



Brussels, 15.7.2014
C(2014) 4865 final

**Multiannual Indicative Programme for the Thematic Programme
“Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities”
for the period 2014-2020**

MULTI-ANNUAL INDICATIVE PROGRAMME 2014-2020 FOR THE 'CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES' THEMATIC PROGRAMME

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Thematic Programme 'Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities' (CSOs LAs) has its legal base in Regulation 233/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of the 11th March 2014, establishing a financing Instrument for Development Cooperation (DCI). The DCI defines the objective of the Programme as *to strengthen civil society organisations and local authorities in partner countries and, when their actions relate to Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) of European citizens, in the Union and beneficiaries eligible under the IPA Regulation*. The Programme will be implemented over the period 2014-2020. Three priorities are identified:

- Action at country level will be at the core of the Programme to support CSOs and LAs contributions to governance and accountability through inclusive policy-making - hence empowering citizens and populations through the voicing and structuring of their collective demands to tackle injustice and inequality, to benefit from qualitative social services and to profit from wealth and job creation. The Programme will also support actions aimed at a sustainable territorial development, including in urban contexts, to foster local development and social cohesion. The promotion of an *enabling environment* for CSOs and LAs - in its legal, regulatory and operational dimensions – will be a crosscutting element.
- Regional and global CSOs networks and associations of LAs are essential stakeholders playing a pivotal role in linking local concerns, often caused by global challenges, to regional and international debates. The EU aims at strengthening them with a view to enhance their contributions to development, especially in the post-2015 Development Agenda.
- DEAR activities will aim at developing citizens' awareness and critical understanding of the interdependent world, of their role and responsibility in relation to a globalised society; and to support their active engagement with global attempts to eradicate poverty and promote justice, human rights and democracy, social responsibility, gender equality, and a sustainable social-economic development in partner countries.

The Programme allocation amounts to EUR 1.907 billion for the period 2014-2020. An envelope of around EUR 970 million has been earmarked for the Multi-annual Indicative Programme 2014-2017.

2. OVERALL CONTEXT

2.1 External goals and priorities of the EU

The European Union development cooperation policy forms part of the Union external action, pursuant to Article 208 (1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in conjunction with Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union. The primary objective is the reduction and, in the long term, the eradication of poverty. In addition, the *European Consensus on Development* (2006)¹ sets out the shared vision and common principles that guide EU development cooperation. It affirms that development is a central goal by itself and stresses that sustainable development includes good governance, human rights and political, economic, social and environmental aspects.

¹ The European Consensus on Development can be consulted online at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2006:046:0001:0019:EN:PDF>

At a critical juncture - facing new global challenges and close to the 2015 target for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – the European Commission Communication “*Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change*” (October 2011, Council Conclusions in May 2012)² sets out a more strategic EU approach to reducing poverty. It provides the policy direction for EU development cooperation by proposing a concentration of development cooperation around two main pillars: i) human rights, democracy and good governance; and ii) inclusive and sustainable growth for human development.

Informed by the outcomes of the “*Structured Dialogue on the involvement of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Local Authorities (LAs) in EU Development Cooperation*”³, the *Agenda for Change* recognises both actors as key players in its two pillars. It calls for strengthened “*links with civil society organisations, social partners and local authorities, through regular dialogue and use of best practices*”, in particular to “*support the emergence of a local civil society which can effectively contribute to dialogue with public authorities and to oversee public authorities’ work*”, and to “*consider ways of mobilising local authorities’ expertise, e.g. through networks of excellence or twinning exercises*”. It also highlights the value of multi-actor partnerships including public actors, civil society, the private sector and local communities.

The importance of Civil Society actions within accountability systems is also emphasised in the Communication on the *Future approach to EU budget support to third countries*⁴ (COM(2011)638, and related Council Conclusions), proposing to facilitate CSO's oversight role and participation in budgetary processes, particularly in countries where the EU provides budget support.

The Communication on Social Protection in EU Development Cooperation⁵ also calls for institutional capacity-building of social partners and other non-state actors to strengthen their administrative and implementation capacities and encourage their partnerships with public authorities aimed at developing and implementing social protection systems.

Both CSOs and LAs are essential in building the foundations for broad-based democratic ownership of development policies and processes as well as for inclusive and sustainable growth. Their role as development actors in their own right has been progressively recognised by the international community, confirmed in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011)⁶ and emphasised in the First High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation⁷ held in Mexico (April 2014).

"Support to" and "participation of" CSOs and LAs in pursuit of internationally agreed goals and development effectiveness are both acknowledged as core EU policy orientations.

The Thematic Programme “Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities”, by focusing concomitantly on both actors, provides a coherent strategy benefitting both as partners and

² The Agenda for Change, COM(2011) 637 is available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0637:FIN:EN:PDF>; Council Conclusions (2012): http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/130243.pdf

³ The 'Structured Dialogue' (March 2010-May 2011) was a multi-actor process for consultation, reflection and stocktaking. At the end of the process participants (representatives of CSOs, LAs, the European Commission, Member States, the European Parliament and EU Delegations) agreed on a Final Statement. For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/who/partners/civil-society/structured-dialogue_en.htm

⁴ Available at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/delivering-aid/budget-support/documents/future_eu_budget_support_en.pdf

⁵ COM(2012) 446 (at: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/social-protection/documents/com_2012_446_en.pdf)

⁶ See Art. 1, 8, 14, 16, 21, 22, 29; Busan Outcome Document, 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, December 2011; http://www.aideffectiveness.org/busanhlf4/images/stories/hlf4/OUTCOME_DOCUMENT_-_FINAL_EN.pdf

⁷ Final communiqué available at: <http://effectivecooperation.org/>

complementary players. It will contribute to progressively support multi-actor approaches and inclusive partnerships for development aimed at poverty eradication and sustainable development, recognising the value of different stakeholders' contributions and synergies.

<i>What is meant by CSOs⁸</i> The EU considers CSOs as non-State, non-profit making actors operating on an independent and accountable basis. They include: non-governmental organisations, organisations representing indigenous peoples, organisations representing national and/or ethnic minorities, diaspora organisations, migrants' organisations in partner countries, local traders' associations and citizens' groups, cooperatives, employers' associations and trade unions (social partners), organisations representing economic and social interests, organisations fighting corruption and fraud and promoting good governance, civil rights organisations and organisations combating discrimination, local organisations (including networks) involved in decentralised regional cooperation and integration, consumer organisations, women's and youth organisations, environmental, teaching, cultural, research and scientific organisations, universities, churches and religious associations and communities, philosophical and non-confessional organisations, the media and any non-governmental associations and independent foundations, including independent political foundations, likely to contribute to the implementation of the objectives of the DCI Regulation.	<i>What is meant by Local Authorities (LAs)</i> The term refers to public institutions with legal personality, component of the State structure, below the level of central government and accountable to citizens. Local Authorities are usually composed of a deliberative or policy-making body (council or assembly) and an executive body (the Mayor or other executive officer), directly or indirectly elected or selected at local level. Local authorities encompass a large variety of sub-national levels and branches of government, i.e. municipalities, communities, districts, counties, provinces, regions etc. The EU includes in this definition⁹ also the «Associations of Local Authorities» (ALAs), to be understood as umbrella organisations based on membership and representativeness at sub-national, national, sub-continental, continental and international level. ALAs may be organised as autonomous entities in accordance with the legislation in force in the country of registration. Associations of Local Authorities may be composed of a representative body elected by its LA members and a permanent secretariat.
<i>CSOs' roles</i> CSOs can advocate for change, mobilise communities and vulnerable groups, activate participation in policy processes and reinforce accountability systems, or complement actions of public administration, at central and local levels, in delivering services to the populations. CSOs voice the concerns of specific populations, including disadvantaged and marginalized groups, represent their interests at various levels or facilitate their direct engagement. CSOs raise awareness about local and global development challenges and promote actions to respond to these.	<i>The role of Local Authorities</i> Adhering to the principle of subsidiarity¹⁰, LAs may act as decision- makers, in favour of transparent and accountable policy-making and service delivery at the local level. Being closer to citizens than other public institutions, LAs hold responsibility in mobilising local societies' opinions and resources while acting as catalysts for change. This is particularly true in terms of more efficient public administration, more inclusive development processes, in cooperation with CSOs, and solutions to urgent challenges faced by local communities. Such challenges include social exclusion and lack of access to adequate education and trainings, migration, food security, limited

⁸ As per definition contained in the Regulation 233/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation (Development Cooperation Instrument, DCI).

⁹ COM(2013) 280, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/civil-society/documents/com_2013_280_local_authorities_in_partner_countries_en.pdf; Council Conclusions (2013), http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/138243.pdf.

¹⁰ The principle of subsidiarity entails that public responsibilities, regulatory functions and spending are transferred to the lowest institutional or social level, that is able and entrusted to complete them.

	infrastructures, rapid urbanisation, depletion of resources, public safety and violence, environmental and social impact of extractive activities, climate adaptation and mitigation, rule of law and access to justice. Therefore, LAs play a double role: (i) representing and ensuring welfare of local political community (<i>agents of a local political constituency</i>); (ii) representing and facilitating the action of the State in their jurisdiction (<i>agent of the central State</i>).
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The Thematic Programme “Civil Society and Local Authorities” is further guided by:

- The 2012 Communication “*The Roots of Democracy and sustainable development: Europe's Engagement with Civil Society in External Relations*”, and related Council Conclusions¹¹;
- The 2013 Communication “*Empowering Local Authorities in partner countries for enhanced governance and more effective development outcomes*”, and related Council Conclusions¹²;
- The 2012 Staff Working Document “*Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) in Europe*”¹³ and the European Parliament written Declaration on “development education and active global citizenship”¹⁴;
- The 2013 European Parliament Resolution on “*Local Authorities and Civil Society: Europe's engagement in support of sustainable development*”¹⁵ (2012/2288(INI))

The policy orientations of ‘*The Roots of Democracy and sustainable development*’, endorsed by the Council of the European Union, propose an enhanced and more strategic EU engagement with CSOs in developing, enlargement and neighbourhood countries, with a particular focus on *local* civil society organisations. An empowered civil society is valued as a crucial component of any democratic system and as an asset in itself. Recognising the importance of constructive relations between states and CSOs, the Communication puts forward three priorities for the EU:

1. Enhance efforts to promote a *conducive environment* for CSOs in partner countries.
2. Promote meaningful and structured participation in programming and policy processes to build stronger *governance and accountability* at all levels.
3. Increase local *CSOs' capacity* to perform their roles as independent development actors more effectively.

It also outlines a new approach to support CSOs with regards to the promotion of inclusive and sustainable growth as well as in service delivery. As for the latter, it emphasises the need to build quality systems, sustainable over time, with clear division of labour between public authorities and other stakeholders to avoid duplication, parallel structures and overlap.

On the basis of the subsidiarity principle, the *Communication on Local Authorities* defines the strategic priorities for the EU to support LAs in partner countries to unlock their development potential. As the public administration closest to citizens, LAs hold special institutional

¹¹ COM(2012) 492 final, URL: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0492:FIN:EN:PDF>; Council Conclusions (2012), URL: www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/132870.pdf

¹² See COM(2013) 280 final (see footnote 10)

¹³ SWD(2012) 457 final, URL: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/dci/documents/swd_2012_457_dear_en.pdf.

¹⁴ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+WDECL+P7-DCL-2012-0007+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>

¹⁵ The full report is available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0432+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

responsibilities in enhancing citizens' participation in decision-making, with the objectives of good governance and sustainable development at local level. This becomes even more relevant in those countries that have already started public sector reform and proceeding toward the decentralisation of power, responsibilities and resources.¹⁶ Focus will be on empowering LAs and Association of LAs, to enable them to contribute to the achievement of more effective development objectives while responding to citizens' demands and to promote inclusive and sustainable local development.

Furthermore, the 2012 *European Commission Staff Working Document (SWD) on Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) in Europe*¹⁷ takes stock of experiences and policies in the field in Europe. It values DEAR contributions to enhance European citizens' understanding, skills and critical engagement on development issues, human rights, social responsibility, gender equality, and global solidarity. DEAR is considered essential for an ambitious EU development policy and represents an integral part of EU development assistance. Furthermore, the European Parliament written Declaration on "development education and active global citizenship"¹⁸ devotes specific attention to the need for a European strategy on DEAR more focused on a critical reflection about development policy and in particular on Policy Coherence for Development.

The European Parliament Resolution on "Local Authorities and Civil Society: Europe's engagement in support of sustainable development"¹⁹ (2012/2288(INI)), conveys positive appreciation for the abovementioned recent Communications and subsequent Council Conclusions on EU partnerships with Civil Society and Local Authorities. The Resolution further proposes a comprehensive set of recommendations aimed at improving EU partnership with CSOs and LAs in development cooperation.

The Thematic Programme CSOs LAs has its legal base in Regulation 233/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation (Development Cooperation Instrument, DCI). Article 6 of the DCI Regulation defines the main characteristics of Thematic Programmes, which shall add value and be complementary to, and coherent with, actions funded under geographic Programmes.

2.2 Previous programmes

The predecessor of this Programme was the "Non-State Actors (NSAs)²⁰ and Local Authorities in Development" Thematic Programme (2007- 2013), implemented at country, regional and global levels. The legal base was the Regulation 1905/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation. It has been a key instrument in supporting Civil Society and Local Authorities, particularly in partner countries. It has integrated important innovations, including opening up the eligibility criteria to allow access of partner countries' organisations to funding (as before only European organisations were eligible).

¹⁶ Decentralisation is the aspect of public sector reforms that occurs at local level; it has three dimensions: (i) Political decentralisation transfers policy and legislative powers from central government to autonomous, lower-level assemblies and local councils; (ii) Administrative decentralisation places planning and implementation under the responsibility of locally situated civil servants, which are under the jurisdiction of local representative bodies; (iii) Fiscal decentralisation accords substantial revenue and expenditure authority to LAs. This particular point is very relevant as LAs can only deliver services efficiently if they have sufficient resources. Reference: European Commission (2007), *Supporting Decentralisation and Local Governance in Third Countries*; http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/governance/documents/decentralisation_local_governance_refdoc_final_en.pdf.

¹⁷ Informed by the Structured Dialogue DEAR support Initiative and related studies: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/index.php/DEAR:_Development_education_and_awareness_raising

¹⁸ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+WDECL+P7-DCL-2012-0007+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>

¹⁹ The full report can be found on: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0432+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

²⁰ In this context, the terms NSA and CSOs may be considered equivalent.

For the period 2007-2013, a total amount of EUR 1.567 million was committed under the NSA-LA Programme. It was articulated around three main objectives. 83% of funds were allocated to the first objective of promoting an inclusive and empowered society at country level and to facilitate NSAs' and LAs' participation in poverty reduction and sustainable development. The second objective of development education and awareness raising in the EU and acceding countries received 14% of the funds; 2% were allocated to the third objective of coordination of NSAs and LAs networks in the EU and acceding countries. Over the period 2007-2011 the geographical allocation of funds reflected the principles established in the NSA-LA Strategy. Therefore, funds for in-country initiatives were allocated as follows: 48% to the ACP region; 20% to Latin America; 23% to Asia; 6% to the Neighbourhood; 2% to the Middle East and 1% to Central Asia.

Support to CSOs and LAs has also been provided, directly or indirectly, through geographical instruments (bilateral and regional Programmes) as well as other instruments and Thematic Programmes (the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), the Instrument for Stability (IfS), other Thematic Programmes under the DCI, the Civil Society Facility under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI).

2.3 *Lessons learnt*

This Programme will integrate lessons and best practices learnt from the implementation of various support schemes, evaluations and assessments²¹ on CSOs and LAs involvement in EU development cooperation (for instance the above-mentioned Structured Dialogue), paying particular attention to:

- *Go beyond the traditional model of CSOs as pure service deliverers* to acknowledge CSOs work to empower populations, promote inclusion and enhance governance and accountability – beyond project implementation and service delivery.
- *Frame support to service delivery* to build sustainable systems avoiding the creation of parallel structures, hampering or overlapping with public services, according to country contexts.
- *Multi-stakeholder partnerships* and innovative schemes of collaboration between public authorities, including LAs, and non-state providers can bring added value in terms of impact and sustainability as well as effectiveness.
- Along the same line, *avoid fragmentation and duplication through coordination and dialogue*.
- Better define the scope of support Programmes in order to be more strategic and improve impact of actions.

In addition, a final evaluation of the previous Thematic Programme NSA-LA (2007-2013) was carried out in 2013 with the following main conclusions and recommendations:

- In partner countries, the Programme has reached an increasing share of local CSOs, thus contributing to their empowerment and build-up of capacities as development and governance

²¹ See: European Court of Auditors (2009), Special report no. 4 'The Commission's management of Non State Actors' Involvement in EC development cooperation'. URL: <http://eca.europa.eu/portal/pls/portal/docs/1/8038812.PDF>. Particip (2008) 'Evaluation of EC Aid Delivery through CSOs: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2008/1259_docs_en.htm. Floridi, M. and Sanz-Corella, B. (2009) 'Capitalisation Study on Capacity Building Support Programmes for NSAs under the 9th EDF' http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/civil-society/documents/final_rep_capit_study_en.pdf David McCormick, Yves Rambaud, Paola Minoia (2009) 'NSA&LA Thematic Programme Mid-Term Review'. URL: <http://ec.europa.eu/development/how/consultation/index.cfm?action=viewcons&id=4886>.

actors. The Programme is also commended for its valuable contribution to the enabling environment in the countries covered, by widening and deepening the dialogue between CSO, partner governments and other stakeholders including local authorities. The flexibility provided at country level has allowed for better responses to the local contexts and changing conditions, including shrinking space for CSOs.

- The evaluation praised the gradual re-orientation of support to multi-country projects and multi-actor partnerships was towards strategic strengthening of existing and representative NSAs and LAs networks at regional and global level. This approach has successfully contributed to the regional and continental structuring of these actors and has also enhanced their capacity to engage on international issues with the Union and other development partners.
- In EU Member States, the development education and awareness-raising component has contributed to enhance dialogue at national level, with increasing attention for development issues, notably in new Member States. In addition, continued exchange of best practices under the Programme has led to innovation and quality improvements. In terms of management, the Programme evaluation recommends more structured and systematic monitoring and evaluation of projects to allow for effective management of results, especially above project level; it also recommended adopting a more strategic approach beyond the project funding.
- Other recommendations include a more widespread and strategic use of support measures, less funding-related and more focused on strategic capacity development of CSO and LA; reaching out to other types of actors (social partners in dialogue), more attention to the quality of partnerships, to the inclusion of disadvantaged and marginalised groups and to cross-cutting issues such as gender mainstreaming.

Lessons learnt have been determinant to define the guiding principles of this Programme (Section 3.3) as well as its monitoring and evaluation provisions (Section 3.4).

2.4 Challenges

Although there has been advancement towards the achievement of all MDGs, progress has been uneven around the world. While millions of people have been lifted out of poverty in some countries, notably in East Asia, overall progress towards poverty reduction remains insufficient, with over 900 million people still living in extreme poverty. Many, notably in fragile and least developed countries (LDC), lack access to the most basic services, including health care, water, sanitation and primary education. This is particularly severe for disadvantaged, marginalised and socially excluded groups. Often those dynamics are exacerbated by public authorities' limited capacities and accountability, and by the unresponsiveness of policies put in place. Fragile states also suffer from limited institutional capacities in the prevention, mitigation and preparedness aspects.

Recent years have witnessed impressive growth rates in some developing countries. However, for a variety of reasons (problems related to e.g. good governance, sound socio-economic development, the application of the rule of law...) these have not necessarily translated into improvement in living standards for all, ., often resulting in exclusion and marginalisation of parts of the population. Situations are often aggravated due to geographical isolation, disability, sexual orientations or ethnicity. Gender inequality persists; women continue to face discrimination in access to education, work, economic assets and participation in government. Moreover, in many developing countries industrial activities have generated the depletion of natural resources, the acceleration of environmental degradation and global warming, which can be major sources of conflict. These activities, including massive deforestation, are as well contributing to greenhouse gas emissions and hence to global warming. Economic growth which causes damage to the environment, biodiversity and natural resources and increases exposure to natural disasters exacerbates the vulnerability of marginalised households and is not sustainable in the long term. In particular, most regions are

characterized by levels of internal migration with negative effects on growth of small cities (as an example, in Latin America 77% of population live in cities) with substantial problems of inequalities and environmental degradations.

A critical understanding of development issues and underlying causes is deemed essential. Eurobarometers surveys on development policy²², through which European public opinion is regularly monitored by the European Commission, show that although most European citizens are in principle in favour of development aid, only few are personally involved in activities related to development; there is also limited familiarity with development concepts and objectives. Yet many challenges affecting development, such as climate change, are of a global nature and require engagement and action by citizens, globally. Enhancing European citizens' critical engagement is particularly important at a time of economic slowdown and budget restrictions.

2.4.1 CSOs and LAs challenges

The active contribution of all development stakeholders is required, but despite the increasing recognition of CSOs and LAs as partners in development, they still face significant constraints, hampering their capacity to effectively contribute to governance, development, and ultimately poverty reduction.

First and foremost, CSOs and LAs' ability to contribute to development depends on the context in which they operate: their 'enabling environment'. Both need a set of guarantees that ensure rights and opportunities to operate, act and perform. In the case of Local Authorities, it entails a conducive legal and policy environment for decentralisation and/or on institutional and capacity development, in order to enjoy a certain degree of autonomy to fulfil their functions as mandated by law. The absence of enabling conditions often constrains LAs ability to address and respond to development challenges.

Inclusive participatory policy-making processes are complex and often delicate exercises, new to many countries. They require first and foremost political will and leadership, adequately structured mechanisms, spaces for interactions and operating rules, specific skills and analytical capacities and competences, both on the side of CSOs and public authorities. In absence of the above, the impact of CSOs' and LAs' participation to policy dialogue would be very limited. Both actors face challenges in relation to their own governance and accountability, which can substantially hamper their credibility and effectiveness. CSOs and LAs are often unable to significantly influence policies and budgets as well as to define their own development policies and plans, in a way that ensure their responsiveness to populations' priorities and effective implementation. Necessary information is not always available and when it is, local actors may lack the capacity to analyse it, to provide evidence-based input and to negotiate.

Financing LAs remains a challenge. Intergovernmental transfers and local revenues are not always timely and consistent and predictable, as well as do not always correspond to the responsibilities and services LAs have been mandated with.

Another challenge faced by LAs is the rapid process of urbanisation happening in most developing countries, which imposes structural readjustments to LAs in rural and urban areas, particularly in relation to the patterns of growth and development and the adequacy of services and infrastructures.

Overall, capacity constraints can be considered a major transversal challenge faced by CSOs and LAs, affecting their efforts to operate effectively in their various areas of work. This is particularly true in the realm of governance and accountability processes (notably in policy dialogue) and responsiveness to citizen's needs (planning, project management, financial management, service delivery).

²² The Eurobarometer is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/public-consultations/eurobarometer_en.htm

3. STRATEGY AND MAIN PRIORITY AREAS 2014-2020

3.1 *Programme objectives*

Within the framework of the DCI overall goals, the objective of this Programme is to strengthen civil society organisations and local authorities; this will be articulated around the two core pillars of the *Agenda for Change*, acknowledging that governance and sustainable and inclusive growth are deeply intertwined and mutually reinforcing.

Accordingly, the Programme will pursue the objective of improving governance and accountability through inclusive policy-making by empowering citizens and populations, through the voicing and structuring of their collective demands, to contribute to tackle injustice and inequality²³.

The Programme will also aim at enhancing livelihood opportunities for populations to participate in and benefit from a just, inclusive and environmentally sustainable climate resilient low-carbon economic development that is tailored to territorial characteristics and needs, and trigger a change in the quality of citizens' life and wellbeing, ensuring a balance between socio-economic growth, equity and environmental quality and increasing the resilience of the most vulnerable²⁴.

Moreover, the Programme will seek to develop European citizens' awareness and critical understanding of complex development issues and global interdependence, and to support their active engagement with global attempts to eradicate poverty and promote justice, human rights and democracy, social responsibility, gender equality, and sustainable development strategies in partner countries.

3.2 *Programme priorities*

This Programme will support actions aimed at enabling CSOs and LAs to respond to populations needs and to participate in inclusive policy-making at different levels. It will focus on the reinforcement of CSOs and LAs as actors at the service of citizens and population at large.

Whilst respecting actors' specificities and diversity, this Programme seeks to promote their coordination, actions' coherence and synergies. In fact, it will focus on the promotion of innovative forms of interactions between CSOs and LAs in the local public policy-making, aiming at the coproduction of good governance and development outcomes.

The initiatives to be financed shall be initiated and directly implemented by civil society organisations and local authorities. In limited cases and where appropriate, in order to ensure their effectiveness, initiatives may be carried out by other actors for the benefit of the civil society organisations and the local authorities concerned.

The Programme will support actions in partner countries (pursuant to Art. 1.1.b of the DCI) and in the Union. When actions relate to Development Education and Awareness Raising of European citizens this is extended to countries covered by the Instrument of Pre-Accession (IPA) Regulation.

Being not subject to the concentration and differentiation principles, it can fund activities in *all developing countries* including in countries that are not benefitting any longer from bilateral EU development assistance (the so-called 'graduated countries').

²³ This is fully in line with a rights-based approach, promoting in particular the right to universal and non-discriminatory access to basic services, participation in democratic political processes, participation of women and youth in the public sphere, transparency and accountability, justice and the rule of law, with a focus on the poor and vulnerable groups.

²⁴ Where relevant, the programme will contribute to the implementation of the Resilience Action Plan (http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/resilience/com_2013_227_ap_crisis_prone_countries_en.pdf)

In countries benefitting from bilateral cooperation, actions may be supported both within and outside of the selected focal sectors. To ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of assistance, this Programme should complement geographic Programmes (bilateral or regional). Funds will not be used to top-up or duplicate activities funded under those Programmes.

The Programme will thus act in complementarity with other Programmes and Instruments benefitting Civil Society and/or Local Authorities, namely the European Instruments for Democracy and Human Rights²⁵, the Thematic Programme on Global Public Goods and Challenges, the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, the Partnership Instrument²⁶, the European Neighbourhood Instrument, the Pan African Programme and projects supported by bilateral or regional cooperation.

Three priorities are pursued:

1. *Focus on country level: enhancing CSOs' and LAs' contributions to governance and development processes.*

Support will be provided to:

I. Enhance CSOs' contributions to governance and development processes as:

- a. Actors in governance and accountability;
- b. Partners in fostering social development;
- c. Key stakeholders in promoting inclusive and sustainable growth.

II. Enhance LAs' contributions to governance and development processes as:

- a. Actors of enhanced local governance;
- b. Welfare providers (public basic services, according to their institutional mandate) and promoters of inclusive and sustainable growth at the local level.

III. Test pilot actions promoting local development through a territorial approach.

2. *Reinforcing regional and global CSO networks and associations of LAs.*

3. *Develop and support Education and Awareness Raising initiatives fostering citizens' awareness of and mobilization for development issues.*

The three priorities are further described in section 5.

3.3 *Guiding principles*

Based on the above-mentioned EU's priorities for external aid and lessons learnt, this Programme will be guided by the following principles:

- *The recognition of CSOs 'right of initiative'* to identify and respond to emerging needs, to put forward visions and ideas; to initiate and propose initiatives and new approaches.
- *The recognition of Local Authorities as the public authorities closest to citizens*, executing the specific functions and regulatory powers for administrative and developmental services delivery, as defined by the national legislation as well as exercising their power of initiative as

²⁵Particularly for activities aiming at reinforcing CSOs contributions to development and governance process and a CSOs "conducive environment".

²⁶Particularly for specific actions such as public diplomacy, and business to business dialogues.

autonomous policy-makers to promote local development and the welfare of their citizens through the resources available and in accordance with the national legislation.

- *A shift from mutual (development partner and national government) accountability to multi-actor and 'multiple accountability'* should be promoted, as both CSOs and LAs are called to be accountable for their actions in matter of development, especially towards their social base, constituency, intended beneficiaries and citizens:
- *ensure that LAs improve their accountability and their capacity to provide citizens with public services and growth in the framework of their competences*; assistance to improve the capacities and financial resource of LAs in many countries should ensure that, at least in the medium term, LAs are able to play the role mandated by law.
- *identify the right CSOs interlocutors and support transparent, representative and accountable actors*²⁷ by considering internal governance and accountability, including the degree of representativeness of intended beneficiaries/constituencies/base. This is valid for local organisations but also for transnational networks which are increasingly called upon to play a role in regional and global dialogues.
- *Support CSOs in their diversity*, in the wide and diverse range of organisations, roles, interests and constituencies they represent, and particularly local and grassroots organisations. The proportion of projects implemented by local organisations has substantially increased over time, also thanks to EU Delegations efforts to reach out to local beneficiaries, including through prioritisation of actions. Efforts in this direction should be reinforced.
- *Integrate a gender perspective* with attention to equality, women empowerment and non-discrimination and *mainstream crosscutting issues* such as human rights, democracy, good governance, the rights of the child, indigenous people's rights, social inclusion and the rights of persons with disabilities, environmental sustainability including climate change and mitigation as well as fight against HIV/AIDS.
- *Move towards more strategic support to capacity development*. A demand-driven and innovative approach to capacity development of CSOs and LAs is needed. This is particularly true in relation to rising expectations on their participation in policy dialogue.
- *Further develop development education and awareness raising* and implementing support modes ensuring a European added value, reinforced capitalisation and knowledge sharing²⁸.

3.4 Monitoring and evaluation

The Thematic Programme will co-finance CSOs' and LAs' own initiatives, with a focus on capacity-building, aimed particularly at enhancing their impact on policy formulation and implementation at various levels – local, regional, global and European. Therefore, a programme based on actors' 'right of initiative' - with limited pre-identification of areas /sectors of intervention - has to maintain a certain degree of flexibility in determining expected results and related performance indicators.

The Programme will track progress of its impact by monitoring an indicative set of indicators as described below, corresponding to the three Programme priorities (being it country, regional /global or European levels) and according to actor benefitting (either CSOs, or LAs, or both).

²⁷ Actors who share EU commitment to fundamental values of peace, freedom, equal rights and human dignity.

²⁸ See: "Study on the experience and actions of the main European actors active in the field of Development Education and Awareness Raising" (also known as the "DEAR Study"), 2010 https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/index.php/DEAR_Final_report

The sources for the data will be evidence collected through the numerous CSOs-led monitoring initiatives, LAs Peer Review Programme, EU internal monitoring tools such as the External Assistance Management Report (EAMR), EU Roadmaps for engagement with CSOs (see box in section 5), including EU Human Right Strategies, along with independent assessments and surveys and where appropriate internationally recognised data sources or indices (existing or under development).

For the priority 1. Country level, the expected results linked to the specific objectives 1.1.a to 1.1.c (Enhance CSOs' contributions to governance and development processes in partner countries) will be monitored through a combination of indicators such as:

- The number of individual CSOs supported in Partner Countries;
- The number of CSOs networks and platforms supported;
- *CSOs Institutional Capacity*, such as:
 - Number of CSOs trained in management/human resources/leadership skills;
 - Number of CSOs improving their internal governance standards, transparency and accountability towards intended beneficiaries/constituencies/social bases²⁹.
 - Number of CSOs trained in analytical/ advocacy/negotiation skills
 - Number of CSOs drafting policy recommendations, proposals or participating in negotiations.
 - Number of programmes delivered by CSOs.
- *CSOs legal, regulatory and operational frameworks (Enabling Environment) in Partner countries*:
 - The number of countries where sets of guarantees that ensure rights and opportunities for CSOs to operate and participate to policy processes exist.

While there is consensus on the importance of an enabling environment for CSOs to engage in development, there is a range of views on what can be considered as such and how to measure progress. Data collection remains problematic. Major advancements have been made by the International community in the context of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation³⁰.

For the priority 1. Country level, the expected results linked to the specific objectives 1.2.a and 1.2.b (Enhance LAs' contributions to governance and development processes in partner countries) will be monitored through a combination of indicators such as:

- The number of individual LAs supported partner countries;
- The number of Associations of Local Authorities supported;
- *LAs Institutional Capacity*, such as:
 - Number of LAs trained in management/human resources/leadership skills;
 - Number of LAs improving their internal governance standards, transparency and multiple accountability lines;
 - Number of LAs trained in analytical/advocacy/negotiation skills
 - Number of LAs and ALAs drafting policy proposals, participating in negotiations with Central Governments
 - Number of programmes managed by LAs and related delivered services.
- *LAs legal, regulatory and operational frameworks (Enabling Environment) in Partner countries*:

²⁹ Valid examples to illustrate CSOs work on improving their own effectiveness are efforts towards adherence to National Code of Conducts, to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), etc.

³⁰ Information is available under: <http://effectivecooperation.org/>

- The number of countries where conducive legal and regulatory instruments exist³¹ to allow Local Authorities to execute their role and responsibilities.

For the priority 1. Country level, specific objective 1.3 (Test pilot actions promoting local development through a territorial approach), a combination of the above indicators will be used, according to actor involved (CSOs, LAs, or both). Furthermore, the following will also be monitored:

- The number of exchange activities between CSOs and LAs (both European and partner countries actors) during project implementation;
- Number of multi-stakeholders (CSOs/LAs) partnerships established;
- Number of CSOs/LAs best practices disseminated on areas relevant to the objective.

For the priority 2. “Reinforcing regional and global CSO Networks and Associations of LAs” the expected results will be linked to the following indicators, according to whether the main beneficiaries will be CSO Networks or Associations of LAs, in Europe or in partner countries:

- The number of CSOs networks/platforms and Associations of Local Authorities supported, both at regional and international levels;
- Number of National CSOs/LAs (members of the above networks/Associations of LAs) indirectly benefitting from support programmes;
- Number of CSOs networks/platforms and Associations of Local Authorities trained in specific-expertise development
- Number of CSOs networks/platforms and Associations of Local Authorities drafting policy recommendations and also participating in negotiations;
- Number of CSOs networks/platforms and Associations of Local Authorities delivering services and support to their members.

The priority 3 of the Programme, aimed at developing and supporting Education and Awareness Raising initiatives fostering European citizens' awareness of (and mobilization for) global development issues, requires special indicators in addition to relevant ones under the priority 2 (ex. N of CSOs and/or Local Authorities supported in implementing DEAR activities, etc.).

Since a component of DEAR activities aims at fostering a ‘conducive environment’ for Development Education and Awareness Raising at European level, the programme also will track records on the:

- Number of exchanges of practices and policy evolutions regarding DEAR in the EU;
- Number of countries where DEAR projects have taken place;
- Number of DEAR projects.

Surveys and studies conducted both at national and European level, including the *Eurobarometer*³² related to the EU aid development agenda, will be of relevance.

In addition, the Commission initiated in 2013 a gradual reform of its monitoring, reporting, external review and evaluation which will apply to external relations instruments. The objective is to improve internal and external accountability through enhanced performance and results reporting. In line with this and with the recommendations of the final evaluation of the predecessor Programme *NSA-LA in development*, the CSOs-LAs Programme will be implemented with strengthened monitoring and evaluation provisions and systematic best practices' collection and dissemination.

The knowledge-generation systems will be fine-tuned during the implementation of the Programme; the Programme will also benefit from a re-designed external review system (replacing results-oriented monitoring) and will be subject to a mid-term review/ mid-term evaluations.

³¹ Ex institutional arrangements, separation of powers, electoral and party systems, appropriate decentralisation policies, intergovernmental fiscal systems, respect of the rule of law, citizens' participation.

³² See footnote 23.

4. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW 2014-2017

The Development Cooperation Instrument 2014-2020 set the total allocation for Programme to EUR 1 907 billion. An envelope of around EUR 970 million has been earmarked for the period of 2014-2017. The table below shows indicative allocations for the different Programme priorities.

Priorities:	Indicative allocations
1: Focus on country level: enhancing CSOs and LAs contributions to governance and development processes	65-75%
2: Reinforcing regional and global CSOs networks and ALAs.	5-10%
3: Develop and support Education and Awareness Raising initiatives fostering citizens' awareness of - and mobilization for - development issues.	10-15%
Support measures and unallocated reserve	2.5-5%

5. PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2014 - 2017

As indicated in section 3, the Programme will provide support to CSOs and LAs along three priorities. Within each, it will pay special attention to:

- *Address capacity gaps* through a demand-driven and flexible approach covering different needs.
- *Support reinforcement and structuring* of CSOs and LAs.
- *Support multi-stakeholder approaches and testing of innovative partnerships* that facilitate optimal synergies and utilisation of different stakeholders' experience and capacities
- *Foster effective coordination*, particularly at country level, to avoid duplication, fragmentation and ineffectiveness of actions, especially when it comes to the delivery of services to populations.
- *Support genuine and equitable partnerships* between European and partner countries actors.

Priority 1: Focus on country level: CSOs' and LAs' contributions to governance and development.

Action at country level will be at the core of this Programme with a view to support CSOs' and LAs' contributions towards reinforced governance, accountability and inclusive policy-making, in their work to ensure people are able to benefit from qualitative social services and profit from decent job creation. The Programme will also support actions aimed at a sustainable territorial development, including in urban contexts, to foster local development and social cohesion.

Under this first priority, the Programme distinguishes three strategic objectives based on the recognition of CSOs and LAs specificities:

1. **Enhance CSOs contributions to governance and development processes** as
 - a. actors in governance and accountability,
 - b. partners in promoting social development
 - c. stakeholders in promoting inclusive and sustainable growth.
2. **Enhance LAs contributions to governance and development processes** as
 - a. Actors of enhanced local governance;
 - b. Welfare providers and promoters of inclusive and sustainable growth at the local level.

3. **Test pilot actions promoting local development and social cohesion** through a territorial multi-stakeholder approach.

Attention will be paid to the promotion of a *conducive environment* for CSOs and LAs to operate in their respective roles and areas of engagement. Where conditions are appropriate, and in complementarity with other Instruments and Programmes, this Programme may contribute to addressing gaps, improve the understanding, capacity and skills, and monitoring of progress in the various components of an enabling environment for CSOs and LAs including the legal, regulatory and operational dimensions.

The empowerment of local actors is at the heart of the Programme. Actions by CSOs and LAs from partner countries will be given special focus, with efforts to facilitate access to funding and investing in capacity development.

Considering the diversity of civil society actors, differentiation of support to non-governmental organisations (NGOs), social partners, cooperatives, chambers of commerce, foundations, community based or grassroots organisations, etc. is particularly encouraged, as well as supporting their structuring.

Financial support to European CSOs and LAs may be provided, individually or in networks and associations, where their experience adds value, upon condition that their action respond to a local demand and to locally identified needs and include support to local partners (e.g. through mentoring, peer support, joint advocacy, and not least through direct financial support). Within each strategic objective, specific objectives are identified below.

EU roadmaps for engagement with CSOs

Interventions of this Programme with regard to CSOs will be instrumental for the preparation and implementation of EU Country Roadmaps for engagement with CSOs. As envisaged in the Communication '*the Roots of democracy and sustainable development*', the related Council Conclusions and the European Parliament Resolution on "Local Authorities and Civil Society: Europe's engagement in support of sustainable development" (2012/2288(INI)), the EU and the Member States should develop country roadmaps to activate and ensure structured dialogue and strategic cooperation, improve the impact, predictability and visibility of EU actions, and ensuring consistency and synergy throughout the various sectors covered by EU external relations. These roadmaps are also meant to trigger coordination and sharing of best practices with the Member States and other international actors, including for simplification and harmonisation of funding requirements. EU Delegations should coordinate the process locally.

Strategic objective 1.1: Enhance CSOs' contributions to governance and development processes

Specific objective 1.1.a: CSOs in governance and accountability

Reinforcing governance and domestic accountability is essential to improve development results. The voice and actions of CSOs as monitors, advocates, partners in national and local policy dialogue and providers of information and expertise (e.g. through think tanks and research institutes) can foster transparency, public knowledge and participation. CSOs can thus play a decisive role in improving the quality and effectiveness of public policies and promoting fair management of public resources. Together with institutional bodies such as parliaments and supreme audit institutions, CSOs can contribute to ensure that public resources are used effectively and efficiently and budgets are reflective of people's needs and priorities.

The Programme will seek to support CSOs to hold public authorities to account at all administrative levels, with a view to ultimately empower citizens. Focus will be on building-up the necessary

expertise and capacity of CSOs to engage with public authorities over the long term, including on highly technical themes such as budgetary issues.

Particular consideration will be given to CSOs' capacity to positively contribute to improved transparency and accountability in the framework of the different EU budget support schemes.

The Programme will support initiatives promoting improved governance and accountability at country level and with public authorities, such as independent budget analysis, expenditure tracking, monitoring the implementation of policies and laws, anti-corruption initiatives, integrity pacts, participatory budgeting, participatory audits, procurement monitoring and public access to information legislation, and promoting judicial reform. Special attention will be paid to capacity building, research and knowledge dissemination, networking and structuring of networks, and mentoring opportunities for CSOs.

National CSO platforms can play an important role in this regard having more potential to impact on policy work, favouring a broader representation of interests and positions and potentially benefitting from a large variety of skills, expertise and capacities.

The **expected results** under this specific objective include:

- Improved environment and space for CSOs to operate in governance and accountability.
- Enhanced CSOs actions in policy dialogues, governance and accountability from the local to the national level.
- Strengthened capacity of CSOs to participate in and contribute to policy dialogue and accountability processes at local and national level.
- Improved CSOs' structuring and joint action in governance and accountability, including through networks.
- Increased documentation, sharing and dissemination of knowledge in related areas.

Specific objective 1.1.b: CSOs' actions to enhance social development

The Programme will seek to support CSOs' actions to enhance social development by improving populations' access to (and benefit from) social services. In the sphere of social sectors (health, education, sanitation, social protection, etc.) it is particularly important to build synergies and complementarity with actions led by public authorities as the organisation of welfare systems is primarily a state responsibility (at the central or sub-national level).

As a general rule, the implementation of this component of the Programme will require strong coordination between CSOs and public authorities to prevent duplication, overlap and parallel systems, as well as ineffective and unsustainable interventions. All initiatives carried forward by CSOs should take place in an "institution – building" logic, particularly when public institutions are weak and/or under-resourced. It is encouraged that supported initiatives include community mobilization and capacity development, in order to enable the targeted population to acquire increased understanding and ability to influence the underlying causes of the challenges they face in accessing services. The aim is to favour and stimulate a demand for social services by population to which public authorities should, in the long run, be able to respond, reinforcing their 'downward accountability' towards their citizens.

The Programme will support CSOs' actions aimed at improving population access to (and benefit from) quality social services, notably in:

- *testing innovations and improving responsiveness of social policies to populations' needs*, through advocacy and participation to policy dialogue in social sectors. To this end, support will be provided to advocacy campaigns, capacity building, research and knowledge

dissemination, networking and structuring of networks, and mentoring opportunities for CSOs, etc.

- *contributing to the improvement of service quality* by contributing to policy work, stimulating informed demand and social accountability initiatives, including using Information and Communication Technologies.
- *improving capacities to participate in multi-actor partnerships*, within sound organisational arrangements agreed with public authorities (including outsourcing schemes where public authorities share selected functions and tasks with CSOs and the private sector, etc.)
- *providing social services* where public authorities, including LAs, do not have the capacity or the resources to effectively deliver services to populations. This will be supported in least developed or low income countries, fragile states and in crisis situations. In middle income countries, in duly justified cases, direct service provision by CSOs could be supported to ensure that disenfranchised populations and out of mainstream segments of society can benefit from social services.

While supporting the above actions, particular attention should be devoted to ensuring that initiatives funded by this Programme do add value and complement support provided with bilateral, Thematic and regional actions in the same sectors.

The **expected results** under this specific objective include:

- Improved environment which allows CSOs to be active in social sectors.
- Enhanced CSO participation in social sectors (in policy dialogue and monitoring and in implementation as appropriate) from the local to the national level.
- Strengthened capacity of CSOs to effectively advocate for improved access of population and quality of services and participate in policy work.
- Access to and quality of social services improved, notably for disadvantaged groups and population out of mainstream services.
- Improved CSO competences and structuring in social sectors, including through networks.
- Improved documentation, sharing and dissemination of information on social development and social cohesion.

Specific objective 1.1.c: CSOs contribution in promoting inclusive and sustainable growth

This Programme component will aim at improving the livelihoods of populations in need, particularly disadvantaged groups, through CSO initiatives. Different CSOs, notably cooperatives, farmers' and small-scale fishermen' associations, chambers of commerce, NGOs, social partners, environmental organisations etc., each have a role to play in the economic realm as they engage at various levels in social economy and affordable innovations initiatives, combining beneficiaries' economic empowerment with ambitions of social development and/or long term sustainability.

CSOs can also provide essential insight, notably with regards to sustainable development provisions included in bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral trade agreements negotiated with the European Union.

The Programme will support CSO actions aimed at promoting advancement in the following areas:

Inclusiveness: Inclusive growth is characterised by people's ability to participate in, and benefit from, wealth and job creation. This requires creation of decent work and income-generation opportunities in the productive and income-generating sectors, particularly for the vulnerable (e.g. in agriculture and rural development), also through better education and vocational trainings. It also requires effective governance and in particular a well-functioning legal and judicial system. The level of inclusiveness

thus depends on the distribution of income, employment opportunities, but also on gender roles and other factors.

Sustainability: Development is not sustainable if it damages human health and safety, the environment, biodiversity and natural resources and increases the exposure or vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change. Growth can only be sustainable in the long term when it does not harm the environment over time, avoids depletion of natural resources and reduces emissions of greenhouse gases. Promotion of greener economies, sustainable and inclusive urban policies, sustainable management of and access to natural resources (including land and coastal zones management) are therefore of pivotal importance. Products and services offered to consumers should comply with standards protecting human health and safety, taking into account in particular the specific situation of vulnerable population groups.

The Programme may support CSO actions aimed at promoting inclusive and sustainable growth such as:

- *Stimulating policy innovation and improving responsiveness of economic policies to populations' needs*, through advocacy and participation to policy dialogue in relevant sectors. To this end, support will be provided to advocacy campaigns, capacity building, research and knowledge dissemination, networking and structuring of networks, and mentoring opportunities for CSOs, etc.
- *Improving capacities to participate in multi-actor partnerships* with the private sector and public authorities. To this end, support will be provided to capacity building, research and knowledge dissemination, advocacy, networking and structuring of networks, and mentoring opportunities for CSOs, etc.
- *Supporting social-economic initiatives* aimed at wealth and job creation, targeting populations with limited opportunities for economic empowerment, including affordable innovations.
- *Reinforcing service provision* for productive activities and access to productive resources (e.g. , business support, market access, opportunities for integration of the informal economy, micro credit) to populations with limited access to such means to enhance their livelihoods.
- *Contributing to the improvement of business environment and practices and economic services' quality* highlighting governance and corporate social responsibility by stimulating informed demand and structuring feedback mechanisms, notably using Information and Communication Technologies.

In all cases it is encouraged that supported initiatives include capacity development and community mobilization, in order to enable the targeted population to acquire increased understanding and ability to address the challenges they face in improving their livelihoods.

The **expected results** under this specific objective include:

- Improved environment which allows CSOs to be active in the social economy.
- Enhanced CSOs participation in economic sectors (in policy dialogue and monitoring and in implementation as appropriate) from the local to the national level
- Strengthened capacity and professionalism of CSOs to effectively advocate for inclusive and sustainable growth and participate in policy work.
- Improved access to - and quality of - services for economic empowerment, notably for disadvantaged groups and population segments out of mainstream services.
- .

Strategic objective 1.2: Enhance LAs' contributions to governance and development processes

The complex challenges to reach good governance and sustainable development goals cannot be addressed exclusively by central governments. These goals are more effectively achieved if individual citizens and local communities are actively engaged. This implies the promotion of participatory and inclusive decision-making processes, the definition of development plans according to local needs, as well as the increased efficiency in the delivery of basic services at local level.

Being the closest public institutions to citizens, Local Authorities are in a unique position to articulate the concerns of the communities they represent and consequently to respond through strategies and actions at the local level.

In the last two decades, many central governments in developing countries have attributed responsibilities to Local Authorities in country development processes - through decentralisation processes³³ - with a view to allow for the definition of public policies and service delivery on local realities. However, this political recognition has not always been accompanied by an adequate level of autonomy, capacity development and financial resources, leaving their empowerment incomplete.

In many countries, LAs are generally mandated for ensuring the economic, social and environmental development of the territory they oversee, encouraging the participation of all other relevant local actors. LAs are legally responsible for providing basic services for the wellbeing of their citizens. Currently, LAs provide their communities with a range of services in the area of education, health, infrastructure, management of land, building plans as well as the granting of licences.

Structures of local administration exist in almost all countries. Even in cases where the political will to implement decentralisation reforms remains weak, LAs may enjoy a relative degree of independence from central governments to execute their institutional mandate as defined by law and consequently to exercise their power of initiative as full-fledged policy-makers.

In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, this Programme will primarily support actions aimed at strengthening Local Authorities as partners in governance and development. This is likely to empower them, and to boost local development via increased democratic participation, justice, human rights, active citizenship, participation of women and youth in the public sphere, and multi-level accountability. More precisely, the Programme will support the role of LAs in working with local communities to respond to complex social challenges and to ensure communities' well-being.

In principle, the Programme shall not aim at supporting public sector reforms and decentralisation programmes; however, in order to enhance the roles and capacities of Local Authorities and to promote a conducive environment in which to operate and flourish, the Programme will facilitate knowledge-generation, development and exchanges of good practices around Decentralisation, including, where appropriate, through Technical assistance.

Specific objective 1.2.a: LAs as actors of enhanced local governance

The Programme will support LAs in enhancing leadership and institutional capacities to execute their mandate as defined by law, with emphasis on inclusive, transparent and participatory governance at the local level. In particular, support will aim at building local technical expertise and develop capacities of politicians and civil servants at local level, while encouraging participation of women in the local administration.

³³ Decentralisation is inherently a political question that affects the overall organisation of a state. It aims at better efficiency, equality and social cohesion and can only be decided by a sovereign country. Hence, support to decentralisation from development partners should be envisaged only where there is a political will to initiate and support decentralisation or where decentralisation reforms have already been put in place.

Secondly, the Programme will support actions enhancing the accountability of LAs, including their self-governing capacity and their accountability as public institutions, towards their own citizens (downward accountability), towards central government and national independent audit bodies (upward accountability), as well as of local executives and administrations to local councils (horizontal accountability). Therefore, it is fundamental to encourage cooperation and partnerships between different levels of government: local, regional/provincial and national spheres. Consequently, increased accountability could have a positive impact on policy and programming coherence as well as include the needs of local communities. In countries where decentralisation reforms are underway, the Programme may accompany LAs in assuming their new mandate and responsibilities for decision-making, delivering public services or public financial management and mobilisation of revenues at the local level.

Finally, under this objective, support could also be tailored to national Associations of Local Authorities (ALAs), in order to enhance their institutional and operational capacities in performing their main functions³⁴.

The **expected results** under this specific objective are:

- Improved institutional and operational capacities of LAs in executing their mandate (i.e. leadership, planning, budgeting, implementation, communication, etc.);
- Enhanced accountability and transparency of LAs towards local communities as well as other levels of government;
- Established mechanisms to engage LAs in dialogue with national authorities, citizens and other relevant stakeholders (multi-level governance approach), with emphasis on transparent decision-making at the local level;
- Enhanced institutional and operational capacities of ALAs;
- Increased coordination and exchange between LAs and ALAs to promote the role of LAs as local governance actors;
- Increased participation of LAs and ALAs in policy processes.

Specific objective 1.2.b: Strengthening the capacity of LAs as welfare providers and promoters of inclusive and sustainable growth at local level

Depending on a country's institutional framework and its level of decentralisation, LAs can be of pivotal importance to ensuring access to quality basic services towards the reduction of inequalities, particularly for marginalized groups and neglected rural areas. Provision of services should foster inclusive societies with a view of generating decent job and opportunities for youth, mitigating the impact of urbanisation, adapting to climate change and preventing risks. LAs can also have a role, in the exercise of their mandate and competences, in ensuring that products and services – particularly the potentially hazardous ones - are subject to effective standards and transparent regulatory regimes and controls.

Under this objective, the Programme will support LAs in improving local decision-making on what services to be delivered to citizens as well as their capacities of design and delivery of public services towards a more efficient use of resources. To this purpose, supported initiatives should seek to

³⁴ Main functions include (i) representation of members' interests, towards central governments and other stakeholders, as well as internationally; (ii) lobby for decentralisation reforms leading to more autonomous and empowered Local Authorities; (iii) coordination and platform for discussion among the members, including the facilitation of political and institutional dialogue with higher-level authorities and citizens; (iv) knowledge sharing and capacity development, with emphasis on international cooperation (e.g. collection and exchange of information, training on project management); (v) control on the quality of LAs' performance, particularly in matter of local development (e.g. through peer reviews between members); (vi) promotion and management of territorial development plans with social participation.

combine capacity development for the local administration with public awareness of LAs' activities, in order to enable local citizens to acquire increased understanding and ability to influence LAs' work to deliver equitable and adequate services as well as to promote local development.

Particular attention will be paid to the impact that urbanisation processes have on services provision at the local level, particularly in relation to the access to stable and affordable basic infrastructure and social facilities, in order to identify and support innovative green urban practices.

A better coordination between national and local levels of government will also be promoted, in order to enhance the contribution of LAs and their associations (bottom-up approach) to the design of national/sector policies and plans by national governments and to the negotiation of priorities for cooperation with Development Partners, in a way that service provision aggregate and connect local contexts and needs.

The Programme will support LAs in mobilising relevant stakeholders to ensure service provision, including the establishment of public-private and public-civil society partnerships for service delivery, even in consideration of the challenges imposed by rapid urbanisation phenomena.

The Programme will also support actions to strengthen the capacity of ALAs at country level to provide their members with assistance, advice and sharing of knowledge in relation to policy dialogue and service provision to local communities.

The **expected results** under this specific objective are:

- Enhanced capacity of LAs (in line with their mandate) to effectively deliver public services, notably social services, and to take measures to promote inclusive and sustainable growth;
- More quality services provided according to the local contexts and needs;
- Increased role of LAs as catalysts of action by local actors, including via multi-stakeholder partnerships for service delivery;
- Improved public awareness on the role of LAs in service provisions, therefore better mobilisation of local communities in what and how services are delivered;
- Better LAs' response to urbanisation phenomenon in relation to service provision;
- Enhanced role of ALAs to assist LAs in participating in the formulation of national/sector policies affecting the local level as well as in service provision.
- Enhanced role of LAs in prevention, mitigation and preparedness, and managing early responses.

Strategic objective 1.3: A territorial approach to promote local development and social cohesion

In many countries, progress in growth patterns has not always been accompanied by the reduction in poverty and inequalities in the distribution of resources, particularly in disadvantaged sections of territory. Reversing these phenomena and triggering a change in the quality of citizens' life and wellbeing calls upon exploring alternative approaches to development that seek to (i) derive added value from locally under-used resources in relation to their potential, (ii) to stimulate and promote consultation and coordination of various social and economic stakeholders in a particular geographical area, including LAs, CSOs, the private sector, (iii) integrate national sector policies at the local level, (iv) create social and economic links between urban centres and rural areas, aggregating respective activities in the same territorial unit, (v) integrate citizens, particularly the most vulnerable, into the education, vocational trainings, employment and investment opportunities generated by local growth, (vi) foster social cohesion,³⁵ meant as fight against social exclusion, polarisation and poverty as well

³⁵ Definition from the "Strategy for social cohesion", Council of Europe (2004): http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/socialpolicies/socialcohesiondev/source/RevisedStrategy_en.pdf

as solidarity, understanding, trust, tolerance and dialogue between and among different segments of the population.

Tailored to territorial characteristics and needs, the territorial approach to development is characterised as a dynamic bottom-up and long-term process based on a multi-actor and multi-sector approach, in which different local institutions and actors work together to define priorities, as well as to plan and implement specific strategies to generate incomes and well-being of populations living in a given territory.

Criteria to define the territory are both geographical and socio-economic ones. The territory is indeed defined functionally as a localised set of community, social, natural and private resources and capacities.

The Programme will aim at piloting multi-actors processes for achieving inclusive growth in specific territories. It will support the mobilisation of different local actors for joint efforts for inclusive and sustainable growth. In particular, local actors will be encouraged in establishing local multi-actor partnerships (Local Authorities, Civil Society Organisations and productive sectors - e.g. enterprises, cooperatives, fair trade). Multi-actor partnerships will have the role to define strategies integrating sector policies and mobilising additional local resources to respond to territorial development challenges and citizens' concerns that require structural changes, in coordination with the central public sector and in line with national development objectives.

Moreover, multi-stakeholder partnerships may be supported to stimulate local growth and reduce poverty and inequalities, through the definition of measures sensitive to the needs of small and cooperative enterprises, the provision quality infrastructure and services while increasing the integration of local markets with national ones, or promoting incentives and capacity development for entrepreneurship.

The Programme will also support local plans for the sustainable management of rural areas, which should consider economic and social links between urban areas and rural communities, with a view to reduce disparities amongst the different parts of the territory in a country.

The above-described pilot actions should be developed as a cross-cutting option under each component of the country-level priority 1. Their design will be built upon successful experiences both in the EU and in partner countries.

The **expected results** under this specific objective include:

- Improved quality of populations' living conditions in the selected territory, to ensure broad sharing of the benefits of territorial development;
- Strengthened capacities and representativeness of LAs, local CSOs and private sector representatives in cooperating together;
- Established mechanisms for consultation, coordination and cooperation among public, private and civil society sectors (multi-actors partnerships);
- Strategic and innovative development plans for the identified territory tested and scaled up through multi-actors partnerships;
- Increased cooperation of LAs, CSOs and other relevant actors including National Authorities, in the production of development outcomes within a given territory;
- Initiatives aimed at ensuring broad social participation and fostering social cohesion tested and scaled up.

Priority 2: Reinforcing regional and global CSO and LA networks

The emergence of transnational governance structures, coupled with the rapid evolution, over the past years, of information and communication technologies, have led CSOs and LAs around the world to extend their contacts and to build alliances beyond national and continental borders.

Regional and global CSOs networks and Associations of LAs are essential stakeholders playing a pivotal role in linking local concerns and priorities, often caused by global challenges, to regional and international debates.

These structures are progressively gaining prominence in the formulation and implementation of policies and agreements connected to the international development agenda.

The EU aims at strengthening representative, membership-based and actor-based³⁶ regional and global Civil Society networks and associations of Local Authorities, in order to maximize the effectiveness of their work as development actors and partners in policy-making, on development related topics at global and regional levels (including the EU), especially in relation to the definition of the post-2015 Development Agenda and its implementation.

The design of this support will focus primarily at:

- Supporting initiatives of the CSOs networks and ALAs to jointly act as strategic partners for key policy makers, through contributions to (1) the formulation of policies/policy-making processes; (2) the implementation of policies and agreements on topics particularly related to the post-2015 Development Agenda as well as to regional process of integration and (3) monitoring policies and agreements implementation.
- Strengthening capacities and representativeness of CSOs networks to effectively link local realities and communities to regional and global debates;
- Improving the institutional and operational capacities of ALAs to ensure the execution of their functions vis-à-vis their members and facilitating the role that ALAs play in raising awareness about decentralisation reform, local and urban development as well as in shaping the international/regional development agenda with a focus on the interests of local communities;
- Facilitating experience and knowledge sharing within and among CSOs networks and ALAs, particularly with the view to enhance their members' capacities;

Multi-stakeholders partnerships among different types of actors (i.e.: NGOs, cooperatives, trade unions, employers' organisations, local authorities, etc.) will be encouraged.

The expected **results** under this specific priority include:

- Strengthened structures of CSOs networks and associations of LAs at regional and global levels;
- Enhanced capacity of CSOs networks and associations of LAs to influence the interests and practices of regional and international mechanisms, contributing therefore to regional and global policy-making and policy implementation processes, including at the EU level;
- Enhanced capacity for CSO and LA members at the national level;

³⁶ "Actor-based" networks are understood as structures that gather civil society organisations belonging to the same family of actors, such as, inter alia, non-governmental organisations, cooperatives, trade unions, employers' organisations, foundations, etc.

- Significant impact of CSOs networks and ALAs on the regional and global policy-making processes.

Priority 3: Development Education and Awareness Raising initiatives fostering citizens' awareness of and mobilization for development issues

The EU has a long standing experience in the support of development education and awareness raising projects implemented by European Civil Society Organisations and more recently by European Local Authorities. On the basis of the results of an ambitious and participatory study held in 2010, the Commission published in December 2012 a Staff Working Document³⁷ taking stock of its DEAR activities supported so far. Taking also into account the Declaration of the European Parliament calling for the need for a long-term, cross sectorial European strategy for DEAR (5 July 2012) and the 2013 European Parliament resolution on “Local Authorities and Civil Society: Europe’s engagement in support of sustainable development” this chapter defines the new strategic approach and related objectives that will be pursued in this domain.

More than half of Official Development Aid (EUR 53 billion in 2011) is provided by the EU and its Member States. Even though 85% of Europeans still think it is important to mobilise resources to assist population in developing countries, around 44% of Europeans have no knowledge about where their country's development aid goes and 53% say they know nothing about where EU aid goes.

Societal perceptions of development assistance are influenced by a multitude of factors, among which the economic and financial crisis in EU Member States. Furthermore, at the individual level, the link between knowledge, attitude and practice is often difficult to address.

The development cooperation landscape itself is fundamentally changing, as a profound redefinition of its framework is ongoing and development actors are adapting their policies, roles and structures in order to better address emerging global challenges. The emergence of new actors in the international arena - such as the "BRICS" - solicits an evolution of traditional North-South relations.

Against this background, acquiring an understanding of development issues, challenges and policies is increasingly complex for citizens. A strong and informed engagement of EU citizens is deemed essential for an ambitious EU development policy and actions in partner countries which are well understood and supported by EU citizens. The DEAR component of this Thematic Programme aims at contributing to the enhancement of citizens' understanding, skills and critical engagement regarding development and its underlying causes. Therefore, DEAR is considered an integral part of EU development assistance.

Environment for DEAR in the EU: In this field, the EU operates essentially in Europe. Since many EU Member States have adopted policies or practices that support DEAR, it is essential to ensure complementarity of action and value added. However, there is considerable diversity within EU Member States with regards to DEAR practice and resources. Several EU MS have a long tradition of supporting DEAR and have constantly innovated in terms of theoretical and practical applications. Other EU Member States are in the process of developing DEAR policies. Furthermore, a certain level of variability within EU Member States is to expect, subject to policy changes and/or fluctuations in funding commitments; therefore, the EU can adopt no "one size fits all" approach, but instead adopt an ambitious, strategic, yet flexible strategy.

In light of the above, the European Union DEAR strategy should particularly focus on:

³⁷ See footnote 13 and 15.

Forging a new global partnership: as the Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda states, a new universal vision is needed: "offering hope – but also responsibilities – to everyone in the world"³⁸. In consideration of the growing global interconnectedness and increasing awareness across the globe of mutual interdependence, DEAR shall contribute to the "most important transformative shift towards a new spirit of solidarity, cooperation and mutual accountability"³⁹, and to the emergence of a new global partnership. The EU DEAR Programme has historically promoted the concept of global solidarity - a stronger and more prominent role is needed.

Global perspective of DEAR: The EU, through its DEAR interventions, should continue to encourage exchange, networking and collaboration between DEAR actors in the EU, candidate and potential candidate countries on the one hand, and development actors in partner countries, on the other. The DEAR Programme promotes and supports initiatives which foster a sense of global solidarity between citizens from the EU and from partner countries, and which seek to develop a common sense of global responsibility for development and promote the integration of global perspectives.

Alignment with the emerging post MDG global development framework: DEAR will remain an integral element of development, and will therefore be aligned with the emerging post-MDG global development framework. DEAR will strive to critically engage citizens, civil society organisations and local authorities in global debates linked to the post-2015 global development framework.

Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) as a pillar of DEAR: The EU seeks to take into account development cooperation objectives in non-development policies. Hence, the EU recognizes that some of its policies can have a significant impact outside of the EU and could either contribute to or undermine its development policy. The EU seeks to minimise contradictions and to build synergies between all policies which have an impact on developing countries, for the benefit of global development. Given the central role that they play in development, PCD issues should continue to be addressed in DEAR policies and projects, contributing to greater policy coherence for development.

DEAR overall objectives will therefore aim at developing citizens' awareness and critical understanding of the interdependent world, of roles and responsibilities in relation to development issues in a globalised society; and to support their active engagement with global attempts to eradicate poverty and promote justice, human rights and democracy, social responsibility, gender equality, and sustainable development strategies in partner countries.

Both CSOs and LAs have an important role to play in the field of Development Education and Awareness Raising.

Civil Society Organisations are well placed to highlight development challenges as well as the impact of policies and behaviours in Europe on development elsewhere. CSOs often have a vast experience in fostering the European public's understanding and recognition of the significance of development decisions and actions for people globally, and have usually established strong relations with relevant actors as well as citizens. Many also work directly on development issues in partner countries. These actors have historically often been at the origin of DEAR activities in Member States, and remain important contributors to the evolution of DEAR policy and practice in Europe.

Local Authorities (LAs) are also essential actors in DEAR. As the closest public institution to citizens, LAs can promote citizens' mobilisation and engagement in public life at local level. Moreover, according to the constitutional framework operating in Member States, LAs have specific

³⁸ "A new Global Partnership: Eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development", 2013 Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda <http://www.post2015hlp.org/>

³⁹ Ibidem

competences in policy-making, service delivery often related to education and environmental protection. Educational, learning or promotional activities carried out in a local context, by LAs and in cooperation with other local actors, may enable citizens to reconnect with their communities and to connect their communities with communities abroad, with whom they share same development concerns and challenges. LA's working for DEAR may result in policy changes at the local level and in a change in the attitude of citizens, which could in turn influence national policies. The explicit attention and the resources which LAs can allocate to DEAR depend not only on their political engagement, but also on their capability to mobilise local financial resources to fund development cooperation or DEAR activities.

The DEAR component of this Programme will be characterised by two strategic objectives:

Strategic objective 3.1: Concentrating on value added & complementarity

The 2012 Staff Working Document on DEAR in Europe drew the conclusion that "the added value of EU support to development education and awareness raising initiatives is strongest where the Commission makes greatest use of its European perspective, its link to all Member States, and where it can build upon its experience and competences in Development Cooperation".

A diverse array of stakeholders is active in DEAR in Europe. The EU will ensure its DEAR interventions provide clear added value to the work already carried out by other actors. To achieve this, the EU will concentrate a significant part of its DEAR interventions on a pan-European level, seeking to produce results on a European scale, through interventions each involving coordinated action and a coherent approach in a significant number of Member States, candidate and potential candidate countries. Where possible, synergies with actions at country-level in EU Member States will systematically be sought.

DEAR interventions are carried out by a variety of actors, mainly Civil Society Organisations, and Local Authorities. The efficiency of these key actors is however often dependent on an enabling institutional environment which is within the Member States' national responsibilities, especially for what concerns the formal education sector. The EU will continue to target its interventions across the broad spectrum of CSO and LA DEAR actors, working at different levels with the aim to strengthen the practice of DEAR across Europe and to ensure the greatest possible impact of DEAR actions on final beneficiaries at the local level. At the same time, an enhanced working relationship with MS national authorities dealing with DEAR will allow better coordination, exchange of experiences and best practices contributing to an increased effectiveness of the EU Programme and projects.

The EU will thus seek to nurture an environment in which all DEAR actors can operate in a complementary and mutually beneficial manner.

With the same purpose, the EU will engage in a process of capitalization, capacity building and networking to ensure that i) lessons learned are identified, ii) capacity building supports project partners with content and process support, and iii) networking contributes to the development of mutually beneficial partnerships across Europe.

Furthermore, DEAR will address the following three cross-cutting issues, which will contribute to achieving the added value that the European Union pursues:

Innovation: DEAR policy and funding of the European Union will open more systematically possibilities for innovation in DEAR policy and practice. Across Europe and beyond, a growing number of CSOs, platforms, academic institutions and think tanks undertake research to improve quality of both DEAR provision and policy. New ways to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of DEAR projects are proposed by a variety of actors implementing DEAR activities at various levels. The EU will endeavour to encourage and facilitate the emergence of new DEAR approaches, methodologies, and policies.

Attention will be given to the development of tools and indicators intended to measure the impact of development education and awareness-raising Programmes. In this context, the European Union will assess the cost/benefit ratio as well as the feasibility of undertaking an EU wide baseline survey, to be repeated every few years, to analyse the attitudes and information needs of Europeans towards "development" as well as the changes in these attitudes and information needs over time.

The expected **results** for this specific objective area are:

- Exchange and policy learning regarding DEAR take place between European Union and Member States
- European Union DEAR activities have a clear added value to Member States' DEAR activities
- DEAR stakeholders profit from capitalisation, capacity building and networking, resulting in better DEAR projects.
- The increased complementarity to Member States' activities as well as the complementarity between the EU financed projects itself, coupled with the ambition to select pan-European projects, will greatly increase the visibility of the DEAR on a Programme and project level.

Strategic objective 3.2: Focusing on key global issues

In line with the conclusions of the "Agenda for Change", and in order to avoid fragmentation of DEAR activities, the European Union will identify in consultation with all concerned stakeholders, a limited and evolving list of key global issues linked to the global development agenda, which will define the framework for EU actions in DEAR. This concentration will contribute to achieving a critical mass regarding certain key global issues and to enhancing the quality of funded individual activities.

The expected **results** under this specific objective area are:

- Key global issues for DEAR interventions are identified in consultation with stakeholders
- The focusing on key global issues ensures that complementary and parallel projects achieve more output and reach a critical mass, and hence, the output of DEAR on a Programme level will become much more visible and measurable
- Higher quality projects will be selected and the complementarity between them will increase.

Both above-mentioned strategic objectives will be pursued through two distinct lines of action by:

a) Raising public awareness and mobilising the public regarding development issues on a European scale

Development awareness-raising shall stimulate citizens' understanding of, and empathy with development issues. An enhanced understanding of these issues aims to contribute to strengthened support for development and stronger mobilisation of public support for actions against poverty and for more equitable relations between developed and developing countries. Positive developments, such as advocacy for policy change, or changes in consumption behaviours are sought as a result.

The Programme will support initiatives promoted by stakeholders, such as advocacy campaigns, including through social media, targeted advocacy projects raising citizen awareness on specific development issues, particularly linked to the emergent post-MDG development framework.

b) Promoting development education

Development Education shall contribute to making "development" an issue systematically addressed in formal and non-formal educational settings, for instance through its inclusion in curricula, through

trainings to teachers or working directly in formal or non-formal education sectors. Actions will support Member States' policies and actions particularly with regards to development education in the formal education sector, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems. Support to CSO and LA actions taking place within formal education systems will require approval of the action from relevant education authorities.

6. AID MODALITIES AND DELIVERY MECHANISMS

The “*Structured Dialogue Initiative for an effective partnership in development*”⁴⁰ (2010-2011) allowed for a thorough analysis of the overall trends emerging in CSOs and LAs support models, aid delivery mechanisms, and their feasibility in light of the EC Financial Regulation. A shift in EU financing from focusing on projects to supporting Programmes and processes, coupled with the possibility for longer-term support, is considered by many as the most appropriate in order to strengthen impact and sustainability, while also allowing for greater predictability of funds.

As envisaged in the Communications on CSOs and LAs, tailored funding constitutes an important component of the EU's engagement with both CSOs and LAs and should allow better access for partner countries actors.

The CSOs LAs Thematic Programme will learn from the experience gained over the implementation of the 2007-2013 *NSAs and LAs in development* Thematic Programme. The Programme will be implemented through the use of an appropriate mix of funding modalities so as to best respond to the widest possible range of actors, needs and country contexts in a flexible, transparent, cost-effective and result focused manner – according to the possibilities granted by the Financial Regulation, such as:

- Project co-financing
- Programme co-financing.

The Call for Proposals system will be the default award mechanism. As foreseen in the Financial Regulation, in exceptional cases funding may be awarded directly, having met the criteria in there specified.

Strategic partnerships will also be established around objectives and actions of common interest for the EU and the potential partner CSOs network and ALAs.

In order to reach the widest possible range of actors, particularly grass-roots organisations and CBOs, re-granting, ring-fencing and performance-based follow-up grants, will also be made available, along with technical assistance, and where relevant, pooling of funds with other donors.

Where relevant, decentralised cooperation⁴¹ (DC) will be promoted to achieve the three objectives related to LAs and ALAs in partner countries, on the basis of a peer-to-peer approach. The Programme may support capacity development, transfer of know-how, networking, mentoring and twinning among LAs and ALAs from partner countries and from Europe, beyond the financial assistance offered by EU LAs. These activities may have multiplier effects for LAs as actors of local governance. DC may support partner countries LAs and ALAs, upon their initiative, in developing capacities for delivering services and goods (e.g. economic development, health and social sectors, land and civil registries, climate change adaptation, urbanisation management, etc.) and in promoting sustainable and inclusive growth at local level, notably by contributing to territorial approach of development. Through exchanges and capitalisation of experiences, development of guidance and support to European and partner countries' networks of expertise, the Programme will seek to promote a more impact-oriented approach of DC.

⁴⁰ See footnote 3.

⁴¹ In the framework of this Programme, decentralised cooperation is intended as a process of cooperation between European Local Authorities and Local Authorities from partner countries.



Brussels, 15.7.2014
C(2014) 4865 final

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 15.7.2014

**adopting a Multiannual Indicative Programme for the Thematic Programme “Civil
Society Organisations and Local Authorities” for the period 2014-2020**

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 15.7.2014

adopting a Multiannual Indicative Programme for the Thematic Programme “Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities” for the period 2014-2020

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) N° 233/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation for the period 2014-2020¹, and in particular Article 15 (1) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Regulation (EU) N° 233/2014 provides for Union assistance to be implemented through geographic programmes, thematic programmes and a PanAfrican programme. Multiannual indicative programmes should provide a coherent framework for cooperation between the Union and the partner countries concerned.
- (2) In accordance with Article 6 and 13 of Regulation (EU) N° 233/2014, the Multiannual Indicative Programme for the Thematic Programme “Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities” for the period 2014-2020 should be complementary to and consistent with actions funded under geographic programmes.
- (3) The Multiannual indicative programme for the Thematic Programme “Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities” for the period 2014-2020 sets out the Union strategy in line with Article 8 in conjunction with Part B to Annex II of Regulation (EU) N° 233/2014.
- (4) In accordance with Article 9, paragraphe 4, second subparagraph of the Council Decision (EU) 427/2010 of 26 July 2010 establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service (EEAS)², the present thematic programmes has been prepared by the appropriate Commission service under the guidance of the Commissioner responsible for Development Policy and presented to the College of Commissioners in agreement with the High Representative and the other relevant Commissioners.
- (5) The Multiannual Indicative Programme for the Thematic Programme “Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities” for the period 2014-2020 should be adopted by the Commission on behalf of the European Union.
- (6) The measures provided for in this decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee established by Article 19 of Regulation (EU) N° 233/2014.

¹ OJ L77 of 15 March 2014, p. 44

² OJ L 201/30 of 3 August 2010, p. 30

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Sole Article

The Multiannual Indicative Programme for the Thematic Programme “Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities” for the period 2014-2020 is hereby adopted on behalf of the European Union. The Multiannual Indicative Programme is contained in annex to the present decision.

The Member responsible for Development, or the person designated by him for this purpose, is authorised to sign the Multiannual indicative programme on behalf of the European Union.

Done at Brussels, 15.7.2014

For the Commission
Andris PIEBALGS
Member of the Commission