Policy Forum on Development

Title of session: Enabling Environment for a new global agenda: Enabling the participation of CSOs and LAs addressing the SDGs

Objective(s): Understand what aspects of an enabling environment are needed for the successful implementation of the new global agenda, particularly how to increase the full participation of all actors as equal partners in the implementation of the SDGs

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. 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.

As part of its mandate to follow up on the recommendations of the Structured Dialogue[1], the Policy Forum on Development (PFD) has agreed to regularly discuss ongoing progress of all actors in enhancing an enabling environment. Each PFD discussion around the enabling environment aims to:

1. Review commitments and share experiences of work to enhance an enabling environment. (These discussions will be captured to build a compendium of case studies/best practices).
2. Identify what needs to change (A discussion of common challenges and sharing of potential solutions in the work of various actors)
3. Develop targeted messages/recommendations to share in other fora
4. Identify what further information is needed to make these changes (areas of potential research and capacity development within the PFD)

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[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 (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 (building on 2015, see last section):
- Identification of challenges and opportunities in the new global agenda
- Identification of examples/actionable points in support of Enabling Environment (EE)
- Understanding of country-specific cases and what lessons may be learned from these cases

Methodology:
I. Panel (1 hr. 30 min)
Moderator: *Jacqueline Wood, Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment*

Introduce panel with PFD research presentations (points on key findings and recommendations can be shared beforehand with all panelists)
Edith van Ewijk, PFD researcher, Netherlands
Wicak Sarosa, PFD researcher, Indonesia

Use this as point of departure to react to key question of how to enable the participation of CSOs and LAs in addressing the SDGs. (Provide specific questions beforehand to limit to responses, rather than presentations; strong moderation in talk show format)

Speakers:
Patrice Lenormand, Deputy Head of Unit, Civil Society and Local Authorities, DEVCO
Cornelius Hacking, Task Team GPEDC
Bernadia Tjandradewi, Secretary General of UCLG Asia Pacific
Hanna Surmatz, European Foundation Centre
Tony Tujan, CPDE
Marita González, CGT Argentina

Coffee break

II. Discussion Groups: *Strengthening Multi-stakeholder approaches* (1 hour 15 min)
Working groups *(topics tbc):*

Working group focused on multi-stakeholder approaches to support an EE to implement the 2030 Agenda at country level (led by PFD researchers)

Working group focused on multi-stakeholder approaches to support an EE for policy influencing (and here participants can link back to discussions held during the morning around two upcoming policy events).

Working group focused on multi-stakeholder approaches to support an EE for implementing a rights based approach

Working group focused on multi-stakeholder approaches to support an EE for implementing donor support

III. Feedback and Plenary Discussion (1 hour)
One participant/chair from each working group returns to form the final plenary panel, reporting on key points raised (five minutes each group; template will be provided to structure presentations) and opening for plenary discussion.

Building on 2015 PFD:
This session is a recurrent theme in the PFD due to the importance of the topic. In the March 2015 PFD meeting, participants discussed the components of an enabling environment. The key components mentioned include:

- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of association
- Political and financial autonomy of CSOs
- Social dialogue
- Trust and mutual understanding
- Independence of media
- Freedom of speech and association
- Independence of judiciary
- Judicial and administrative frameworks
- Rule of law and enforcement of frameworks
- Legitimate representation from CSOs and democratically elected LAs
- Self-regulation of CSOs
- Multi-stakeholder dialogue
- Right of initiative of CSOs
- Mutual accountability and transparency
- Respect for workers' rights
- Permanent, institutionalised dialogue, including social dialogue (workers, private, state)
- Equal dialogue - coming together as equal partners
- Space for advocacy
- Monitoring and participation of stakeholders in monitoring
- Access to finance
- State/government understanding of the roles and responsibilities of actors
- Government recognition of CSOs and institutionalised space for engagement with CSOs
- Predictability of legal and political systems
- Political coherence
- Functioning formal economy
- Autonomy of CSOs (political and financial)
- Peace and Stability
- Political willingness
- Technical competence and capacity

The ways in which CSOs and LAs could work together to support an EE include:
- Engage at national level for scale-up and sustainability of an EE (e.g. Philippines in disaster and rehabilitation)
- Institutionalise participation (i.e.in LA planning processes)
- Promote dialogue to develop legislation
- Promote access to information and transparency

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

The group discussing Local Authorities and an EE made specific suggestions at each level about how to work together:

Global	Regional	National	Local
• Advocate for the importance of both actors in global agenda, such as Post-2015 Agenda, Habitat III, climate change, Financing for Development. • Create a Global Alliance and Division of Tasks with clear coordination and instruments to achieve objectives (existing platforms such as Global Task Force could be used for this purpose).	• Create a space for institutional dialogue at regional level; • Identify areas where advocacy can occur in regards to common initiatives • Analyse and compare the political context across countries and regions • Exchange knowledge and best practices (as a means to encourage capacity development and trust building)	• Create an institutional space at national level for dialogue – LGAs plus the national platform of CSOs • Identify areas where advocacy can occur in regards to common initiatives • Exchange knowledge and best practices (as a means to encourage capacity development and trust-building)	• Build trust to contribute to good partnership and genuine dialogue • Promote consultation and participation in local planning, budgeting and decision-making processes • Encourage partnerships in service delivery • Invest in capacity development for LAs to engage CSOs and citizens • Favour an evidence-based approach (LAs to give examples and show results)