

What are the key components of Enabling Environment?

In March 2015, the Global PFD chose EE as one of the main themes of debate. The half day combined a panel of experts with working groups where representatives from both CSOs and LAs had the time to discuss both the definition and experiences on EE and, at the same time, identify what are the main factors that determine an EE.

Despite the complexity of the concept and the lack of time, the session was highly successful. It attracted a lot of interest and ended up gathering a considerable amount of useful information in regards to both the understanding of what are the components of an EE and how can CSOs and LAs work better to promote an EE. This paper presents the compilation of the answers given to the three main questions proposed.

1. What are the key components of an EE?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of expression • Freedom of association • Political and financial autonomy of CSOs • Social dialogue • Trust and mutual understanding • Independence of media • Freedom of speech and association • Independence of judiciary • Judicial and administrative frameworks • Rule of law and enforcement of frameworks • Legitimate representation from CSOs and democratically elected LAs • Self-regulation of CSOs • Multi-stakeholder dialogue • Right of initiative of CSOs • Mutual accountability and transparency • Respect for workers' rights • Access to finance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent, institutionalised dialogue, including social dialogue (workers, private, state) • Equal dialogue - coming together as equal partners • Monitoring and participation of stakeholders in monitoring • State/government understanding of the roles and responsibilities of actors • Government recognition of CSOs and institutionalised space for engagement with CSOs • Predictability of legal and political systems • Political coherence • Functioning formal economy • Autonomy of CSOs (political and financial) • Peace and Stability • Political willingness • Technical competence and capacity • Space for advocacy
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2. In which ways can CSOs and LAs work together to support an EE?

- Engage at national level for scale-up and sustainability of an EE (e.g. Philippines in disaster and rehabilitation)
- Institutionalise participation (i.e. in LA planning processes)
- Promote dialogue to develop legislation
- Promote access to information and transparency
- Encourage mutual social accountability and monitoring to ensure access to quality services and service delivery
- Share property - CSOs to use existing facilities of LAs to meet and work
- Promote transparency in public procurement processes
- Joint capacity building (mutual training) for mutual empowerment and joint service delivery
- Sensitise towards cooperative business models - involvement of LAs very beneficial (renewable energy)
- Update laws and legal regulations for CSOs in order to work as partners with LAs
- Establish a code of good conduct between LAs and CSOs
- LAs and CSOs to be both actors in implementation and beneficiaries
- Make south-south cooperation a topic of LAs' official agenda
- CSOs and LAs to sit together on development councils, such as in Philippines - allow for dialogue as equal partners
- Right to information as entry point to CSO-LA engagement
- Create 'cluster development' among CSO and LA actors (ie. Colombia)
- Roadmaps for LAs as well as CSOs
- Participatory budgeting and planning, monitoring of activities
- Mainstream CSO work into SDG implementation

3. How CSOs and LAs could work better at different levels to enhance an EE?

Global	Regional	National	Local
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for the importance of both actors in global agenda, such as Post-2015 Agenda, Habitat III, climate change, Financing for Development. • Create a Global Alliance and Division of Tasks with clear coordination and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a space for institutional dialogue at regional level; • Identify areas where advocacy can occur in regards to common initiatives • Analyse and compare the political context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an institutional space at national level for dialogue – LGAs plus the national platform of CSOs • Identify areas where advocacy can occur in regards to common initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build trust to contribute to good partnership and genuine dialogue • Promote consultation and participation in local planning, budgeting and decision-making processes

<p>instruments to achieve objectives (existing platforms such as Global Task Force could be used for this purpose).</p>	<p>across countries and regions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange knowledge and best practices (as a means to encourage capacity development and trust building) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange knowledge and best practices (as a means to encourage capacity development and trust-building) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage partnerships in service delivery • Invest in capacity development for LAs to engage CSOs and citizens • Favour an evidence-based approach (LAs to give examples and show results)
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Views and experiences from the LAs

Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi, UCLG-Africa, presented work that UCLG-A has been doing together with Cities Alliance to assess the performance of African LAs as autonomous actors in development, at country level. UCLG-A has conceived a ranking system to encourage Central Authorities (CAs) to measure their performance in terms of relations with LAs as well as local democracy and development in their countries. The review defines which essential features should define EE for African LAs to perform according to their mandate. It compares this definition with what African CAs state they do for LAs and what is actually done. The agreed criteria involve 10 issues (outlined below), ranked from 0 to 4 (total maximum points being 40). Ranking encompasses cities of 50 countries, and, depending on the score, countries will be placed in a specific colour and qualification: green (above 30 points; very favourable environment for LAs); yellow (score between 30 and 25 points; rather favourable environment for LAs); orange (score between 25 to 20 points; EE requires major reform efforts); red (less than 20 points; unfavourable environment for LAs). It gives a good picture of the real relationship between CAs and LAs in Africa.

The criteria cover the following issues:

1. Constitutional Framework
2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework
3. Local Democracy
4. Financial Transfers from the Central Government to Local Governments

5. Local Governments' Own Revenues
6. Capacity Building of Local Government Administrations
7. Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms
8. Provisions Citizen Participation
9. Local Government Performance
10. Existence of Urban Strategy

As for EE at the regional level, **Mr. Mbassi** informed that the African Union had approved the Regional Charter of Good Governance in July 2014. Consequently, UCLG-A has started advocating for the creation of a High Council of LAs and incorporated EE into the work of the African Union. Ideally, that could also be reproduced at sub-regional levels (5 sub-regions).

Bernadia Tjandradewi, UCLG-Asia Pacific, presented the project DELGOSEA (Democratic Local Governance in Southeast Asia) to illustrate a successful platform to engage in structured dialogue between LAs, ALAs and citizens (organised, CSO, academic) working on the following topics: people's participation in planning and decision-making; institutional governance; inclusive public services; and financial management. UCLG-ASPAC has investigated around 25 LA good practices and is currently deconstructing the factors that promote EE in Southeast Asian countries to be used elsewhere. A key aspect highlighted was the need to really know and understand the actors involved. At the same time, regarding current events in the ASEAN regions, it will be important to consider the consequences of the creation of a single market in the area.

Guillermo Tapia, Federation of Latin American Cities, Municipalities and Associations of Municipalities (FLACMA), presented on placing local interests in national agendas. The *Foro Iberoamericano de gobiernos locales* first started through the initiative of three cities: Montevideo, Santa Tecla and Barcelona. The idea behind the Foro was to widen up the participation of the Ibero-American Conference of Heads of State and Governments (22 states) to citizens, through municipalities and regions from the ibero-american cooperation (now thousands of LAs). At the beginning, the Foro was created as a parallel forum to the States Summit and gradually it has become an accompanying event, as CAs have recognised the important role played by actors operating at local level. FLACMA is included in the Foro. El Foro has elaborated the Carta de Autonomía Municipal Ibero-americana, as a common framework of LAs to claim more space for their work and interests before CAs. El Foro is a space for aggregating the needs present at local level and pushing them up to the national level. In the future there is the intention to proceed towards a dialogue space between Latin-American and European LAs, in parallel with the EU-Latin American Summit.

Edgardo Bilsky, UCLG-WS, talked about “Localising the Post-2015 Agenda” - SDGs+COP+Habitat III. Creation of a Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) for Post-2015 Agenda and Towards Habitat III (GTF). LAs still face problems being recognised as LAs, since the UN considers them CSOs. Since 1996, LAs have been observers in the UN-HABITAT Council. In 2000, UNACLA was created but chaired by the DG of UN-HABITAT and able to put forward themes related to the UN-HABITAT mandate. Being part of the multi-lateral negotiations is not easy. While progress has been slowly achieved during recent years, one of the main goals of LAs (particularly in the context of the agendas discussed) is to consolidate their position and representation into institutionalised multi-lateral platforms/structures.