

Title of session: Enabling Environment for CSOs and LAs

Where are we in our quest for an enabling environment? and what do we need to advance?

Background

An enabling environment (EE) refers to the conditions needed to allow for civil society and local authorities to fulfill their roles as active, effective and necessary agents of development. High level forums on aid and development effectiveness such as in Accra and Busan have broadly recognized that civil society and local authorities are important agents of development, in their own right. Yet these actors can fulfill their added value only if a set of conditions that impact on their capacity to engage in development processes in a sustained and effective manner, whether at the policy, program or project level, is fulfilled.

This set of conditions is referred to as an enabling environment and it includes elements related to legal, regulatory and policy frameworks, and political, socio-cultural and economic factors, as well as consideration of emerging transformative challenges, such as rapid urbanisation. Achieving an enabling environment is greatly dependent on the responsiveness of state and institutional decision makers; however, all stakeholders, including the actors that themselves need an EE, have to act in sustaining a legitimate enabling environment for the long run.

As part of its mandate to follow up on the recommendations of the Structured Dialogue¹, the Policy Forum on Development (PFD) has agreed to regularly discuss ongoing progress of all actors in enhancing an enabling environment.

Objective(s):

- Clarify definitions of EE for CSOs and EE for LAs
- Understand the state-of-play of on-going actions to improve the enabling environment for both actors
- Identify entry points for collaboration between the two actors

¹ May 2011, see https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/images/e/ea/FINAL_CONCLUDING_PAPER.pdf, and https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/images/f/fb/Joint_Final_Statement_May_2011.pdf. The EU CSO Communication (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0492:FIN:EN:PDF>) and the Communication on the Role of LAs (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0280:FIN:EN:PDF>) have laid out the plans of the institutions for developing the agenda for support for EE.

Expected Results:

- An update on specific actions/case studies intended to assess the progress of the commitments towards an EE by all actors
- Suggestions for potential research areas to feed the overall "*compendium of PFD members' activities to implement the recommendations of the SD*" (as agreed in the PFD October 2014)

Co-Chairs: Izabella Toth and Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi

Detailed agenda (3 parts: plenary, working groups and plenary again):

9 - 9:45 I. A plenary session will introduce the concepts/definitions of EE for CSOs and EE for LAs with brief mention of existing initiatives toward an enabling environment. It is intended to create a common ground of understanding and share information with all PFD participants.

Two speakers of 7-10 minutes each and short Q&A. (40')

CSO representative: Robert Mabala (REPONGAC)

LA representative: Mr Boubacar BAH, Mr Boubacar BAH, Mayor of Bamako District V, President of the Association of Municipalities of Mali (AMM), CGLU-Afrique

Moderator: Patrick H. Leusch (Deutsche Welle – representing the Media at PFD)

9.45 -10.00 Coffee break

10 - 12:30 II. Break out into working groups (2h): (although there is a need to have groups for CSO and a group for LAs, this should not be the rule, and certain CSOs may find it interesting and could contribute to the discussion in the LA group and vice versa)

A. LAs (and others) will form a break-out group (2h30')

Participants will share experiences and develop specific recommendation to improve approach and indicators of EE, through the following case studies:

- Country level: UCLG-Africa will introduce one or two examples from Africa countries (Mr Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi)
- Regional level: experience with ASEAN (Ms Bernadia Tjandradewi, UCLG-ASPAC), and with the Ibero-American General Secretariat (Mr Guillermo, FLACMA)
- Global level: UCLG-WS will present the work of the Global Task Force of Local and Regional authorities (GTF) on the SDGs, with emphasis on the Global Partnership (Edgardo Bilsky).

Discussion question: How can LAs and CSOs work together to enhance an enabling environment?

B. CSOs (and others) remain in the plenary room (2h30')

Method: presentations + buzz groups reactions, in order to stimulate debate in small and informal environment (CSOs + others sitting in small groups) tasked to respond to pre-identified questions relevant to the presentations.

Part 1: Partner country focus: How is EU defining and supporting EE in partner countries? (1h45')

1. Presentation of EU views on EE for CSOs: Thomas Hansen, EC DEVCO B2, will present definition and current work, using the Roadmap process as an example, drawing on case studies completed and underway.
2. Highlights from the study "An Enabling Environment for Civil Society Organizations: A Synthesis of evidence of progress since Busan," by Civil Society Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE)
3. Case study from the Arab CSO network: Ziad Abdel Samad
4. Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment: update on the Global Partnership Initiative 12 on Enabling Environment and contributions to future GPEDC Indicator II on Enabling Environment for CSOs.

Buzz groups:

1. What are the key components of an EE for you?
2. State of play: What are your efforts in EE? are your efforts on monitoring and/or changing the EE? Hear case studies/state of play
3. How can LAs and CSOs work together to enhance an enabling environment?

Part II: EU focus: EU enabling framework - How is EU doing in supporting meaningful and structured participation of CSOs in EU processes at country level? *the role of Delegations* (45')

1. Introduction: EC (refer to SD concluding paper and key qualities of consultation)
2. CONCORD report on Mutual engagement between EU delegations and CSOs: Stijn De Lameillieure
3. EC response
4. Q&A
5. At end: Launch of roadmap survey

12:30-14:00 LUNCH

III. Plenary closing session 14:00-15:00 (1h)

All participants will come back together in plenary to hear the rapporteurs of each group feed back and ask questions. Discussion around common question: How can LAs and CSOs work together to enhance an enabling environment?