a strong position to leverage new sources of funding and platforms for bigger funding schemes to amplify impact

#### ***Administrative sustainability***

This is a stable area of ACT Ubumbano and we should not under-estimate the importance and efficiency that goes with a sound administration. Compliance with funding requirements is efficient.

## 8. FINDINGS

### 8.1 Findings from the context and relevance of ACT UBUMBANO

#### ACT UMBUMBANO is relevant because:

8.1.1 The impact of neo-liberalism and rising resistance is unfolding both in the North and South. The context has opened up greater possibilities for people to people solidarity and a solidarity that is different from the solidarity for the era of political liberation in the region. ACT Ubumbano is one such initiative that is different.

8.1.2 The current system generates the issues on which to organise both for the right wing shift and the social justice sector. The increased vulnerability of the poor and middle classes provides space and "rich pickings" for the right and those that espouse toxic nationalisms, misogyny, xenophobia, racism and homophobia.

ACT Ubumbano, NGO partners, the E3 and social movements, have a substantial role to play in qualitatively and quantitatively supporting the strengthening of the social justice voice and power of the poor.

8.1.3 In a balance of forces/power analysis, the forces for emancipation are small and generally not united in struggle. Demobilisation is of concern.

Therefore the organisation and mobilisation of resilient allied people's formations/movements led by the poor is critical if this system is to be challenged substantially. What makes for resilient formations/movements in this context is a fundamental question for deeper reflection and change.

ACT Ubumbano's orientation towards supporting agency, supporting the building of united and resilient struggle led by the organised voice of the poor and rooted in a transformative analysis and emancipatory in praxis, is therefore critical in this period.

8.1.4 Emancipation will come through the struggles of the poor and marginalised, at local, national, regional and global levels. Therefore, a programme of building solidarity based on those that suffer lead and others walk that path with organised formations of the poor, is an important empowering orientation if there is to be a contribution towards fundamental and structural change.

8.1.5 Poverty and bearing the manifestations of the neo-liberal project has the face of woman, the struggle for social justice cannot be faceless, a just struggle must centrally reflect the face of woman. Gender justice has been central. ACT Ubumbano has facilitated vibrant gender justice processes/activities with partners and shows tremendous potential for gender justice to be central and intersect with all the other pillars and themes.

8.1.6 The evaluation has found that the pillar of gender justice has not been informed adequately by a broader structural contextual analysis. This a weakness in ACT Ubumbano. All pillars should demonstrate alignment with the ACT Ubumbano transformative analysis and emancipatory praxis.

8.1.7 The rise of the retrogressive fundamentalist religious phenomenon is worrying. A section of the church/institutional church has not articulated its transformational social justice/prophetic voice as a central part of its ministry. This is a critical area for attention, reflection and in particular, for the FBO's who form a substantial group in ACT Ubumbano.

Based on the above analysis the evaluation has found that ACT Ubumbano is highly relevant in the current complex external environment including the complex terrain in which the poor and marginalised are organising and mobilising.

## **8.2 Findings on identity of ACT Ubumbano – its understanding and participation**

**8.2.1** The identity of ACT Ubumbano is clearly established through its principled frameworks, a transformative approach and an emancipatory praxis. The identity is also clearly expressed in the document, *Inequality and the Struggle for Humanity in South Africa*, documenting a process of building solidarity in Southern Africa.

It is understood by partners who have ideological congruence. Process organisations are not easily understood. It will be important to continue to explain ACT Ubumbano, demonstrate the value of its work and broaden the participation of partners. In this regard, the gender justice pillar is leading the way.

ACT Ubumbano is therefore a critical, radical and different space to build a new form of solidarity, shaped by an understanding of the changing context. It is a process initiative that supports the organic development of solidarity programmes and therefore the anti-thesis of the log-frame and transactional project driven development.

## **8.3 Findings on Effectiveness**

The effectiveness of ACT Ubumbano should be seen in the context of thorough foundation phase of grappling and reaching clarity on its identity and orientation. This is an important result in a complex context.

**8.3.1** Substantial effort went into building relationships, constructive safe spaces, communication and facilitating effective participation of NGO partners, social movements/formations and the E3. This has fostered a progressive and constructive culture.

The hubs, learning events, the advisory group and the gender activities have contributed to:

- ✓ deepening a root cause and transformative analysis;
- ✓ raised the importance of emerging alternatives;
- ✓ clearer positioning of NGO's, E3 with regard to the centrality of the power and voice of the poor;
- ✓ conceptualising/refining emancipatory praxis and practice, including organising;
- ✓ building and setting the base for increased linkages, collaborations and alliances;
- ✓ breaking out of silo's/territorialism;
- ✓ embarking on organic community led solidarity actions eg, through the Ubumbano Voice.

**8.3.2** NGO partners are under pressure at a funding level and increased pressure on management. If not addressed it will impact negatively on ACT Ubumbano and growing solidarity.

- 8.3.3 Partners E3 and NGO's are the "organising terrain" of Act Ubumbano but also central to shaping its orientation and programme. Their participation in the Advisory Group has been effective. As the solidarity programme unfolds increased participation will be necessary and solidarity would need to be integrated more into partner programme work. An example is that the Ubumbano Voice could be much more vibrant and utilised, if the many stories of struggles are put onto the app.
- 8.3.4 The Community Organising Learning event and the facilitated gender activities have delivered results. ACT Ubumbano should be cautious not to get caught in a workshop orientation. The manner in which ACT Ubumbano plans, activates and follows up on these process needs attention. ACT Ubumbano needs to generate knowledge that illustrate the results and resonance of these activities. Task teams like the partner driven Gender Task Team are appropriate structures to drive these processes.
- 8.3.5 When the poor organise and voice truth to power, challenge power and challenge for peoples power to take control of social justice change, they are confronted with increased repression and securitisation. The evaluation affirms the theme Protecting the Defenders. Whilst understanding that many of the pillars and themes need to be further conceptualised, protecting defenders needs to be conceptualised with a deeper understanding of the threat and the nature of repression.
- 8.3.6 The scoping report provides important information about partners. This should be an ongoing exercise in the context of generating knowledge that enhances practice, the voice and struggles of the poor and demonstrable social change.
- 8.3.7 The current linear systems are not fully conducive for a transformative and emancipatory approach. This paradigm has substantially driven solidarity into the project delivery dimension. The discourse of project delivery language also restricts and has assisted to mould thinking into a project delivery orientation and has played a role in demobilising movement building (see 6.5).

Practice change is necessary both in the North and South with regard to planning and learning. E3 partners display flexibility amidst back donor constraints.

The increased ability to measure social change and reflect the qualitative dimension to social justice work is critical for NGO partners, E3, movements and ACT Ubumbano.

This issue has been raised consistently in this report in the context of reclaiming planning and learning sovereignty, asserting the value of social justice work and shifting the transactional funding towards transformational funding. This is an essential practice change area if there is to be a power shift as the linear modalities give funding partners substantial power and control.

Unless this happens more clearly and decisively with emancipatory planning and learning frames that control the back donor requirements, an emancipatory praxis will be frustrated and neither can it be adequately reflected, appreciated, measured and therefore remains a substantial constraint with regard to supporting struggles of the poor and initiatives of solidarity with the poor and marginalised.

ACT Ubumbano in moving into the next phase needs to perhaps be an example of this practice change and support partners with this area of practice change. As a process organisation that supports and facilitates, it does have more space to do so.

If knowledge generated in the "implementation phase" moves towards the quality of knowledge generated in the conception phase, it will make a major contribution to asserting the centrality of the transformational social justice development discourse.

8.3.8 Although there are encouraging change and signs of change individually within the E3 to address the Kopanong principles, there is an absence of strategy, institutional capacity and a programme to address these principles collectively. Some of the consequences of this would be:

- ✓ With the imperative of global struggle and increased people to people solidarity, the programme and identity of ACT Ubumbano will continue to be lob-sided towards the South.
- ✓ The right wing shift will continue largely unabated in relation to the predominant transactional development paradigm and the "smallness" and fragility to some extent of the E3 will be entrenched and the committed critical mass of activists in the E3 could be more frustrated.

#### **8.4 Findings on Efficiency**

8.4.1 With its experienced staff and the collective wisdom of the E3 and NGO partners, ACT Ubumbano is efficiently governed and managed.

8.4.2 Its highly participative, reflective and learning methodology enabled the E3, NGO Partners and increasingly formations have shaped its identity, orientation and programme and continues to do so now through task teams. This reflects a deeper sense of accountability.

The evaluation affirms the advisory group as the main from of governance and suggest that the working group is not needed due adequate points of accountability, sound transparency and this initiative very partner driven.

### **9. CONCLUSION**

"Self-criticism is an act of frankness, courage, comradeship and awareness of our responsibilities, a proof of our will to accomplish and to accomplish properly....To criticise oneself is to reconstruct oneself within oneself in order to serve better."

Amilcar Cabral, Unity and Struggle, Copy right 1979 by PAIGC

Without being repetitive this conclusion will be short. Many of the conclusive comments are in the findings.

In a complex messier world with increased dehumanisation of the poor, in particular women and youth, comes hope, opportunities and potential for a just world through the struggles, pain and victories of the organised voice and struggles of the poor. A range of resistance is on the upsurge in the North and South and provides great possibilities for a new type of solidarity.

This solidarity initiative is a reflection of the Cabral quote because it has built a constructive and progressive culture and conceptual clarity as outlined in its Principled Frameworks, its Transformative approach and an Emancipatory praxis (see 1.3). They have fostered collaboration, innovation and is bound to increase collaboration with for example the gender justice work.

It uses a range of methodologies for initiatives to emerge within this framework. The methods used have been participatory, empowering with vibrant engagement.

The Voice App, the community organising learning event, the gender work and protecting the defenders have emerged organically.

ACT Ubumbano has moved beyond the conceptualisation phase, it is facilitating gender initiatives led by partners and is driven by a partner led task team. The community organising learning event, the Ubumbano voice app is stimulating collaboration among partners and innovation. The issues identified with regard to these areas in this report when addressed would assist consolidate a number of these emerging initiatives.

The E3 have shown their commitment and intent but need to have a more organised response to implement the Kopanong principles.

Increased participation and ownership by NGO's, E3 and social movements, integrating ACT Ubumbano as part of their work will be vital going forward.

This is a good foundational start to address the "harder issues" of practice change with the NGO partners, the E3 and social movements/formations to refine their practice in order to work more effectively, build a new type of solidarity that changes power relations, enhances people to people solidarity driven by the principle of equality, the imperative of dignity and respect by walking the journey together with the poor in their struggles for transformative social justice.

There is critical mass, a core of organisations that have been consistent, see congruence with the orientation of ACT Ubumbano, value this space, learn, share and place more energy in the unfolding solidarity processes.

The progressive culture will be tested as ACT Ubumbano addresses the recommendations. The next phase will addresses a number of "hard issues" as each part of Act Ubumbano deals with practice change and to be supportive of each other in the change process.

Change is never easy, power is not easy to share and this applies to both the North and South. There has been a solid foundation built to take this solidarity initiative forward.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations need to be studied carefully to draw out some of the more specific's that cannot go into broad recommendations. It does provide analytical material to shape moving forward, consolidating and advancing on current work.

### **RECOMMENDATION 1 – IDENTITY AND BROADENING THE ACT UBUMBANO ALLIANCE**

This evaluation affirms the work done thus far with regard to conceptual clarity and emerging solidarity initiatives. It should continue to creatively and more vigorously convey/engage its identity to a range of players, to enable its orientation to increasingly be understood, supported and generate

participation. ACT Ubumbano should broaden its reach of its orientation both quantitatively and qualitatively by:

- 1.8 The clip on the website is a good explanation and should be further developed and distributed.
- 1.9 A consolidated information stating, What is and why ACT Ubumbano? What is it not? Its significance in the current context? What it hopes to achieve? How it goes about achieving what it sets out to achieve? The progress made thus far. The gains from participation by NGO's, social movements and the Northern partners. The gender justice work with organic follow-up led by partners could be an example of how broadening could take place within the frame and orientation of ACT Ubumbano.
- 1.10 The scoping report provides a good basis for a force field analysis (dart-board approach), and strategy for field work to broadening the base.
- 1.11 Continued exposure and processes (not events) will be important, hearing the powerful voice of base groups, and a more base-group orientation. ACT Ubumbano events/processes need to increasingly be reflective of the voices of the poor and its proximity to struggles will be important.  
  
Few community based activists were at the launch of Ubumbano Voice and more at the community organising hub. Some suggested that the launch could have been held in a community and done more creatively due to being in close proximity to a struggle.
- 1.12 Increasing the voices of the poor expressing themselves and engaging each other and partners (like the organising learning), perhaps one or two base partners who can benefit from attending the deeply engaging and analytical Advisory Group meetings, which are deeply analytical and engaging.
- 1.13 Maintaining and developing the methodology of reflection, learning and sharing should always be part of ACT Ubumbano processes. The manner in which ACT Ubumbano actions unfold should be maintained. It is organic orientation should be strengthened as it moves from a predominantly conceptualisation phase to organic solidarity initiatives. It should start with reflection and not with actions. By reflecting, strategic issues are identified to be taken forward to enhance struggles and change/refine practice.
- 1.14 Explore local follow-up with regard to for example, community organising learning event which had the participation of both NGO partners and the formations they work with. If three or four partners who work with movements and formations, convene a process of a learning and sharing event, this could set the basis for organic solidarity among the formations and greater collaboration amongst the NGO's.

## **RECOMMENDATION 2 - THE CENTRALITY OF PARTNER PARTICIPATION AND OWNERSHIP**

### **This recommendation is linked to Recommendation 1**

Partners in their strategic and operational planning should include solidarity as an objective or sub-objective and funding partners in the North should be open to funding this as a budget line. In addition, funds can be drawn from the ACT Ubumbano solidarity funds. Ideally, if projected in strategic plans, it will give a longer term trajectory for both partners in the North and South.

ACT Ubumbano should refine its field work strategy informed by its developing baseline and unfolding processes. Consistent contact, further building relationships, communication, advancing and consolidating emerging solidarity initiatives will all be key moving forward.

Getting the message out clearly not just to management but to partner field staff and movements/formations will be important in that they are more in touch with the ground and could include this in their thinking, analysis and programme work. Therefore, getting ACT Ubumbano understood and activated as broadly as possible in a critical mass of organisations will be important.

### **RECOMMENDATION 3 - THE PILLARS**

The evaluation affirms the pillars, gender, economic, environmental justice.

All pillars should develop a framework that reflect the following:

- be rooted in sound analysis of context (root causes)
- be in alignment, is reflective of and promotes the principled frameworks, transformative approach and emancipatory praxis (see 1.3)
- should not be predominantly NGO driven
- reflects a change of practice at a number of levels NGO's, formation/movements and E3
- be organic in how it unfolds
- be situated in an appropriate emancipatory planning, documenting and learning system to measure the resonance and impact of solidarity initiatives, and to continuously generate the strategic issues for consolidating and advancing work.

### **RECOMMENDATION 4 – FAITH BASED ORGANISATIONS**

ACT has a critical mass of FBO's organisations and a broader network of other FBO's that it can draw in. The FBO's have the potential to clearly cut through the neo-liberal context, analyse the church sectors response (see 4.5) and provide a clear analysis that shows the imperative of social justice that is transformative and emancipatory. The entry point of gender justice and the work done with FBO can also provide entry points.

That this process be informed by a root cause/structural analysis and is within the frame of ACT Ubumbano's transformative and emancipatory approach.

That this space should provide guidance with regard to the prophetic voice of the church and the option to stand in solidarity with the poor in a manner that reflects a transformative and emancipatory orientation.

The following questions arising from the analysis (see 4.5) are important for the FBO's:

- Was/Is "critical solidarity" with the neo-liberal paradigm a weak strategic choice? What was the justification for critical solidarity within the frame of the neo-liberal paradigm and all its manifestations? What lessons can be drawn?
- To what extent has this "critical solidarity" generally demobilised the social justice dimension in the church?
- If the positioning was clearly anti-neoliberal to what extent could the church have been prophetic and confronted and organised against neo-liberalism and its manifestations?
- Given the current context how should the churches position itself?
- What role can the FBO's play in formulating a transformative response that can give clarity to the prophetic voice?
- Is there a critical mass that can be activated and what are the key elements that can frame a strategy?

## **RECOMMENDATION 5 - ONGOING KNOWLEDGE GENERATION**

The ACT Ubumbano has a good baseline from the scoping study; however baseline is not static<sup>52</sup>. ACT Ubumbano should view this as an ongoing area of work and should explore the tool of Participatory Action Research. Future areas that could be covered with regard to baseline, further scoping and knowledge generation:

- ✓ Reflect a more root cause analysis of the country situations and partner understanding/analysis of the problems/issues that they work on;
- ✓ Reflect the extent of partner alignment to the orientation of ACT Ubumbano;
- ✓ Show how partners understand solidarity and the solidarity initiatives they are currently involved in, including those outside of ACT Ubumbano;
- ✓ Reflect the resonance and impact of ACT Ubumbano with regard to solidarity initiatives, eg. what happened after your story was on the app? What resonance did the community organising learning event have?
- ✓ Increase its competence to demonstrate the quality of social justice work and process work within the transformation and emancipatory paradigm.

It should address this by conceptualising and develop a system of Emancipatory Planning and Learning in ACT Ubumbano and support partners to enable more effective reflection of the qualitative dimension to social change;

- ✓ Generate knowledge development and production on solidarity and an emancipatory praxis;
- ✓ Generate knowledge and qualitative information analysis, eliciting strategic issues that need to be taken to the Advisory Group, fed into programme activity, shaping organic activities and generally consolidating and advancing the ACT Ubumbano solidarity orientation and initiative;
- ✓ Trace progress of strategic issues identified and activated both in the North and South.

This is a critical aspect of generating knowledge that will assert the centrality of the transformative and emancipatory frame of this initiative and could provide valuable material for the strategy to “claw back from transformational funding towards transformative funding” in the North.

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<sup>52</sup> Note: Baseline is against or towards, a pole, a vision, a concept or strategic objectives. These poles are not static but dynamic and changing both in evolving of vision, concepts (including ideology) and strategy around for example, agrarian transformation in a complex operational environment. For example, the critical mass of cadre can grow in their conceptual understanding of the context, conditions and deepen their analysis of their problems, develop confidence, develop various technical/organising/political skills, begin a programme of action that addresses various problems, constraints, challenges and drives the initiative towards addressing the objectives of their programmes which can lead towards alliance building. The variables of process and complexities make this analysis especially if practiced in action/learning mode dynamic and powerful, and it sharpens strategic competence (ability to manage and even turn internal and external challenges into opportunities to advance struggles).

This recommendation needs further conceptualisation and capacity will be needed to activate this as the current staff cannot carry out this area of work.

### **RECOMMENDATION 6 – PRACTICE - ADDRESSING THE PRESSURE ON MANAGEMENT IN NGO'S**

Directors and managers are busy and it is necessary to find ways of managing and/or refining organisations for increased sustainability and resilience.

Management are part of the advisory group, participate in many of the processes of ACT Ubumbano and they are critical with regard to the strengthening of this sector under increasing difficult conditions

ACT Ubumbano should create the space for management to reflect, learn and share practice with the purpose of refining management practice in an increasingly difficult environment for NGO's

This should result in;

- The refining of management practice in the current context;
- Supporting organisational change and renewal in some instances;
- A strategy to deal with the funding crisis, defining ACT Ubumbano's role in this strategy and developing funding stability.
- The growing alignment with and involvement in Act Ubumbano and viewed as part of NGO work;
- Building organisational cultures that are reflective of transformation and emancipation.
- In some instances, it may be useful to look at conflict sensitivity, addressing latent conflict, and conflict transformation.

### **RECOMMENDATION 7 - PRACTICE - COMMUNITY ORGANISING**

The Community organising learning event raised a number of critical issues that activists identified that need to be addressed with regard to refining organising practice. Follow-up is important.

This follow-up could take the form of localised learning events that could be an ongoing space in closer proximity to struggles and has the potential to generate peer solidarity.

Some of the complexities with regard to strengthening organising have been raised in hub processes including the learning event<sup>53</sup>. These could form a set of strategic analysis areas/questions and at some point to reflect on progress with regard to these issues. This will also assist to measure change in this important sector of Act Ubumbano. These include :

- single issue organising;
- lack of alliances;
- the need for a more structural analysis
- the difficulties in translating protests into sustained struggle;
- male dominant leaders with the mass being the face of woman;
- the importance of strategy and tactics when engaging and confronting power or wanting to take power at local level;
- autocratic and centralised leadership versus more egalitarian structures;
- advancing on a number victories and gains in a resilient and more pro-active manner;
- some NGO's in their practice creating dependency and demobilising agency, like some who say they amplify the voice of the poor as if the poor do not have their own voice.

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<sup>53</sup> See Report, Act Alliance, Ubumbano Learning Event, community organising, solidarity in action, December 2017

- some movements are very under resourced as compared to NGO's.
- contending with repression and the need for a defensive strategy<sup>54</sup>
- Reviewing and refining the practice of movements and formations

These issues and emerging issues need to be addressed if there is to be expanding resilient, effective social movements with increased allied social weight to challenge power and work towards effective transformative change. This will be an important space for reflection going forward and contribute to a stronger voice of the organised poor.

ACT Ubumbano and partners like for example in the Gender justice pillar should formulate a set of strategic analysis questions and areas.

### **RECOMMENDATION 8 – STRATEGY AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE KOPANONG PRINCIPLES**

That ACT UBUMBANO formulates a concept, strategy and institutional capacity to enable the E3 partners to more effectively address the Kopanong principles and develop a vigorous programme of conceptualisation, solidarity hub development, and action, informed by the issues raised in this report.

That it draws from ACT Ubumbano partners in the South for guidance and support.

That it embarks on a strategic study to look at the context, how the E3 are changing towards the ACT solidarity orientation, constraints, possibilities, potential, risks, opportunities, allies, etc and key elements that can inform a strategy.

This study should have a strong element of terrain analysis to assist identify various supportive factors/organisations/people, to inform strategy. That in conducting this study which should cover the three E3 countries, there should also be engagement with base organisations involved in struggles and their possible alignment to the ACT Ubumbano solidarity orientation. It should reflect elements of Participatory Action Research.

The team should comprise "expertise" which should include partners from the North and South and be done in a participatory and innovative manner that in many ways does some of the groundwork.

It should lead to a strategy.

If this recommendation is accepted, there should be one advisory group and the evaluation suggest that the overall co-ordinator be based in the South.

### **RECOMMENDATION 9 - A PROACTIVE RESPONSE TO REPRESSION – MOVING BEYOND PROTECTING THE DEFENDERS?**

That ACT Ubumbano creates the space together with partners, E3 and social movements to conceptualise and activate as part of its programme a defensive strategy<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> This has emerged from the evaluation process and goes beyond Protecting the Defender

<sup>55</sup> A defensive strategy is not passive, it is understanding the terrain of struggle and various actors and forces that can repress that struggle. It involves pre-empting how those forces can react and preparing for it. Eg. Legal support, the community being

It draws from the experience of movements who have borne the brunt of repression and the manner in which they organise in defence of their struggles.

**Appendix 1 – List of Desktop Documents – this is a selection over 50 documents were studied**

1. 8 Updates on the change process
2. Notes and reports of Advisory Group meetings
3. Reports and notes from Advisory group meetings
4. Solidarity Hub minutes
5. (2017) Act Ubumbano, Inequality and the Struggle for humanity in South Africa, documenting a process of solidarity.
6. ACT Ubumbano, South and Southern Africa, Gender and SRHR Concept
7. Act Alliance South Africa, Report on the mapping of organisations involved in Community Organising and Social Justice in Southern Africa, May 2018, Esibayeni Group (Pty) Ltd.
8. (October 2018) Goran Therborn, Twilight of Swedish Social Democracy, new Left Review
9. Ubumbano Notes from visit to JCP Zambia on 23-24 April 2018
10. Report, Act Alliance, Ubumbano Learning Event, community organising, solidarity in action, December 2017
11. Report, Amplifying Women's Voices in Artisanal and Small Scale mining for demand driven chain
12. Notes from E3 Solidarity Hub meeting – 16<sup>th</sup> March 2018
13. A call to action and update on the Act Alliance Change Process – 10 May 2018
14. SRHR – Report on 16 days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children
15. Structure Presentation

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the ears and eyes of leadership (intelligence), exposing publicity in the North and South, alliance building, counter-intelligence, turning responses of the dominant class into opportunities , solidarity activation on different fronts – opening space and taking opportunity from repression and thus refining evolving tactics (it is ultimately a contestation with power) etc

## **Appendix 2 – List of Informants – names are available from the office**

1. Staff – orientation meetings held individually, focus discussion with both staff and extended discussion of draft report
2. Two Working Group focus discussions – 5/6 participants
3. Discussions with 3 advisory group members in addition to those who attended the focus discussion.
4. Focus discussion in Johannesburg with an independent reflector – 5 partners and 2 activists
5. Focus discussion in KZN – 3 partners with an independent reflector
6. Focus discussion in Harare – 1 Partner and 1 Activist
7. Follow-up discussion with 2 Activists and 1 Advisory Group member
8. Discussions with 3 facilitators of hubs, advisory group meetings and learning events and 1 expert in the philanthropy sector
9. Individual discussions with project officers from the E3
10. Follow-up telephonic discussion with staff

## Appendix 3 – Instruments

### **PARTICIPATORY EXTERNAL EVALUATION – ACT – UBUMBANO INSTRUMENT GUIDE 3.1 - ANALYTICAL AND REFLECTIVE FOCUS DISCUSSION WITH PARTNERS – 8<sup>th</sup> November (KZN) 27<sup>th</sup> November (Zimbabwe) and 29<sup>th</sup> November (Gauteng)**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

##### **1.1 Background**

- In response to changing global conditions, and to effectively amplify the impact of their work, three European development agencies that are ACT Alliance members, have joined with Southern African partners to explore new ways of working.
- A key element in this process is the centrality of 'Solidarity Hubs' that bring together European and Southern African organisations and churches, and movements and allies from other parts of the world, to critically reflect on their practice of social justice, reflect on global and structural drivers of injustice, and emerge with new solidarity action that is rooted in the communities they seek to serve.
- Out of this the Ubumbano Solidarity hub has emerged as an initiative of a group of European and Southern ACT alliance members, and other partners in South and Southern Africa creating a new joined up model that will support communities' struggles for economic, gender and environmental justice.
  
- ***The review has two core objectives:***
  - ✓ Assess the progress made in the multi-stakeholder process of setting up a new joint solidarity initiative, and
  - ✓ Assess the extent to which that initiative is developing new ways of collaboration, reflection and innovation in the field of social justice in South and Southern Africa
  
- ***Additional secondary objectives are to:***
  - ✓ Produce a mapping of the ways the initiative has contributed to increasing the voice of silenced communities
  - ✓ Assess the relevance of the tools / instruments / inputs developed for the project e.g. Solidarity Hub, learning exchange approach, community voice, etc
  - ✓ Provide actionable recommendations on how to entrench the model, increase participation, strengthen or institutionalise the space for reflection, and enhance the objectives of the initiative

#### **2. THIS PROCESS**

This focus discussion is intended to be a critical analysis and a space to take the analysis forward. Ubumbano has been a reflective and analytical process . Through our discussions we can deepen this analysis with a forward looking component within the frame of the objectives of this evaluation.

As part of this process we will also have an overall reflector who will listen and share reflections towards the end of the process.

### **3. INTRODUCTIONS**

3.1 Participants introduce themselves using GUIDE 1

3.1 Facilitator introduces himself and the evaluation process and today's process

### **4. CONTEXT, THE POSITIONING OF ACT UBUMBANO, ITS SOLIDARITY CONCEPT and PROGRAMME.**

4.1 A participatory exercise and discussions/reflections using a guide

4.2 Reflectors comments and conclusion

## **Guide 2 for focus discussion – Ubumbano Evaluation – 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

### ***The context of solidarity (structural drivers of injustice)***

The world is changing and it cannot be "business as usual". A new type of solidarity is needed. Over 30 years of neo-liberal globalisation has resulted in: gross and entrenched structural inequality and poverty; massive wealth accumulation for a few; entrenched patriarchy; growing securitisation and repression; conflict and war; trade wars; a restructuring of labour reflecting increased vulnerability and the precarious nature of work, in particular for woman; and the entrenchment of the dirty energy and extractive path.

In our region we have seen an elite transition led by former liberation movements reflecting many of the manifestations listed above. On the continent BRICS investment is in extractive mode, re-enforcing the structural drivers and imbalances and, in some instances, linked to bloody civil wars.

However, a worrying trend has been the rise of the right in for example, Europe (the Swedish elections being the latest), the United States, Brazil, South Africa and India. With this comes the worrying growing trends of racism, misogyny, fundamentalist right wing religion, homophobia and xenophobia.

**The current system generates the issues on which to organise both for the right wing shift and social justice sector.**

There are many solidarity possibilities if contextual analysis is deepened, shared and the imperative of solidarity is conceptualised and activated in action/analytical reflection/learning mode (see, judge act).

The manifestations of this paradigm have impacted on the poor/marginalised/working class and in some instances, the middle classes both in the North and South. This has opened up greater possibilities for people to people solidarity. This assumes a conceptualisation and programme of solidarity in the North and the South.

Various social justice movements/organisations and formations are in struggle in the South and the North. Formations and social movements are the sources of hope for a better world. NGO's who constitute Ubumbano, work with, accompany, support and are in solidarity with struggles "the sources of hope"

NGO partners of ACT Ubumbano are in partnership with ACT alliance E3 (BfdW, CoS, and CA).

### **Questions for discussion**

The discussion should be within the following frame:

**Our understanding of the world** (just a few points):

A root cause contextual analysis informs the imperative of transformation. Our contextual analysis is at a number of levels, including the complex terrain, and the objective and subjective conditions in which the poor and marginalise organise themselves and in which partners support/are in solidarity.

**Our place in the World** (just a few points)

Ubumbano, partners (us) and movements/formations struggles, alliances, positioning in the context, our programmes, projects, strategy, praxis and struggles, our practice.

**Our vision and practice of an alternative** (just a few points)

Are we an alternative in values, practice, in relationships, in struggles, in solidarity and a reflection of a new transformative culture?

Increased spaces to express this in organising, mobilising, programmes of community/sector re-organisation eg, solidarity economy, food sovereignty, in-situ community driven informal settlement development.

**In all of the above:**

**1. The process of conceptualising and the programme of ACT Ubumbano strongly features the participation of partners.**

1.1 In what ways and how have partners shaped/contributed to the concept and programme of Ubumbano?

**2. Is the programme Ubumbano, contributing to a deeper understanding of solidarity? If so how ?**

2.1 Is it contributing to shaping our place in the world? If so how ?

2.2 Is it contributing to a vision and practice of an alternative? If so how ?

2.3 In particular, what is the conceptualisation and role of Ubumbano in raising and making gender justice a core part of its orientation?

2.4 How has it gone about this? Progress and constraints.

**3. Summarise the progress, gains, positives of all of the above and how can they be consolidated and advanced?**

**4. Summarise the constraints, weaknesses, challenges and how they can be further addressed/addressed?**

**5. The E3 partners have committed themselves to the Kopanong Principles? (its attached )**

What is the programme to implement these principles?

To what extent have the E3 implemented these principles and what are the positive effects on partnerships, solidarity initiatives and fundamental change in the manner in which they operate, based on the principles of solidarity, an important one being equality?

Have there been shifts with regard to funding that is more conducive to social justice work and systems that are more conducive to planning, reporting, learning and measuring social change?

**6. What are the strategic issues going forward for ACT Ubumbano?**

**The Kopanong Principles\***

1. We commit to promote a strategic and transformative relationship with southern African partners, which go beyond transactional funding.
2. We build our future partnership on solidarity, with a strong commitment to change the power dynamics and being more accountable to partners.
3. Our new model will be jointly owned, but driven by southern partners, and we do not subscribe to the top-down models driven by many INGOs.
4. Our new model has a regional advocacy focus and include both South African and Southern African partners with a regional focus and/or national programmes that links to regional priorities.
5. We engage in strategic partnerships with both ACT Alliance members and faith-based organisations, but also organisations, networks and movements without a direct affiliation to the church.
6. Whatever model – we strongly commit to instate a local independent advisory committee consisting of national and regional partners.
7. We will start from an evolving organisational model (possibly an NCA hosting model) and may over time move into a new localized organisational model, if agreed upon by E4 members and partner organisations.
8. The Board will consist of core funding partners, e.g. Heads of Africa departments plus minimum three independent southern African members.
9. We commit to sustain funding levels during change process (2017-2018)
10. We commit to secure funding for the change manager and change process (2017-2018)

\* Adopted by CA, NCA, CoS, BftW – 10/03/2017

**Guide 1 – INTRODUCTION EXERCISE - Please hand to facilitator after introducing yourself.**

**NAME:**

**ORGANISATION** \_\_\_\_\_

1. What does your organisation do in no more than **2 sentences**?

2. Share a positive, hope, progress, an advance with regard to your work for social justice and one concern/worry or challenge.

**HOPE/POSITIVE/ADVANCE**

**CONCERN/WORRY/CHALLENGE**

3. Share a positive, hope, an advance, and a concern/worry/challenge with regard to the solidarity initiative Ubumbano.

**HOPE/POSITIVE**

**CONCERN/WORRY/CHALLENGE**

**PARTICIPATORY EXTERNAL EVALUATION – ACT – UMBUMBANO -8<sup>th</sup> November 2018  
INSTRUMENT GUIDE 3.1 - ANALYTICAL AND REFLECTIVE DISCUSSION WITH E3  
PARTNERS**

**5. BACKGROUND**

**1.1 Background**

- In response to changing global conditions, and to effectively amplify the impact of their work, three European development agencies that are ACT Alliance members, have joined with Southern African partners to explore new ways of working.
- A key element in this process is the centrality of 'Solidarity Hubs' that bring together European and Southern African organisations and churches, and movements and allies from other parts of the world, to critically reflect on their practice of social justice, reflect on global and structural drivers of injustice, and emerge with new solidarity action that is rooted in the communities they seek to serve.
- Out of this the Ubumbano Solidarity hub has emerged as an initiative of a group of European and Southern ACT alliance members, and other partners in South and Southern Africa creating a new joined up model that will support communities' struggles for economic, gender and environmental justice.
- ***The review has two core objectives:***
  - ✓ Assess the progress made in the multi-stakeholder process of setting up a new joint solidarity initiative, and
  - ✓ Assess the extent to which that initiative is developing new ways of collaboration, reflection and innovation in the field of social justice in South and Southern Africa
- ***Additional secondary objectives are to:***
  - ✓ Produce a mapping of the ways the initiative has contributed to increasing the voice of silenced communities
  - ✓ Assess the relevance of the tools / instruments / inputs developed for the project e.g. Solidarity Hub, learning exchange approach, community voice, etc
  - ✓ Provide actionable recommendations on how to entrench the model, increase participation, strengthen or institutionalise the space for reflection, and enhance the objectives of the initiative

1. What are the reasons for your organisation's partnership with the ACT Umbumbano solidarity initiative?  
Why is solidarity important during this period in the world, and in particular Southern Africa, Europe and your country of location?

2. Building on the question above, What (and Why) is the relevance of an initiative like ACT Umbumbano?  
In the light of your response to 1 and 2 above what are the critical factors and constraints that can enable effective solidarity? And how has ACT Umbumbano addressed these?
3. To what extent has ACT Umbumbano achieved the objectives it has set out to achieve? Let us look at progress, advances, outcomes and impact, constraints, challenges and weaknesses.
4. Gender Justice: What is the conceptualisation and role of Umbumbano in raising and making gender justice a core part of its orientation?  
How has it gone about this? Progress, results and constraints.
5. ACT Umbumbano its concept and programme has been shaped through consultations/spaces of interaction with partners both in the South and North. There is an advisory group and a working committee.  
How effective has the governance been? What can we learn from this model going forward?
6. What has been the administrative and compliance efficiency of ACT Umbumbano?
7. If this solidarity initiative is to be strengthened in the North and South, to support the voice and power of organised formations in their struggles for social justice, what are the strategic issues that ACT Umbumbano needs to address going forward.
8. As part of the E3 your organisation has made a commitment to the Kopanong Principles.
9. To what extent have you been able to conceptualise these principles and apply them. Let us look at progress, advances, outcomes and impact, constraints, challenges and weaknesses
10. Any other questions and issues

Thanks

Alvin

**APPENDIX 5 - METHODOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE WORK OF ACT UBUMBANO – ADD AMEND QUESTIONS AS APPROPRIATE.**

<b>Description of the methodology - the how and why (rationale for choice) and how did it fit into the overall orientation of ACT Ubumbano:</b>				
<b>Processes and Activity/Activities</b>	<b>Gains, progress, outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges, constraints and Weaknesses</b>	<b>Follow-up, key issues and potential going forward</b>	<b>Assessment of alignment to the overall objectives and orientation of ACT U and further analysis</b>
<b>Description of the methodology - the how and why (rationale for choice) and how did it fit into the overall orientation of ACT Ubumbano:</b>				
<b>Activity/Activities</b>	<b>Gains, progress, outcomes</b>	<b>Challenges, constraints and Weaknesses</b>	<b>Follow-up, key issues and potential going forward</b>	<b>Assessment of Alignment to the overall objectives and orientation of ACT U and further analysis</b>

## Appendix 5 ACT Ubumbano

Drawn from: **TOWARDS PLANNING AND LEARNING SOVEREIGNTY – A PROCESS OF REVOLUTIONISING PLANNING AND LEARNING INITIAL NOTES FOR AFRIKAGRUPPERNA STAFF MEETING ON EMANCIPATORY – 12/6/2018** - A.R. Anthony – [tonymflk@gmail.com](mailto:tonymflk@gmail.com)

### 1. WE OPERATE IN A PREDOMINANTLY TRANSACTIONAL DONOR WORLD

We are all influenced by the dominant transactional development paradigm. This paradigm is rooted in the neo-liberal discourse and was intended to shunt solidarity work into service delivery. Partners work in a confusing donor world and partners often need to propose and report on a variety of confusing language. Therefore, we are all captured to some extent by this paradigm. It is often the “donor” that makes it more difficult at times, due to the pressure of compliance. It is important to define these terms for ourselves and adapt according to how a specific donor or reporting format defines for example inputs, outputs and outcomes. Below is a list of definitions that could be of assistance.

#### *An attempt at Definitions*

<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	A set of objectives that address the strategic issues and illustrates the programmatic line of march of an organisation/movement/formation. This is what we broadly hope to achieve over a period of say 5 years. The strategic issues are drawn from a sound external and internal contextual analysis and evaluation of past and current work. Contextual analysis can take place at a number of levels, global, continental, regional, national, local operational terrain and specific sector. Strategic objectives are in alignment with the Vision, Mission and values of an organisation
<b>Objectives</b>	What do we hope to achieve? In a time-period, a project or programme. (it also provides the basis for measurement and analysis of the extent to which they have been achieved). Sound objectives should assist with the formulation of quality indicators as part of the chain of analysis.
<b>Inputs</b>	Resources put into the project
<b>Activities</b>	All that is done in order to make progress, advance work, obtain a result, achieve an objective – eg workshops, field trips, labour radio slots.
<b>Output</b>	Refers to immediate and direct consequence of activities completed eg 26 participants trained on organizing media education, 250 people assisted with labour legal advice, 20 labour media shows produced in a year.
<b>Outcome</b>	Is the positive or negative small or big change as a result of organizational activities Eg. The Health Care workers in Alex have been organised and reached an agreement with the

	government/organisation and are now recognised as a representative structure. Outcome is restrictive it could also be progress, advances, gains, challenges and weaknesses.
<b>Impact</b>	<p>Significant change at a societal level eg. As a result of five years of organizing to change precarious health in Hwange, five new forms of health organizations have started, and the community is now claiming their rights and have taken control of health services in the community. The following positive progress indicates the growth of community health .....</p> <p>The following indicates/shows/demonstrates a growth in the level of people's power, women's power and organisation.</p> <p>The following indicates the collective growth of a critical mass of activists.</p>
<b>Indicators</b>	<p>Indicators can be complex. They are basically both quantitative and qualitative. They should be formulated to assist to measure progress. How will we know what we are achieving and what level of change we want to achieve? The problem with indicators is that they are static designed during the planning prior to implementation. In a situation of flux, turbulence and variables, like organizing/movement building, or the volatile state of formations they can undervalue the work of an organisation. Indicators are also constantly developing in that if we ask the question 3 years down the line from planning – What shows or indicates that we have achieved an objective, the indicator could look very different or there could be additional indicators?</p> <p>Indicators also emerge in an unfolding process that cannot substantially be pre-determined.</p>
<b>Baseline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline is against or towards, a pole, a vision, a concept, strategic objectives, strategic issues or results/progress/advances.</li> <li>• These poles are not static but dynamic and changing both in evolving of vision, concepts (including ideology) and strategy around for eg. agrarian transformation work that unfolds in a complex operational environment.</li> <li>• So, for example, the critical mass of cadre can grow in their conceptual understanding of the context, conditions and deepen their analysis of their problems, develop confidence various technical/organising/political skills, begin a programme of action that addresses various problems, constraints, challenges and drives the initiative towards addressing the objectives of their programmes.</li> <li>• As they grow they become part of a bigger movement /alliances that demonstrate increased social weight for eg their human rights, value chain development, food sovereignty, solidarity and agrarian transformation. Note this is in a complex</li> </ul>

	<p>and variable context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The variables of process and complexities make this analysis especially if practiced in action/learning mode dynamic and powerful, and it sharpens strategic competence (ability to manage and even turn internal and external challenges into opportunities to advance).</li> <li>• The above point is situated in a context of a struggle for power. When power is challenged it responds. A principle in organising is that the system generates the issues on which to organise. The contestation and engagement with power provides/opens-up space and opportunities for further consolidation and advancing work. It is a constant tactical process of consolidating and advancing.</li> </ul>
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## 2. OUR DISCOURSE OF LANGUAGE

There needs to be an increased alignment with our language and an emancipatory praxis. Once again, we have been influenced by the dominant “transactional” paradigm and as part of reclaiming our planning and learning sovereignty, unlearning the old and learning the new is important. A few examples below.

<b>The word/concept</b>	<b>Critical Analysis</b>
<b>SMART</b>	SMART is often used. SMART indicators, SMART objectives and we should try to be SMART as much as possible. However, in a volatile environment with constant changes SMART can be very UNSMART. In a volatile environment you identify the drivers of that volatility, the root causes, where you want to go with a project, community or program (visioning, re-imagining the alternative) and therefore strategy and action learning is important. Processes unfold and therefore planning is refined and therefore it is not STATIC.
<b>BEST PRACTICE</b>	This word is often used and indeed there is best practice. Best practice works better in an exact science like accounting. Good practice is something that we can learn from and adapt to at times to a very different set of circumstances.
<b>EXIT STRATEGY</b>	Often some funders want to know what is your exit strategy from a community or country as “we cannot be there forever”. Exit strategy is reflective of a project approach. Solidarity requires a path of struggle that is protracted. In addition, it requires alliances to express increased combined social weight for social change. Roles may change and support from an NGO may be less. The critical mass of cadre should be used to further build and extend the movement. There is no exit from the struggle for social justice. One of the reasons why even some progressive NGO’s suppress the growth of movement is that they do not allow the critical mass to shape the formations they work with and respond adequately to the different levels.
<b>OUTCOMES</b>	This is an important concept; however, it does not capture adequately the nature of movement building for just social change. There is also

	<p>progress, gains, advances and challenges. In being confined to outcomes, we can miss some of the important aspects needed for consistent consolidation and advancing of peoples struggles.</p>
<p><b>Intended and unintended consequences/results</b></p>	<p>Indeed, there are the intended and the unintended. However, planning in process work cannot be exact, you cannot predict accurately how it is going to pan out. There are always emerging issues and they cannot be defined as unintended. Again, this concept is based on the notion that all inputs, outputs and outcomes must be foreseen. (the efficiencies of an engineering production model like the log-frame and its kissing cousin RBM).</p>
<p><b>Beneficiaries</b></p>	<p>I have seen and heard this word in Act Ubumbano documents. In a people centred approach the community is the main artist. Critical consciousness is different and asks the correct questions. Communities are not objects of history but subjects of history. In many of the transactional funded programmes, by reiterating the name beneficiary there is a relationship weakness and a power imbalance. The danger is that it contributes to a reinforcement of power dynamics and inequalities. Some theorists have also written about how the beneficiary orientation in development has disempowered, created dependency and reinforced structural violence.</p>