



Guide for  
**Dialogue with  
Development  
Partners  
and Donors**



**CSOPartnership**   
for Development Effectiveness



A DECADE OF CSO SOLIDARITY  
ON EDC ADVOCACY AND PRACTICE



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# Guide for **Dialogue with Development Partners and Donors**



**CSO Partnership**   
for **Development Effectiveness**

A DECADE OF CSO SOLIDARITY  
ON EDC ADVOCACY AND PRACTICE

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	4
Introduction	5
<b>MODULE 1</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>I. Development Partnerships</b>	<b>8</b>
A. What are development partnerships?	8
B. How is EDC translated to development partnerships?	11
C. What are the commitments of donors to EDC?	15
<b>II. What is CPDE's global engagement with development partners</b>	<b>16</b>
A. CPDE's history of donor engagement as a commitment from Busan	16
B. Evolving trends in donors' policies and approaches on CSOs' Funding	24
<b>III. Donor Strategies vis-à-vis CPDE Key Asks: Convergence and Divergence</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>MODULE 2</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>IV. Planning for engagement</b>	<b>36</b>
A. Context and Stakeholder Analysis	37
B. Analysis of the enabling environment particular to the country/region	40
C. Principles that guide CPDE's donor engagement	42
<b>V. Important elements in developing country-specific/ Region-specific policy positions</b>	<b>48</b>
A. How to develop an engagement strategy and plan?	48
B. Why is it important to?	51

## **MODULE 3** **56**

### **VI. The Donor Cycle** 58

A. Phase 1. Cultivation 59

B. Phase 2. Solicitation 65

C. Phase 3. Stewardship 68

### **VII. Tips in Proposal Writing for EDC** 70

### **VIII. Beyond Aid: Planning for institutional sustainability** 72

A. Financial sustainability/ independence of the organisation 72

B. Scaling up relationship with donor  
(aid recipient/donor) to partnerships 74

## **References** **75**

Annex 1 81

Annex 2 86

Appendix 1 88

Appendix 2 94

Appendix 3 112

Appendix 4 114

## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>AAA</b>	Accra Agenda for Action
<b>ADA</b>	Austrian Development Agency
<b>CPDE</b>	CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisations
<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee
<b>DE</b>	Development Effectiveness
<b>DPs</b>	Development Partnerships
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>EDC</b>	Effective Development Cooperation
<b>FG</b>	Feminist Group
<b>GPEDC</b>	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
<b>GPEDC SC</b>	GPEDC Steering Committee
<b>HRBA</b>	Human Rights-Based Approach
<b>MSEPs</b>	Multistakeholder Engagement Processes
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>PADOR</b>	Potential Applicant Data On-Line Registration
<b>RFA</b>	Request For Applications
<b>Sida</b>	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats



# INTRODUCTION

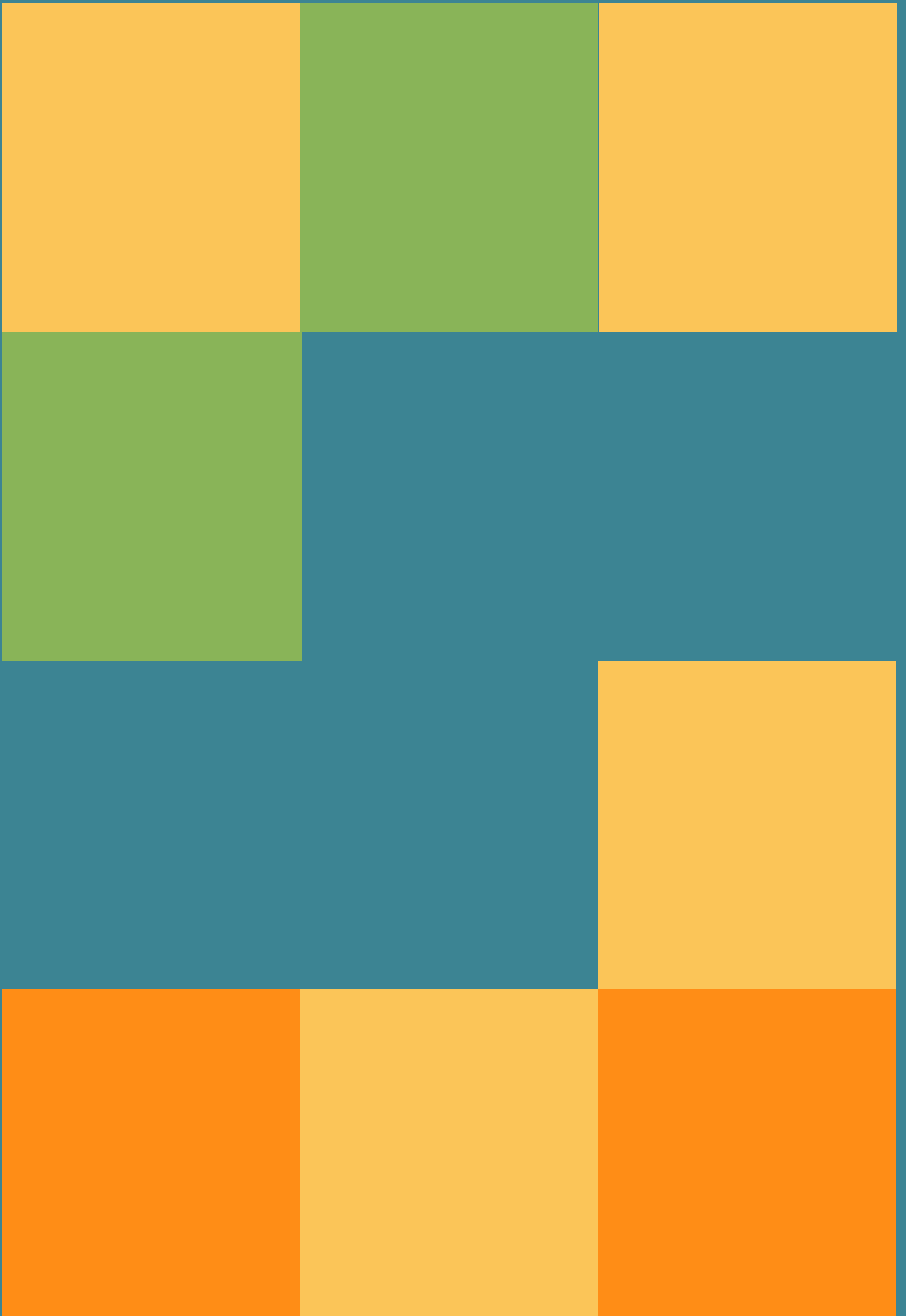
**The CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) is a global civil society platform that facilitates bottom-up civil society engagement in partnerships for effective development cooperation (EDC). CPDE brings civil society organisations (CSOs) together on the issue of EDC and engages in multistakeholder policy arenas at the national, sub-regional, regional, and global levels.**

CSOs continue to be challenged by shrinking civic spaces, a trend of narrowing opportunities for CSO funding, and other challenges to the enabling environment. These challenges mainly limit CSO operations but, to a certain extent, also help them realise their role as development actors in their own right. Moreover, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures that the governments have imposed have even attacked human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of assembly, freedom of movement, freedom of association, and the right to privacy. In some countries, civil society has witnessed aggressive authoritarian responses, including massive surveillance measures, which have affected civic space and the capacities of civil society to respond to the crisis.

In a world marked by these ever-growing challenges, the capacity of any CSO to effectively pursue its advocacy agenda is greatly determined by its ability to plan, initiate, conduct, and maintain a constructive dialogue with a sufficiently diversified network of development partners at the country level.

This Guidebook is based on the Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness and is part of CPDE's effort toward forging stronger and more effective CSOs. It aims to contribute to an enabling environment in development partnerships, one of the five policy objectives in the CPDE 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. This Guidebook, part of a series that includes modules on project management and network management, is designed as a practical tool for CSOs' effective engagement with development partners at the country level.

This Guidebook is organised in three modules arranged in a deductive manner. First, it introduces and explains development partnerships, the international commitments to EDC, and CPDE's engagement with donors and development partners. Second, it proposes principles and concrete applications to prepare CSOs to engage with donors and development partners. Lastly, it discusses the donor cycle and the considerations for CSO sustainability.





The background is a solid teal color. It features several geometric shapes: a large orange square in the top-left corner; a vertical bar on the right side consisting of an orange rectangle at the top, a yellow rectangle in the middle, and a green rectangle at the bottom; and a 2x2 grid of squares at the bottom, with colors (top-left to bottom-right) of green, yellow, green, and yellow.

# Module1

# Module 1

## I. DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

### A. What are development partnerships?

*“Openness, trust, and mutual respect and learning lie at the core of effective partnerships in support of development goals, recognising the different and complementary roles of all actors.”*

– Busan Declaration, 2011

#### 1. How has the concept of development partnerships emerged and evolved?

The concept of partnerships for development was globally formalised in the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 8, wherein the targets for a financial system, the debt problem of developing countries, and the private sector’s role in new technologies, among others, were outlined (United Nations, 2000). But it was not until 2008, in the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) during the 3rd High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Ghana, that the concept of multistakeholder inclusive partnerships for development was explicitly recognised (OECD, n.d.). Development actors cemented the commitment to supporting and upholding inclusive partnerships in Busan and further affirmed it in succeeding meetings in Mexico (2014), Nairobi, Kenya (2016), and New York (2019).

There is an inclusive development partnership when all partners are engaged in development planning and implementation and recognise their specific and complementary roles (GPEDC, 2021). The Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) is the primary multistakeholder arena where the effectiveness of development cooperation and inclusive partnerships is discussed, monitored, and advocated (**see Sidebar 1**).

For civil society organisations (CSOs), partnerships should always adhere to the highest standards of a CSO enabling environment, mutual accountability of development actors, democratic ownership, and a human rights-based approach (HRBA).



### **Sidebar: The Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation**

The GPEDC is the primary multistakeholder arena with the mandate to monitor the implementation of the effectiveness principles and development cooperation commitments for the shared benefits of people, the planet, prosperity, and peace (GPEDC, 2021). The GPEDC brings together governments, bilateral and multilateral organisations, civil society, the private sector, and representatives from parliaments and trade unions, among others, who are committed to strengthening the effectiveness of their partnerships for development. It supports the practical implementation of effective development cooperation (EDC) principles, promotes mutual accountability, and works to sustain political momentum for more effective cooperation and partnerships.



### **Sidebar 2: Development Partners and Development Actors**

Development partners are providers of development cooperation, including traditional donors (e.g., the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and multilateral development banks) and non-traditional partners (e.g., the private sector and Southern partners).

Development actors include stakeholders such as civil society and development partners, as defined above, and non-traditional development partners (e.g., the private sector and philanthropic organisations) (GPEDC, 2020).

## 2. How do development partnerships figure in the development cooperation and sustainable development discourse?

Ensuring the effectiveness of development partnerships is a key focus of the GPEDC and thus a significant component of its monitoring exercise – the mechanism to promote development stakeholders' accountability. In the 3rd Monitoring Round (3MR) in 2018, 45% of the 114 countries (partner countries and bilateral development partners) that undertook multistakeholder development effectiveness (DE) monitoring reported progress towards inclusive, transparent, and accountable multistakeholder partnerships. Meanwhile, the alignment of project objectives to partner country priorities and the reliance on country-defined results, statistics, and monitoring systems have decreased for most development partners but have been most pronounced in bilateral partners since 2016 (OECD and UNDP, 2019a).

The commitment to inclusive partnerships should translate to inclusive spaces for the participation, integration, and involvement in development processes and policymaking of all development stakeholders. Implementing inclusive partnerships is a political process of democratising development and providing spaces to ensure that the people's demands are heard and respected (Dacara, 2017). One such way is through multistakeholder mechanisms or processes that provide structured engagement with all relevant development actors. However, only four (4) out of 10

countries examined by CPDE's Monitoring Survey have these mechanisms or processes. The quality of existing multistakeholder dialogue practices is unsatisfactory or needs significant improvement (Tomlinson, 2019).

The realisation of inclusive partnerships also means that people's needs and interests are included in development planning (Dacara, 2017). They are often represented by CSOs, many of which ground policy discussions on the realities of those marginalised and living in poverty (Tomlinson, 2019). CSOs' participation in the whole process, including implementation, monitoring, and evaluation at every level (local, regional, national and global), not only foregrounds public interests in the development discourse and policymaking but also ensures transparency and accountability (Dacara, 2017). However, in CPDE's monitoring survey, CSOs in more than half of the 44 3MR countries (53%) reported either no consultation (two countries) or only occasional consultations of insufficient quality (21 countries) (Tomlinson, 2019).

More evidence from the GPEDC's last monitoring round and subsequent reports from various CSO platforms, including CPDE, showed that the enabling environment for CSOs has deteriorated over the past years.

### Sidebar 3: Definition of Development Cooperation

Development cooperation is an activity that “aims explicitly to support national or international development priorities, is not driven by profit, discriminates in favour of developing countries and is based on co-operative relationships that seek to enhance developing country ownership.” Official Development Assistance (ODA) is

one form of financing within a much broader palette of development cooperation approaches and instruments. They include non-concessional finance, South-South and triangular cooperation, climate finance, cooperation among governments on non-aid policies, and cooperation with and among non-governmental actors, such as businesses and civil society (Alonso and Glennie, 2015).

## B. How is EDC translated to development partnerships?

### 1. Why are development partnerships important for EDC?

Inclusive development partnerships create a more significant positive impact on people’s lives through sustainable development results, which are the end goal of effective cooperation. According to the commitment forged in Busan during the 4th High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (2011), development cooperation is only part of the solution, but it “plays a catalytic and indispensable role in supporting poverty eradication, social protection, economic growth and sustainable development.”

### 2. How is development partnership in EDC expressed at different levels of work (i.e., global, regional, country)?

Over the years, various stakeholders have made efforts to implement global-level commitments, as exemplified by the work of the GPEDC and the Task Team on CSO DE and Enabling Environment (hereafter referred to as “Task Team”).

The GPEDC’s Steering Committee represents recipients and providers of development cooperation, the private sector, parliaments, civil society, multilateral development banks, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Sustainable Development Group, the OECD Development Assistance Committee, trade unions, foundations, and sub-national governments. Effective development partnerships include



discussions on the following themes: private sector partnerships, triangular development cooperation, supporting country-led DE of South-South cooperation, CSO enabling environment, engagement with foundations, DE at the sub-national level, and making multilateral support more effective.

The Task Team, which also engages the GPEDC, is a global multistakeholder coalition composed of development cooperation providers (donors), partner country governments, and CSOs (coordinated by CPDE) working to improve effective CSO participation in development processes. It has generated attention and contributed to reaffirming and further strengthening international commitments on CSO DE and enabling environment and, more specifically, on (1) access to spaces for dialogue and partnerships with governments and other development actors, (2) legal and regulatory frameworks that support and promote rather than constrain CSOs' work, (3) funding mechanisms for CSOs that allow them to operate in a way that is responsive to the individuals and communities they serve or represent, and (4) CSOs' continuous effort to advance their accountability and effectiveness as independent development actors.

The GPEDC and the Task Team have initiated work to promote and monitor EDC implementation at the country level. Effective country-led development partnerships are reflected in (1)

development partners' alignment to partner country priorities and country-owned results frameworks, (2) the use of country systems (e.g., national procurement systems), (3) the forward visibility of development partner's cooperation (i.e., the extent to which donors offer transparency regarding available resources to a developing country up to three years ahead), (4) the reporting of global information systems and standards and the availability of timely and forward-looking information on development, (5) inclusive and predictable engagement, and (6) mutual accountability structures and processes.

### 3. What are the challenges in development partnerships in EDC?

The GPEDC's last monitoring round revealed that international commitments have declined or stalled or have shown uneven progress (OECD and UNDP, 2019b). For example, development partners' alignment to partner country priorities and country-owned results frameworks and their forward visibility at the country level declined and weakened, respectively. Moreover, the progress on timely and forward-looking information on development cooperation remained limited, and there was a lack of systematic consultations with CSOs. CSOs also raised their concern that development partners' funding to CSOs is primarily driven by the latter's interests and priorities (OECD and UNDP, 2019).

Aside from the challenges identified by the GPEDC, a complementary study by CPDE noted that the role of CSOs in developing country strategies and results frameworks is mixed. Most country CSOs are aware of such documents and processes, but access to them is uneven. Despite laws or policies that recognise the participation of CSOs in decision-making in many countries, there remain significant challenges, such as limited participation, lack of institutionalised structures, and poor engagement quality (CPDE, 2019).

provide means for citizens to exercise their right to participate in development (GPEDC, 2016).

Since the Busan Declaration, international development actors have committed to developing policy spaces and an enabling environment for the formation and operation of CSOs, to ensure their full participation in development processes at all levels. CSOs, in turn, have committed to:

- a. adhering to the Istanbul Principles (see Sidebar 4), which incorporate the Busan Principles as an expression of mutual accountability with other relevant stakeholders in the Global Partnership;

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- b. upholding country-led results frameworks relevant to their work as independent development partners in their own right;

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- c. developing and implementing strategies, activities, and practices that promote individual and collective human rights, including the right to development with dignity, decent work, social justice, and equity for all people;

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- d. demonstrating a sustained organisational commitment to transparency, mutual accountability, and integrity in their internal operations; and

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- e. realising sustainable outcomes and impacts of their development actions, focusing on results and conditions for

#### 4. What are the CSOs' roles in development partnerships in EDC?

CSOs have increasingly gained recognition as development actors due to their consistent engagement and participation in EDC. As outlined in earlier meetings, the Mexico and Nairobi High-Level Meetings (2014 and 2016) reiterated their role in development partnerships. The Mexico Communique stressed that CSOs empower people to claim their rights, promote rights-based approaches, shape development policies and partnerships, and oversee their implementation. The Nairobi Outcome Document further recognised civil society as an independent partner in its own right, working within national policies and towards EDC and poverty reduction, tackling inequalities and ensuring progress towards the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda through advocacy and communications, service delivery, monitoring, and research. CSOs also

lasting change for the people, with special emphasis on poor and marginalised populations, ensuring an enduring legacy for present and future generations (GPEDC, 2016).

These commitments are intertwined. While CSOs have made remarkable strides in fulfilling them, such as demonstrating their effectiveness and accountability, they can only do so much as fully independent development actors in an environment where major legal, regulatory, and policy hurdles challenge their existence and roles (IBON International et al., 2014). Such political context and the actions of other development actors affect CSOs' capacities to demonstrate inclusive partnerships.

CSOs must assert their commitment to an enabling environment at the global,

regional, and country levels to demonstrate effectiveness. They must continue engaging development actors, especially governments, as duty-bearers, in upholding international human rights conventions, reversing trends of shrinking and closing civic spaces, and asserting the people's fundamental political and civil liberties and their rights to peaceful assembly and information. CSOs can call on their governments to retract restrictive laws hindering their full operation and review disabling conditions for CSO formation and registration, including arbitrary policies and duplicate processes and requirements, especially for those working on human rights in critically sensitive environments.

**Sidebar 4. The Istanbul Principles on development effectiveness:**

- Respect and promote human rights and social justice
- Embody gender equality and equity while promoting women's and girls' rights
- Focus on people's empowerment, democratic ownership, and participation
- Promote environmental sustainability
- Practice transparency and accountability
- Pursue equitable partnerships and solidarity
- Create and share knowledge and commit to mutual understanding
- Commit to realising positive, sustainable change.



## C. What are the EDC commitments?

The Busan Partnership Document establishes the following commitments of donors and other stakeholders to EDC:

### Country ownership.

The principle of country ownership over development processes posits that all partners work together under the leadership of partner governments to maximise the impact of development based on national priorities that have been set in a broad consultative manner. Using measures to identify steps toward greater ownership entails conversations with and among stakeholders about necessary change (see Sidebar 5). Country ownership in development cooperation assumes that aid-funded initiatives will lead to more successful outcomes given the recipient countries' interest and participation (Watson et al., 2016).



### A focus on results.

Partner countries are expected to develop their own results frameworks, which donors must use. Despite persistent, significant challenges on this front, some progress, albeit slow, has been achieved in meeting this commitment. The SDGs articulate clear results and most major donors have signed up to support countries in pursuing these goals (OECD, 2014).

### Inclusive partnerships.

Development partners must engage in development planning and implementation to harness their specific and complementary skills and roles.

### Transparency and mutual accountability.

Donors are committed to transparency in cooperation and hold each other accountable for delivering mutually agreed-upon outcomes. Both donor and recipient governments are thus required to work towards a model of good practice guided by the principle of national ownership.



### Sidebar 5. Use of country systems

Signatory donors of the Busan Declaration have agreed to work in partnership with recipient governments and progressively use the latter's budgets, systems, and procedures for channelling aid flows. Recipient governments must develop policies – either at the sectoral or programme level or for general poverty reduction – and focus on achieving results. This commitment demonstrates the principles of harmonisation and alignment, in that donors elect to harmonise their processes and, where possible, align with country policies and procedures.

## II. WHAT IS CPDE'S GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT WITH DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS?

### A. CPDE's history of donor engagement as a commitment from Busan

Since CPDE was formed in 2012, it has been engaging donors and development partners at the global, regional, and sectoral levels through its representatives, constituencies, and governing bodies. Its primary engagement platform is the GPEDC, but it also engages with the United Nations (UN) SDG processes, Financing for Development (FfD), the UN Development Cooperation Forum (UN DCF), the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), the EU Policy Forum on

Development (EU PFD), and the Task Team. Moreover, it has built bilateral relations with the European Commission (EC), Global Affairs Canada, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Finland, the Austrian Development Agency, Irish Aid, and Sida.

Having committed to the Busan EDC Principles, CPDE anchors its engagement with donors and development partners on the conviction that CSOs are development actors in their own right. For nearly a

decade of engagement, it has enhanced its relationship with major bilateral donors and reached several milestones in advocating EDC to fulfil the SDGs.

## Global Policy and Advocacy Arenas

### GPEDC

In 2014, barely two years after it was formed, a second seat in the GPEDC Steering Committee was given to CSOs (trade unions) to counterbalance the strong private sector representation and substantially contribute to the GPEDC Global Monitoring Framework. CSOs have since mainstreamed key priority language in the meeting communique, proposed key deliverables on inclusive partnerships, and successfully pushed for inclusive development, as evidenced by the multistakeholder nature of the GPEDC's First High-Level Meeting (CPDE, 2014).

The following years propelled CPDE as the primary civil society stakeholder on the EDC agenda. CPDE, as a Steering Committee member in the GPEDC, has led the Global Partnership Initiative (GPI) on Civil Society Continuing Campaign on Effective Development, co-chaired the Task Team's GPI on CSO EE Framework and Guidelines, and engaged in the work on climate finance, fragile states, and South-South cooperation (CPDE, 2015).

One of the highlights of CPDE's GPEDC engagement was its influence, in 2016,

on the content of key plenary sessions on stock-taking progress in implementing and upholding the Busan commitments, the SDGs, South-South cooperation, private sector engagement, women and youth empowerment, the "leaving no one behind" principle, and inclusive partnerships. CPDE members also contributed actively to the 2nd Round of the Global Monitoring Framework. CPDE tried to influence the outcomes of the HLPF resolution and endorsed the Open Letter of the NGO Major Group urging governments and other stakeholders to commit to mutual accountability, leaving no one behind, and delivering and reporting actual results. The group submitted a position paper to the FfD Forum outlining CSO position and key demands, such as regulating the actions of the private sector through legally binding documents (CPDE, 2016).

In 2017, CPDE was influential in shaping the work of the GPEDC in Workstream 1 (Country Effectiveness in Agenda 2030) and Workstream 4 (Private Sector Accountability) and in the technical working group that advised the Steering Committee (CPDE, 2017).

In the period 2018–2019, CPDE engaged in the 3rd Monitoring Round in the areas of CSO EE, decent work, quality of public-private dialogue, gender equality, and transparency and accountability. CPDE, as the sole CSO representative to the Steering Committee, mobilised CSO

participation at the Senior-Level Meeting in New York in 2019 and reported on the dismal performance of development partners in the areas of CSO EE, conditionalities, and the use of country systems. CPDE advocated for more country-focused work for the GPEDC and welcomed the development of the Kampala Principles, which guide the engagement with the private sector premised on accountability and people-oriented results (CPDE, 2019a).

### Task Team

Members of the Task Team are champions of CSO DE and an enabling environment for effective CSO participation in development processes. The three co-chairs of this coalition come from each of its constituent stakeholder groups: donors, partner governments, and CSOs through CPDE. In 2015, CPDE co-chaired the Task Team's GPI 12 (CSO EE Framework and Guidelines) in the GPEDC. In 2017, the platform participated actively when the Task Team convened twice to take stock of the progress in implementing the various stakeholders' DE and EE commitments. It pushed for inclusive partnerships, an HRBA approach to development, and a CSO enabling environment. The following year, CPDE shared CSO positions with other stakeholders to broaden common ground, which led to other CSO delegates partnering with the Task Team in the GPI 12 and on country effectiveness in development cooperation.

### OECD-DAC

The DAC CSO Reference Group (RG) is the main mechanism to advocate CSO positions and recommendations in the DAC policy discussions. In 2016, CPDE sought observer seats in the OECD-DAC sessions on the role of the private sector in development cooperation. In the following years, CPDE supported the establishment of the CSO dialogue mechanism. CPDE members have since led DAC CSO RG working groups on DE and peace and security, among other thematic areas.

The OECD-DAC donors' performance largely determines the global pace towards EDC, not only because its members mostly include major traditional donors but also because it consistently commits them to the effectiveness principles.

### UN processes

*(Agenda 2030, Development Cooperation Forum, and Financing for Development)*

Policy and advocacy engagement in the UN DCF has also been sustained through the participation of CSO representatives in DCF-organised events. At the UN DCF Forum in Berlin in 2014, members took part in CSO consultations, the DCF Advisory Group with the GPEDC Steering Committee members, and the briefing on the HLM communiqué. In 2015, CPDE advocated for the DCF to play a more significant role in monitoring EDC commitments, upholding principles of just

and fair development cooperation, promoting development cooperation that matches the needs of the people and the planet, and increasing efforts to implement international agreements on the effectiveness agenda. In the following years, CPDE members emphasised genuine multistakeholder partnerships, the urgency of universalising EDC, the accountability of all actors, the use of HRBA in development cooperation, and the value of CSO participation to achieve SDG 17 in particular and Agenda 2030 in general.

CPDE also engages other UN mechanisms such as South-South Development Cooperation (SSDC) and the FfD Forum. It advocated for SSDC founded on the principles of horizontal development cooperation and HRBA. In the FfD Forum, CPDE emphasised the principles of accountability and transparency and underscored the need for private sector accountability in development. In 2017, the platform led the Development Cooperation Pillar in the FfD Forum and called on development actors and partners to fulfil their commitments from previous High-Level Forums (HLFs) and spell out time-bound action plans. Since 2018, CPDE has developed key messages on accountability and transparency, particularly on the responsibilities of states as duty-bearers of development and development cooperation. It has also welcomed positive developments in

recognising country leadership in national development processes, realising global commitments, and implementing a nuanced approach to Technical Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) and blended finance.

### **European Union Policy Forum on Development (EU PFD)**

The European Commission (EC), an executive branch of the EU, is one of CPDE's main donors with a keen focus on development cooperation. CPDE engages bilaterally with the EC and participates actively in the EU PFD and the EU Partnership Forum, primarily on the issues of CSO enabling environment and development partnerships. During the revisiting of the EU PFD's mandate in 2015, CPDE underscored the importance of the EU PFD in having a stronger influence on EU development cooperation policies. In this engagement, they pushed to balance the role of the private sector and a CSO enabling environment in reformulating the EU PFD's mandate. Moreover, CPDE members also influenced the EU country roadmaps. In 2017, CPDE critiqued the EU Development Consensus by reiterating the importance of spelt-out, time-bound action plans to implement such a consensus (CPDE, 2017).



## Bilateral donor engagement

Involvement of civil society in policy dialogue and political advocacy has been a growth area, and most donors seek to support spaces to enable civil society involvement in such discourse at the country and global levels. Donors acknowledge that sometimes their work in this area is ad hoc, partly given its sensitive nature. However, in bilateral policy, it has been lately notable how some donors like Sida have articulated their support for CSOs in the South as an end in itself.

Since its formation in 2012, CPDE has engaged and built relations with several donors (see **Appendix 1**). Sida has been its consistent donor since November 2013 until its current programme for 2020-2021 (extended until 2022). The EC, Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, Irish Aid, the Austrian Development Agency, and Finland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs have also supported CPDE's policy advocacy and capacity-building (see **Matrix 1**).

### Matrix 1. CPDE's Donors

#### CPDE Programme

#### Civil Society Continuing Campaign for Development Effectiveness

#### Donors

Sida  
Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) Canada\*  
Irish Aid  
Austrian Development Agency  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs Finland

#### Period covered

November 2013 – March 2017

#### Key Objectives

1. Continuously monitor and advocate for the Global Aid and Development Effectiveness Agenda, ensuring alignment with the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA), CSO Key Asks, and the Busan agreements
2. Promoting an Enabling Environment (EE) for CSOs
3. Building CSO Development Effectiveness (DE) through the implementation of the Istanbul Principles

## CPDE Programme

### Enhancing Civil Society Role in Development Partnerships Post 2015

#### Donors

European Commission (co-financed by SIDA)

#### Period covered

2016 – 2018

#### Key Objectives

1. Influence favourable policy outcomes in development partnerships at the global and regional levels through institutionalising CSO participation, advocating an enabling environment for CSOs, and aligning development frameworks to human rights-based approaches
2. Increase CSO capacity to contribute and monitor DPs and Istanbul Principles implementation

## CPDE Programme

### Sustaining Civil Society Advocacy on Effective Development Cooperation

#### Donors

SIDA

#### Period covered

April 2017 – April 2018

#### Key Objectives

1. Renew effective development cooperation advocacy at the country level
2. Sustain the momentum of effective development cooperation advocacy among constituencies
3. Consolidate and further strengthen the platform

<b>CPDE Programme</b>
<b>Grounding Effective Development Cooperation and Development Partnerships in People's Realities and Realisation of Their Rights</b>
<b>Donors</b>
SIDA
<b>Period covered</b>
May 2018 – April 2019
<b>Key Objectives</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthen core EDC advocacy grounded in realities and issues of constituencies and countries in preparation for the 2019 Senior-Level Meeting (SLM) and High-Level Meeting (HLM)</li> <li>2. Advocate for the effectiveness of development cooperation actors based on HRBA</li> <li>3. Sustain the momentum of platform work on CSO development effectiveness and enabling environment</li> <li>4. Support the restructuring of the GPEDC towards a more meaningful multistakeholder partnership</li> </ol>
<b>CPDE Programme</b>
<b>Promoting the Universal Application of Effective Development Cooperation (EDC) for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>
<b>Donors</b>
SIDA
<b>Period covered</b>
2020 – 2021
<b>Key Objectives</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthen country-level mechanisms for EDC engagement</li> <li>2. Reinforce application and recognition of CSO DE principles</li> <li>3. Increase awareness of development actors on EDC principles application in crisis situations</li> </ol>



## CPDE Programme

### Advancing CSO Advocacy and Capacity on Effective Development Cooperation and Partnerships

#### Donors

European Commission (Co-financing with Austrian Aid Irish Aid)

#### Period covered

2020 – 2022

#### Key Objectives

1. Improve CPDE members' capacity to engage in development partnerships
2. Establish a broader support base for CSOs and their positions

*Source: Various CPDE programme documents*

*\* Global Affairs Canada*



## B. Evolving trends in donors' policies and approaches to CSO funding

**Alongside the MDGs and climate change discussions, the effectiveness agenda dominated the policy discourse in the 2000s, owing to several developments in the international aid regime.**

The policy and funding environment from the 2000s to 2015 shifted several times according to geopolitical factors and the global development agenda. At the turn of the millennium, the MDGs were at the centre of the development discourse, focusing on the state or government ownership of poverty reduction policies, as espoused by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. CSOs were losing their role as monitors of government policy and becoming more like donor agencies' contractors. The post 9/11 period shifted the priority for aid to counterterrorism priorities such as "democracy-building," "good governance," and "national security," which CSOs criticised because this pivot took public money away from the neediest areas to so-called hotspots (Pinauin, 2020).

In the late 2000s, the effectiveness agenda became the focal point of the international development arena. With the rollout of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the blueprint for a universal call to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure

that, by 2030, all people enjoy peace and prosperity, development partnerships and EDC became integrated with the SDGs as means of implementation.

### Policy environment

#### i. CSOs' Role in Development

The recognition of CSOs as development actors in their own right gained popularity after decades of positive interventions by adequately resourced and suitably accountable civil society groups. These interventions have infused global relations with more democratic legitimacy. They have also been proven effective in advancing public education, fuelling debate, and promoting transparency and accountability. CSOs generally have two significant roles in development: (1) as change agents and (2) as donors of aid, channels for aid, and recipients of aid. CSOs, as change agents and development actors, are fundamental to democratic rule and good governance (OECD, 2011).

Several paradigm and policy shifts saw the increased recognition of CSO roles in development. The shift from country ownership to democratic ownership as part of the discourse on DE also advocated for the increased role of other development actors such as CSOs in policy

making, development planning, implementation and review.

Both government and civil society should define the priorities for national development (Hauck and Land, 2011).

A shift in policy logic, in broad terms, treated CSOs as “mainly collaborative and efficient implementers of government policies to achieve specific development goals” as opposed to “incubators of social and political transformation that should receive enough autonomy.” The persistence of even expansion of the practice of results-based management (RBM),<sup>1</sup> for example, has been seen as restricting CSOs’ autonomy in some ways. In addition, this policy logic sees Southern CSOs playing a role only if they are efficient providers of services (Verbrugge and Huyse, 2018).

These policy shifts and the changing development context result in policy gains for improved CSO practice. In 2021, the OECD released a legal instrument on enabling civil society in development cooperation and assistance, wherein CPDE participated and contributed to the discussions leading to its finalisation (see **Sidebar 6**).

## ii. CSO Effectiveness and Enabling Environment

In the AAA, donors and governments of developing countries asked CSOs to reflect on their effectiveness and accountability. They committed to improving the coordination of CSO efforts with government programmes, enhancing CSO accountability for results, enhancing the dissemination of information on CSO activities, and working with CSOs to provide an enabling environment that maximises their contribution to development (OECD, 2011). The Istanbul Principles and other CSO DE efforts respond to these commitments. The International Framework on CSO DE also suggests minimum standards for donor policies and practices in working with CSOs (Open Forum, 2011).

Donors and development partners have also recognised that shrinking civic space has constrained and even endangered CSOs in fulfilling their role in development. Civicus, a civil society alliance, reported that, in 2020, about nine in 10 people (87.3%) lived in countries with an obstructed, repressed or closed civic space, compared with 82.4% the year before.

.....  
<sup>1</sup>RBM is a management strategy by which all actors, contributing directly or indirectly to achieving a set of results, ensure that their processes, products and services contribute to achieving desired results (outputs, outcomes, and higher-level goals or impact). For accountability and reporting, the actors, in turn, use information and evidence of actual results to inform decision-making in the design, resourcing, and delivery of programmes and activities (UNDG, 2011).

## Sidebar 6. OECD Legal Instrument: DAC's Recommendation on Enabling Civil Society in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance

In 2021, the OECD-DAC adopted a document recognising civil society actors as critical contributors to all SDGs. The DAC Recommendation “aims to support DAC members and other development cooperation and humanitarian assistance providers to enhance how they address civic space and work with civil society actors, while underscoring that civil society actors must also take action to enhance their effectiveness, transparency and accountability” (p. 3).

To enable civil society, the DAC Recommendation addresses three interlinked pillars of development cooperation in enabling civil society: (1) respecting, protecting, and promoting civic space; (2) supporting and engaging with civil society; and (3) incentivising CSO effectiveness, transparency, and accountability. These three pillars address the three clusters of challenges that the DAC has identified as impediments to civil society:

- A diminishing respect for human rights and democracy in a context of rising authoritarianism around the globe is eroding the freedoms of peaceful assembly, association, and expression, posing a real threat to civic space.
- There is work to be done to strengthen the way DAC members support and engage with civil society actors to ensure the most effective use of the resources.
- There are opportunities to enhance their effectiveness, transparency, and accountability.

The rationale behind the process that DAC embarked on was DAC's readiness to play a leadership role in expressing support to develop a policy instrument enabling civil society (OECD-DAC, June 2021). The DAC Recommendation is the first international standard focused on the actions of development partners and civil society, in particular, as a contributor to the 2030 Agenda.

*Source: OECD-DAC (2021, July).*



At the 2019 Civil Society Summit in Belgrade, Serbia, CSOs called for an end to the relentless attacks on civil society, social leaders, and human rights defenders. Concerning funding, the OECD acknowledged that various factors behind current donor-driven funding trends must be revisited and reconstructed to help civil society push back against narrowing civic space. In addition, the OECD stressed the need for transparency and accountability to abolish practices that favour international organisations based in the donor country and drive CSOs to compete for resources and funding (OECD, 2018).

### iii. Private Sector Engagement

The prominent role of the private sector in development is one of the most contentious discussions in international multistakeholder arenas. It is anchored on the idea that other forms of financing should be leveraged for development beyond traditional aid. In this regard, the Addis Ababa Financing for Development Conference in 2015 committed to working with the private sector. Unlike the MDGs, the SDGs gave this sector a more prominent role, as observed in major donors' "innovative financing mechanisms," such as blended finance and commercial contracts (Verbrugge and Huyse, 2020). One outcome of this paradigm is that growing shares of public resources through ODA are being transferred to private sector initiatives in developing countries (Simonetti, 2016).

## Recent funding trends

### i. CSO funding in flux?

Total aid to and through CSOs<sup>2</sup> from DAC members remained the same at US\$21 billion in 2019 compared to the year before (at constant 2018 prices). Likewise, the percentage of ODA to and through CSOs in the same period still stood at 15% of total bilateral aid. What is stark, though, is that the amount of ODA through CSOs (to implement donor-initiated projects) even increased from US\$16 billion in 2010 to US\$18 billion in 2019, which underscores the greater importance of CSOs in implementing donor government programmes.

A study on recent trends in CSO funding (Verbrugge and Huyse, 2018) showed evidence that, in major donor countries in the EU, the relative weight of CSO funding in ODA budgets has stagnated or decreased. The previous upward trend in CSO funding, from early 2010 to 2015, of some major donors, including the EU, has not persisted, and absolute amounts of funding have stagnated.

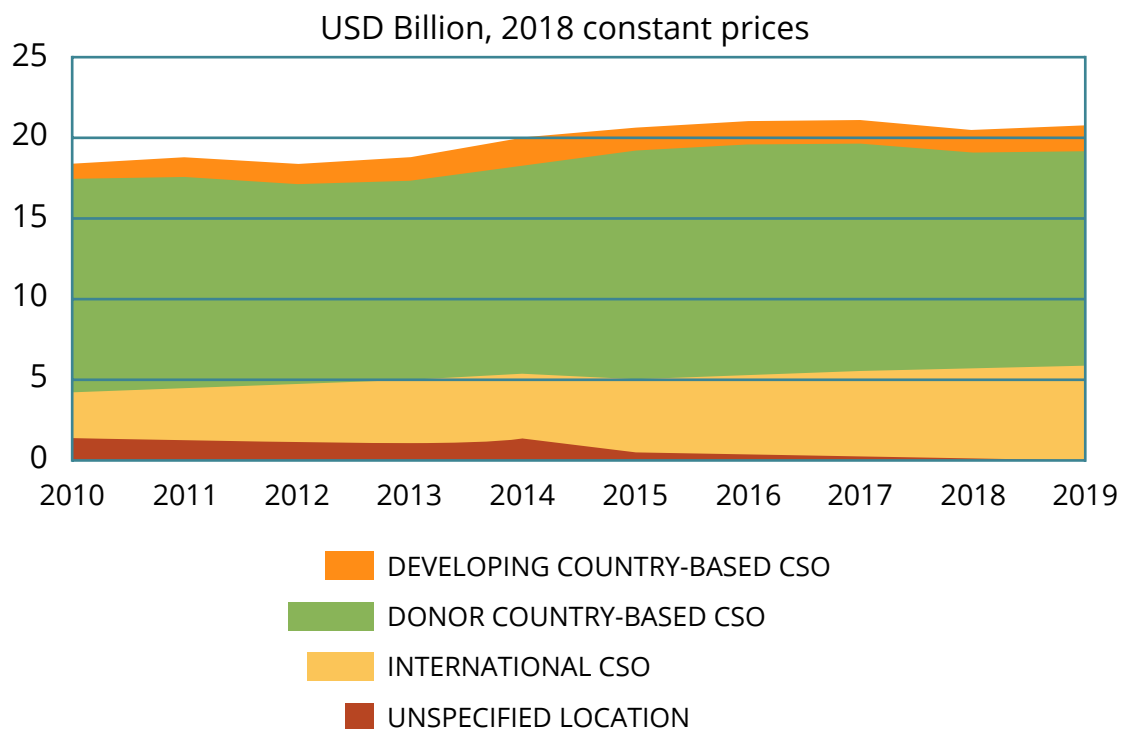
By type of CSO, compared to almost a decade ago in 2010, ODA allocation by DAC members channelled to and through international CSOs<sup>3</sup> and developing country-based CSOs<sup>4</sup> in 2019 increased by 93% and 38%, respectively (**see Chart 1**).

.....  
<sup>2</sup>"Aid to CSOs" are core contributions and contributions to programmes. These aid funds are programmed by the CSOs while "Aid channelled through CSOs" are funds channelled through CSOs and other private bodies to implement donor-initiated projects (earmarked funding), according to the OECD-DAC.

<sup>3</sup> International NGOs (Channel Code 21000): an NGO organised on an international level. Some INGOs may act as umbrella organisations with affiliations in several donor and/or recipient countries.

<sup>4</sup> Developing country-based NGOs (Channel Code 23000): an NGO organised at the national level, based and operated in a developing (ODA-eligible country)

**Chart 1: ODA allocations of DAC members to and through CSOs, by type of CSOs**



Source: OECD, 2021

The 2021 Aidwatch Report (Concord, 2021) disclosed that only 20.3% of funding EU funding disbursed to CSOs is core funding, while the bulk of these amounts is earmarked funds or for specific donor-initiated projects. Meanwhile, only 1.8% of the total EU ODA to CSOs is core funding to organisations in partner countries (usually developing countries).

## ii. Sectors attracting more funding

Social infrastructure and services accounted for 47% of bilateral ODA by DAC members in 2018-2019, followed by humanitarian assistance (31%). But, in the same period, the top sectors that bilateral ODA had targeted for intervention channelled through CSOs were emergency response, government and civil society,

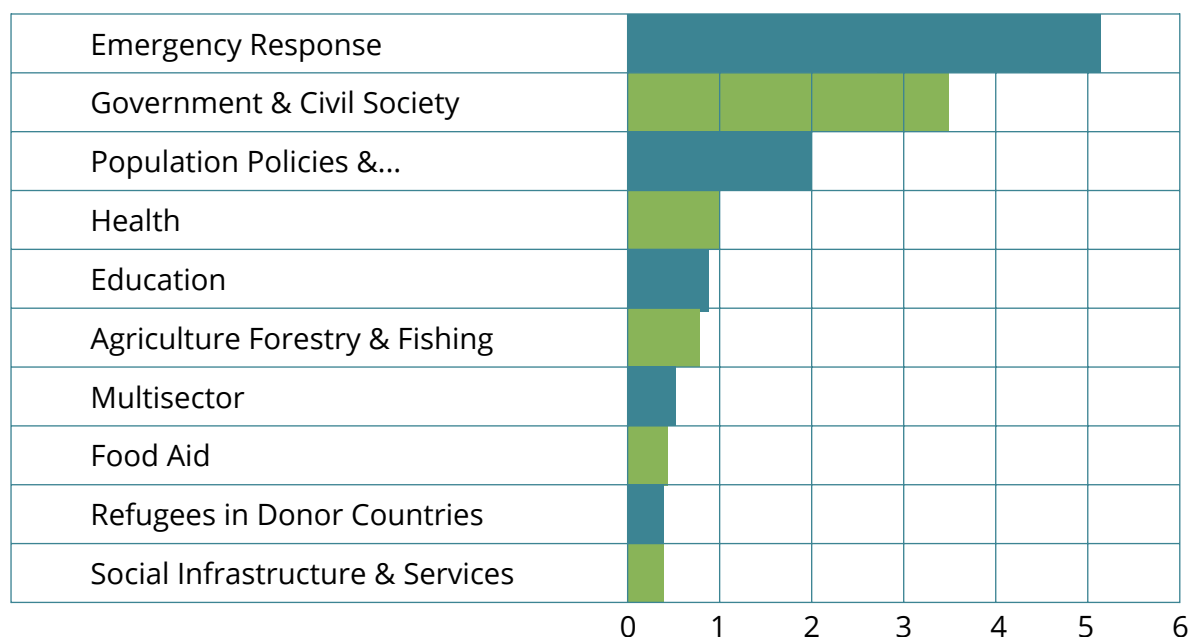
and policies on population and reproductive health (**see Chart 2**).

Other sectors that are attracting more funding are organisations working on climate change, including attendant social issues such as social justice, indigenous populations, women and children, livelihoods, food security and sovereignty, human rights, peace and conflict resolution, social inclusion and diversity, health, livelihoods, and education.

## iii. Instrumentalisation of development?

CSOs have observed that aid and development are increasingly tied to donors' geopolitical interests, such as security, defence, and trade, in the name of policy coherence (Verbrugge and Huyse,

**Chart 2. Top 10 Subsectors of Intervention for Bilateral ODA channelled through CSOs by DAC Members, 2018-2019**



Source: OECD, 2021

2020). Amid stagnating ODA, CSOs competing for funding are pressured to prove that they can contribute to the donors' targets and priorities.

Removing ODA conditionalities has been a rallying point for CSOs in the 2000s, but in the era of DE, CSO funding comes with ever more "strings attached" (Huyse and De Bruyn, 2015). CSOs have to integrate the donor's chosen thematic or geographical area of focus (e.g., gender, the environment, and digitalisation, as with EU countries). Donors also often cite "effectiveness" when introducing mechanisms or requirements for CSOs to access funding or be eligible for evaluation (for future funding), such as "value for money" and "payment by results" (Verbrugge and Huyse, 2020).

#### iv. Role of ICSOs

One key topic of discussion among EU donors is the changing role of Europe-based CSOs in influencing funding-related policies. On the one hand, this ongoing discussion is fuelled by evidence of southern CSOs' growing capacities. On the other hand, it hints at a gradual shift among Northern CSOs from their relevance as policy innovators to a more "defensive" attitude toward their added value as an intermediary for funding southern CSOs, given that some bilateral donors might eventually no longer need such intermediation (Niels and Spierings, 2011).

### III. DONOR STRATEGIES VIS-À-VIS CPDE KEY ASKS: CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE

**Two main documents articulate CPDE's priorities and policy and advocacy positions: (1) CPDE Manifesto and Key Asks and (2) Strategic Plan 2020-2023. The framework and theory of change reflected in these documents guide the platform's engagement with various stakeholders.**

#### A. CPDE's policy priorities

CPDE (2020a) identifies effective and inclusive development partnerships, as upheld in the Busan Agreement, as the key to achieving the aspirations of Agenda 2030. CPDE believes that state, market, and civil society actors should exhibit behaviour change to build these partnerships. It has expressed its commitments concerning four key priority areas:

- a. the role of the private sector in development;
- b. CSO enabling environment and the reversal of shrinking civic space;
- c. the effectiveness of climate finance; and
- d. nexus issues of humanitarian response, peace, and development

CPDE's current strategic plan is both an iteration and a continuation of the CPDE Manifesto and Key Asks, which detail CPDE's position in (1) effective development cooperation, (2) private sector in development, (3) South-South cooperation, (4) CSO enabling environment, (5) countries in situations of conflict and fragility, and (6) migration and development cooperation (**see Appendix 2**).





## B. Key convergence and divergence

Some donors have policy priorities aligned with CPDE's policy positions as articulated in its strategic plan. Some of these convergences are on the themes of civic space and CSO enabling environment, which is also a key priority of Sida, and development cooperation, which is a key priority of the EC.

While some of the donors' and development partners' policy positions differ from CPDE's (**see Appendix 2**), the platform engages with these actors in global, regional, and national arenas to bring forth its key messages and attempt to influence their policy positions or behaviour.

### Sida on CSO enabling environment and shrinking civic space

CPDE has been working to reverse the pattern of closing and shrinking civic space in development partnerships by promoting a CSO enabling environment, collaborating with other actors, and implementing awareness-raising campaigns.

Meanwhile, Sida wants to "support civil society in its own right, that is, support a pluralistic and rights-based civil society as an objective in itself in addition to supporting individual CSOs with respect for their independence and right of initiative." Sida understands that a strong, independent civil society is essential to a democratic society and key to inclusive and sustainable development (Sida, 2019).

Sida's policy and related programming guidelines concerning CSOs are contained in the document Guiding Principles for Sida's Engagement with and Support to Civil Society, which includes five policy pronouncements:

1. Explore the various roles of CSOs within their contexts by conducting power analyses, drafting an intervention logic for engagement with and support for civil society, engaging stakeholders, and conducting regular reviews.

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2. Strive to support civil society in its own right by applying a whole-of-agency approach and coordinating with other donors for more extensive outreach.

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3. Provide aid and development-effective support to civil society partners by using more coordinated and harmonised support mechanisms that strengthen CSO ownership and DE, providing flexible and responsive funding to support a variety of civil society actors, taking calculated risks preferring direct grant-making to calls for proposals.

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4. Support civil society partners' efforts to strengthen their own DE, including transparency and accountability.

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5. Engage in continuous dialogue with civil society by conducting strategic and structured discussions and using existing initiatives.

With the promotion of CSO enabling environment and strengthening the capacity of CSOs in low- and middle-income countries a priority, Sida disbursed a third of its available funds to and through CSOs. It also champions a CSO enabling environment and DE in other policy arenas (such as the Task Team) and facilitates global collaboration on these themes. Sweden has also maximised the use of bilateral, multilateral, and regional policy and legal instruments to address the closing of civic space (e.g., lobbying and advocacy at the UN and efforts to strengthen the mandate of UN Special Rapporteurs). On the same subject, Sida has played a role in supporting evidence generation by funding the monitoring and analysis of CSOs on shrinking civic space (Hossain and Khurana, 2019).

### EC on development cooperation

CPDE's engagement with the EU and the EC derives primarily from its commitment to effective development cooperation. The EU follows a "rights-based approach that encompasses all human rights to development cooperation" (European Council et al., 2017). It seeks to strengthen the effectiveness of its development cooperation and abide by the Busan EDC principles in various policy arenas (**see Appendix 2**). The European Consensus on Development (2017) frames the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in partnership with all developing countries, taking due account of the framework

provided by the Lisbon Treaty, which gives the EU its legal personality.

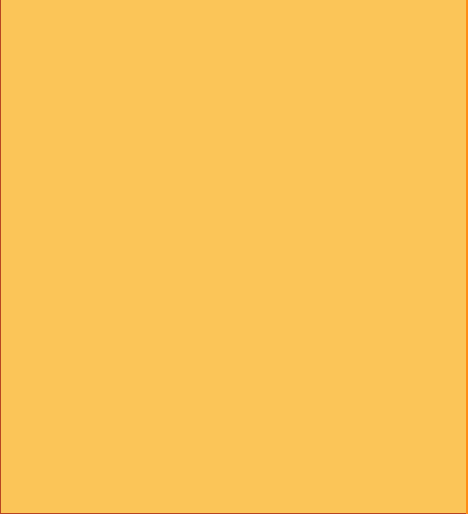
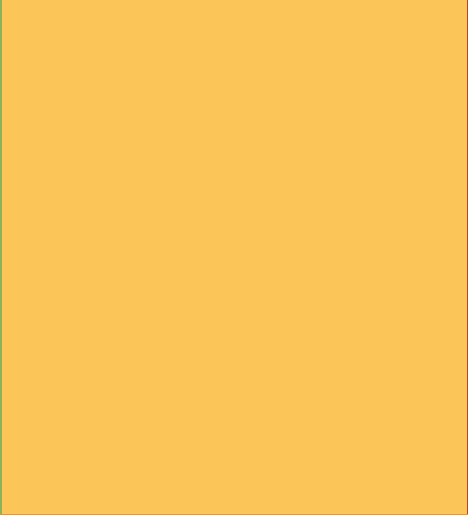
The EU and its member countries provide more than half of the world's development aid. The EC considers this form of assistance as one of the pillars of the EU's external action. For policy coherence, the EC strives to orient the country-level approaches of governments, donors, and other partners according to DE principles and practices. It coordinates with EU countries through joint programming to reduce donor fragmentation and transaction costs and optimise European development aid.

The EC's directorate-general for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO, recently renamed "DG for International Partnerships" or DG-INTPA) is a member and an active supporter of the GPEDC. As part of its work, it commissioned a detailed report on 1,800 projects in over 70 partner countries, analysing the EU performance in EDC (EC, 2020a). The study found that EU donors were firmly committed to DE at the policy level. While some have even institutionalised DE in their procedures and management systems, there was still an overall deterioration in the union's performance.

## The private sector in development

CPDE recognises the role of the private sector, specifically micro-, small, and medium enterprises, in contributing to national development. However, faced with growing private sector engagement in development, CPDE underscores the importance of private sector accountability given the detrimental impacts of large-scale corporate operations and projects, which governments have historically sanctioned, from health crises and environmental issues to loss of lands and livelihoods (CPDE, 2019b).

Many donors and development partners such as OECD members, the World Bank Group, and the EU (as stated in its External Investment Plan) have lately advanced, to varying degrees, the concept of blended finance, wherein donors use ODA to "leverage" or attract private financing in development. But several criticisms of blended financing point to the inadequacy of its grievance mechanisms, low levels of transparency, and a decline in aid for other traditional uses, such as public service, in the face of non-increasing ODA as a share of the gross national income (Oxfam, 2017).



The background is a solid orange color. It features several large, solid-colored rectangular blocks: a red block in the top-left, a yellow block in the top-middle, a red block in the top-right, a yellow block in the middle-right, a green block in the bottom-left, a yellow block in the bottom-left (below the green one), and a green block in the bottom-right.

# Module 2

# Module 2

## IV. PLANNING FOR ENGAGEMENT

**Multistakeholder Engagement Processes (MSEPs) are processes structured to ensure the participation of different development actors in tackling a specific issue. These processes are based on principles, sometimes inspired by the rights-based approach to development. They aim to ensure participatory equity, accountability, and transparency and develop partnerships and networks among different stakeholders. Stakeholders are groups that have a role and interest in the objectives and implementation of a programme or project. They include target groups, direct beneficiaries, and those responsible for ensuring that the CSOs or project proponents deliver results as planned and are held accountable for the resources the programme or project needs (UNDP, 1997).**

MSEPs are increasingly used to deal with complex development questions, particularly about sustainability, and enhance CSOs' capacities for engagement and effective participation in priority multistakeholder development actions. These inclusive and participatory processes inspire a greater sense of ownership of development outcomes and strengthen CSOs' institutional sustainability.

MSEPs can help you promote transparent and inclusive decision-making, strengthen your stakeholder networks, and create a sense of empowerment, ultimately contributing to good governance (Wignaraja, 2006). They are conducive to building confidence in different actors and arriving at mutually acceptable solutions.



## A. Context and Stakeholder Analysis

Effective stakeholder engagement is a means to build stronger social relationships, resulting in improved organisational performance. CSOs should thus communicate effectively with their external and internal stakeholders. Otherwise, when communication is not meaningful or occurs only superficially, stakeholders lose interest, and their contribution might not be optimised. They are best positioned to make or break your project. Your stakeholders can either be powerful allies, advocates, supporters, and change agents or barriers to achieving your strategic goals.

Your engagement with stakeholders must be well-managed and continuous. You should review and revise, if necessary, as the project progresses. You must understand that key stakeholders have much to contribute to the decision-making process, and their involvement can dramatically improve the success of a project. Below are seven steps to engage your stakeholders (**see Figure 1**).



**Figure 1. Steps to Stakeholder Engagement**



## Identify your stakeholders.

The first stage in stakeholder relations involves researching individuals and organisations that may be relevant to your goals. For example, some groups may be directly affected by an initiative (positively or negatively), wield influence or power over its progress, and have stakes in its successful or unsuccessful conclusion.

Ask yourself:

- Who are my stakeholders?  
.....
- Do they share my interests and goals?  
.....
- Are they active publicly and in the right circles?  
.....
- Do they have a strong reputation and legitimacy?

- Do they have the ear of my audience and my audience’s influencers and decision-makers?  
.....
- Are they active in the jurisdictions that matter to me locally, nationally, or regionally?  
.....
- How am I going to engage with them?  
.....
- What can I do to reach them?

Understand at what level your stakeholders would like to be involved and offer them multiple opportunities to participate in decision-making and other activities. Involve your stakeholders and work together to address critical issues.



## Define the objectives.

Once potential stakeholders have been identified, make sure they are clear about the project goals and informed of all the details regarding the project's "who," "what," "when," "how," and "why."

---

## Communicate the objectives.

Develop a plan and make sure you have included various channels to connect with as many stakeholders as possible. Creating this plan early on makes it likelier that the team will communicate with stakeholders more regularly.

---

## Create a strategy.

Ask questions and engage stakeholders to help you understand challenges and opportunities within different project areas. Their input can reveal essential details regarding potential pitfalls and help you make informed decisions.

---

## Assign responsibilities.

Connect with stakeholders and ask for their input. Once your stakeholders have been identified, researched, and prioritised, the next step is to make contact to explore their interest in a potential collaboration. Use the information you have gathered to identify

points of intersection that you can use to build opportunities and present a win-win proposition for both organisations. Identify the best person to target and the most qualified person from your organisation to make the call.

---

## Define the evaluation process.

Engage stakeholders in addressing challenges your project may face and provide all necessary information to help them perform their roles effectively. Based on their feedback, you can better evaluate the current project stage and, if necessary, refocus your project plan.

---

## Assess risks and opportunities.

Stakeholders' engagement and feedback can have a tremendous impact on your project's success. Try to involve as many stakeholders as possible during the research phase. If you are unsure what areas or challenges to focus on first, you can engage the key stakeholders to help you prioritise responses to burning issues.

## B. Analysis of the enabling environment particular to the country or region

Socioeconomic and political contexts affect stakeholder engagements; thus, analysing the enabling environment is key to planning and strategising. In Busan, government leaders, heads of multilateral and bilateral institutions, and other stakeholders agreed to fully implement commitments to help CSOs exercise their roles as independent development actors in an enabling environment. The GPEDC monitors developments in the enabling environment through Indicator 2: “Civil Society Organisations operate within an environment that maximises their engagement in and contribution to development.”

The GPEDC (2020) released a self-reflection guide, Global Partnership Monitoring: Drivers of Indicator 2 results and questions for self-reflection and for multistakeholder dialogues, which the OECD-UNDP Joint Support Team developed. In this document, four key themes of an enabling environment, called “thematic modules,” were broken down into key aspects to guide stakeholders in reflecting on the current status of the CSO enabling environment (**see Matrix 2**). More related guide questions are detailed in Annex 1.

**Matrix 2. Drivers of Enabling Environment (Indicator 2) in the GPEDC Monitoring Framework, by Thematic Module**

Thematic module	Responsible party	Key aspects
<b>1. Space for CSO dialogue on national development policies</b>	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulting CSOs on national development policies</li> <li>• Consulting CSOs on SDG implementation and monitoring</li> <li>• Accessing relevant information</li> <li>• Consultations informing policies</li> </ul>



Thematic module	Responsible party	Key aspects
<b>2. CSO development effectiveness: Accountability and transparency</b>	CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging in equitable CSO partnerships</li> <li>• Coordinating CSO engagement in policy dialogue</li> <li>• Following a human rights-based approach (HRBA)</li> <li>• Addressing CSOs' transparency and multiple accountabilities</li> </ul>
<b>3. Official development cooperation with CSOs</b>	Development partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulting CSOs</li> <li>• Advocating for an enabling environment for CSOs</li> <li>• Providing effective financial support to CSOs</li> <li>• Reporting to international platforms on CSO funding</li> </ul>
<b>4. Legal and regulatory framework</b>	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enabling CSO assembly and expression</li> <li>• Enabling CSO formation, registration, and operation</li> <li>• Protecting CSOs working with marginalised populations and at-risk groups</li> <li>• Facilitating CSO access to resources</li> </ul>

Source: Global Partnership Monitoring (October 2020). Drivers of Indicator 2 results and questions for self-reflection and multistakeholder dialogues.

CSOs, in their contribution to the GPEDC 3MR, reported that there had been a decline in the legal and regulatory frameworks protecting CSOs, especially those working with at-risk populations (Tomlinson, 2019). They denounced limited freedom of expression and inadequate safeguards against harassment. CSOs agreed that other development actors had indeed engaged them in thought-enhancing dialogue and collaboration, which were, however, characterised by tokenism in most instances (CSO representative, Personal Communication, February 28, 2021).

### Reflection questions:

1. How does a hostile environment affect your organisation's plans for multistakeholder engagement?
2. How can you hurdle these challenges?

## C. Principles that guide CPDE's donor engagement

To design interventions better geared to the "real world," CSOs must mainstream and incorporate rights-based, gender-sensitive, and sustainable approaches into their programming – qualities that are more likely to interest donors.

In engaging donors, CPDE members can include the platform's strengths and advantages that it has developed over the years: (a) HRBA to development; (b) a feminist-based approach; (c) equitable partnerships; and (d) consensus-building. CPDE's commitment, practice, and adherence to these principles offer

a comparative advantage in engaging with donors and development partners.

### a. HRBA

CSOs are effective as development actors when promoting human rights and social justice. Thus, they must notably support and include the poor and the marginalised in crafting strategies, policies, and initiatives that respect and assert individual and collective rights. Such interventions could help transform lives and enhance democratic participation locally or regionally.

A rights-based approach is a conceptual framework and methodological tool for developing programmes. It advocates a conscious and systematic integration of human rights and human rights principles into all stages of the project cycle. CPDE asserts that human rights are at the heart of the aid and development agenda, which must be consistent with human rights instruments and norms, bridging international human rights standards and development interventions (CPDE, 2018). An HRBA implies CSOs intend to enhance the capacities of their constituencies and communities, empower them in all development areas, and represent their interests, particularly in CSOs' programmatic priorities and policy processes.

There is no universal standard for applying a rights-based approach to projects, but it generally entails:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifying the rights at stake;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assessing the extent to which rights are respected, protected, and fulfilled within the adopted solution;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifying rights-holders and their specific rights and the duty-bearers who bear the obligation to respect, protect, and fulfil those rights;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pledging to work towards strengthening the capacity of rights-holders for them to enjoy and claim their rights and for duty-bearers to meet their obligations; and</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adopting a solution that integrates the rights principles (universality, equality, and non-discrimination; participation and inclusion; accountability, the rule of law, and transparency);</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adhering to the pledge or ensuring that no human rights are violated due to the project.<sup>5</sup></li> </ul>

Some CPDE members have incorporated the HRBA into their strategic plans, organisational documents, and programme implementation (**see Appendix 3**).

.....

<sup>5</sup>Adapted by Author based on International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2015).

## b. Feminist-based approach

CSO DE embodies gender equality and equity while promoting women's rights in theory and practice. These principles complement the HRBA by advancing women's roles in development processes. In Busan, South Korea (2011) and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (2012), women's rights organisations and other CSOs issued six demands to integrate EDC and women's rights and gender issues (**see Sidebar 7**).

### **Sidebar 7. Key Demands from Women's Rights Organisations and Gender Equality Advocates to the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (Busan 2011) and the Development Cooperation Forum (2012)**

1. Any new development cooperation framework to be agreed in Busan should be based on human rights, including women's rights.
2. A new equitable development cooperation system for gender equality and women's rights under the United Nations is in place.
3. Development effectiveness requires democratic ownership by women and meaningful and systematic participation by civil society, especially women's and feminist organisations.
4. Promote multiple accountability systems for women's rights and gender equality, improving existing monitoring systems.
5. Financing for Development: Gender Equality and Women's Rights Beyond Mainstreaming
6. Development cooperation to the countries in situations of fragility and conflict must acknowledge the differential and disproportional impact of armed conflict on the lives and rights of women and girls.

Gender equality is a core value that CPDE applies in all its activities.

A programming process is gender-sensitive when every step of the project cycle systematically integrates a gender dimension, from context analysis and the definition of the problem to the identification and implementation of potential solutions (including the composition of the project management team).

Conducting a gender analysis is part of the project feasibility study. It aims to assess gender relations and gender inequalities by looking at specific social, economic, and political aspects, such as gender roles and division of labour, the needs and interests of various gender groups, their access to and control over services and resources, and stakeholder participation at different levels.

In recent years, it has been a priority for donors to reflect a gender-sensitive approach in their development cooperation policy. While no country has achieved full gender equality, the EU is comparatively a world leader on this front. Its member states, on average, scored 67.4 out of 100 in the EU Gender Equality Index in 2019,<sup>6</sup> a score that improved by just 5.4 points since 2005 (EC, 2020b).

Moreover, the EC has specific guidelines on gender mainstreaming used for its internal policy and the compliance of the entities it funds. Generally, a gender-sensitive approach to programming entails:

assessing how the issue affects women and men;

considering how the proposed solutions will affect women and men by addressing their differential needs and capacities;

ensuring that the composition of the implementation and management teams is gender-balanced and that they are professionally aware of gender issues around the project;

allocating sufficient funds for special measures to increase women's benefits and their participation; and

visualising the differential impact of the programme on women and men and the benefits of mainstreaming gender for the success and sustainability of outcomes.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup>See European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE): <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2019>.

<sup>7</sup>Adapted by Author based on Leduc & Ahmad (2009)



CPDE's Feminist Group (FG) constituency has taken the lead in emphasising the need to uphold and practise the feminist approach to the platform's internal and external work (**see Sidebar 8**). The FG clarified what a "feminist approach" means to CPDE in a position paper it developed in 2012,<sup>8</sup> defining feminist perspectives and advocacy in development cooperation. This approach is also embedded in CPDE's membership charter, by which virtue a representative of the Feminist Group constituency automatically secures a position on the platform's steering committee (SC).

**Sidebar 8. Case Study:  
Mainstreaming gender equality and  
equity into development  
cooperation: The CPDE Feminist  
Sector Development Effectiveness**

The FG is one of CPDE's sectoral constituencies and an evolved version of previous forms of informal self-organisation, collaboration, and coordination of women's rights organisations (WROs) and feminists on the aid and DE journey before the High-Level Forum in Accra (2008). It gained traction in Busan (2011) and Mexico (2014). The FG is an open and organised constituency that aims to influence all DE policy arenas to apply a feminist and gender-sensitive approach to development cooperation. To this end, and under

the umbrella of CPDE, the group has been supporting women's organisations and mainstream CSOs worldwide in applying the effectiveness principles from a women's rights and feminist perspective in their everyday development practice by developing relevant tools and raising awareness about the centrality of gender equality to EDC0. The group's "Women's Key Demands" (2011) remains a blueprint and a live document articulating the "what," "why," and "how" of inclusion and gender equality in CPDE, the GPEDC, and other development cooperation platforms at global and national levels.

*Source: Nurgul Djanaeva, Personal Communication (2021)*

.....  
<sup>8</sup>Strategy paper on a feminist approach to the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness and development and development cooperation at large



## c. Equitable Partnerships

The sixth Istanbul Principle articulates the concept of equitable partnerships: “Commit to transparent relationships with CSOs and other development actors, freely and as equals, based on shared development goals and values, mutual respect, trust, organisational autonomy, long-term accompaniment, solidarity and global citizenship.” This principle adheres to the notion that CSO partnerships will be stronger through deliberate efforts to realise equitable and reciprocal collaboration and coordination based on mutually agreed-upon goals and shared values.

Organisational autonomy is essential for equitable partnerships, which rely on deliberate attitudes and actions by all partners to counterbalance inequalities in power. Such imbalances result from unequal access to resources, structural and historical inequalities, gender inequities and women’s exclusion, and sometimes wide disparities in internal capacity (**see Sidebar 9**).

The role of external CSOs is to enable, rather than dictate, and to amplify, not substitute, the voices of developing country CSO actors (Bermann-Harmms and Murad, 2012).

### Sidebar 9. Donor-led constraints on equitable partnerships

International NGOs (INGOs) act as conduits for major donor funding, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, several CPDE members reported that major donors channelled much of their COVID-19 response funding through larger INGOs. At the same time, funding calls rarely target smaller, national CSOs. Already a feature in the humanitarian space, large-scale contracts, as opposed to grants, continue to grow in popularity with major donors in the development sphere, further limiting the opportunities for CSOs to assert meaningful inputs in development priorities, planning, and delivery.

Some informants mentioned that one major donor had been so specific in its criteria that NGOs could not choose the

organisations they could work with beyond the target region or even what results to expect. Likewise, the levels of compliance to meet donor requirements seem to be increasing each year. As one informant said:

*“It’s in real tension with the principles of equity with partners and empowerment and participation. ... It is a real struggle for us, and because of [our bottom-up] approach, we don’t have a highly formalised, rigorous approach to partner compliance. So, we have to try and bolt that on top of our traditional ways of working with partners. But it’s almost like they’re incompatible. It’s almost like they are two different philosophies. It’s a real headache, the amount of effort it consumes. It’s like it doubles every year.”*

Source: CSO representatives, Personal communication (2020)

## d. Consensus-Building

The principle of consensus guides decision-making in CPDE constituencies. The concerned constituency, governance body or working structure ultimately decides on strategies for programme development and donor engagement (CPDE, 2020b).

Consensus-building helps groups arrive at well-reasoned decisions that hold up. Effective consensus-building is inclusive and engages all participants. Consensus decisions can lead to better quality outcomes that pave the way forward for the group or community. No matter what has been negotiated, consensus-building is not over until everyone responsible has lived up to their commitments.

CPDE's consensus-building practice is built into its structures. The CPDE Global Assembly (GA) is the highest governing body that selects Co-Chairs and defines their responsibilities. It affirms the SC and Coordination Committee (CC) members and holds them accountable. It meets at least once every three years to review the CPDE mandate, set the platform's strategic direction, and approve the strategic plan. Composed of representatives from CPDE constituencies, it provides political leadership and guidance. The GA is also responsible for signing off on policy and advocacy papers and external communication materials.

# V. IMPORTANT ELEMENTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRY- OR REGION-SPECIFIC POLICY POSITIONS

## A. How to develop an engagement strategy and plan

Approaches to solving development problems through coordinated and concerted efforts between government (diplomatic missions and CSO reference groups) and non-government actors, including companies and civil society, should leverage resources, expertise, and efforts to achieve greater impact and sustainability in development outcomes. The engagement must be coordinated, hence the need to develop a strategy. The stages involved in working out this strategy are as follows.

**Identify shared opportunities with other CSOs or actors.** The most effective partnerships are based on a mutual commitment for mutual benefit. Partnerships involve two parties coming together to pursue a goal or create an impact they could not accomplish as effectively otherwise. The key for partnership brokers and stakeholders is to recognise the prospect of shared objectives, values, and dialogue and capitalise on the competencies of each partner to achieve bigger and bolder results.

**Scan the donor landscape and identify donors.** They must espouse shared or aligned interests, and, correspondingly, you must determine entry points, engagement strategies, and donor approaches (e.g., framework partnerships and calls for proposals).

**Reach out and negotiate with donors.** In doing so, you must apply the insights gleaned from the preparatory work on scoping and profiling donors and analysing the enabling environment using tools like SWOT.

For Fowler (2000), three necessary preconditions for negotiations should be in place by way of preparation: (1) organisational commitment to negotiate; (2) practical preconditions, including the type of appropriate relationship to build, the non-negotiables for the organisation, and its capacity to deliver; and (3) policy preconditions to signal to the donor that the organisation is prepared to negotiate based on the relationship's specific terms (see Sidebar 10).

**Enter into agreements and develop terms of reference.** Healthy recipient-donor relationships require collaboration. Just as donors support your cause, so should you understand their positions and involve their programme counterparts throughout the entire process.

**Build the relationship or partnership.** It must be founded on trust and proactive communication. To this end, a dedicated team does more than keep day-to-day operations in check. The staff is also crucial to managing the relationship with the donor and establishing written agreements and protocols outlining the essential elements of the partnership.

**Demonstrate results through monitoring and evaluation (M&E).** Public calls for transparency and accountability compel some donors to implement rigorous M&E rules and systems and evidence-based assessments. Such measurable results define and communicate partnership value. There are also efforts to push for participatory M&E.

While M&E is a vital discipline in the global development community and critical to assessing the impact of development interventions, some development stakeholders believe its emphasis has resulted in overly burdensome requirements that potentially compromise aid effectiveness and misdirect development funds. For CPDE, M&E is also a learning process for best practices among constituencies and members.





## **Sidebar 10. The three dimensions of donor relationship with CSOs**

A UNDP resource guide identified three dimensions of donor relationships with CSOs:

### **1. Dialogue and consultation (working with civil society)**

Some donors regularly seek advice and feedback from domestic, international, and local CSOs on policy, strategy, and operational issues. It is increasingly recognised that consulting with civil society is essential to ensure ownership and relevance of interventions and minimise risks of a hostile environment and social impact. Consultations can be either ad hoc or institutionalised.

### **2. Partnering with civil society in service delivery (support through civil society)**

Donors have traditionally seen CSOs as partners in the effective delivery of development programmes and operations, particularly in fragile situations and humanitarian emergencies. While initially providing such services in social or productive sectors, there has long been an increasing tendency to involve CSOs in governance services such as community mobilisation and electoral education and, more recently, in human rights monitoring and various forms of advocacy work.

### **3. Civil society strengthening (support to civil society)**

Donors recognise different types of interventions to support and strengthen civil society, including but not limited to: capacity development through training or other forms of experiential learning; technical support for advocacy and lobbying; and support for CSO networks to scale up impact. Donors also indirectly support civil society by promoting a CSO enabling environment by, for example, endorsing an adequate legislative and regulatory framework for CSOs.

Source: UNDP (2012)

## B. Why is it important to...

### 1. Write policy papers on EDC

The development cooperation system is undergoing dramatic changes. New actors are on stage, new instruments beyond ODA are being used, and the fields of work have been widened. Its broadening scope is in line with the ambitious and comprehensive Agenda 2030. However, these changes also imply massive tensions and challenges to the current development cooperation system and its objectives, procedures, and narratives. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct more evidence-based materials around EDC, such as deep-dive research and policy briefs.

#### Tips for Writing Policy Papers

A policy paper provides comprehensive and persuasive arguments for policy recommendations and thus functions as a decision-making tool or a call to action for the target audience. As reflected in these documents, the CSOs' analyses and stances on specific development issues support and sometimes determine the direction of CSO engagement with donors and development actors.

The problem-solution is the heart of policy paper development (Hovland, 2005). A policy paper should summarise a particular issue, the policy options to deal with it, and some recommendations on the best option (see Sidebar 11). It must logically contain an executive summary, the background of the issue, a statement of the problem, a review of current policies and their related issues, and a discussion of alternative solutions and evidence of best practice. You can countercheck your policy papers based on the following checklist (Hovland, 2005) and other specific questions (**see Annex 2**).

- Which stage(s) in the policymaking process are you trying to influence through your policy paper?
- Which stakeholders have been or are involved at each stage of the policymaking process?
- Have you identified a clear problem to address? Can you summarise it in two sentences?
- Do you have sufficient, comprehensive evidence to support your claim that a problem exists?
- Have you outlined and evaluated the possible policy options that could solve this problem? What evaluation criteria did you use?
- Have you decided on a preferred alternative?
- Do you have sufficient evidence to argue for your policy alternative effectively?

### **Sidebar 11. The Long Road to Development: How effectiveness gaps hinder progress in Agenda 2030**

*(CPDE's Policy Paper on the Voluntary National Reviews 2020 of Agenda 2030)*

CPDE virtually launched its study on the Voluntary National Reviews in July 2021. Its findings and analysis were based on a survey conducted by CPDE from 27 March to 30 April 2021. A total of 109 CSOs from 45 countries participated, of which all but three were developing countries. The following is an outlined summary of the policy paper's content.

**Audience:** United Nations High-Level Political Forum 2021

**About:** The document presents the reflections and recommendations of CSOs on implementing the SDGs at the national level using the lens of EDC.

#### **Summary of key findings:**

1. Nearly all governments have integrated the SDGs into national development planning or development cooperation policy, but national budgets are not aligned with SDG priorities
2. A high proportion of countries establishing a national SDG results framework and reporting process, but the SDG reporting process is not open to the public in nearly half of the countries covered by the survey, SDG information is not proactively disseminated to the public, and governments have tendencies to be highly selective in their SDG reporting.
3. In terms of partnerships with stakeholders and civil society participation, most countries have

mechanisms for stakeholder engagement. However, there is still a generally weak institutionalisation of stakeholder engagement in the SDG processes at the country level.

#### **Policy recommendations to governments:**

1. Cooperate with civil society in translating the 2030 Agenda into local plans, programmes, and monitoring efforts and ensure that local priorities inform national plans and the VNR process.
2. Ensure that national SDG review processes are open to the public and information dissemination is conducted in a proactive manner that connects with citizens, not just technical experts.
3. Ensure civil society engagement in the 2030 Agenda implementation by formalising and institutionalising CSOs' participation in governance structures supported by enabling laws, mechanisms, resources, and capacity development for civil society, especially those from marginalised groups and communities.
4. Respect and protect the rights of all citizens to conduct their independent monitoring and review of the 2030 Agenda, including those who may be critical of state policies and programmes.
5. Map out the links between specific policies, programmes, and budget allocations with results when reporting progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

*Source: CPDE (2021, July)*

## The Policy Dialogue

CSOs operate in a given institutional and policy context. The policy environment could either provide incentives, resources, and support services or, conversely, hamper their activities if constraints in the enabling environment are not addressed. Such factors tend to be outside the control of local CSOs. In the international arena, however, policy dialogue with donors, development partners, and other government institutions can facilitate policy changes that promote CSOs' work and interaction with key stakeholders.

Policy dialogue empowers participants and develops their capacity to engage in policy issues and navigate complexity. Its objectives should be tailored to the national and local context so that different parties can forge a unity of purpose, reach a common understanding, and identify actionable recommendations. The dialogue can culminate in but is not limited to roundtables or similar meetings. Integral to these events are preparations for action plans and follow-through at the local and national levels (FAO and Agrinatura, 2019).

## 2. Develop a communications plan and effective messaging

You must strategically use communications to engage development partners, donors, and their intended constituencies. CSOs do so using simple, compelling messages that resonate with the audience and, in most cases, provide a call to action. Organisations working in consortiums like CPDE must know when to convey which messages and how to align them with their colleagues' views to present a more consolidated stance and avoid mixed or contradictory signals to the

broader public. Civil society's themes and fields of action become increasingly expansive yet more interconnected, requiring much closer coordination in communications.

Communications should not only be the sole responsibility of the organisation's communication officers but should also include other staff members. Finally, CSOs should review and update their communication strategies from time to time.

## CPDE's Communications Strategy and Plan

CPDE's communications strategy serves to promote the platform's advocacy positions, shape public opinion and discourse, and secure buy-in from its constituency and other stakeholders. It is anchored on raising awareness regarding the civil society situation and people's resistance through the lens of EDC, the SDGs, and CSO DE. Toward this end, CPDE's communication strategy was designed to:

- continue to highlight the importance of development cooperation among CPDE's constituencies, other development stakeholders, and the public;
- ground CPDE's advocacy work in the realities, needs, and interests of its constituencies; and
- establish a strategic and targeted digital and multimedia communications system.

Part of the strategy is the development of specific communications plans according to activity or initiative (**see Sidebar 12**).



## Sidebar 12: CPDE's Basic Outline of a Communications Plan

- a. Background of the engagement
- b. General and specific objectives of the engagement
- c. Target groups or audience
- d. Key messages
- e. Specific calls and recommendations
- f. Outputs
- g. Social media
- h. Timeline and tasking

*Source: CPDE Communications for CSOs, 2021*

### **The Importance of Communicating with Donors**

Donors speak to each other and often ask for references before funding an organisation. So you would do well to build your reputation and retain donor loyalty by communicating effectively with your current donors and demonstrating transparency and accountability (FHI360, n.d.). An effective communications strategy performs two operationally separate yet mutually reinforcing functions:

#### **1. Day-to-day business communication**

focuses on the organisation's core business – advocacy (for legislative or policy changes) and social mobilisation (for collective action or behaviour change).

#### **2. Accountability communication**

is geared toward reporting back to donors and constituents on the project outcomes and impact (e.g., what has been done, what has changed owing to the interventions, and what remains to be done). It lends credence to an organisation and reasserts its relevance to all stakeholders and donors.

Every CSO must work out how to better “sell” its success because, in this “age of information,” achieving results is as important as properly communicating them to stakeholders and the general public. Accountability communication is a reciprocal, win-win strategy – it gives the CSO publicity, thus building up its profile while offering its donors a public relations



boost. It enhances both parties' social legitimacy and attracts new donors that could broaden and diversify the CSO's funding base (see Sidebar 13).

Rules of effective communication, such as the "seven C's" – clear, correct, complete, concrete, concise, considered, and courteous — apply in various contexts (Obregon and Casanova, 2019). But, in a CSO, accountability communication seems particularly effective in keeping donors engaged if:

1. the institutional messages are premised on solid evidence (i.e., drawn from reliable analytical data such as facts and statistics);
2. the publication and dissemination of content are "dosaged" (i.e., strategically managed such that the audience is neither left puzzled nor overwhelmed with information); and
3. the messages are tailored to the communications channels or media formats used (e.g., press releases, one-on-one interviews on TV or radio, social networking posts).

### Reflection questions:

1. Why is effective messaging critical to donor engagement?
2. How do you ensure that your plan is appropriate for each donor?

### Sidebar 13: Tips in Donor Communication

- Make sure you know who your contact person will be and let them know who is responsible on your end. You can start by sending a letter of appreciation to the donor.
- Keep all copies of the grant agreement in a safe and accessible place.
- Send your reports on time. If there will be a delay, let them know when to expect your submissions.
- Take the time to write clear and credible reports.
- Send updates, such as newsletters and annual reports to the donor.
- Leverage additional support from the donor, such as technical assistance, introduction to other donors, and endorsements.
- Invite the donor to events organised by your organisation.
- Make sure your relationship remains formal rather than personal.





# Module 3



# Module 3

## VI. THE DONOR CYCLE

Most CSOs depend on traditional donor project funding to finance their operations. However, a bigger challenge for them is finding, retaining, and diversifying sustainable funding sources for their core costs. Amid this increasingly competitive environment, CSOs must master and keep track of the donor engagement cycle and get the donors to buy into their advocacy and hopefully commit to a long-term partnership. The end goal of the donor cycle is to build a solid relationship with the donor that will ultimately lead to continued financial support for the organisation (see Figure 2).

### 1. CULTIVATION

- Planning
- Researching funding prospects

### 2. SOLICITATION

- Developing the proposal
- Making an approach
- Managing the proposal assessment process

### 3. STEWARDSHIP

- Managing the relationship

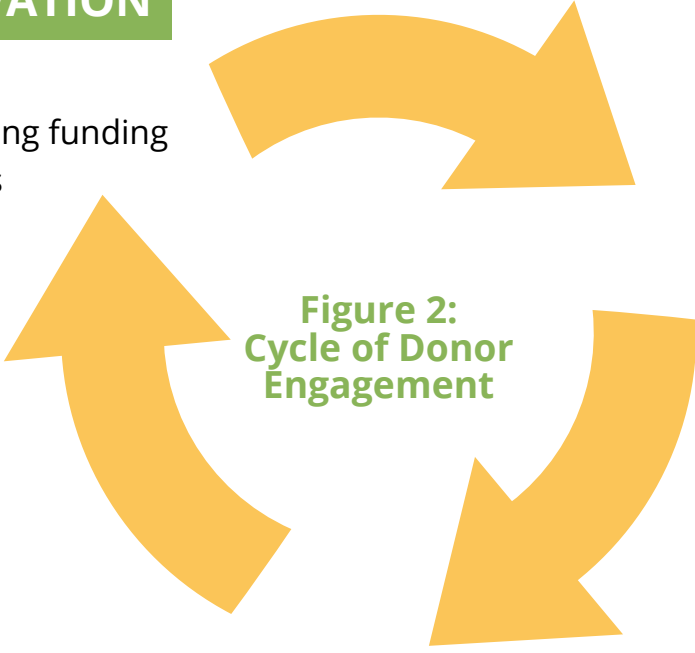


Figure 2:  
Cycle of Donor  
Engagement

(Source: <https://www.wealthengine.com/communication-strategies-for-donor-retention/>)



Full-cycle planning prepares your organisation for the challenges ahead and increases your chances of success. So, this module is precisely about how to strategically design the plan to cultivate, solicit, and build stewardship with the organisation's network and other stakeholders. It discusses steps to successful donor engagement and some challenges organisations face when raising funds and managing relationships with donors.

## PHASE 1. CULTIVATION

This stage includes researching and getting to know the prospective donors and getting them to know you and your organisation. You must establish the first contact and share more about your organisation's work. Each touchpoint in this phase represents a foundational building block of your donor engagement cycle, providing a broad base of donor interest, engagement and trust, culminating, all things being equal, in a grant to your organisation.

► **Step 1. Perform an internal diagnostic.** A standard SWOT analysis will reveal your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

- **Strengths and Weaknesses**

Evaluate the "organisational software" (the governance, ethics, and accountability systems). From the results-oriented perspective commonly used by donors, the "software" of the organisation (how it is managed to deliver its goals) is more important than its "hardware" (how it is organically structured), which is only supposed to be flexible enough to adjust to changes promptly.

Assess the organisation's policy approaches. Establishing what policy approaches inform the organisation's programming allows you to gauge how close the organisation stands to certain

donor positions and how far it stands from others. You can work out a rapprochement towards some common ground. This module provides step-by-step guidance on how CSOs can adopt policy approaches conducive to more robust donor engagement.

- **Opportunities and Threats**

Watch out for elections and listen to what politicians say in donor headquarters. With political cycles come predominant policy statements that serve as fairly robust predictors of trends in development financing. The prevailing political landscape thus shapes donors' outlook on CSOs' funding for at least the next four or five years.

The Mexico City policy, also known as the "Global Gag Rule (GGR)," stands as a glaring example of how political cycles

might affect funding to CSOs' programmes. This US policy blocked American foreign aid to NGOs performing or actively promoting abortion as a family planning method. Since its introduction in 1984 by Ronald Reagan, the GGR has been successively repealed by every Democratic president, only to be reinstated by each Republican one.<sup>9</sup>

- **Step 2. Take stock of the trends in government policies on funding CSOs.** Such information may come from your analysis of the enabling environment. While brokering funding partnerships is increasingly tricky, many governments actively aim to further obstruct CSOs' access to foreign grants. As of April 2019, at least 58 countries have imposed legislation and regulations that totally ban or severely restrict domestic CSOs from accessing foreign assistance (Baldus, 2019). You must consider these barriers to funding when working out your organisation's engagement plan with donors and its longer-term sustainability plan.<sup>10</sup>

### List of Key Informants/Personal Communication

Key informant	Date
1. Reileen Joy Dulay, DAC-CSO Reference Group	4/12/2020
2. Matt Simonds, CPDE Global Secretariat	10/12/2020
3. Amerina Padilla, IBON International	9/12/2020
4. Donor representative, IrishAid	18/12/2020
5. Donor representative, Austrian Development Agency (ADA)	17/12/2020
6. Donor representative, Sida	16/12/2020 and 03/2021
7. Donor representative, European Commission	16/12/2020 and 03/2021
8. Representative, OECD-DAC	2020
9. Nurgul Djanaeva, Forum of Women's NGOs in Kyrgyzstan	9/1/2021 and 7/4/2021
10. Anas El-Hasnaoui, Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND)	17/4/2021
11. Bihter Moschini, ANND	22/4/2021
12. Luca de Fraia, ActionAid Italy	3/12/2020
13. Vitalice Meja, Reality of Aid Africa	10/12/2020
14. CSO representative in Nigeria (Women's Health and Rights Project)	7/4/2021

## List of Additional Readings:

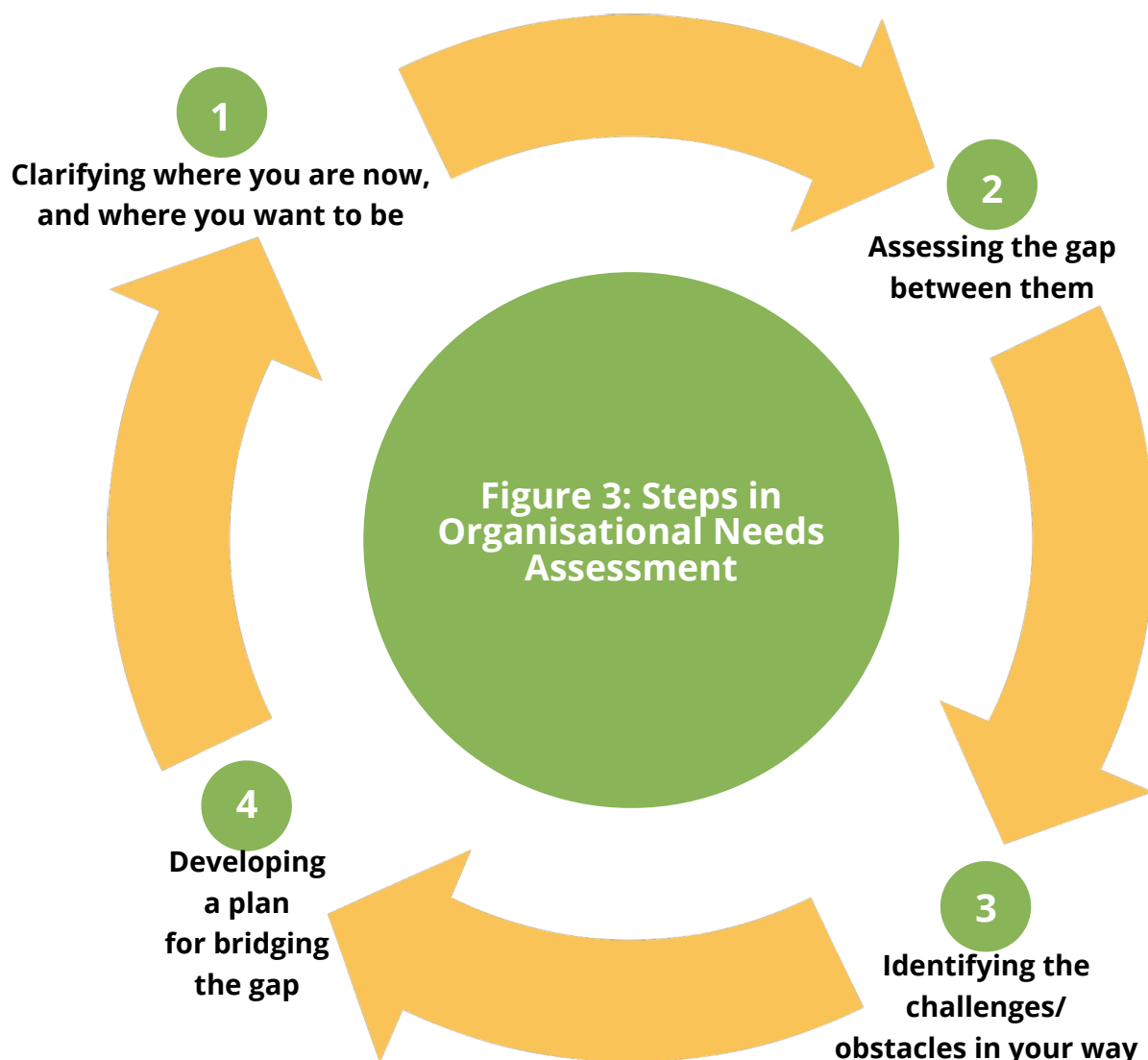
1. OECD. (2021). "OECD/LEGAL/5021: DAC Recommendation on Enabling Civil Society in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance." <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/Instrument%20s/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-5021>
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4. CPDE. (2018). Policy Research on the Implementation of a Human Rights-Based Approach in Development Partnerships. Ibon Institute for International Development. [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Paul-Quintos/publication/337167765\\_Policy\\_Research\\_on\\_the\\_Implementation\\_of\\_a\\_Human\\_Rights-Based\\_Approach\\_in\\_Development\\_Partnerships/links/5dc9784c92851c8180466409/Policy-Research-on-the-Implementation-of-a-Human-Rights-Based-Approach-in-Development-Partnerships.pdf?origin=publication\\_detail](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Paul-Quintos/publication/337167765_Policy_Research_on_the_Implementation_of_a_Human_Rights-Based_Approach_in_Development_Partnerships/links/5dc9784c92851c8180466409/Policy-Research-on-the-Implementation-of-a-Human-Rights-Based-Approach-in-Development-Partnerships.pdf?origin=publication_detail)

.....  
<sup>9</sup>For further reading on the US 'Mexico City Policy':

<https://www.kff.org/global-health-policy/fact-sheet/mexico-city-policy-explainer/>

<sup>10</sup>For further reading see Amy McDonough and Daniela C. Rodríguez (2020) 'How Donors Support Civil Society as Government Accountability Advocates: A Review of Strategies and Implications for Transition of Donor Funding in Global Health', <https://globalizationandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12992-020-00628-6>

- **Step 3. Map the organisational needs and quantify funding gaps.** The CSO's strategic goals and sustainability plans define its current and future needs. To meet these multiple competing demands, you must decide where to focus time, attention, and finite resources, especially funding, most effectively (see Figure 3).



(source: <https://www.wealthengine.com/communication-strategies-for-donor-retention/>)



#### ► **Step 4. Scope funding prospects.**

You must gather as much information about your prospective donors or development partners to pursue funding and partnership opportunities that match your relevant programme areas.

This scoping exercise aims to:

- identify different kinds of prospective institutional donors, such as agencies, public foundations, bilateral donors, multilateral donors, public foundations;
- target a funding source (e.g., bilateral development agencies, government entities, funding agencies, and other CSOs that externalise funding sources);
- describe a potential funder's area of work that aligns with the CSO's programmes;
- provide the potential funder's or partner's contact details: (a) the organisation's website, physical address, and telephone and fax numbers; (b) the pertinent contact person, including their full name, designation, email address, and telephone and fax numbers; and (c) the person responsible for approving grants or funding (e.g., executive director, secretary-general or head of international programmes) or overseeing the relevant programme; and
- advise the CSO on guidelines for a funding or grant application and best practices in approaching the potential funder based on other CSOs' experiences and knowledge.

The results of the donor scoping exercise can be reflected in a matrix for better organisation and easier referencing (see **Appendix 4**). This matrix or worksheet can help CSOs determine if they are a good match with a funder (e.g., eligibility issues, funding types, geographic and programmatic focus). CSOs can focus on funding organisations whose priorities align with their objectives.

#### ► **Step 5. Analyse funding opportunities from the scoping work on donors.**

You need not exert time and effort for donors that are the least appropriate for your specific targets in a certain period.

You can use the results of the internal diagnostic and the analysis of the enabling environment to draw up a shortlist from the pool of all possible donors. Appraise them based on criteria such as (1) their current country strategies' degree of CSO-friendliness, (2) their previous record of engagement with non-governmental actors, and (3) the extent of alignment of their country strategies with broader EDC principles, including human rights, gender equality, and environmental sustainability.

Aside from thoroughly and comprehensively understanding your organisation and the proposal or request filed to the donor, you may also need to use your contacts and networks to know more about the donor you are about to meet (FHI360, n.d.).

► **Step 6. Set up a demand-driven resource mobilisation approach.** A supply-driven engagement approach depends on donors' requests for funding applications (RFAs) or calls for proposals. An overreliance on the latter may lead the organisation to pander to a donor-driven agenda because the eligibility criteria of such competitive RFAs are naturally biased towards donors' priorities. In contrast, a demand-driven resource mobilisation approach consists in proactively submitting unsolicited proposals. To set up a corresponding strategy for this, you must outline what you have accomplished in the previous steps and reflect on the following questions:

**A. Imperatives informing fundraising work**

- a. What is your fundraising work's external context (socio-political, development environment)?
- b. What is its internal or organisational context?
- c. What are your fundraising imperatives?

**B. PDF targets**

- a. What is your starting point in your EDC-related programme or project and finance?
- b. What is your ideal programme and financial situation by the end of the financial year?

**C. Donor scoping**

- a. Which donors' programmes have you studied?

- b. Which of these donors are your targets? How do their policy positions align with your unit's programmes or plans?
- c. How do you currently relate to your target donors?

**D. Programme or project pitch**

- a. What is your offer to the target donor? Summarise the project's context, objectives, outputs, key activities, personnel requirements, and budget.
- b. How do you intend to make this pitch?

**E. Plan**

- a. What are the project's key activities?
- b. What is the timeframe for completing them?

## PHASE 2. SOLICITATION

Solicitation is the first step to getting a prospective donor on board. You must develop and present a proposal and manage the assessment process through various channels, such as email, postal service, and videoconferencing.

Before anything else, though, you must consider two interlinked aspects that speak to your CSO's credibility – eligibility and registration or accreditation.

A more detailed discussion can be found in CPDE's Programme Management Guide, "Demonstrating Results and Accountability."

**1. Eligibility.** Most international funders have established a geographic focus, narrowing the list of countries to which they can dedicate funding. Therefore, your CSO and the areas where you intend to implement your activities must fit this criterion, among other eligibility requirements.

Many governments have passed laws and policies on the criteria that CSOs must follow in applying for ODA. Some eligibility requirements concern specific legal compliance (e.g., annual turnover

and sufficient human resources) and quality audit (e.g., financial management, strategic management, process management, risk management, personnel management, partnership management, RBM, transparency, and capacity to manage complexity and work on cross-cutting themes such as gender and the environment). CSOs often have to submit key documents to prove their eligibility and substantiate their credentials when registering or applying for funding (**see Sidebar 14**).



#### Sidebar 14: Registration to the European Commission's PADOR

The Potential Applicant Data On-Line Registration (PADOR) is an online database in which organisations seeking funding from the EC can register and regularly update their data. The PADOR is open, in principle, for organisations that:

- are active and have capacities in the development field;
- require subventions from EuropeAid, in the long or short run;
- have officially registered statuses (or equivalent documents) and have their own established;

- have annual accounts; and
- have the ability to speak on behalf of their members.

Registration in PADOR is obligatory for all co-applicants and affiliated entities to call for proposals, non-state actors, public administration bodies, including local authorities, who apply for a grant over 25.000€ (there are exemptions, but these are limited). Once registered, you can also opt not to share your audited financial data, but you will not be qualified as the main applicant for a project.

*Source: European Commission*

**2. Registration or accreditation.** Most donors and governments require potential funding recipients to be duly registered or incorporated as a non-profit entity in the countries where they operate. Some accreditation systems are specific to donors or funding streams. Most local CSOs with funding from their state or national governments must follow the country's procurement system.

#### Knowing Whom to Contact and Establishing Contact

The points of contact you have identified from donor scoping are key to successful donor engagement. Their information is readily available in solicited proposals, but additional data gathering is needed if you have decided on a demand-driven approach for your CSO.

Often, it is helpful to network with board members, well-established CSOs, or those already engaging your potential donor or development partner. These contacts can recommend and refer you to the latter.

You could likewise begin to engage in specific EDC issues that have global or regional resonance, such as the monitoring of Agenda 2030 and voluntary national reviews, or in country-specific areas of work, such as developing country roadmaps, or even in governance issues, such as national budget and national development plans. These involvements showcase your expertise, credibility, and track record as an institution.

CSOs can also maximise their engagement in multistakeholder events that some potential funders attend. It is always best to observe and listen to interventions and discussions that reveal the potential funder's inclinations and strategies through their speeches and opinions.

Usually, at the end of these sessions, delegates take the opportunity to approach funder representatives to introduce their organisations.

### **Preparing for Outreach and Negotiation**

The asymmetries and innate imbalances between donors (government or Northern CSOs) and Southern CSOs have been well documented (Fowler, 2000; Elbers and Arts, 2011). But there are some essential tips that CSOs can use in preparing for and doing the actual negotiations (**see Sidebar 15**).

#### **Sidebar 15. Tips before and during negotiations with donors**

1. Know your basic information. Based on your scoping exercise, you shall have learned about the donor's policies and decision-making processes.
2. Find out the level of authority of the persons you are talking to. Do they have the mandate to negotiate? Or are they limited to explaining their organisation's goals and little else?
3. Do a simple compatibility check. In other words, ask questions about the organisation's values, constituency, policies on funding, the pattern of relationships it has with other CSOs or development partners, sources of funds, and so on.
4. Explain the relationships you have already built and what you are looking for. Summarise your preferences in terms of rights and obligations. Indicate what is not negotiable and why.
5. Get down to the specifics. What would a relationship with the donor involve in practical terms? What can both of you commit to at this point? What needs to be deferred? Agree on the next steps, if any.
6. Understand the culture and conventions of the negotiating parties. Level and adjust your expectations based on this knowledge. For example, Northerners will likely deal with disagreement by allowing time for consultation outside the formal setting.

*Source: Fowler A. (2000)*

## PHASE 3. STEWARDSHIP

Once the contract is signed and the grant is received, you have entered into a formal relationship with the donor. Stewardship involves interacting and communicating with them to forge a genuine, longer-term relationship (Funds for NGOs, 2013).

Maintaining a meaningful relationship with your funders is more crucial than ever as resource mobilisation is becoming more competitive during the COVID-19 pandemic. Getting a grant is only the beginning, and submitting high-quality proposals and reports is the bare minimum. It would help if your organisation exerted tremendous effort to stand out from the crowd.

### Tips in Relationship-Building

Try to go above and beyond the funders' minimum requirements. The objective should be to ensure their experience of supporting your organisation is positive and rewarding, demonstrating that the project grant adds value to their strategy and that their support translates to tangible results.

Building a deeper relationship with a donor enables you to learn more about their interests and motivations. You could make your reports and applications even

more relevant to their interests or share stories of your work that you know would resonate more with them. This richer understanding of their motivations may even lead to further opportunities or open up doors with some of their funder contacts down the line.

You could consider diversifying your donor base only when you are favourably managing your relationships with your current donors. You gain their trust not necessarily by achieving every agreed project output but by being transparent and communicative, even when the project is not going according to plan. Donors are, in most cases, willing to help find solutions to problems as long as you are transparent with them.

Contact them with news of the project's progress, successes or unexpected outcomes, and remarkable changes in your organisation. Building trust with your donors also means being transparent about the challenges you face and showing them how you are addressing or overcoming these issues. Below are some tips for building a lasting relationship with your donors (see **Sidebar 16**).



### **Sidebar 16. Tips for Building Relationships with Donors**

1. Communicate with the donors using the means and frequency that they prefer. Your director could call or write to thank them for awarding your organisation a grant. Let them know how it will make a difference to your organisation.
2. Express willingness to work with them as collegial partners. The officer in charge of the project could initiate subsequent communications with the donors to create an environment of openness, accountability, and transparency.
3. Keep your funder up to date on any notable progress and milestones or any mandatory reporting procedures. Go beyond what they expect and take advantage of new media by attaching a few digital photos to your email updates.
4. Share any major challenges you encounter in the delivery of your project. You should expect unforeseen problems to crop up in almost any project, but you need not involve your funder in solving every little trouble.
5. Acknowledge the donors' contributions. Unless otherwise advised, you must attach their brand logo to your publications and other project outputs and outcomes.
6. Invite them along to see your project and their investment in action.
7. Be timely with all reports and ensure that they include all requested information, signed off by the appropriate signatory, before sending them.
8. Do not be afraid to ask for advice. Most grant-giving organisations have seasoned project managers or team leaders on their staff. Their advice may even make your project more effective, generating better results and giving you a greater chance of repeat funding in years to come.

*Source: Peebles (2013)*

## VII. TIPS IN PROPOSAL WRITING FOR EDC

**A proposal is a document submitted to a prospective donor outlining the project. In many instances, a full proposal is not the first written document that donors expect or want from grant applicants. But the project proposal encapsulates the project's intervention in a particular problem in terms of activities, their intended outputs, and the interventions' outcomes and impacts. Outside of RFAs, CSOs could still submit unsolicited proposals for the donor's consideration (see Sidebar 17).**

The specifics of project proposals are discussed in another document, the CPDE Guide for Project Management. This section, however, presents some tips for CSOs (Bond, MZN International, 2021) to write more appropriate and effective proposals:

1. Plan enough time for collecting information and going through the rounds of revisions and approvals from relevant bodies (especially if you are part of a consortium).
2. Be complete and concise. Include all pertinent information.
3. Know the donor. Find out about the projects they have funded and are currently funding and the areas, sectors, and themes they prefer to focus their resources on. Include broader themes that the donor might be involved in, such as environmental sustainability or the SDGs.
4. Stick with the donor's format. Some donors require a template that helps distil the content of proposals correctly and efficiently.
5. Follow all instructions. Review the document to ensure it meets the donor's guidelines.
6. Be correct and specific. Double-check every detail to avoid even the slightest errors.
7. Present yourself credibly. Summarise your credentials and highlight concise success statements to attest to your organisation's experience and track record.
8. Be realistic and accountable. Include specific, realistic goals that identify the beneficiaries; and can be measured within a set timeframe against a robust methodology.
9. Make it sustainable. Show a lasting difference.
10. Avoid the budget rejection trap. The budget must make sense, align with details in the proposal, and add value.



Transparency right from the beginning is crucial. Suppose the organisation is setting a multi-donor support arrangement. In that case, the proposal or application should clearly state the aggregate needs and funding gaps of the programme or project and the share of contributions expected from each participating donor. When the organisation seeks funding from a single donor, it becomes easier to construct an appealing theory of change with project outcomes and impact that the donor can easily highlight. Though single-donor projects are not necessarily the best type of support arrangement, they present some advantages, such as being ideally suited for a new relationship, because they allow a closer process of trust-building between the donor and the funded CSO, creating the conditions for much more complex relationship models in the future. Whereas they are easier and quicker to implement, a multi-donor arrangement requires a minimum of one year to set up.

### **Sidebar 17: Solicited vs unsolicited proposal**

Solicited proposals follow a supply-driven engagement approach.

CSOs respond to strict and competitive requests for funding applications (RFAs) or calls for proposals typically advertised through the donors' communications channels. The EC, for instance, issues a variety of such calls throughout the year in different areas of work (e.g., development and humanitarian aid, research and innovation).

The advantage of this approach is that the donor outlines the template for writing the proposal, so the applicant precisely knows what the donor wants. The disadvantage is that it can render the organisation vulnerable to being captured by a donor-driven agenda

because project eligibility criteria in such competitive calls are naturally biased towards responding to donors' priorities.

An unsolicited proposal is submitted to a donor without them asking for it. In other words, it is a proactive submission. This demand-driven engagement approach means that the applicant does not need to follow an application format or a template; instead, they have more freedom to outline their demands.

The disadvantage, however, is that, precisely because it is unsolicited, the submission may not come at a time when donors are looking to select proposals to fund. And depending on the donor, they might be less inclined to choose a proposal if it doesn't fit their mould.

## VIII. BEYOND AID: PLANNING FOR INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

**Sustainability is a broad concept, and a multidimensional model is invariably required to capture it fully. Hailey and Salway (2016), for example, employed a model of four dimensions to conceptualise the sustainability of CSOs: (1) financial (the continuous availability of financial resources); (2) operational (technical, operational, and administrative capacity); (3) identity (the relevance, legitimacy, and accountability of the organisation in the eyes of the community); and (4) interventions (long-term benefits and viability of specific projects or investments).**

A generally declining ODA outlook severely affects the CSO enabling environment in the Global South. Moreover, an ever-growing trend toward government restrictions on foreign funding to CSOs calls for reshaping CSOs' financial and operational models to diversify income away from aid.

The debate around post-aid civil society sustainability has renewed interest in managerial innovations for keeping CSOs afloat amid funding cutbacks. CPDE has comprehensively reviewed these innovations, which can be grouped into two types of strategies.

### A. Revenue-generating strategies for financial sustainability

#### 1. **Social enterprises.**

The organisation charges user fees for the services it statutorily provides within the scope of its social mission, with the view to generating revenue to sustain the continuing promotion of that very mission. Note that the prices charged are not economically significant (i.e., their purpose is not to generate profit but rather to cover operational costs).

#### 2. **Subsidiary enterprise.**

The organisation sets up a business or enterprise to explore its accrued non-financial assets, such as land properties and real estate facilities, and generate income to fund programme work. Prices must be economically significant.

#### 3. **Crowdfunding.**

The organisation mobilises private philanthropic donations from corporate and individual sources.

Of course, none of these strategies is exempt from challenges. Besides requiring a stock of equity, market-based or entrepreneurial survival approaches (in either social enterprises or subsidiary enterprises) come with risks. They might cause the organisation to drift away from its inherently social mission and identity. As in the crowdfunding model, a civic survival approach is also hardly handy. It requires the organisation to have strong connections with a reasonably broad and consolidated (upper) middle-class grassroots (which is possible in many developed countries but not in developing countries).

Hence, the ultimate question is which sustainability strategy should CSOs pursue and how. These strategies do not necessarily have to be mutually exclusive (i.e., they can be mixed). For instance, a merger can be a transitional step toward building a subsidiary enterprise. The decision on which strategy or combination of strategies to pick depends highly on the organisation's macro- and micro-environments, with all its SWOT factors considered.

Whatever option is taken, it is worth bearing in mind one fundamental assumption when planning organisational survival beyond aid: Institutional sustainability is no quick win. The organisation should not jump out of aid dependency; it must grow out of it. A successful sustainability strategy should deliberate a post-aid funding model well before all donors are gone – this is called transitioning.



## B. Scaling up aid recipient-donor relationships to partnerships (co-production, organisation of activities together)

### 1. Drawing a transitioning profile

Regardless of whether they have pledged to remain or signalled departure, your donors deserve to know whatever plans you have regarding funding. They talk a lot to each other, formally and informally. So, a departing donor might introduce you to potential new donors in their networks, which would help close financial gaps and buy you more time to consolidate your sustainability plans.

At this transitional stage, your conversations with donors should set out an “if scenario” – how the organisation would fill any budgetary deficit “if” donors withdrew today. Conducting this exercise early on – when the organisation can still count on its donors – is crucial because executing sustainability strategies requires substantial resources. Even an ostensibly cost-free crowdfunding strategy requires fundraising skills that can be acquired through costly training packages.

Another challenging aspect of planning sustainability is how to address the issue with the donors. They have decided to support your programme or project because they identify with your “cause,” not because they want to safeguard your jobs. Similarly, they may continue to partner with you if they understand that your plans are not for the organisation’s sustainability per se but rather for the sustainability of your cause and keeping the momentum and the gains you have so far achieved. The precedence of the

“cause” over the “organisation” justifies why the sustainability plan must consider every structural change or sacrifice necessary to ensure the continuity of project or programme delivery even without donor funding. This willingness to “sacrifice” the organisation through, for example, downsizing or merging can potentially shift the donor’s attitude toward the plan.

### 2. Learning and adjusting

Jim Kwik, a renowned American learning expert, is famously quoted as saying, “If an egg is broken by outside force, life ends. If broken by inside force, life begins. Great things always begin from inside.” From an institutional point of view, the bottom line is that organisational progress is necessarily rooted in the process of self-discovery, self-recognition, and self-adjustment rather than imposed from the outside. That explains why a thorough internal diagnostic and environmental analysis comes right at the planning stage of the donor engagement cycle.

A CSO’s preparations ahead of a “charm offensive” to donors have much in common with those of a private enterprise about to debut the sale of its shares in the stock market – they have to ensure that the value or rating of the organisation is at its best when they go public and that all of the investors’ or donors’ considerations for funding are addressed. It is thus crucial for any CSO to firm up and consolidate its organisational systems and values.

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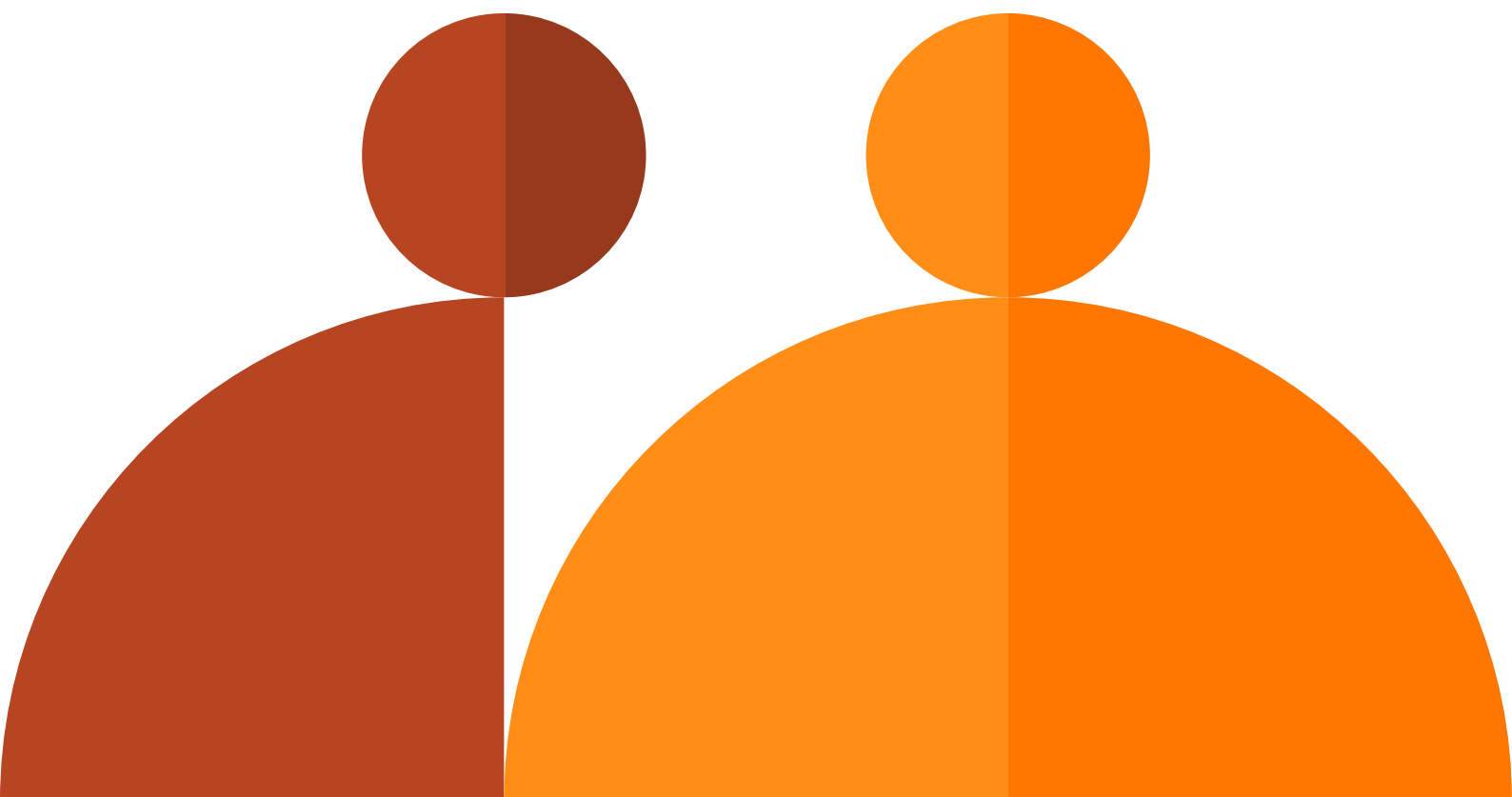
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# Annex 1



## CHECKLIST OF AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CSOs AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL

### **Module 1: Space for CSO dialogue on national development policies**

(RESPONSIBILITY: GOVERNMENT)

- What is the government's policy regarding consultations with CSOs?
- Does the policy foresee a certain frequency for the consultations?
- Does it include the full range of major national development policies?
- Are CSOs consulted in the context of national development planning? Do consultations occur more than once a year?
- Are consultations predictable, with participants being informed well ahead of time?
- Is the content of the consultation set in cooperation with CSOs?
- Is the agenda shared in advance?
- Do consultations happen at stages of the decision-making process where changes in policy direction are still possible?
- Does the format allow for dialogue and the provision of feedback?
- Are the rules of engagement clear?
- Are the results of the consultation shared with participants?
- Which actors are typically invited?
- Are the criteria for participation open and transparent, with no restrictions?
- Can any CSO participate?
- How are the most vulnerable and marginalised CSOs engaged?
- Are there financial and human resources available to support these dialogues?

**Module 2: CSO development effectiveness: Accountability and transparency**

(RESPONSIBILITY CSOs)

- Are partnerships between CSOs covered in a written partnership arrangement?
- Are these agreements jointly established, and do they reflect joint programming?
- Do partner country-based CSOs participate in defining the partnership's shared priorities based on the programme's reflection of country realities?
- Do they include core institutional support and capacity development?
- Are mutual responsibilities and accountabilities explicitly set out? Do these partnership agreements foresee mutual learning and mutual decision-making?
- Is reporting of grants based on the funded CSO's programme cycle and processes?
- Are partnerships between CSOs typically long-term (over a 5- to 10-year period)? Are they periodically renewed?
- Are there CSO platforms at the national and sectoral levels? Do partner country CSOs initiate these national platforms? Are platforms broadly accepted and acknowledged to be representative of diverse national and local CSOs?
- Are there information-sharing mechanisms within the CSO platform and between the platform and other stakeholders?
- In addition to external funding, are these platforms also sustained by member funding, which often ensures longer-term financial sustainability?
- Do these platforms have a code of ethics and good practices for CSOs – based on the Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness and codes for good humanitarian practice – to improve the quality of CSO development efforts?
- Are there mechanisms to ensure no duplication of work and more robust collaboration for scaling up when possible?

- Are CSOs actively engaging and taking direction from local leadership in vulnerable communities, including local women and women’s organisations and other marginalised sectors, in determining programme priorities and approaches? Are leaders from vulnerable communities, including women’s representatives, included among CSO participants in multistakeholder policy dialogue on an ongoing basis?
- Are CSOs working with local partnerships that strengthen the sustainability of organisations from marginalised populations, including their engagement with local power-holders and support to human rights defenders?
- Are (international) CSOs supporting domestic CSO-coordinating mechanisms and platforms to promote human rights-based approaches and regular skills training on rights-based approaches with the CSO community?
- Are CSOs accountable and transparent in many ways and at different levels to their constituencies, governance structures, programming counterparts, funders, and government regulatory bodies? In many countries, the accountability of CSOs is also guided by voluntary codes of conduct and standards, which cover best practices in governance, CSO transparency, and human rights with respect to staffing, financing, and programming practices.
- Are most CSOs associated with CSO-led accountability mechanisms and standards?
- Do these national accountability mechanisms have formal processes to confirm CSO adherence to the standards?
- Are these processes and assessments renewed or reviewed periodically? Do they offer capacity development programmes with national and local CSOs to promote these standards?
- Do CSOs generally report on their organisational and programme information? Is there a national platform for disclosing CSO information on development activities? Is it open and accessible to the public? Do large CSOs publish to the IATI transparency standard? Do CSOs provide relevant organisational information to partners as part of the partnership relationship?

**Module 3: Official development cooperation with CSOs**

(RESPONSIBILITY: DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS)

- What are your corporate policies regarding CSO consultation in determining and implementing development cooperation policies and country priorities?
- How regular are these opportunities?
- Do they happen at different policy and programme development stages, including design, implementation, and monitoring?
- Do these consultations happen at a stage in the decision-making process when change is still possible?
- Are these consultations coordinated among development partners present in a specific partner country?
- Do they involve knowledge-sharing?
- What are the selection criteria for CSOs' participation?
- Is this information available to the public?
- How is a diversity of national and local CSOs ensured in consultations?
- Do you observe an imbalance in consultations with CSOs based in the development partner's country versus those based in partner countries?
- Is there a strategy for public engagement by and with CSOs to raise awareness of development issues?
- Is the content of the consultation set in cooperation with CSOs? Do the invited CSOs receive advanced access to relevant documents allowing adequate preparation and useful feedback?
- Are the consultations structured for dialogue and feedback from CSOs?
- Is there feedback back to CSOs following consultations?

## Module 4: Legal and regulatory framework

(RESPONSIBILITY : GOVERNMENT)

- Are the existing laws on CSO assembly and expression aligned with international standards?
- Do laws clearly recognise the right to peaceful assembly?
- Are most peaceful assemblies allowed in practice, regardless of the issues raised or the groups participating?
- Are there restrictions on the time and location of assemblies?
- When there are restrictions, do regulatory authorities provide reasons for them?
- Can organisers appeal to them?
- Is there an explicit legal obligation for law enforcement to protect participants of assemblies, including those occurring at the same time and place as counterdemonstrations, with approaches to de-escalate violence?
- Is abuse against participants of assemblies swiftly and effectively investigated?
- Is there ongoing monitoring of the legal environment to identify issues requiring attention and ensure there are no unintended consequences (e.g., counter-terrorism)?
- Can the public freely access CSO voices, including foreign media and a wide range of independent media, which criticise politics or culture and operate under little government control?
- Are physical attacks on CSOs, human rights defenders or journalists for their expression of views investigated without impunity?
- Do laws on the freedom of expression often result in censorship regarding public policy, culture, or other sensitive topics?
- Is there a strong culture of political expression, including information critical of the government?
- When the government apparatus conducts legal surveillance, are there few or many reported instances of suspected illegal surveillance?

Source: *Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2020, October). Global Partnership Monitoring: Drivers of Indicator 2 results and questions for self-reflection and for multistakeholder dialogues*



## GUIDE QUESTIONS IN WRITING POLICY PAPERS FOR CSOS

- i. Executive Summary.** It is the most critical part of the policy paper because it synthesises complex data into a short and coherent whole that allows the policymaker and other target audience to identify the problem, supporting evidence and solutions in a few minutes. The core components of the executive summary are:
- Who is the key stakeholder (target audience and the intended use of the paper)?
  - What is the problem or issue?
  - Why is change needed?
  - What are the policy options or key findings on the issue?
  - How can the target audience take action?
  - What are the supporting reasons?
  - Why is the action urgent?
- ii. Introduction and Background of the Issue.** Questions to consider are as follows:
- How did the issue originate?
  - Why is this an important issue for society and policymakers, in particular, to address?
  - Are there critical incidents that emphasise the importance of the issue?
  - Why should citizens be concerned with this issue?
- iii. Statement of the Problem.** This section aims to analyse the specific issues related to the problem and the societal consequences if this problem continues unaddressed. Some key questions that you can consider:
- What is the specific problem?
  - What are the major causes of the problem?
  - What are the key questions, ethical debates, or controversies associated with the problem?
  - How does the problem affect critical populations, groups, and society?
- iv. Current Policies.** This section aims to analyse current policies (or programmes) that deal with the problem. The questions to address are as follows:
- What aspect of the problem are the current policies (or programmes) trying to solve? Have they delivered?
  - Who are the proponents or supporters of these policies? Why do they support these policies?
  - What are the major flaws or limitations of the current policies?



- Who is in favour of changing the current policies? Why do they want to change them?
- These questions can serve as a transition to the next section of the paper.

**v. Alternative Solutions.** This section aims to analyse two or three alternative solutions to the problem. Choose and highlight alternatives that advocates or policymakers have seriously proposed. Expanding (or modifying) current policies (or programmes) can be treated as one of the alternative solutions. Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of each alternative and discuss which groups, opinion leaders, or policymakers support or reject it. Ultimately, keep in mind that you might disagree with these solutions or only use parts of them for your policy proposal in the next section of the paper. The questions to address are as follows:

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the alternatives?
- Who supports and opposes the alternatives? Why?
- Why haven't these alternatives been made into policy?

**vi. Case Studies and Best Practices.**

Although CPDE members come from different constituencies and geographic areas, they operate within similar principles and commitments and can learn from each other through case studies.

**vii. Policy Recommendations and Feasibility and Implementation Strategies.**

This section aims to formulate an effective policy proposal, demonstrate that it is practical and feasible, and prove that it will work. The questions to address are as follows:

- What specific policy recommendations does your group propose to solve the problem?
- How does your policy proposal solve the problem better than the current policy or other alternatives? What evidence can you offer that demonstrates its feasibility and effectiveness?
- How will you influence specific groups so that your proposal will be adopted? What other implementation strategies might you use to gain support for your proposal?
- What are the most critical financial, legal, ethical, or political obstacles to implementing your policy proposal? How do you plan to overcome these obstacles?

**viii. Summary and Conclusion.** This section is the capstone of your policy paper and, as such, should briefly summarise the argument you have made. This section should also include a final persuasive appeal to your reader(s).

**ix. References or Works Cited.** This section contains the works cited in the body of the paper.

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Sources:

- 1.Herman, L. (2012). *Executive Summary Guidelines*. [https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/files/hks-communications-program/files/ho\\_herman-exec-summary\\_2-14-13\\_0.pdf](https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/files/hks-communications-program/files/ho_herman-exec-summary_2-14-13_0.pdf)
- 2.York University (n.d.) [http://www.yorku.ca/lfoster/2007-08/sppa4115a/York%20-%20Policy%20Paper%20Modules/Policy\\_Paper\\_Writing\\_The\\_Extended\\_Version.htm](http://www.yorku.ca/lfoster/2007-08/sppa4115a/York%20-%20Policy%20Paper%20Modules/Policy_Paper_Writing_The_Extended_Version.htm)

# Appendix 1

## CPDE'S DONORS AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

### 1. European Commission (EC)

The EC is the EU's politically independent executive arm. It is responsible for drawing up proposals for new European legislation, and it implements the decisions of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU. EC's Directorate-General (DG) for International Partnerships (previously named DG International Cooperation and Development or DEVCO) is responsible for formulating the EU's international partnership and development policy.

The EC, the only multilateral donor of CPDE, channels its contribution through a delegated cooperation scheme with Sida. Otherwise, if the EC would disburse the fund directly, then harmonising different requirements between the bilateral donors and the single multilateral donor would become much more cumbersome, which would, in turn, increase transaction costs and potentially weaken the programme's structure and effectiveness ( Member of the EC staff, Personal Communication, March 2021).

The general guidance by the EC, as laid out in the EU country roadmaps for the

engagement with civil society, presents an analysis of the panorama of civil society, its enabling environment, and the obstacles, constraints, and opportunities facing CSOs in each partner country. By identifying EU priorities when engaging with and supporting CSOs in partner countries, the roadmaps seek to improve the impact, predictability, visibility, and consistency of EU actions (CONCORD, 2019).

Meanwhile, the EU Delegation (EUD) is responsible for EU programming at the country level and the EU's political and policy dialogue, including with local authorities, national governments, and regional organisations. The EUDs engage in a comprehensive dialogue with civil society in various global forums such as the GPEDC and the Policy Forum for Development (PFD). The PFD is a platform that coordinates the relationship between EUDs and CSOs beyond issues of access to funding, contracting, and compliance. It allows CSOs to participate in the programming of the EC aid and the political and policy dialogue between partner country governments and civil society. An organisation contacting the EUD for the first time at the country level always goes



through the focal point for dialogue with civil society (Robba, 2019).

## 2. Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Sida's mission is part of Sweden's national policy on global development and poverty reduction. Sida has bilateral development cooperation with approximately 35 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. Sida's headquarters are located in Stockholm.

About 40% of Sida's budget goes to civil society. As a bilateral donor, it provides core support to civil society to address the common challenge of governance and sustainability. CSOs have long preferred core funding – funding that covers organisational development and programmatic work and the organisation's administrative running costs (MacLeod and Almeda, 2021). Since it is more flexible, core funding is appropriate for advocacy CSOs, which need to maintain a reputation of legitimacy and independence. Sida is very much in tune with the development effectiveness principles and supports processes that help CSOs coordinate, develop policies, and reach consensus.

These processes enable CSOs to organise and build capacities. Sida appreciates the diversity of CSOs and embraces their positions in direct dialogues where they can iron out tricky issues of representation and reach consensus (Member of the Sida staff, Personal Communication, 2020).

Sida believes that establishing forums for regular dialogues with civil society helps donors systematically tap into CSOs' knowledge and expertise, identify common ground for collaboration, and promote trust and mutual accountability. For Sida, civil society enables people to claim their rights by promoting a rights-based approach to sustainable development, taking concerted action on human rights violations, and shaping policies and actions. The solidarity expressed in speaking out against threats to the lives and livelihoods of many human rights defenders goes a long way toward improving the dialogue.

Swedish missions to partner countries also support CSOs in their dialogue with country governments to promote an enabling environment for CSOs (Member of the Sida staff, Personal Communication, March 2021).

### 3. Austrian Development Agency (ADA)

The main objectives of the ADA, the operational unit of the Austrian Development Cooperation, are global poverty reduction, peace and human security, and the preservation of the environment and natural resources. The ADA considers the Istanbul Principles as relevant to the donor community, in general, and to the ADA's strategies, policies, and principles, which emphasise partnership and democratic ownership, consider social and cultural contexts, promote gender equality, and address the needs of children and persons with disabilities. All ADA projects take into account and contribute to fulfilling the objectives of international development targets, such as the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAA), and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation.

The projects that the ADA supports align with the partner countries' development plans and EDC principles. Its criteria for funding projects include ownership, the do-no-harm principle, equity, equality, and non-discrimination, inclusive participation and equal representation of all stakeholders, and accountability and transparency. All ADA partners must also fulfil its Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management (EGSIM) criteria.

Usually, the ADA does not fund new or recently registered Austrian CSOs, due to

mandatory budgetary floors in its funding guidelines and risk management reasons. But it is different for local CSO partners, which are eligible to receive support even if they were newly registered. Still, more established organisations might have a competitive advantage. When newer CSOs fail to make the cut, the ADA usually refers them to other Austrian funding institutions (Austrian Provinces). Sometimes, the ADA recommends that newer CSOs form a consortium with more experienced CSOs. Under this arrangement, the ADA supports CPDE's project on Advancing CSO Advocacy and Capacity on Effective Development Cooperation and Partnerships with some contribution. (Member of ADA staff, Personal Communication, December 2020)

### 4. Irish Aid

Irish Aid is the Irish government's programme for overseas development. It is managed by the Development Co-operation Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs. The programme underscores the need for CSO spaces and enabling environment. Beyond providing grants to CSOs, it also encourages partner governments to include civil society in dialogues. For example, Irish Aid engages the Human Rights Council to promote multistakeholder ownership, harmonisation, and alignment of development cooperation and programming (Member of Irish Aid staff, Personal Communication, December 2020).

With about 40% of its annual ODA budget going to civil society, Irish Aid has demonstrated its support for an enabling environment for civil society to organise and engage with governments and its own broader constituencies; to promote participation and good governance; to ensure pro-poor service delivery and pro-poor growth; and, globally and at the country level, to build a constituency for development, human rights, and social justice (KII, IrishAid representative, 2020).

The Irish Aid policy on civil society goes back ten years and is now under revision to reflect the changing nature of the development cooperation landscape. For example, over a decade ago, Irish Aid was looking at service delivery through northern NGOs but now acknowledges the importance and strength of local NGOs to quickly respond to issues, as in the case of the Arab Spring.<sup>1</sup>

The co-financing of CPDE by the ADA and Irish Aid is contingent on the EC grant.

### 5. Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC)

The GPEDC is the primary multistakeholder vehicle to advance the effectiveness of all forms of development cooperation in delivering long-lasting results and contributing to the achievement of the SDGs. It carries out its responsibilities by

facilitating national monitoring exercises of the Busan development effectiveness commitments and producing the Global Monitoring Reports.<sup>2</sup>

CPDE's engagement in the GPEDC includes support for the Non-Executive Co-Chair (CSO representative) and its participation in the Steering Committee Meetings, Senior-Level Meetings, and various Action Areas, especially Action Area 2.4 (Civil society partnerships: addressing shrinking civic space and reinforcing effectiveness) (Meja, Vitalice, Personal Communication, Kenya, February 2021; KII with CSO representative, Nigeria, March 2021).

### 6. Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness (DE) & Enabling Environment (EE)

The Task Team was created in April 2009 to promote and monitor the implementation of CSO-related commitments. It comprises development cooperation providers (donors), partner country governments, and CSOs (mostly affiliated with the CPDE). Its main task is to enhance CSO participation in development processes by promoting international commitments and advocating for a conducive operating environment for CSOs while looking inwards to ensure CSO accountability and transparency. Led by a team of three co-chairs representing partner countries, donors, and civil society, the Task Team,

<sup>1</sup>The revolutionary wave of demonstrations and protests (both non-violent and violent), riots, and civil wars in the Arab world began, on 18 December 2010, with anti-government protests that rocked Tunisia. In 2019, multiple uprisings and protest movements in Algeria, Sudan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Egypt were seen as a continuation of the Arab Spring.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.effectivecooperation.org/content/gpedc-glance-0>

in its capacity as a voluntary body, monitors all development paradigms and commitments from the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) and engages with the GPEDC and development actors at the country level.

### **7. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC)**

Headquartered in Paris, France, the OECD is a forum where governments work together to address global social, economic, and environmental challenges. The OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is one of the specialised committees set up to promote development cooperation and other policies to contribute to sustainable development and pro-poor economic growth in developing countries towards a future in which aid is no longer needed. The OECD promotes a development framework that harnesses resources from a wide range of development actors, including CSOs, the private sector, philanthropists, local governments and parliaments, and also via cooperation between governments through platforms such as South-South and

triangular cooperation (CSO representative in the Philippines, Personal Communication, 2020).

The OECD-DAC recognises the role of CSOs as essential development partners in delivering services, stimulating public debate, and encouraging democratic processes and accountability. Most DAC members vary widely in their policies and strategies for working with CSOs to provide development and humanitarian assistance. Donors in the OECD-DAC and those in developing countries commit fully to the principle of inclusive partnerships, which was first proposed as integral to development effectiveness in the AAA in 2008. Though some donors have lately increasingly engaged with CSOs, there is still room for improvement.

The DAC-CSO Reference Group facilitates CSOs' engagement with the OECD-DAC and carries pro-civil society positions to promote more effective aid and development finance. It serves as a venue for members to plan and coordinate activities and positions related to OECD-DAC engagement. CPDE, as a platform, is a member of the Reference Group alongside other international and national CSOs.



#### Sources:

- CONCORD (2019). EU Delegation unwrapped: A practical guide for Civil Society Organisations. Available at: <https://concordeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/EUDHandbook-English-2.pdf>
- Robba, R. (2019) EU Delegations Unwrapped: A Practical Guide for CSO Engagement with EUDs, Brussels.
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- Member of the EC staff, Personal Communication, March 2021.

# Appendix 2

Theme	CPDE	Sida (Sweden)
<b>Effective Development Cooperation (EDC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the aid and development effectiveness agenda in development cooperation.</li> <li>• Uphold the mandate of ODA to eradicate poverty and address inequalities.</li> <li>• Reform the neoliberal development agenda as enshrined in Agenda 2030 to avoid market-based solutions to development problems.</li> <li>• Stop the corporate takeover of development cooperation policy and partnerships, and hold all private sector interventions accountable to the people with do-no-harm principles.</li> <li>• Uphold the centrality of human rights in development and the practice of a human rights-based approach (HRBA) in development cooperation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International development cooperation must create preconditions for better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression.</li> <li>• Sweden’s development cooperation must be founded on and characterised by a rights perspective and the perspective of poor people on development.</li> </ul>





**CPDE's Position and Key Asks and Policy Strategies of Key Donors  
and Development Partners**

**Policy Positions of Donor or Development Partner**

<b>European Commission (European Union)</b>	<b>Austrian Development Agency, ADA (Austria)</b>	<b>Irish Aid (Ireland)</b>
<p>“Development effectiveness is fundamental for achieving the SDGs and should underpin all forms of development cooperation. The EU and its Member States will apply the development effectiveness principles agreed upon in the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) during the Busan High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011 and renewed during the High-Level Meeting in Nairobi in 2016: namely, ownership of development priorities by developing countries, a focus on results, inclusive development partnerships, transparency and mutual accountability.”</p> <p><b>The European Union:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• defines objectives based on partner countries’ development priorities;</li> <li>• supports the policy processes through which these priorities are formulated, as well as the results frameworks established to manage and report on them;</li> <li>• strengthens and builds on partner countries’ systems to deliver on policy objectives and implement development programmes; and</li> <li>• provides more support through coordinated aid modalities, such as budget support.</li> </ul>	<p>The following principles guide Austria’s development policy positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• human-rights based approach;</li> <li>• building relationships based on partnership and ownership;</li> <li>• accounting for environmental and climate protection and gender equality throughout;</li> <li>• enhancing management for results; and</li> <li>• improving efficient and effective multilateralism.</li> </ul>	<p>Ireland has reiterated its commitment to expand ODA and make progress on delivering the UN target of allocating 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) for Official Development Assistance by 2030.</p> <p>Ireland is committed to contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals and, in particular, the rallying call to reach those furthest behind by prioritising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gender equality;</li> <li>• humanitarian response;</li> <li>• climate action;</li> <li>• mechanisms strengthening governance; and</li> <li>• focused interventions on protection, food, and people.</li> </ul>

Theme		
	CPDE	Sida (Sweden)
<b>Private sector in development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt guidelines and binding regulations (e.g., International Labour Organization (ILO) core labour standards) to ensure additionality and adherence to human rights, gender justice, international labour, social and environmental and Indigenous Peoples standards, such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.</li> <li>• Affirm and support the central role of states in providing public goods and services and universal social protection at the country level.</li> <li>• End direct foreign investment (DFI) financing, which leads to the overt and covert privatisation of basic social services, undermines peoples' livelihood, rights, and future, and further increases the inequality gap.</li> <li>• Develop strong safeguard and accountability mechanisms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By partnering with the private sector, development cooperation can leverage actions and achieve results that would not otherwise be possible.</li> <li>• Public-Private Development Partnership (PPDP) method is utilised when the private sector is considered the most strategic partner for a specific development challenge where Sida leverages the private sector's financial resources, skills, innovative solutions, and interest in market expansion.</li> <li>• The aim of Sida in private sector collaboration is for the private sector to contribute approximately half the cost when a project is run together with Sida. All companies should adapt to the UN's Global Compact and its principles and be open to scrutiny.</li> </ul>

**CPDE's Position and Key Asks and Policy Strategies of Key Donors  
and Development Partners**

**Policy Positions of Donor or Development Partner**

<b>European Commission (European Union)</b>	<b>Austrian Development Agency, ADA (Austria)</b>	<b>Irish Aid (Ireland)</b>
<p>The EC recognises that collaborating with individual small businesses, big companies, and regional business organisations is essential at each stage of the development process because they help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implement aid programmes;</li> <li>• formulate policies; and</li> <li>• mobilise private resources.</li> </ul> <p><b>EC partners with private actors to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• foster growth, create jobs, and reduce poverty;</li> <li>• achieve sustainable and inclusive development, recognising that private actors, through investment and innovation, have an essential role to play in new sectors like sustainable energy, sustainable agriculture and agribusiness, green infrastructure and connectivity; and</li> <li>• promote cross-cutting issues, such as the fight against climate change, the protection of the environment, women empowerment, and human rights.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The private sector is a major partner of Austrian development cooperation because businesses solve problems. They create jobs, build infrastructure, and contribute to poverty reduction. Countries whose private sector has become more relevant have made great progress in recent years.</li> <li>• The only way to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is for governments, enterprises, and civil societies to act together on a global scale.</li> </ul>	<p>As well as contributing additional capital, private sector partners are bringing fresh know-how and innovative ideas to resolve development challenges.</p> <p>Today many developing countries are becoming less dependent on aid and are generating more of their own resources through trade and investment.</p> <p>Irish Aid's work on private sector engagement includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting a better investment climate in Africa;</li> <li>• promoting private sector development in its partner countries;</li> <li>• promoting business links between Ireland and countries in Africa; and</li> <li>• supporting research on new technologies.</li> </ul>

Theme		
	CPDE	Sida (Sweden)
<b>Private sector in development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the highest standards, co-developed with government and civil society, of transparency and accountability for the private sector through appropriate monitoring, regulatory, and accountability mechanisms at local, country, and global levels.</li> <li>• Recognise and protect communities' development rights and stop unsustainable projects that harm their land, livelihood, and environment.</li> <li>• Support gender-sensitive MSMEs and local entrepreneurs, especially in developing countries, to support national industrialisation and sustainable agriculture towards overall sustainable development and self-reliance.</li> <li>• Strengthen labour protection, both formal and informal, and expand the right to collective bargaining, trade union formation, and collective action at the country level to eliminate precarious work conditions and establish decent work, gender sensitivity, and equal wages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sida's principles for collaborating with the private sector are based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ catalytic partnerships where the partnership generates a multiplier effect on the project's impact;</li> <li>◇ social and environmental responsibility;</li> <li>◇ sustainable results through cost and risk-sharing; and</li> <li>◇ systemic impact and contributions to market reforms by enabling well-functioning, inclusive, and sustainable markets, value chains or business models.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**CPDE's Position and Key Asks and Policy Strategies of Key Donors and Development Partners**

**Policy Positions of Donor or Development Partner**

**European Commission  
(European Union)**

**Austrian Development  
Agency, ADA (Austria)**

**Irish Aid (Ireland)**

Theme	CPDE	Sida (Sweden)
<b>Shrinking space and enabling environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retract restrictive and repressive laws and disabling conditions that hinder the full operation of CSOs (e.g., registration processes or duplicate processes and requirements, and arbitrary policies, especially for those working in critically sensitive environments).</li> <li>• Promote citizens' right to initiative, uphold the principle of inclusiveness, and safeguard the rights of CSOs.</li> <li>• Uphold all fundamental rights and freedoms including, but not limited to, freedom of association, expression, and political participation, and the rights to peaceful assembly and information.</li> <li>• Recognise, by developing mechanisms, the multiplicity of the roles and functions of CSOs, people's movements, and trade unions as independent development actors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sida should explore the various roles of civil society within their context.</li> <li>• Sida should strive to support civil society in its own right.</li> <li>• Sida should provide aid and development effective support to civil society partners.</li> <li>• Sida should support civil society partners' efforts to strengthen their own development effectiveness, including their transparency and accountability.</li> <li>• Sida should engage in continuous dialogue with civil society.</li> </ul>

**CPDE's Position and Key Asks and Policy Strategies of Key Donors  
and Development Partners**

**Policy Positions of Donor or Development Partner**

<b>European Commission (European Union)</b>	<b>Austrian Development Agency, ADA (Austria)</b>	<b>Irish Aid (Ireland)</b>
<p>The EU Consensus on Development: “The EU and its Member States value the participation of civil society organisations (CSOs) in development and encourage all parts of society to actively engage. They recognise the multiple roles that CSOs play as promoters of democracy and defenders of rights holders and of the rule of law, social justice and human rights. The EU and its Member States will promote civil society space and enhance their support for building the capacity of CSOs, so as to strengthen their voice in the development process and to advance political, social and economic dialogue.”</p> <p>The EU Council “remains deeply concerned by the shrinking space for civil society in an increasing number of countries. It is firmly opposed and will remain vigilant of unjustified restrictions to freedom of association, expression and peaceful assembly that are hindering the work of human rights organisations, women’s organisations, pro-democracy actors and wider civil society movements.”</p>	<p>A robust, vibrant, and functioning civil society is a measure of development. For this reason, cooperation with CSOs makes up a major component of sustainable development cooperation and development policy. Civil society actors are engaged worldwide in helping solve different sets of problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In countries with weak public institutions, CSOs often contribute to providing basic social services.</li> <li>• CSOs advance participation in social policymaking and discussion, undertake supervisory functions, and demand respect for human rights and the rule of law.</li> <li>• With their know-how and experience, CSOs deploy donor resources where they are most needed.</li> </ul>	<p>Irish Aid’s international development policy: “We will support and protect civil society space. We will continue to work with civil society partners to inform our influence and interventions for the protection of human rights.”</p> <p>Irish Aid’s civil society policy: “In order for civil society to grow and strengthen, it must operate in an enabling environment. Governments have a key responsibility for creating the conditions that enable civil society to grow and flourish.”</p> <p>The partnership between Irish Aid and CSOs is built on a shared commitment to sustainable development, gender equality, human rights, and good governance</p>

Theme	CPDE	Sida (Sweden)
Shrinking space and enabling environment		



**CPDE's Position and Key Asks and Policy Strategies of Key Donors  
and Development Partners**

**Policy Positions of Donor or Development Partner**

**European Commission  
(European Union)**

**Austrian Development  
Agency, ADA (Austria)**

**Irish Aid (Ireland)**

According to the EC, civil society plays a vital role in voicing the concerns of local communities, especially people in vulnerable and marginalised situations, in an inclusive way. CSOs' participation in dialogue and policymaking is key to bringing expertise from the ground and devising policies that meet people's needs.

Despite increased recognition of the vital roles of civil society, CSOs' ability to act freely as actors in their own right is continuously diminishing, with very few positive examples of the opposite. This closing space for civil society is part of a general authoritarian pushback against democracy.

The policy objectives of Irish Aid in relation to civil society:

- to support an enabling environment for civil society;
- to organise and engage with governments and their own broader constituencies; and
- to support the role of civil society:
  - ◊ in promoting participation and good governance;
  - ◊ in ensuring pro-poor service delivery and pro-poor growth; and
  - ◊ in building a constituency, globally and nationally, for development, human rights, and social justice.

Theme	CPDE	Sida (Sweden)
Climate finance	<p>Promote the development effectiveness agenda in financing climate action for the SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main focus of Sida’s climate finance is on climate change adaptation.</li> <li>• Climate financing is additional to the international development aid goal of 0.7% of GNI.</li> <li>• Sweden is committed to upholding its ODA at 1% and providing climate finance at increasing levels.</li> <li>• Sweden aims to mainstream climate change in international development assistance, enhance contributions to low-carbon development, and make ODA more climate-resilient.</li> </ul>

**CPDE's Position and Key Asks and Policy Strategies of Key Donors  
and Development Partners**

**Policy Positions of Donor or Development Partner**

<b>European Commission (European Union)</b>	<b>Austrian Development Agency, ADA (Austria)</b>	<b>Irish Aid (Ireland)</b>
<p>The Council of the European Union:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>emphasises the strong support of the EU and its member states to climate spending targets pursued through the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework, including its external policy instruments and NextGenerationEU, as well as based on the European Climate Law that requires the EU to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 from 1990 levels and to be climate-neutral by 2050;</li> <li>highlights the need to significantly enhance the mobilisation of private finance to help implement the Paris Agreement and underlines the important leveraging role that public policy, including public finance and sectoral roadmaps, can play in that regard;</li> <li>stresses that carbon pricing and phasing out environmentally harmful fossil fuel subsidies are key components of an enabling environment to shift financial flows towards climate-neutral and sustainable investments, as well as to support a just transition, and commits to supporting developing countries in their own efforts; and</li> </ul>	<p>The objectives of the Austrian contribution to international climate finance for developing countries and countries with economies in transition are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to contribute to limiting the increase of the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to make efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C;</li> <li>to increase the capacity to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change and promote resilience and low-emission development; and</li> <li>to make financial flows consistent with a decarbonisation pathway and climate-resilient development (as indicated in the Articles of the Paris Agreement).</li> </ul>	<p>Irish Aid pledges to continue scaling up allocations to climate action interventions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exploring innovative approaches to finance, risk insurance and adaptation through multilateral partners;</li> <li>strengthening support for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) (e.g., through responses to the specific challenges faced by SIDS across the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, and the Pacific Ocean); and</li> <li>developing a new Oceans Funding initiative to explore the potential of the blue economy for developing countries, including SIDS.</li> </ul>

Theme	CPDE	Sida (Sweden)
Climate finance		

**CPDE's Position and Key Asks and Policy Strategies of Key Donors  
and Development Partners**

**Policy Positions of Donor or Development Partner**

**European Commission  
(European Union)**

**Austrian Development  
Agency, ADA (Austria)**

**Irish Aid (Ireland)**

- reconfirms the commitment by the EU and its Member States to continue scaling up their contribution to international climate finance from a wide variety of sources – public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including alternative sources of finance – instruments and channels, in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency of implementation, as part of the goal of developed countries to collectively mobilise US\$100 billion per year through to 2025.

Articulating the new EU strategy, the EC pledged to increase support for international climate resilience and preparedness by scaling up international finance and stronger global engagement and exchanges on adaptation.

Theme	CPDE	Sida (Sweden)
<p><b>Nexus issue – Conflict and fragility</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uphold coherence between development cooperation and other policies, especially in relation to foreign affairs and international norms, while giving primacy to the humanitarian and democratic interests of people living in conflict-affected and fragile situations.</li> <li>• Reorient development assistance to ensure gender responsiveness and the security of peoples' lives and rights rather than allowing it to be used as military assistance for security improvement</li> <li>• End efforts to profit or make a business from situations of conflict and fragility.</li> </ul>	<p>Sida's approach to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus is based on the DAC Recommendation. It takes the rights and needs of poor and crisis-affected people as its point of departure.</p> <p>Sida's development cooperation policy integrates a conflict perspective into its development cooperation activities.</p> <p>Applying a conflict perspective on development cooperation is essentially about having good knowledge about the context where a development programme is implemented, considering how contextual factors affect the implementation of a development programme, and how it can intentionally or unintentionally affect ongoing and submerged conflicts or tensions.</p>

**CPDE's Position and Key Asks and Policy Strategies of Key Donors  
and Development Partners**

**Policy Positions of Donor or Development Partner**

European Commission (European Union)	Austrian Development Agency, ADA (Austria)	Irish Aid (Ireland)
<p>The triple nexus reinforces the Comprehensive Approach and should be understood as a process to shift the work culture towards more systematic and up-front coordination between humanitarian, development, and peace actors in headquarters and on the ground among EU institutions, EU Member States, and other relevant actors, and in full compliance with their respective mandates and roles.</p> <p>The Council recognises the linkages between sustainable development, humanitarian action, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and the importance of diplomatic and political solutions to support peace and security, in line with the EU Global Strategy and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. The Council stresses the importance of investing in prevention and addressing the underlying root causes of vulnerability, fragility, and conflict while meeting humanitarian needs and strengthening resilience, thus reducing risks.</p> <p>Development cooperation and humanitarian assistance should be designed and delivered in a more complementary manner to respond earlier and more effectively to the dynamics of fragility, poverty, and vulnerability.</p>	<p>ADA is committed to contributing to peacebuilding and conflict prevention in different ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It supports concrete projects of civil society and international organisations devoted to peacebuilding, conflict prevention and conflict transformation.</li> <li>• It assists fragile states in establishing constitutional and democratic structures.</li> <li>• It is dedicated to protecting women in conflict situations and including them in peace processes.</li> <li>• When planning activities in conflictive countries, it takes care to avoid an escalation of conflict and strengthen peacebuilding impacts (do-no-harm principle).</li> <li>• It takes a whole-of-government approach to pursue development goals.</li> </ul>	<p>Irish Aid will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continue to scale up its development cooperation and humanitarian assistance to effectively deliver meaningful and sustainable change in the lives of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people;</li> <li>• strengthen its response to humanitarian crises: "We will increase our funding and build our capacity for rapid response to sudden-onset crises. We will continue to provide high-quality funding and strengthen its predictability, working with international humanitarian partners, including United Nations agencies and international NGOs, to allocate resources where there is the greatest need as effectively as possible.";</li> </ul>

Theme	CPDE	Sida (Sweden)
Nexus issue – Conflict and fragility		

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**CPDE's Position and Key Asks and Policy Strategies of Key Donors  
and Development Partners**

**Policy Positions of Donor or Development Partner**

European Commission (European Union)	Austrian Development Agency, ADA (Austria)	Irish Aid (Ireland)
	<p>From the OECD Audit in 2020: "In implementing its commitment to conflict prevention, Austria is limited by the lack of a specific instrument and budget focusing on stability and conflict prevention. This means that development cooperation and fragmented humanitarian aid are the only mechanisms available to respond to crises."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop a more comprehensive Irish response to peace and security challenges, identifying synergies with other areas of development and instruments of foreign policy; and</li> <li>• develop regional approaches to conflict and fragility.</li> </ul>

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# Appendix 3

## A CASE STUDY FROM CPDE: ADVANCING A HUMAN-RIGHTS BASED APPROACH AMID CROSS-CUTTING CHALLENGES

### **The Engagement Challenges of the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND)**

The Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) leads the CPDE Constituency in the Middle East and North Africa region. It consists of nine national networks and 23 NGOs operating in 12 Arab countries. The ANND's work is organised according to three main areas:

- Strengthen the capacity and role of CSOs in advocacy and lobbying in the field of economic and social policymaking in the Arab region
- Promote and develop knowledge products related to the role of civil society in the Arab region.
- Strengthen the space available for CSOs' participation in economic and social policymaking at national, regional, and international levels.

The ANND's multiyear strategy also involves engagement with several actors, including UN agencies, the League of Arab States, European Union (EU) institutions, international financial institutions (IFIs), and the international donor community,

on macroeconomic policies, distribution policies, the role of development actors, and cross-cutting issues regarding culture, good governance, climate, and gender justice, among others. The strategy helps its member CSOs identify and engage with projects within a comprehensive framework and guide them in resource mobilisation.

With different donors covering different goals, the long-term sustainability of activities is assured. This way, fundraising for new activities or strategic priorities builds on achievements and lessons from previous years' relations. For instance, the ANND's current UNDEF-supported project, "Engaging Civil Society in Policy Dialogue on Agenda 2030," took several lessons from previous UNDEF grants. Likewise, to facilitate better implementation, the same donors have funded the development of the Arab Watch Reports, which are biannual regional, thematic, and national reports on various economic and social policy issues.

The ANND faces several fundraising challenges due to several external factors. A set agenda by donors might restrict



CSOs' flexibility because of gaps between donor priorities and local, national, or regional needs. Funding is available for specific budget lines in project activities, but lengthy and complex funding processes may hinder the effective implementation of advocacy actions. Fundraising must also contend with the changing role of development partners, such as shifts in donor priorities and the expanding role of private actors in the development sphere. Moreover, development assistance is increasingly limited to in-donor country programmes, further diminishing fundraising opportunities for developing country actors, including civil society.

The overall economic and political situation in the region impacts fundraising and the general operations of the ANND in view of growing threats and challenges: the spread of populist and religious movements; the decline of human rights discourse; the systematic erosion of human rights mechanisms; and the detrimental shifts in legal structures and safeguards of people's economic, social, civil, and political rights. The COVID-19 pandemic brought about an additional

challenge as some activities have been suspended due to restrictions on face-to-face meetings, workshops, and international travel. Sometimes, such challenges necessitate reallocating project activities and budgets.

The ANND's membership in several global networks provides it with a channel to voice civil society concerns in the global arena and represent civil society in the region in key policy processes. The ANND's anti-corruption policy and the external audit of its processes attest to the network's commitment to effective resource utilisation, transparency, and integrity. The ANND affirms that, in place of ad hoc and short-term initiatives, inclusive, transparent, and participatory structured mechanisms should be instituted between the donor community and civil society.

*Source: Anas El-Hasnaoui, Arab NGO Network for Development, Personal Communication,*

# Appendix 4

## DONOR PROFILE TEMPLATE (COUNTRY-LEVEL)

<b>Name of donor</b>
<b>Mission and vision</b>
<b>Address and website</b>
<b>Donor type</b> (bilateral, multilateral, public, philanthropic, etc.)
<b>Financial data</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Total assets</li><li>• Total grants paid</li><li>• Grant ranges or amount needed</li><li>• Period of funding and project duration</li></ul>
<b>Geographic focus or limits</b>
<b>Thematic focus</b>
<b>CSO engagement mechanisms or approaches</b>
<b>Funding modality for CSOs</b>
<b>Funding amount and limits</b>
<b>Eligibility criteria</b>
<b>Eligible items and costs</b>
<b>Application information:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.Does the funding agency have printed guidelines or application forms?</li><li>2.How does the donor prefer to be approached initially (e.g., letter of inquiry, formal proposal)?</li></ol>
<b>Important deadlines</b>
<b>Contact persons and details</b>









**CSO Partnership**   
for **Development Effectiveness**

A DECADE OF CSO SOLIDARITY  
ON EDC ADVOCACY AND PRACTICE

