"EVERY VOICE COUNTS"

Inclusive Governance in Fragile Settings

III.2 Theory of Change

Theory of Change
Inclusive Governance in Fragile Settings

1. Introduction

Some 1.5 billion people, half of the world's poor, live in fragile settings where the government is unable or unwilling to fulfill its core responsibilities to protect and care for its citizens.[1] In such fragile settings, often characterized by variable levels of violent conflict, perspectives for stability and sustainable inclusive development - key priorities of the Dutch Government - continue to be extremely bleak. Whereas each fragile setting is unique, a broad international consensus exists on the multiple and complex causes that need to be addressed for a transition out of fragility. Among these, establishing inclusive governance processes is considered essential.[2]

This theory of change (TOC) focusses on inclusive governance processes in fragile settings. It is informed by CARE's extensive experience in programming, including advocacy support, in fragile settings and builds on CARE's Governance Programming Framework[3]. CARE envisions strengthening advocacy capacities of excluded groups and civil society organisations in some of the most fragile settings in the world, including Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, DRC, Rwanda and Burundi.
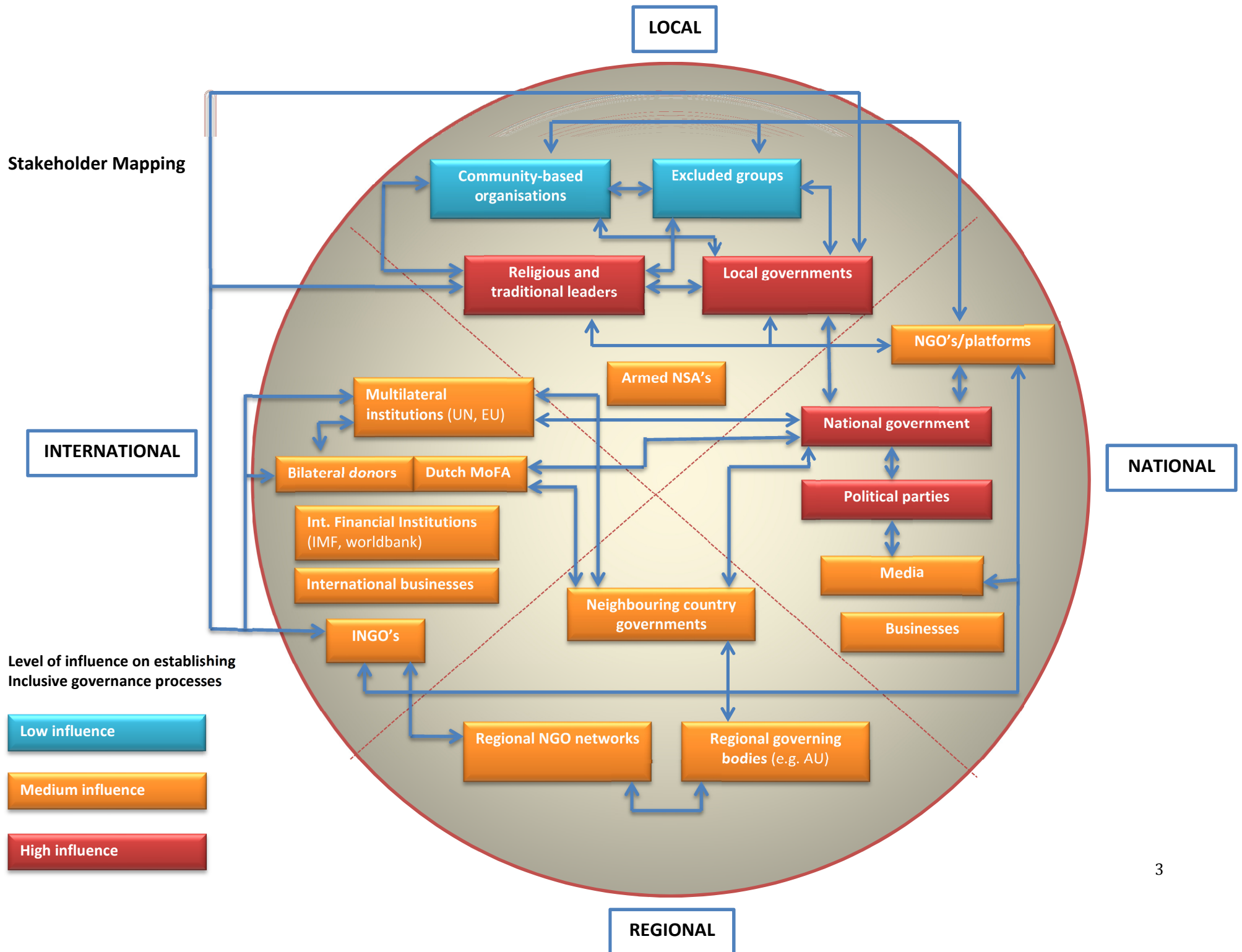
2. Analysis

A key obstacle for achieving sustainable development in fragile settings is the structural exclusion of particular segments of society from local and national governance processes. Dynamics of inclusion and exclusion are context-specific. However, exclusion is always a result of unequal power relations. In many fragile settings, especially poor people, youth, women, ethnic and religious minorities and indigenous people can be considered excluded groups. When these considerable parts of society not only lack access to scarce resources, but also lack the capabilities and opportunities to voice their demands and influence decisions that affect their lives, societal divisions, tensions and destabilisation remain imminent.

By providing an arena for channelling societal interests, and redefining and renegotiating the existing balance of power, civil society has a key role to play in advocating for the interests of excluded groups. However, civil society in fragile settings tends to be weak and polarized itself.[4] The legal and political environment is often fairly restrictive and the political space is shrinking further.[5] Suffering from weak capabilities[6], civil society finds it difficult to function effectively and represent and channel the interests of excluded groups.

In fragile settings, those in power often tend to lack responsiveness to demands made by the population or civil society. Those referred to as "power holders" include public authorities, but also religious or traditional leaders, and economic elites. In general, opening up governance processes for formerly excluded groups implies repairing voice and power asymmetries, and often evokes resistance of those currently in power. Expanding and strengthening spaces for dialogue and negotiation is therefore critical, in order to aggregate and channel demands and negotiate competing interests between all actors.

3. Stakeholder analysis

CARE has identified key stakeholders relevant to this TOC, and their relative influence on establishing more inclusive governance processes (see image below). Important relations between the actors have also been indicated. This stakeholder analysis will vary according to the specific country context.

Stakeholder Mapping

LOCAL

INTERNATIONAL

NATIONAL

REGIONAL

Community-based organisations

Excluded groups

Religious and traditional leaders

Local governments

NGO's/platforms

Armed NSA's

Multilateral institutions (UN, EU)

National government

Bilateral *donors*

Dutch MoFA

Political parties

Int. Financial Institutions (IMF, worldbank)

International businesses

Media

INGO's

Neighbouring country governments

Businesses

Regional NGO networks

Regional governing *bodies* (e.g. AU)

Level of influence on establishing Inclusive governance processes

Low influence

Medium influence

High influence

3

4. Long term objective and domains of change

For this TOC, our **long-term objective** is:

> **Governance processes in fragile settings are inclusive and effective**

The concept of **inclusive governance** here refers to the extent to which governance processes provide 'space' to overcome the systematic exclusion of these disadvantaged groups seeking to participate in decision making. To be 'inclusive' is a core value of democratic governance, in terms of equal participation, equal treatment and equal rights before the law. This implies that all people have the right to participate meaningfully in governance processes and influence decisions that affect them. CARE believes that inclusiveness also leads to more effective governance, since institutions and policies are accessible, accountable and responsive to disadvantaged groups, protecting their interests and providing diverse populations with equal access to public services such as justice, health and education.[7]

This TOC indicates four "domains of change" in which change is required to realize our long-term objective. The diagram below presents a static image in which the four domains are bounded and separate. However, in reality these domains will be overlapping, interdependent, and dynamic. While changes need to take place in all domains in order to achieve impact, the interaction between the domains is key. The domains are mutually constitutive, and change in one can trigger change in the other. The fourth and central domain is the product of interactions between public authorities and other power-holders (domain 3), members of excluded groups (domain 1), and CSO's representing them (domain 2).
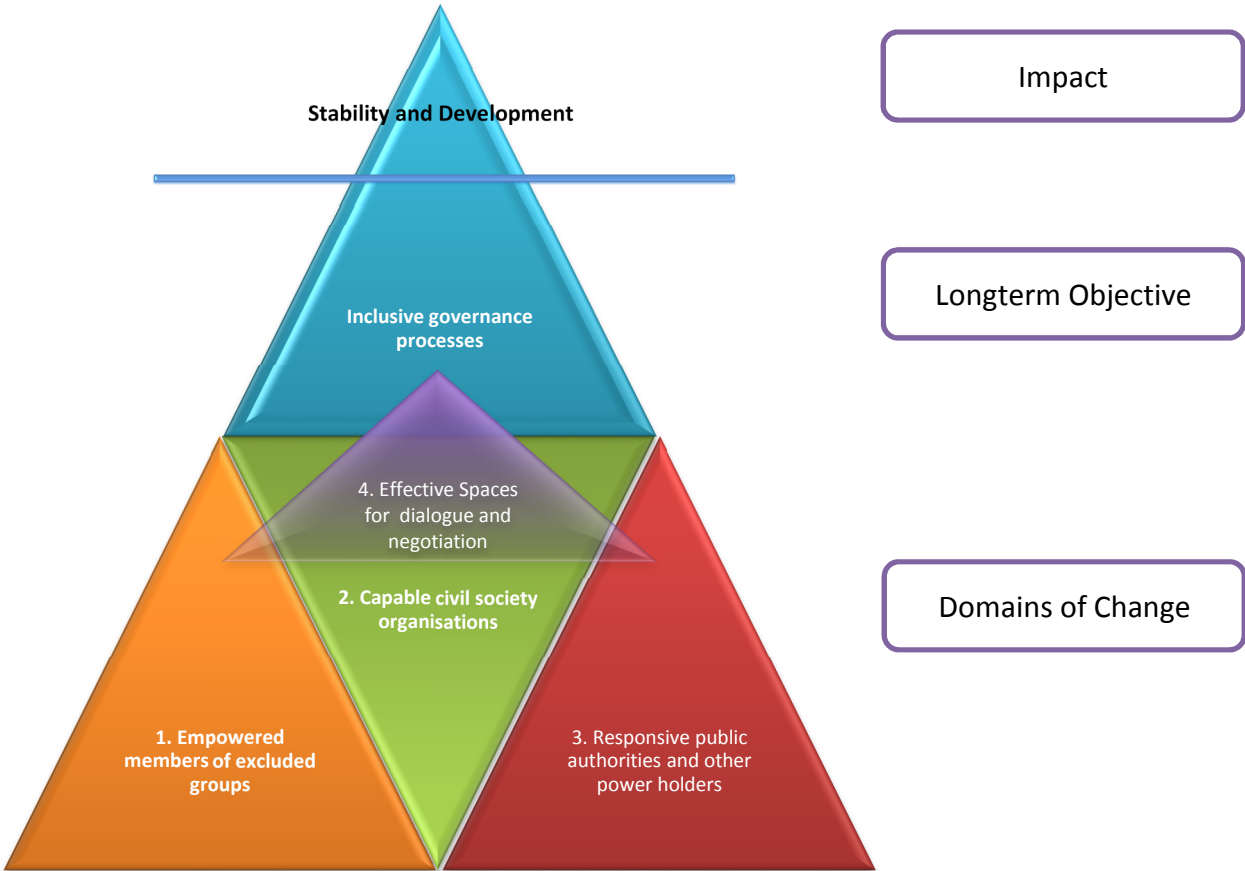
The five images below present the logic of our TOC. The first image shows the four domains (formulated as outcomes) as the building blocks of the long-term objective. These outcomes will have to be achieved in order to realize the long-term objective. In addition, the main assumptions that underlie the change process are made explicit. The other four images present each of the domains separately. Various pre-conditions have been presented which all have to be fulfilled to achieve the outcome. Also here the assumptions have been made explicit, together with an indication of interventions that contribute to the realisation of the pre-conditions.

Long-term objective:
Governance processes in fragile settings are inclusive and effective

ASSUMPTIONS

When interests of excluded groups are represented, resulting processes and policies are likely to yield expected development results, which increases public authorities' legitimacy – a key factor in securing stability.

IF

Domain 1: Members of excluded groups are empowered and are actively influencing decisions that affect their lives

Empowered excluded groups are essential to inclusive governance processes (1)

AND IF

Domain 2: Civil society organizations are effectively influencing policies and practices on behalf of excluded groups and are holding public authorities and other power holders to account.

CSO's are instrumental for excluded groups to influence policies on their behalf (2)

AND IF

Domain 3: Public authorities and other power-holders are responsive to and act upon the needs and interests of excluded groups

A responsive approach of power holders leads to more inclusive and effective planning and policy design and resource allocation. (3)

AND IF

Domain 4: Excluded groups, civil society organizations, public authorities and other power holders effectively interact through formal and informal spaces for dialogue and negotiation

Increased engagement and interaction between all actors in spaces for negotiation leads to policies and practices that better take into account the interests of excluded groups (4)

Domain 1: Excluded groups

1. Members of excluded groups are empowered and are actively influencing decisions that affect their lives

IF

1.1 Social norms are more conducive towards participation of excluded groups in society

AND IF

1.2 Members of excluded groups are strengthened to articulate and act upon their needs and aspirations, and engage in processes for social change

AND IF

1.3 Members of excluded groups have access to information, and an increased awareness of their civil rights and responsibilities

AND IF

1.4 Members of excluded groups actively exercise their agency

Most members of excluded groups are affected by discriminatory social structures, lack awareness of their rights and responsibilities and have limited capacities to articulate and act on their needs.

Engaging influential community members to promote rights of excluded groups and discourage harmful traditional practices and beliefs.

Supporting skill development through training (e.g. leadership, advocacy skills)

Facilitating grassroots advocacy initiatives. Community members are supported to carry out self-defined advocacy campaigns.

Strengthening of community based advocacy structures and linking them with higher level existing structures.

Awareness creation on rights and responsibilities (e.g. community theatre, radio spots, use of social media and IT).

Domain 2: Civil society organizations

ASSUMPTIONS   **INTERVENTIONS**

2. Civil society organizations are effectively influencing policies and practices on behalf of excluded groups and are holding public authorities and other power holders to account.

IF

2.1 CSO's are strengthened to operate effectively and advocate for inclusive governance

CSO's will be unable to fulfil their duties if they lack the institutional capabilities to do so

Institutional & advocacy capacity strengthening based on the 5c model.

AND IF

2.2 CSO's are representative of and accountable to excluded groups.

Accountability leads to legitimacy among excluded groups being represented

Promoting networking and coalition building: support existing platforms and new initiatives

AND IF

2.3 CSO's effectively collaborate in civil society networks or structures to advocate on common agenda's

Collaboration among civil society organisations will increase effectiveness of advocacy attempts and expands negotiation space.

Building international coalitions for dialogue with governments as an enabling environment for civil society
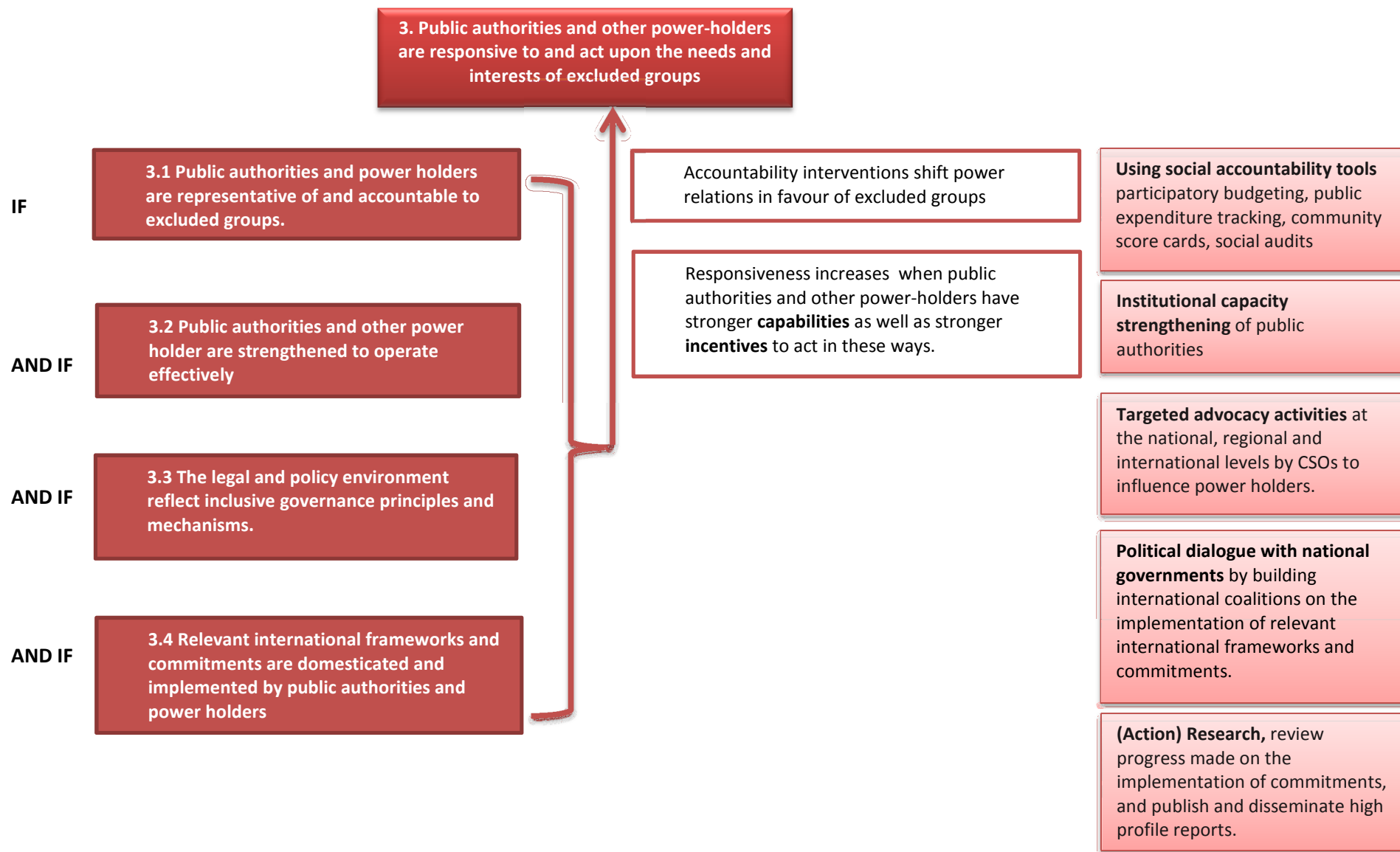
AND IF

2.4 The legal and policy environment allows civil society organisations to play their advocacy role.

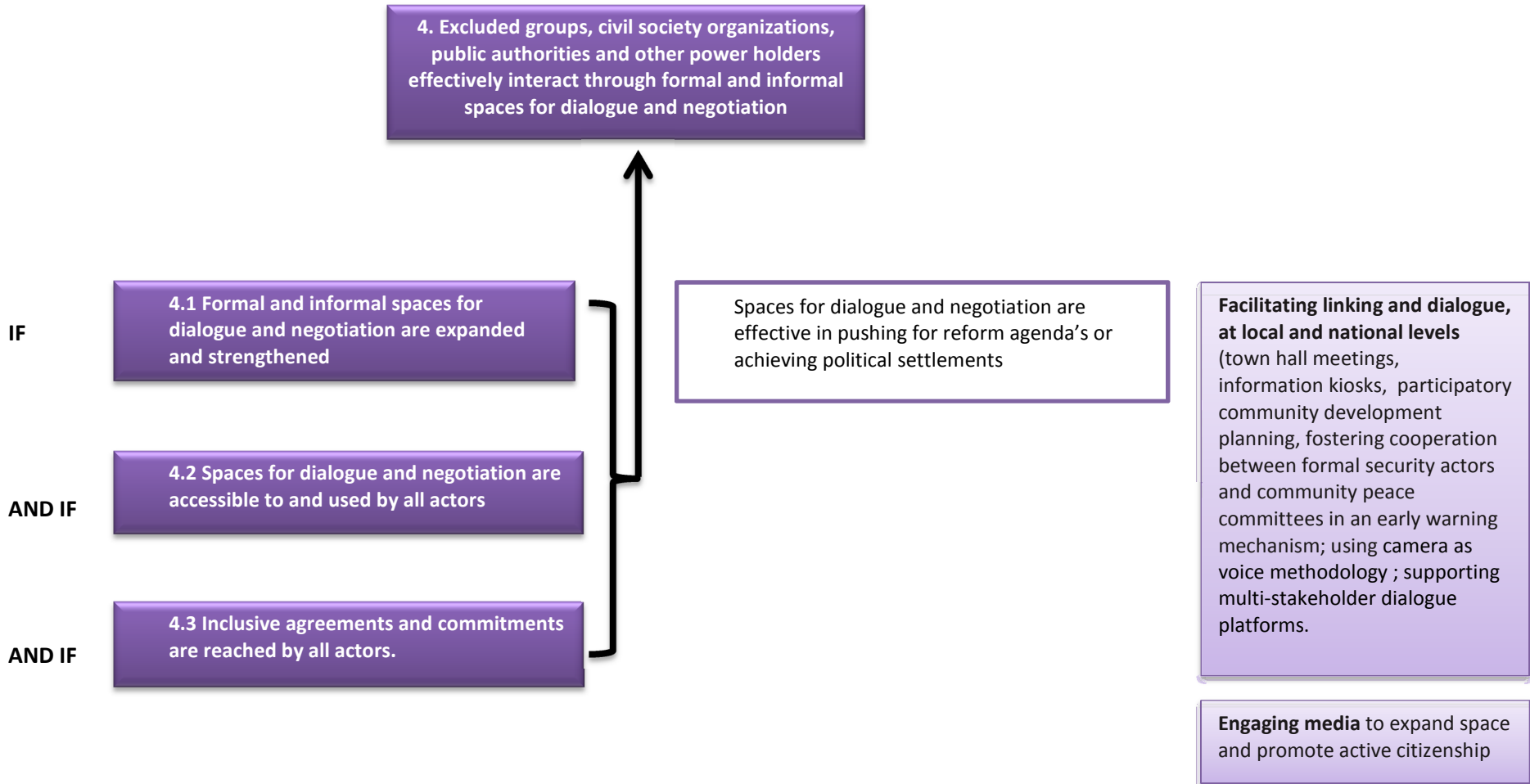## Domain 3: Public authorities and other power holders

ASSUMPTIONS

INTERVENTIONS

3. Public authorities and other power-holders are responsive to and act upon the needs and interests of excluded groups

IF

3.1 Public authorities and power holders are representative of and accountable to excluded groups.

AND IF

3.2 Public authorities and other power holder are strengthened to operate effectively

AND IF

3.3 The legal and policy environment reflect inclusive governance principles and mechanisms.

AND IF

3.4 Relevant international frameworks and commitments are domesticated and implemented by public authorities and power holders

Accountability interventions shift power relations in favour of excluded groups

Responsiveness increases when public authorities and other power-holders have stronger **capabilities** as well as stronger **incentives** to act in these ways.

Using social accountability tools participatory budgeting, public expenditure tracking, community score cards, social audits

Institutional capacity strengthening of public authorities

Targeted advocacy activities at the national, regional and international levels by CSOs to influence power holders.

Political dialogue with national governments by building international coalitions on the implementation of relevant international frameworks and commitments.

(Action) Research, review progress made on the implementation of commitments, and publish and disseminate high profile reports.

Domain 4: Spaces for dialogue and negotiation

4. Excluded groups, civil society organizations, public authorities and other power holders effectively interact through formal and informal spaces for dialogue and negotiation

IF

4.1 Formal and informal spaces for dialogue and negotiation are expanded and strengthened

AND IF

4.2 Spaces for dialogue and negotiation are accessible to and used by all actors

AND IF

4.3 Inclusive agreements and commitments are reached by all actors.

Spaces for dialogue and negotiation are effective in pushing for reform agenda's or achieving political settlements

Facilitating linking and dialogue, at local and national levels (town hall meetings, information kiosks, participatory community development planning, fostering cooperation between formal security actors and community peace committees in an early warning mechanism; using camera as voice methodology ; supporting multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms.

Engaging media to expand space and promote active citizenship

5 Indicators

The following impact and proces indicators will be used to monitor progress and make adjustements when required. SMART and context specific indicators will be part of the M & E plan, to be developed in the next phase.

Long-term objective

- % increase of members of excluded groups reporting an improvement in the realisation of their rights
- Reduced number of conflicts related to the exclusion of specific groups

Members of excluded groups

Impact indicators:
- % increase of members of excluded groups stating they have more influence in decision making processes that concern them.
- % increase of members of excluded groups participating in local development planning and the management of basic services and resources.

Process indicators:
- % reduction of discrimination (on the basis of gender, age, religion or ethnicity) reported
- % of members of excluded groups who report an increase in understanding of their civil rights and responsibilities
- Increased # of initiatives undertaken by members of excluded groups to advocate for their rights

Civil society

Impact indicators:
- % of members of excluded groups expressing satisfaction with the way their civil rights are promoted by CSO's
- Increase in # of advocacy initiatives undertaken by CSO's to address the rights and interests of excluded groups

Process indicators:
- % of CSO's which show an increased score on all of the five capabilities of the "5c model".
- Increased # of members of excluded groups report to participate in and be represented by CSO's
- Reduced # of reports of restrictive measures in the civil society operating environment
- Existence of CSO legislation respecting the fundamental freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and allowing for CSO engagement in governance processes, and lobby and advocacy.

Public authorities and other power holders

Impact indicators:
- % increase of members of excluded groups stating that local and national policies are addressing their identified needs
- % of targeted members of excluded groups indicating an increased level of confidence in public authorities and other power holders

Process indicators:
- Increased # of elected representatives are from excluded groups
- Accountability mechanisms (such as high courts, ombudspersons, auditor general, anti-corruption bodies, elections, budget monitoring, public hearings) exist and are increasingly evaluated positively.
- Increase in # of policies, laws, budgets and action plans that were developed through inclusive mechanisms.
- % of public authorities and power holders maintaining collective assets (water/education/health) that receive a higher score on their scorecard by their users

Spaces for dialogue and negotiation

Impact indicators:
- Increase in # of agreements and commitments reflecting the interests of excluded groups, as a result of the spaces for negotiation
- Increase in # of functional spaces and mechanisms for institutionalised participation in policy formulation and planning processes

Process indicators:
- Members of excluded groups, CSO's, public authorities and other power holders indicate awareness of relevant spaces for negotiation and that they are increasingly accessible to them.
- All actors express increased satisfaction with the interaction through spaces for negotiation

6 Strategic partnership: Roles & Responsibilities

This strategic partnership provides an opportunity for complementarity between the efforts of the Ministry and of CARE, who share the same agenda of fighting exclusion and strengthening governance and the rule of law in fragile settings. The value that CARE adds to the strategic partnership lies in our:

- strong field presence and experience in fragile settings;
- innovative community development approaches;
- extensive expertise in advocacy capacity strengthening;
- access to relevant advocacy networks (from local to global);
- holistic programming approach;
- strong government relations;

all described in more detail in our track record. These comparative advantages make us well placed to strengthen civil society organisations in their advocacy roles and in achieve lasting results. Depending on the context, CARE envisions a role within this strategic partnership as that of an initiator, facilitator, connector and capacity builder. In the restrictive political environments in which we work, CARE seeks to achieve results through constructive engagement with all relevant actors. We will work together with various local partners (subcontractors), and seek cooperation with other organizations supporting inclusive governance and dialogue processes in specific contexts. For some of the capacity strengthening interventions, CARE Nederland will sub-contract The Hague Academy for Local Governance.[8]

The Ministry could play a role within this strategic partnership in facilitating linkages between strategic partners and relevant initiatives for coordination and learning purposes. Moreover, the Minister has some capacities and instruments to lever the responsiveness of power holders, and to support the creation of spaces for dialogue and negotiation at the national level. The political and legal environments in which CARE and its partners operate are often fairly closed to active participation, and the political space is shrinking further. The Dutch government has a role to play in building international coalitions and engaging in a dialogue with governments of fragile states on this shrinking political space, and in holding them accountable for their responsibilities and international commitments.

7 Succes & Risk analysis

Based on our experience in fragile setting, CARE has identified the following critical success factors for this TOC, which have to be ensured:

- thorough analysis and understanding of context and power dynamics;
- constructive engagement with all actors concerned;
- facilitating linkages from local to global;
- investing in capacity strengthening and empowerment approaches.

CARE has also identified risks, their potential impact, as well as mitigating measures to avoid and/or reduce the negative impact on the implementation of this TOC.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measure
Deterioration of security situation in fragile settings. This may lead to limited access, delays and suspension of program interventions.	High	Medium	Safety and security systems are in place. CARE has arrangements with local partners to continue the work. Furthermore, CARE addresses security issues through national and international advocacy efforts.
Occurrence of major natural disasters in	Low	High	Coordinated response with all key

fragile settings, impacting on program activities.			stakeholders i.e. relevant government line ministries, UN agencies, local and International NGOs. Advocacy priorities may change and plans and strategies may have to be adjusted.
Economic and financial crisis (inflation, devaluation of currencies or increased prices), impacting on people's priorities and engagement with program interventions.	Medium	High	CARE ensures an holistic programming approach; complementing this strategic partnership on advocacy with other ongoing resilience and livelihood programmes.
Members of excluded groups experience negative consequences resulting from exercising their agency in the communities (domain 1). Processes of empowerment can cause conflict as powerful groups resist challenges to their control.	Medium	High	Conduct extensive analysis and follow established guidelines and principles such as the "Do no harm approach" and "Guidelines to prevent and address Gender Based Violence".
There is limited and inconsistent political commitment/will of public authorities and power holders at various levels to increase inclusivity (domain 3).	Medium	Medium	Conducting thorough analyses to understand vested interests and power dynamics. CARE and its local partners facilitate active engagement and involvement of all relevant stakeholders to ensure ownership and acceptance.

1) Fragile states 2013: Resource flows and trends in a shifting world, OECD-DAC international network on conflict and fragility (INCAF), 2012: http://www.oecd.org/dac/incaf/FragileStates2013.pdf
2) In line with the Peacebuilding and State building Goals of the New Deal for engagement in fragile states: http://www.oecd.org/dac/HLM%20one%20pager%20PSGs.pdf, as well as the Dutch "Security and Rule of Law" policy
3) CARE's Governance Programming Framework (2011) http://governance.care2share.wikispaces.net/file/view/GPF%20main%20document%20final.pdf/256612310/GPF%20main%20document%20final.pdf, see Annex III.2.A
4) Haider Huma, 2011. "State-Society Relations and Citizenship in Situations of Conflict and Fragility", GSDRC
5) Frauke de Weijer and Ulrika Kiles, "Strengthening Civil Society. Reflections on international engagement in fragile states", ECDPM Discussion Paper 135, 2012, : http://ecdpm.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/DP-135-Civil-Society-International-Engagement-Fragile-States-2012.pdf
6) As defined by the "5C-model": Heather Baser and Peter Morgan, "Capacity, Change and Performance", ECDPM Discussion Paper No. 59B, 2008, http://ecdpm.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/DP-59B-Capacity-Change-Performance-Study-Report-2008.pdf
7) See Annex III.2.B for an overview of the definitions used by CARE in this TOC.
8) UNDP,"Towards Inclusive Governance. Promoting the Participation of Disadvantaged Groups in Asia-Pacific", 2007, http://hrbaportal.org/wp-content/files/Towards_inclusivegovernance_Asiapacific6.pdf
9) See Annex III.2.C for a profile of the The Hague Academy for Local Governance, drafted for CARE.