

## CSO Key Messages for a Just and Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda

We, Asia and the Pacific civil society organizations, representing various major groups and stakeholders, gathered in Bangkok, Thailand on June 24 to 25 on the occasion of the Policy Forum on Development Meeting of the Asia and Pacific region.

In this meeting, we raise our collective voices to call on the European Union to champion Development Justice in its policies and actions in Asia and the Pacific. The five foundations of Development Justice<sup>1</sup>: Redistributive Justice, Economic Justice, Social Justice, Environmental Justice, and Accountability to Peoples, provide a transformative framework that aims to reduce inequalities of wealth, power, opportunities, and resources between countries, between rich and poor and between men and women.

Furthermore, we urge on the EU to embrace a rights-based approach, and ensure that the human rights principles of equality, equity, non-discrimination and inclusive participation and decision-making underpin its development cooperation in the region.

The EU can support **redistributive justice** and reduce inequalities between countries by:

- Promoting progressive taxation, including capital gains taxes and financial transactions taxes, EU is also called upon to review trade and investment provisions that allow corporations to reduce tax obligations.
- Promoting cooperative system of public-peoples enterprises and public-private ventures, which practice democracy, equality, equity and solidarity and embrace the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for people and planet.
- Review the EU's energy projects in the region to ensure that these do not lead to loss of livelihoods and instead promote the aspirations especially of small producers at the local level.
- Promoting less military expenditure and reallocate the resource for poverty eradication, including for people deprived of telecommunication services and access to information to reduce the Digital Divide between rural and urban areas.

The EU can promote **economic justice** in its development cooperation in the region by:

- Ensuring economic cooperation contains appropriate safeguards so as not to constrain domestic policy space for development.
- Reviewing public-private partnerships (PPPs) to ensure that these follow the principles of democratic ownership and respect for human rights.
- Ensuring open source access to intellectual property essential for sustainable development in the EU's trade and investment agreements.
- Support trade unionism and freedom of association and social dialogue. Commit to internationally-recognized framework of International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Decent Work and Living Wage agenda, and ILO's Social Protection Floor Initiative as a starting point for basic social protection for everyone.

EU can support **gender and social justice** in its policies and projects in Asia and the Pacific through:

- Uphold governments' roles as duty bearers of human rights, and in respecting, protecting and fulfilling rights to communications and information, and the wider freedom of expression, speech, movement, and to organise as civil and social movements.
- Supporting women's empowerment and participation, especially those coming from small holder producers, in policy development, implementation, and monitoring.
- Requiring trade and investments to be child and disabled-friendly, and gender-responsive, addressing the conditions of women, including decent work and gender discrimination in the workplace.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on Development Justice, please visit <http://peoplesgoals.org/devjustice/about-development-justice/>

- Advance the substantive gender equality for achieving women's human rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, as central to sustainable development.
- Promote universal access to health care, including for sexual and reproductive health, and comprehensive sexuality education, including for young people and girls.
- Empower and strengthen capacity of women and girls to address gender inequities, alongside efforts to integrate needs of women and girls into the development process.
- Revoke discriminatory and punitive laws and policies, including traditions and local practices.
- Mandate targets for women in decision making at local and regional levels.

EU support the achievement of **environmental justice** through:

- Ensuring that renewable energy projects (windmills, solar energy, agrofuels, etc) supports climate policies that address the adaptation and mitigation needs of developing countries in a just and equitable manner.
- Promote the role of civil society and private sector in delivering the sustainable development agenda, particularly, their interventions on climate change to ensure that these will be people-oriented.
- Committing to full recognition of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) and genuine, pro-people solutions over market-based mechanisms
- Committing to climate finance that is new and in addition to ODA and accounted for separately. Likewise, climate finance must be immediate, public and non-debt creating. It should synchronize mitigation and adaptation efforts and assist grassroots communities in accessing climate finance for adaption.

Lastly, the EU can guarantee the **accountability to peoples** through:

- Supporting the cultivation of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) into a strong, independent, transparent and inclusive institution that provides monitoring, review and enables implementation and enforcement of commitments reiterated through the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Upholding the primacy of Human Rights and the UN Charter over trade and investment agreements.
- Ensuring free prior informed consent from IP communities as well as all affected communities. Support democratic ownership by ensuring transparency and people's participation in the negotiation, implementation, and monitoring of trade and investment agreements.
- Providing regulatory mechanisms, such as the Business and Human Rights Mechanism, which would serve as guide for institutions and corporations from EU member states as they conduct business particularly outside the EU member nations and hold multinational corporations accountable for human rights violations and erosion of state capacity.
- Promoting enabling environment for CSO participation through:
  - Formalize, operationalize, and institutionalize, the participation of CSOs and grassroots communities in the development, implementation, and monitoring of policies, at the subnational, national, regional, and global levels. This can be supported through creating platforms for multistakeholder platforms involving CSOs and grassroots communities as equal partners in development.
  - Supporting capacity building for CSOs to improve their development effectiveness and accountability.
  - Supporting the sustainability of CSOs through longer-term financing rather project-based funding, and coordinating financing mechanism with other donors so as to avoid duplication and enhance synergies using need-based approaches.
  - Utilising EU's donor position as leverage to promote enabling environment for CSOs in the midst of government crackdowns.

We believe in the power of dialogue and constructive engagement, and wish to see the Policy Forum on Development, turn into an effective space for policy influencing for a transformative development agenda.