



METHODOLOGICAL MEMORANDUM

A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME

**BOOSTING CIVIL SOCIETIES
IN THE FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICA
AND IN THE INDIAN OCEAN THROUGH
THE DEVELOPMENT OF
CARITAS ASSOCIATIONS**



Summary



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. SUMMARY

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE METHODOLOGICAL MEMORANDUM

2. AUTONOMY FOR ACTORS AS BOTH AN ETHICAL STANCE AND A KEY AIM OF A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME

3. METHOD ADOPTED BY THE A2P-DIRO

« PROXIMITY PERSONALIZED ACCOMPANIMENT, CHANGE-ORIENTED APPROACH AND COLLECTIVE ACCOMPANIMENT »

3.1. MAKING CARITAS ASSUME THEIR RESPONSIBILITY

3.2. CHANGE-ORIENTED APPROACH

3.3. COMPREHENSIVE AND SYSTEMIC APPROACH

3.4. PERSONALISED, PROXIMITY AND COLLECTIVE APPROACH

4. ORGANISATIONAL CHOICES

ORGANISATIONAL CHOICES, KEY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME

4.1. PLURALISTIC MODEL OF GOVERNING

4.2. DECENTRALIZED COORDINATION SYSTEM

4.3. DIVERSIFIED RANGE OF ACTION

5. UPCOMING TRANSFER OF THE PROGRAMME TO CARITAS AFRICA FOR ENHANCED EFFECTS

5.1. EFFECTS OF THE A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME

5.2. OUTLOOK FOR THE A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME







1

SUMMARY

1.1. SUMMARY

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE METHODOLOGICAL MEMORANDUM



1.1 / SUMMARY

This memorandum serves to present the institutional and methodological approach of the A2P-DIRO Programme as implemented by Secours Catholique – Caritas France (SC-CF) for phase 2 (2016-2018).

This program aims to strengthen the capacities of 15 Caritas (12 in French-speaking Africa, as well as Caritas Madagascar and Caritas Comoros, under the cover of Caritas Africa, head of the Caritas network in French-speaking Africa and Indian Ocean region. It received co-financing from Agence Française de Développement (AFD). Capacity strengthening programmes have become common to development activities, but this initiative stands out for six major innovations presented in this memorandum :

1. The autonomy of supported organisations are usually advanced on Capacity strengthening initiatives such as training and coaching. But this is little worked as ethics. In fact, to put this ethics into practice, the A2P-DIRO programme considered the parties as autonomous from the outset, and recognized them as subjects of their own development. In this regard, the programme had to design a methodology and governing model that would position Caritas at the core of the approach, repositioning SC-CF in accompaniment role so as to respect the decision-making competence of the individual Caritas.

2. This principle of autonomy led to make the Caritas take a strong and genuine

ownership of determining their strategic orientations and development needs, setting out capacity strengthening actions and related outcomes, as well as steering the programme.

3. Furthermore, the A2P-DIRO programme was designed according to a **“change-oriented approach”**, no longer limited to simply developing capacity strengthening initiatives based on the strategic goals of the Caritas in question, this approach seeks to identify the changes (institutional, organisational and technical) that such initiatives must carry out. Focused on the actors themselves (decision-makers, staffs, partners), this approach makes it possible to better monitor and adapt changes in the organisation, while managing resistance and activating various growth levers. It also required setting a particular monitoring-evaluation-planning system.

4. The capacity strengthening methodology is **comprehensive** (encompassing all needs of the Caritas), **systemic** (taking into account the relationship between the

national Caritas and the diocesan ones, as well as its peer Caritas), **proximity and personalized**, as the programme was adjusted to suit each Caritas by developing specific actions.

5. The A2P-DIRO programme also proved innovative by combining a more diverse range of initiatives : **change accompaniment actions** for Caritas, **individual capacity building actions**, **collective network-based actions**, and **knowledge management activities**. Specific skills for organisations change-based accompaniment have been developed and shared with Caritas Africa.

6. Finally, the programme also positioned **SC-CF as a programme beneficiary**, allowing the organisation to take advantage of the change-centred approach and organisational guidance practices in its own strategic planning, while better coordinating its partnership and capacity strengthening practices.

1.2 / OBJECTIVES OF THE METHODOLOGICAL MEMORANDUM

This memorandum aims to specify the fundamental and structural components of the general institutional and methodological approach of the A2P-DIRO programme as implemented in the phase 2 (2016-2018). The forecast-based evaluation of phase 2 of the programme, carried out between June 2017 and February 2018, as well as the outcome of the satisfaction survey among the programme Caritas parties, highlighted those various components.



BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM

Secours Catholique-Caritas France (SC-CF) has been involved for many years in a partnership-based approach with Caritas in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Indian Ocean . It became very early aware of the need to accompany and strengthen the capacities of its partners, enabling them to better define and carry out their social mission. Thus, SC-CF intends to provide them with the means to become influential actors with the ability to implement meaningful, efficient and effective actions in the fight against poverty and inequalities.

In this context, in 2006 it initiated a personalised proximity accompaniment pro-

gramme (A2P) focusing on institutional development and organisational strengthening under a pilot phase (2006-2010) implemented with SC-CF funding. Thanks to this phase, the approach has been launched with a limited number of Caritas (Benin, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Madagascar and Mali) and tested while reinforcing the relationship of trust between SC-CF and the national Caritas taking part to the process. During this period, the programme strove to meet high-priority and concrete needs expressed by the organisations (administrative and financial management, human resource management, governing and project management).



Thereafter, followed the implementation of a phase 1, known as “consolidation phase”, from 2011 to 2015, oriented to consolidation of the initial Caritas parties experiences (apart from Caritas CAR and Caritas Madagascar, which withdrew from the initiative) and to extend the programme to seven other Caritas (Burkina Faso, Niger, DRC, Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal, Togo and Chad) upon their request. During this phase, particular attention was paid to developing and implementing strategic planning to help partners better define their key orientations. Note that SC-CF took responsibility for goals designing and setting during this phase, while consulting to Caritas for activities to be carry out. This phase was thus spearheaded by SC-CF through a participatory process . To implement the phase 1, SC-CF received co-fun-

ding from French Development Agency (Agence Française de Développement) under a programme-agreement. It also enjoyed the support of the Swiss Philanthropy Foundation, Fondation Caritas France and Caritas Spain.

Following phase 1, the DIRO programme received further AFD co-funding to implement phase 2 (2016-2018), which featured the inclusion of three new Caritas (Central African Republic, Comoros and Madagascar), as well as Caritas Africa, with the aim of strengthening the skills of this organisation, set to act as network head for the African continent. Phase 2 witnessed several innovations : decentralised coordination, a change-oriented approach, enhanced guidance, knowledge management, etc.





2

AUTONOMY FOR ACTORS AS BOTH
AN ETHICAL STANCE AND A KEY
AIM OF A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME



2 / AUTONOMY FOR ACTORS : AS BOTH AN ETHICAL STANCE AND A KEY AIM OF A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME

AUTONOMY FOR ACTORS AS BOTH AN ETHICAL STANCE AND A KEY AIM OF A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME

Autonomy : (from the Greek autos nomos – “according to its own laws” - Literal definition “Capacity to act in accordance with freely chosen rules”) designates the ability of an actor (organisation, collective body or individual) to decide for itself and reach independently determined objectives.

Autonomy as an ethic led the A2P-DIRO programme to consider the parties as autonomous from the outset and to recognise them as subjects of their own

development. For this purpose, the programme had to design a boarding leadership model and methodology around the following principles :

- Position Caritas parties at the core of the programme as actors and authors ;
- Recognise and respect the decision-making authority of all participants ;
- Strengthen Caritas at every level of the programme ;
- Develop interdependence of actors within a collective approach.

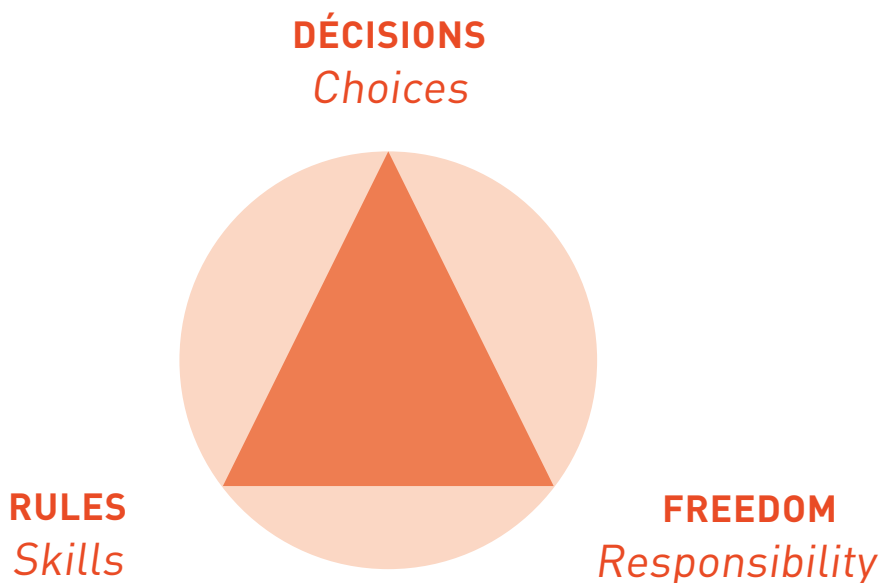
Autonomy as an aim of the programme oriented all activities carried out in pursuit thereof, whether focused on accompaniment, capacity strengthening or collective exchanges.¹

The bi-annual meeting of all actors (Caritas and partners) in Lourdes, which took place in October 2013, was an opportunity to lay the foundation of these principles and the underlying ethical stance, which were then expressed in concrete terms in the methodological approach of the phase 2 of the A2P-DIRO programme with regard to :

- Programme governing, in which Caritas member organisations play a central role ;

- Definition of capacity strengthening activities, ultimately determined by Caritas according to their strategic orientations, thanks to high-quality and adequate accompaniment from programme consultants ;
- A wide variety of capacity strengthening activities necessary to support to last the empowerment of organisations and actors ;
- The Caritas accompaniment measures with the aim of ensuring a close relationship with the accompanied actors ;
- Programme coordination operating and rules ;
- The role and place of the programme initiator, SC-CF, in turn positioned as a “beneficiary” and willing to learn from the activities.

¹ S. DESFONTAINES, S. MONTIER, Les clés de l'autonomie, Eyrolles 2012



■ *The three pillars of autonomy*





METHOD ADOPTED BY THE A2P-DIRO

« PROXIMITY PERSONALIZED ACCOMPANIMENT,
CHANGE-ORIENTED APPROACH AND
COLLECTIVE ACCOMPANIMENT »

3.1. MAKING CARITAS ASSUME THEIR RESPONSIBILITY

3.2. CHANGE-ORIENTED APPROACH

3.3. COMPREHENSIVE AND SYSTEMIC APPROACH

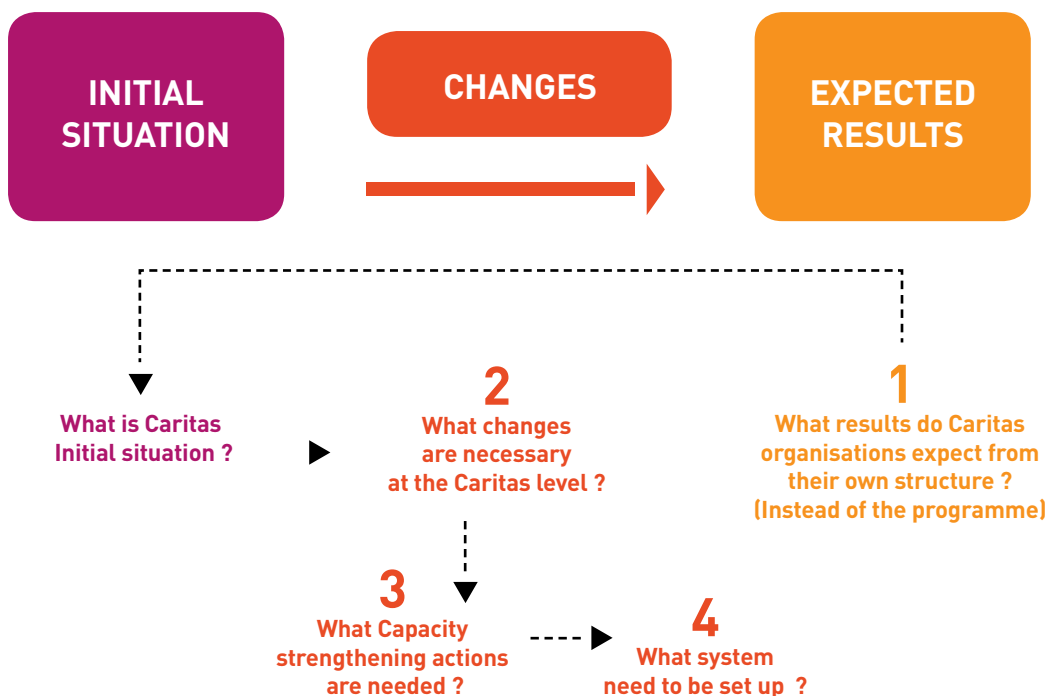
3.4. PERSONALISED, PROXIMITY AND COLLECTIVE APPROACH



The A2P-DIRO Programme bases on a method known as the “Change-Oriented Approach”, formalised by the PRISME Programme led by F3E¹, and complemented by the principles and practices of professional accompaniment, which are designed to strengthen “parties’ power to act” and which today provide the foundation for the fields of professional coaching or social accompaniment.

The pillars of this approach are many and they have structured all activities carried out in the A2P-DIRO Programme, in keeping with the dual vision of autonomy as an ethical stance and a key aim.

¹ Prisme : Programme of innovations to plan, monitor and assess processes of change, carried out by F3E (Association network wholly dedicated to quality in terms of working methods, international solidarity initiatives and decentralised cooperation).



■ A2P-DIRO programme content construction phases

3.1 / MAKING CARITAS ASSUME THEIR RESPONSIBILITY

Certain capacity strengthening approaches may exhibit some so-called adverse effects when, in the interests of effectiveness, they take it upon themselves to determine the types of needed supports, on behalf of beneficiaries. True to the principle of autonomy, the A2P-DIRO Programme instead chose to focus on making Caritas assume their responsibility (neither interfering in their decisions nor acting on their behalf) at several levels :

LINE 1 : SETTING OUT STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS

The A2P-DIRO Programme accompanied Caritas Parties in defining the strategic orientations they wished to seek, their choice serving as a basis to analyse their needs in terms of capacity strengthening.

A one-week workshop in September 2014 provided the opportunity for the 15 Caritas parties of the programme and SC-CF, to work out together the strategic support framework of the A2P-DIRO Programme

(2016-2020) under a “Change-Oriented Approach”. During subsequent “country workshops”, each of them adapted these orientations to suit its specific context, thereby developing its own accompaniment plan. This practice had several positive impacts for a greater coherence seeking at different levels of activity :

- Creating a shared strategic framework for capacity strengthening among all the 15 Caritas;
- Making the Caritas take the ownership of its key change areas;
- Prompting national Caritas to include in their orientations the needs and expectations of diocesan Caritas ;
- Allowing a greater coherence between the programme orientations and the Caritas strategic priorities, to ensure that the A2P-DIRO Programme serves to further their development, in a spirit of respecting their legitimacy and decision-making power;

- Confirming Caritas Africa as head of the regional African network by incorporating its strategic orientations;
- Incorporating into Caritas management orientations “Caritas Internationalis Management Standards” promoted in the whole international Confederation ;
- Helping SC-CF better understand Caritas’ strategies and incorporate these strategies in its partnership actions;
- Finally, an effort was made to bring about greater coherence among the support mechanisms provided by the various partners of each Caritas. This effort bore little fruit during phase 2, but was organised as of the planning stage for phase 3. Indeed, most Caritas technical and financial partners were invited to pursue a more collective approach to ensure that the support they provide is consistent with the strategic orientations of each Caritas and in keeping with the policies and capacity-building strategy set out by Caritas Africa.

LINE 2 : NEEDS ANALYSIS

Empowering Caritas also took the form of a capacity strengthening needs analysis. At a professional workshop conducted in March 2015, each organisation enjoyed personal

support to identify the capacity strengthening measures required to implement its orientations.

LINE 3 : DEFINITION OF REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

At the risk of disempowering a Caritas and impeding its progress towards autonomy, a need for support must not systematically give rise to external assistance from the programme. Indeed, many needs may be met internally by organisations themselves, calling on their own skills and financial

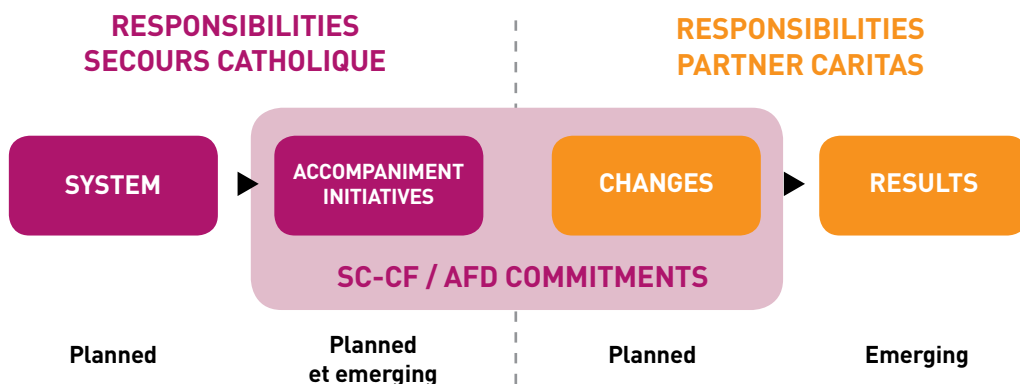
resources, or else by partners other than the A2P-DIRO Programme. The programme thus worked with each Caritas to see how it could first meet its own needs, and subsequently address a request for capacity strengthening to the A2P-DIRO Programme if it so desired.

LINE 4 : RESULTS OF CAPACITY STRENGTHENING MEASURES

The question of responsibility for the results achieved through capacity strengthening actions is delicate. Nonetheless, the answer must be clear to facilitate Caritas' progress towards autonomy. SC-CF is indeed responsible for designing the mechanism applied in the context of the A2P-DIRO Programme, as well as for devising capacity strengthening initiatives for Caritas, but it cannot be held responsible for changes brought about via these initiatives, especially when it comes to results achieved by Caritas through their activities with target audiences. SC-CF is thus responsible for providing resources, while individual organisations are responsible for generating results. Indeed, the local organisation, and not SC-CF, is responsible for deciding whether or not to apply lessons learned during a training session on the logical framework format, for instance. Likewise,

a positive outcome on the ground cannot be attributed solely to capacity strengthening initiatives carried out through the programme; the outcome is the result of countless inter-related factors. For example, who or what is accountable for an increase in the annual budget of Caritas? There are many causes for this increase, and attributing it solely to the effect of the A2P-DIRO Programme would be deceptive and even presumptuous.

This shared responsibility may appear logical and obvious, but it may not be so simple for the programme's institutional donor (AFD), which expects the recipient of its funding (the programme) to commit to delivering the results expected by the beneficiary of the initiative. Negotiations were thus required between the donor, the programme head and the beneficiary to properly distribute responsibilities.



■ *Diagram of responsibility sharing in A2P-DIRO Programme*

LINE 5 : PROGRAMME STEERING

Caritas within the A2P-DIRO Programme are no longer seen as "beneficiaries" or "aid recipients", but rather as responsible actresses. As such, they must also manage all programme resources and orientations.

They have thus been brought together and placed at the heart of institutional governing of the programme (see section 3.1 below).

3.2 / CHANGE-ORIENTED APPROACH

The Change-Oriented Approach means not only designing actions to achieve a given outcome, but also identifying the changes an organisation must bring about to better carry out the actions it has resolved to implement. Indeed, planning an action does not always lead to the desired result if one essential factor is neglected: does the actor implementing the action have the required capacities? Often the actor himself must change to allow the action to be successful.

This “change-oriented” approach leads to very different practices :

- The key aspect of the change-oriented approach is that it shifts attention from the action to the actor, seen as a comprehensive organisation made up of several groups of individuals. Each individual is asked to change in some way. The approach imbues the support process with all its complexity, often difficult to understand and impossible to control, as well as a dose of freedom that can prompt people both to get involved and to retreat from action at any time.
- Going beyond actions, Caritas are systematically asked to identify changes they must bring about to carry out their actions and achieve their objectives. These changes must help the organisation take a different view of reality by altering its representations, habits, beliefs, know-how, etc. They propel the Caritas down the path of in-depth change by exposing it to new ways of working and helping it to better adjust to the realities it faces. Identifying change starts with reassessing established practices. It requires close-knit support to inspire actors to open up in a spirit of trust and spark a desire for change.
- Identifying change is not enough to make it happen. Indeed, resistance is bound to emerge in many forms, impeding implementation by upsetting delicate balances and habits, obliging actors to deal with uncertainty, etc. Once again, the support provided by the A2P-DIRO Programme must help each Caritas identify and manage any opposition that arises, promoting change by means of communication, collaborative work, anticipating and solving problems, etc. Change cannot be simply be ordained; it must be fostered.
- It is possible to implement a measure and maintain a certain level of control over performance, but change within actors and organisations cannot be controlled in the same way. It is essential to acknowledge the uncertainty of outcomes, see mistakes as opportunities to learn, accept and deal with unforeseen phenomena that may arise, etc. The principles of emergence and unpredictability of events are central to this approach.
- The change-oriented approach requires considering processes of change as a series of steps that a person or organisation must go through to grow and become autonomous. The processes by which an entity gains autonomy are not straight

Examples of change identified by Caritas to help them become more influential actors:

- 1. The organisation develops a more militant culture and exhibits political vision.**
- 2. The organisation alters its approach to working with beneficiaries: once based on meeting needs (distributive model), it focuses on defending citizens' fundamental rights (emphasis on solidarity and responsibility).**
- 3. The organisation becomes more engaged in dialogue with other stakeholders in the same field and develops a more pronounced partnership policy, promoting interdependence.**
- 4. The organisation enjoys more constructive relations with the Bishops' Conference in the country.**

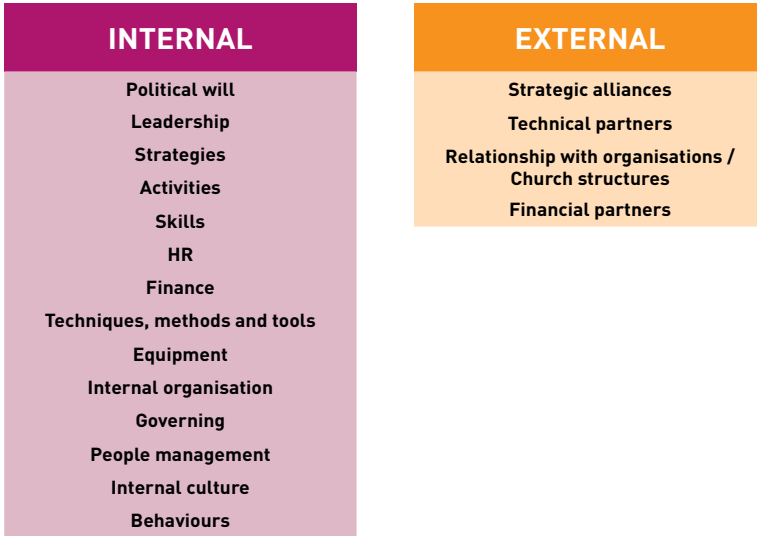
lines, but complex exercises that must be analysed both before and after the action itself to identify the paths other actors have taken to increase their autonomy and achieve their goals. The A2P-DIRO Programme has modelled three key steps on the path to autonomy for Caritas (Emergence, Structuring, Maturity), and determined the requirements and means of support specific to each step.

- Finally, the change-oriented approach calls for very different monitoring and evaluation tools and methods than the classic approach. Indeed, it is possible to clearly identify one's effects, and sometimes one's impacts, using classic approaches, but it is much more difficult to monitor or assess an action that brings about change

in an actor. This is generally done after the fact using two methods:

- *Looking back on an experience to identify changes brought about by an action or over a given period, and seeing the resulting consequences on the organisation and their impact on the populations receiving support ;*
- *Examining the level of satisfaction of Caritas, whose feedback makes it possible to improve certain activities and methods.*

As such, the monitoring and evaluation system used for this type of programme is much more cumbersome and affords a lesser degree of satisfaction than for a classic approach.



■ *Different dimensions of the global approach of Caritas.*

3.3 / COMPREHENSIVE AND SYSTEMIC APPROACH

Many capacity strengthening programmes focus on strengthening actors, with implementation of a project in the field as both the means and goal of the programme. However, the effectiveness and relevance of this approach suffers due to a misconception, failing to see the project as simply one aspect of the organisation among many and thereby obscuring several other aspects that may destabilise the action.

The A2P-DIRO Programme opted for a comprehensive approach: capacity strengthening must focus at once on the projects and actions carried out by a Caritas, as well as on its Institutional Development (Développement Institutionnel, the “DI” in DIRO: leadership, bargaining power, credibility, etc.), its organisational strengthening (Renforcement Organisationnel, the “RO” in DIRO: internal organisation, resource management, etc.), professional-

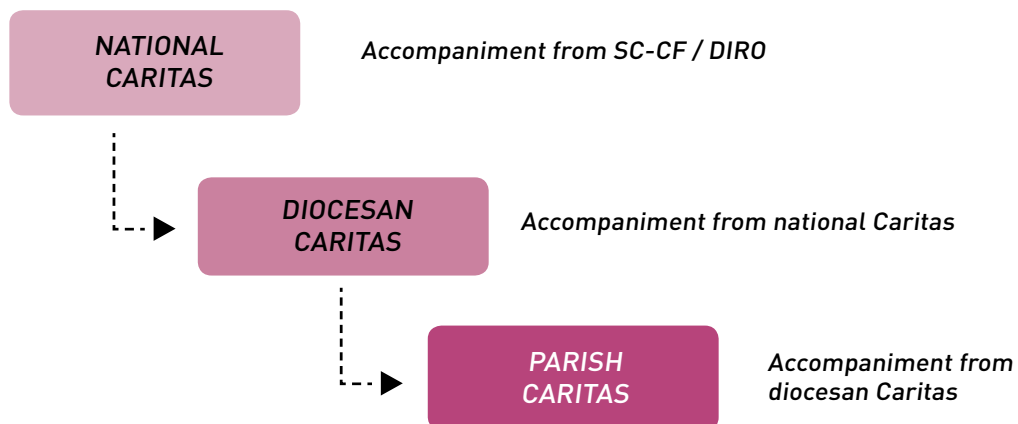
ization of its management structure, as well as its internal culture.

The second methodological aspect involved defining a systemic approach to capacity strengthening. The idea is that by starting with capacity strengthening for national network heads (national Caritas), these structures would in turn become capable of unifying their networks and developing the capacities of all members,



with the goal of triggering a domino effect. The programme reflects an all-embracing, collective dynamic while stri-

ving to reinforce the notion of solidarity throughout the network.





3.4 / PERSONALISED, PROXIMITY AND COLLECTIVE APPROACH

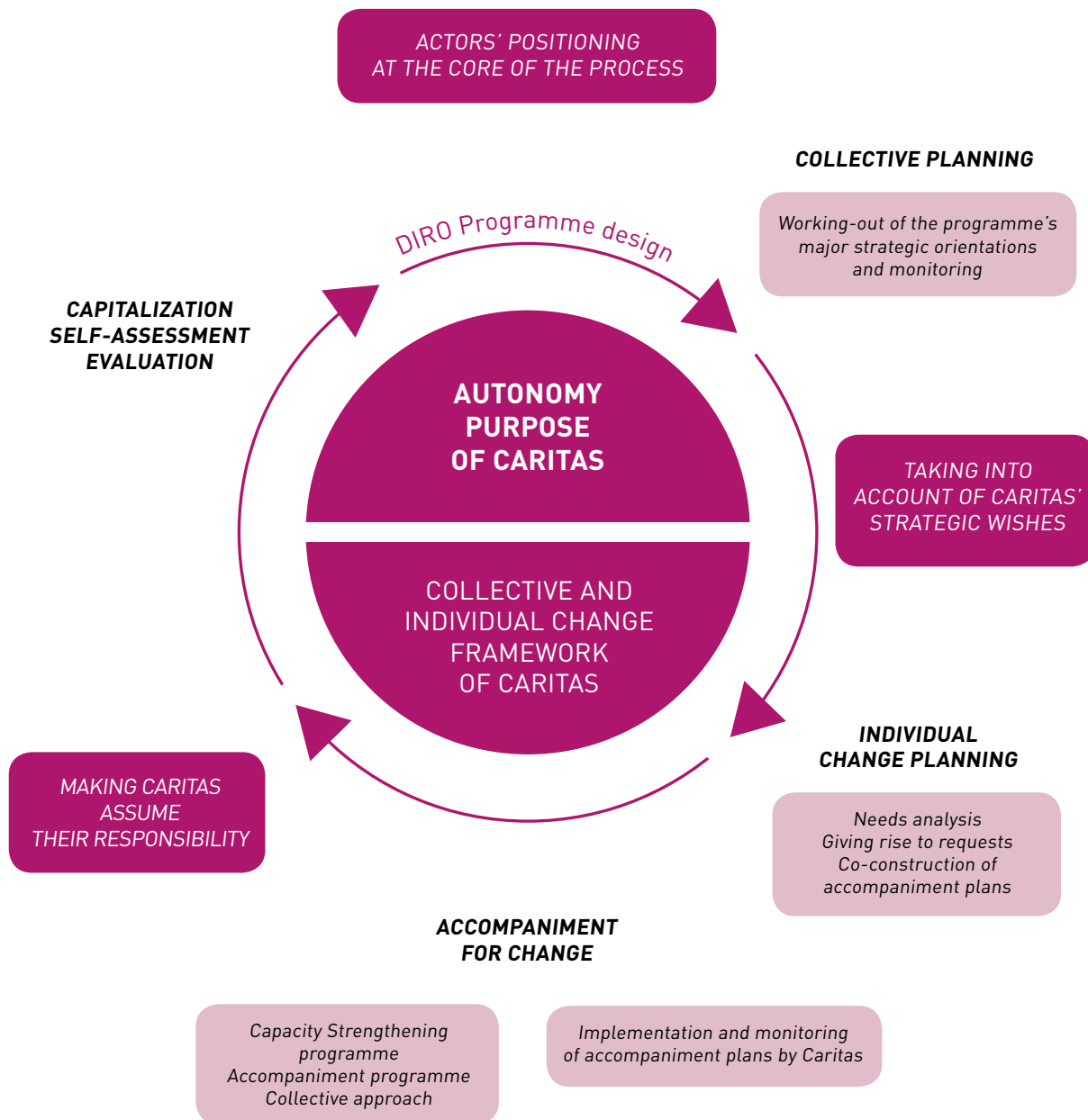
A final key aspect of the A2P-DIRO approach is its focus on Personalised and Proximity support (Personnalis   and Proximit  , the “2P” in A2P-DIRO). Highly praised by Caritas themselves, the personalisation and proximity focus of the approach have made it possible to forge relationships of trust with programme accompanists, work in a serene environment and adjust capacity strengthening measures to suit the specific needs of each organisation (enhanced impact), and finally to address more subtle issues (such as leadership for Bishops) that demand more long-term support and a greater level of confidence.

This personalised approach makes it possible to take into account the specific course of growth of each Caritas (process of change), as well as differing rhythms and patterns.

Finally, this personalised approach goes together with a collective approach (Assembly of Parties every 18 months, peer learning, immersions and visits, sharing and pooling of knowledge and experience, etc.) to foster networking, collective intelligence, openness and establishment of a

shared culture. This collective dimension has proved to be a significant and recognised growth factor for Caritas, and one of the most valued aspects of the programme.

Nonetheless, the personalisation and proximity focus of the support provided by the A2P-DIRO Programme are limited by the programme’s financial capacity. Indeed, one can hardly expect an accompanist to work in-depth with more than 5 or 6 structures on a long-term basis.



■ Graphic summary of the programme's methodological approach.





4

THE ORGANISATION OF THE A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME : ORGANISATIONAL CHOICES, KEY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME

4.1. PLURALISTIC MODEL OF GOVERNING

4.2. DECENTRALIZED COORDINATION

4.3. DIVERSIFIED ACTION



The organisation of the A2P-DIRO Programme is structured around a pluralistic model of governing, a decentralized coordination system and a diversified range of action.

4.1 / PLURALISTIC MODEL OF GOVERNING

A2P-DIRO Programme governing places Caritas at the heart of the structure as decision-makers, giving them a central role in programme governing and decision-making with an eye to fostering stronger ties to the programme and greater empowerment. Governing is structured around three entities: the Assembly of Parties (AP), the Strategic Monitoring Committee (SMC), and the Strategy Team (ST).

Programme stakeholders stress the clear and relevant complementarity among these governing bodies, and particularly the key role played by Caritas parties in phase 2. These structures inspire benefi-

ciaries themselves to become more involved and take ownership of the programme. "The key advantage of the AP is the opportunity to listen to each other". "The SMC helps parties strengthen one another. It reinforces the commitment to communicate, to help countries come together once again through Bishops, to talk about governing and determine where action should be focused on".

They further attest to the ability of DIRO actors to engage in lifelong learning and to amend the programme's operation and implementation as necessary to ensure high-quality and personalised support.

² Bishop and Caritas beneficiary.

4.2 / DECENTRALIZED COORDINATION SYSTEM

In addition to the Strategy Team (Africa Division, Programme Officer, Caritas Africa) which manages overall programming and reviews, there is a Togo-based operational coordination team made up of a Programme Officer who oversees a team of three accompanists-consultants specialised in capacity-strengthening, an Administrative and Financial Manager and a Communications Manager.

This coordination team guides all programme actors, monitors capacity strengthening initiatives and offers communication and knowledge management support (see section 3.3 below).

Along with coordination and support, SC-CF partnership officers coordinate with the A2P-DIRO Programme team via an Operational Monitoring Unit (OMU). Accompaniment, capacity strengthening and partnership are all specific pursuits requiring coordination around each Caritas. Such coordination is essential, but it is not necessarily easy, as the DIRO team and SC-CF partnership officers have neither the same position nor the same responsibilities. Indeed, the two parties share responsibilities in the context of joint action carried out in partnership with SC-CF, but the Caritas party to the programme is solely responsible for requesting capacity strengthening support and ensuring the impact of its actions.

General meeting of parties

Establishes and monitors the strategic development framework and strategic changes of Caritas

Gathers together all the actors involved in the programme

Strategic Monitoring Committee

Advisory body responsible for overall coherence of the programme. The SMC ensures compliance with strategic orientations and proper implementation of the programme. It provides mediation and facilitation among Caritas

Made up of 3 representatives of the 14 Caritas, Caritas Africa and SC-CF

Strategy Team

An information, consultation and decision-making venue for the programme's steering and strategy.

Made up of Caritas SC-CF and Africa



4.3 / DIVERSIFIED RANGE OF ACTION

The role of A2P-DIRO Programme coordination team is threefold :

• ACCOMPANIMENT ACTION :

This action must be distinguished from capacity strengthening. The latter requires knowledge transfer (e.g. through training), whereas this is not necessarily the case for accompaniment functions. In the words of Professor Maëla Paul, accompaniment consists first and foremost in "connecting with someone to accompany him wherever he is headed". In the context of the A2P-DIRO Programme, Caritas accompaniment is carried out in several phases :

- **Formulation of the Carits' objectives in terms of development;**
- **Identification of its needs to reach those objectives (diagnostic phase);**
- **Analysis of its own capacity to meet its needs;**
- **Formulation of requests addressed to its partners (including the A2P-DIRO**

Programme) for capacity strengthening by designing a capacity strengthening plan and/or specific projects (known by the programme as a accompaniment plan);

- **Establishing a contract with partners regarding capacity strengthening action by means of accompaniment plans;**
- **Monitoring of capacity strengthening actions carried out;**
- **Evaluation and feedback;**
- **And problem solving, provided that problems fall within the accompanist competence area.**

As mentioned earlier, such support requires a personalised and proximity approach, as well as a relationship of profound trust with the Caritas receiving accompaniment, thanks to a specific attitude of non-interference (respect for the request and the autonomy of the Caritas) and neutrality with regard to the mutual

³ Maela PAUL, *La démarche d'accompagnement, repères méthodologiques et ressources théoriques*, DeBoeck 2016



demands of the SC-CF partnership structure (to avoid “taking sides”). It also calls for listening skills, candid dialogue and confidentiality to encourage the Caritas to open up to the accompanist.

This accompaniment attitude is fundamental to enable the emergence of a true request for capacity strengthening in line with the overall needs and objectives of the Caritas, as well as to **contribute to reinforcing its emancipation, its power to act, and as such its autonomy.**

Finally, the accompaniment develops a rationale of continual experimentation, recognising mistakes as opportunities to learn. It adapts to the Caritas level of development and growth potential. The methodology applied is more iterative than linear, making it easier to set priorities and categorise the needs for which the Caritas receives support.

Finally, this type of support may spark opposition in Caritas that used to working with consultants who offer turnkey solutions, while accompanist initially encourage the Caritas to draw from its own resources to solve problems. The subject to be addressed is less the nature of the problem than the organisation’s ability to solve it. This technique may take longer and require more patience, but it is more effective in helping Caritas to gain their autonomy.

The satisfaction survey⁴ attests to Caritas’ positive perception of :

- **Active listening (a positive opinion for 62% of Caritas, and an extremely positive opinion for 38%) ;**
- **Mutual trust (an extremely positive opinion for 54% of Caritas, and a positive opinion for 38%) ;**

- **Accompanist’ ability to inspire interest (an extremely positive opinion for 54% of Caritas, and a positive opinion for 31%) ;**
- **Accompanist’ adaptability and flexibility (a positive opinion for 69% of Caritas, and an extremely positive opinion for 15%).**

• **CAPACITY STRENGTHENING :**

In a more classic vein, the programme finances capacity, strengthening initiatives based on the action plans set out by each Caritas, formalized by contract with the programme and SC-CF. The effectiveness of these capacity strengthening initiatives depends on the skills of the consultants recruited to implement them, as well as the diversity of possible forms of action. Indeed, these initiatives often focus acutely on training but fail to offer a broad range of formats: advice, research, coaching, networking, funding, supply of tools and methods, mediation, subcontracting, etc.

• **KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT :**

The A2P-DIRO Programme tested this new dimension with the aim of developing tools and methods making it possible to identify, utilise, organise and disseminate the organisation’s tangible knowledge.

- Development of individual and collective knowledge production: feedback, best practices, information, etc.;
- Structuring access to knowledge based on future use;
- Development of sharing and dissemination of knowledge/expertise;
- Development of innovation functions.

The approach is based on two fundamental principles underlying all of these interrelated activities :

- **Sharing among actors :** this lies at the heart of the approach to ensure that eve-

⁴ 13 respondents

« The adviser offers a special opportunity to talk, realign, go deeper into the questions addressed. It all revolves around participation. »

Caritas party to the A2P-DIRO Programme

ryone is willing to take advantage of his/her knowledge and share it freely with others;

- **Pragmatism** : knowledge that is not of use to an actor has little real value. A piece of knowledge that is not used by someone else, even if it is highly interesting in itself, is of little value in the context of a knowledge management approach.

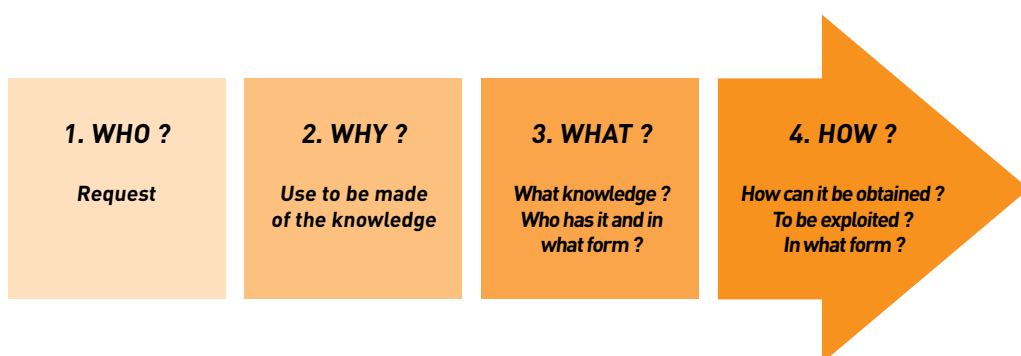
In concrete terms, this means :

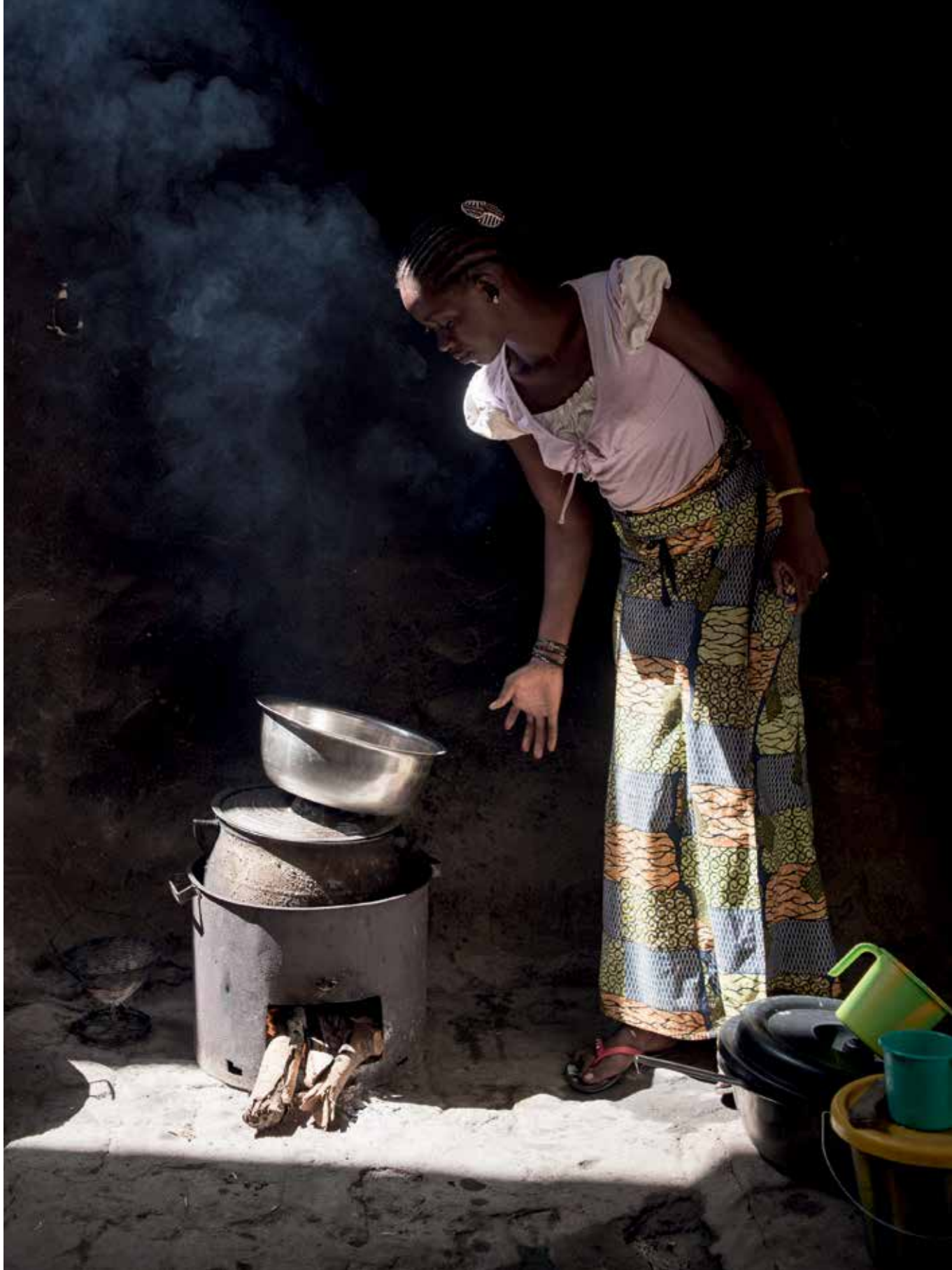
- Identification of tangible and tacit knowledge held by Caritas ;
- Identification of knowledge required to implement Caritas' development strategies ;

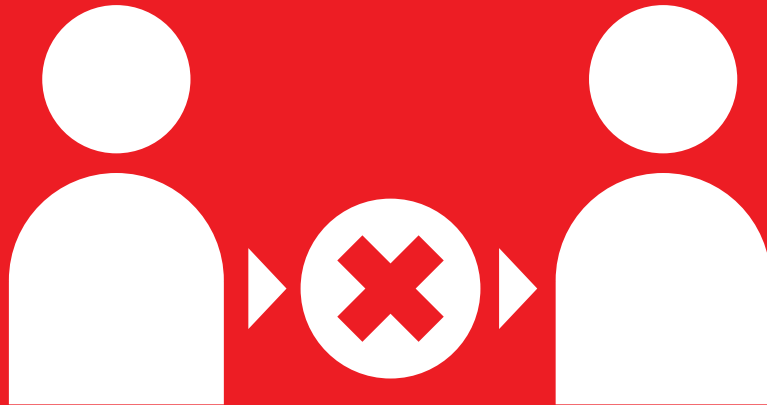
- Choice of knowledge to be exploited depending on knowledge requirements and definition of format depending on re-use conditions ;
- Diversification of content to be exploited: history, narratives, lessons learned, best practices, methodological guide, tools, information, etc.
- Development of a knowledge access platform: Communities of practice, documentary database, monitoring, expert network, etc.

• **NETWORK MANAGEMENT :**

Along with an individual approach, the A2P-DIRO Programme developed a more collective approach leading to the creation of a network through which the Caritas exchange information and best practices. Collective encounters related to Governing, collective training sessions (e.g. in knowledge management), peer exchange, etc. were supported by the A2P-DIRO Programme coordination team and very gratifying for Caritas, thereby contributing to strengthening their collective capacities.







5

UPCOMING TRANSFER OF THE
PROGRAMME TO CARITAS AFRICA
FOR ENHANCED EFFECTS

5.1 EFFECTS OF THE A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME

5.2 OUTLOOK FOR THE A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME

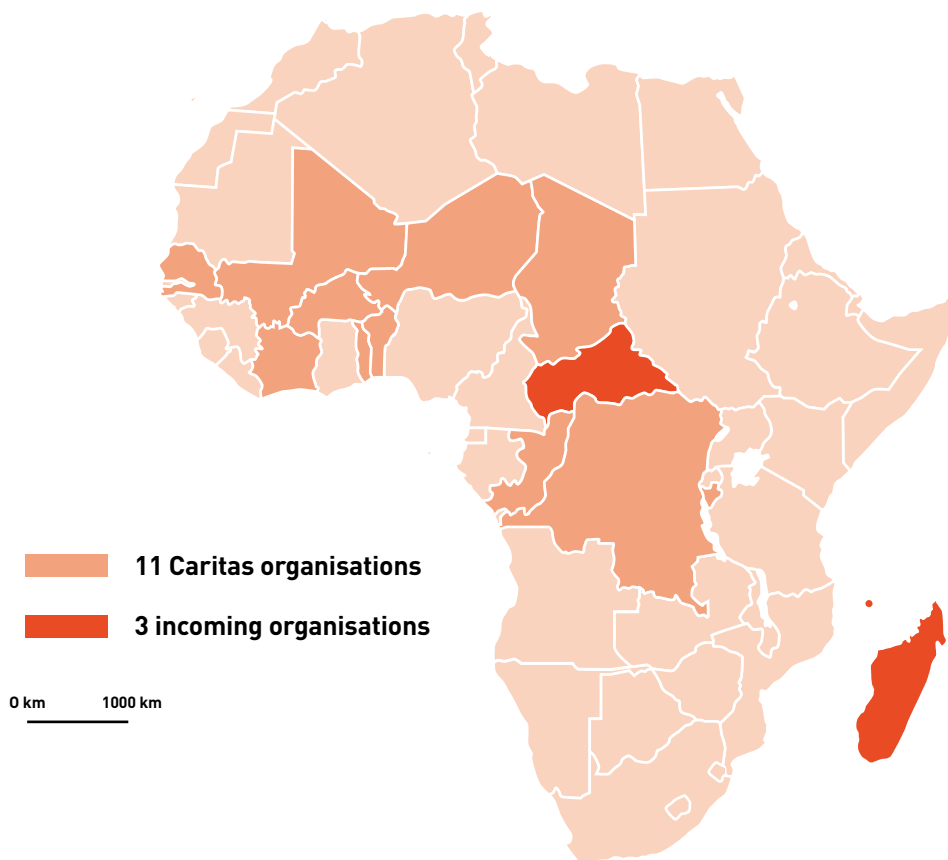
5.1 / EFFECTS OF THE A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME

The programme evaluation carried out in 2018 identified 5 effects :

- Strengthening of a feeling within Caritas of belonging to a network ;
- Greater openness in Caritas and creation of collective and multi-actors dynamics at the regional level ;
- Caritas awareness of the need to tend towards greater professionalization and to have access to the means necessary to

fulfil their social mission : Caritas must be better structured, more disciplined and more efficient with strong response capacity (from the base) ;

- A better reputation, greater visibility and credibility for Caritas at the local, national and continental level in dealings with technical and financial partners, donors and governments ;
- Discussions concerning SC-CF's partnership strategy and efforts to rebalance its relations.





5.2 / OUTLOOK FOR THE A2P-DIRO PROGRAMME

Phase 2 of the A2P-DIRO Programme will be completed on 31 December 2018. To ensure the sustainability of the actions undertaken, SC-CF plans to empower Caritas Africa, head of the continental network, and to promote initiatives aimed at strengthening its skills, ensuring that the organisation is in a position to assume political, institutional and operational management of the programme. This transfer of governance requires specific capacity strengthening for Caritas Africa, in response to its own needs and in connection with its improvement plan. A third phase (2019-2021) was thus deemed necessary to initiate this process of ensuring sustainability of support.

This third phase will have a dual objective : help Caritas achieve their strategic goals while consolidating the gains achieved in phase 2 and initiating the transfer of management to Caritas Africa, all with the

overarching objective of ensuring the long-term foothold of the programme.

It thus becomes necessary to manage the shift away from the current “programme rationale”, transforming the DIRO into a sustainable instrument of network development and capacity strengthening for African Caritas. The Phase 3 must provide Caritas Africa with the capacity to:

- **Implement a continent-wide institutional development and capacity strengthening (IDCS) strategy;**
- **Ensure coherence and complementarity with regard to supports from technical and financial partners in this field;**
- **Expand and diversify technical and financial partnerships;**
- **Forge new strategic alliances;**
- **Manage its network while opening up to other actors within and outside the Caritas network.**



• • • • •

Document prepared by : Stéphane MONTIER / AlterVisio

Contributions : L'Équipe A2P-DIRO / Lomé (Togo)

Directeur de publication : Marc LAROCHE / SCCF

Crédits photographiques : Élodie PERRIOT / SCCF
Xavier SCHWEBEL / SCCF
Raphaël DADJOSSIME / Coordination A2P-DIRO

Graphisme / illustrations : Vincent Fisson

• • • • •

May 2018

• • • • •





- MAY 2018 -