

2014 MEETING OF THE PFD
Session 3 - Enabling Environment for CSOs and LAs
BACKGROUND NOTE

High-level forums on aid and development effectiveness have broadly recognized that civil society and local authorities are important agents of development, in their own right. This is directly followed by the recognition that 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 called an Enabling Environment (EE) and it includes elements related to legal, regulatory and policy frameworks, and political, socio-cultural and economic factors. Achieving an enabling environment is greatly dependent on the responsiveness of state and institutional decision makers; however, all stakeholders, including the actors that themselves needing an EE, have to act in sustaining a legitimate enabling environment for the long run.

Following Accra and Busan GPDE, an Enabling Environment for civil society and local authorities has been high also on the agenda of the EC Structured Dialogue, and resulted in recognition of a shared responsibility for achieving it. Following the Structured Dialogue recommendations (May 2011) different actors have made Commitments to work on EE.

(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_2_011.pdf).

The EU CSO Communication (September 2012) (<http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0492:FIN:EN:PDF>), and the EC Communication on the Role of Local Authorities (<http://eurlex.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.

The civil society and local authorities have also actively contributed to a better enabling environment, in their work on their own development effectiveness and transparency, as well as fulfilling necessary roles of monitoring an enabling environment in partner countries and globally (at political, policy influencing and implementation level, for example, Civicus reports on State of Civil society).

Goals of the session:

The session will review progress on the realization of the commitments by ALL actors (including CSOs and LAs, individual and networks alike) based on examples, and identify future paths of furthering the agenda for an Enabling Environment as a shared responsibility, including in the PFD forum.

Questions to be covered include:

- How different actors (EC, CSO, LAs, Member States) have worked towards enhancing an enabling environment since the Structured Dialogue?
- What else needs to be done and what is the role for the PFD in furthering the EE agenda?