

OPEN FORUM FOR CSO DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

Updates from Asia, January 2010

From Aid Effectiveness to CSO Development Effectiveness

The issue of the quality of aid, or aid effectiveness, has come forward and has become even more prominent in 2008 during the Third High Level Forum (HLF) on Aid Effectiveness in Accra, Ghana. It relates to how development programs are being implemented. But when we, CSOs, talk to our government and to donors about aid effectiveness one question that immediately comes to mind also is “What about *your* effectiveness? What about CSO accountability, legitimacy, what right have you to be talking to us about our effectiveness?”

Thus was born the Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness, an international CSO-driven process towards defining a globally accepted development effectiveness framework for CSOs. It aims to provide a learning space, based on mutual trust, where CSOs can discuss issues and challenges relevant to their work and relationships as development actors.

Consensus-building will be done through carefully structured multi-stakeholder dialogues at country, regional and global levels from 2009-2011. Regional consultations have already been done in Asia in November 2009, Latin America and the Caribbean in December, and Africa in January 2010. Country consultations will soon follow, beginning with Asia this February, to allow all local and national CSOs to actively explore, discuss and define CSO development effectiveness, as well as engage with governments and donors towards achieving an enabling environment for CSOs.

At the HLF-4 in Korea in 2011, we CSOs will propose and push to governments, multilateral institutions, donors and fellow CSOs to come up with a global agreement on the resulting framework for CSO development effectiveness. The challenge is to secure the deepening of aid reforms and to renew the aid architecture to put considerations of development and human rights, rather than aid effectiveness, at its heart.

PREPARATIONS IN ASIA

The Open Forum Regional Consultation in Bangkok last November has successfully captured the interest and eagerness of CSOs from Asia and MENA regions to hold their own national consultations (each with a multi-stakeholder dialogue) on CSO Development Effectiveness.



As agreed thereupon, country core groups (CCGs) were created to facilitate the process. Participating CSOs were automatically qualified and were made to fill out application forms to formalize their membership to the CCG. Some of them also nominated organizations who were not at the Bangkok consultation. CCGs are bound by a Terms of Reference, which lays down their duties and responsibilities, from the preparations to the post-consultation phase.

The proposal of having fiscal sponsors within CCGs was also brought up and, after a rigorous discussion, was recently approved by the Global Facilitation Group. Some CCGs have already nominated their respective fiscal sponsors, and have taken the challenge to raise funds to augment the limited budget, specifically to translate the toolkit and to conduct preparatory seminars.

The Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN) which leads the Open Forum process in Asia hopes to conclude the country consultations with a second regional consultation by end-June to be able to contribute to the 1st Global Assembly in August.

COUNTRY BRIEFS

Open Forum Asia will be holding country consultations in 17 countries: India (New Delhi), Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, South Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Egypt, Lebanon, India (Chennai), Indonesia, Tajikistan, China, Morocco, Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, plus one more country to be identified soon.

INDIA-New Delhi

The first country-level consultation will be in India-New Delhi, originally scheduled on the second week of February but moved to February 22-24 due to some constraints in booking travel tickets and time required for getting confirmation of the participants from across the country. Tentative venue will be at the Indian Social Institute.

The CSO-only consultation is expected to be attended by some 65 CSOs from West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, J & K, Rajasthan and all North-Eastern States. Invitees to the multi-stakeholder dialogue are government officials from the Planning Commission, FCRA Division and representatives from donors such as Action Aid, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, and Danida.

Interested parties may get in touch with any member of the India-New Delhi CCG:

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SRI LANKA

There is a possibility that the Sri Lanka national consultations initially scheduled on March 3-5 will be postponed. According to the Green Movement of Sri Lanka (GMSL) and Sewalanka Foundation, much of the CSOs they are targeting as participants have been recently preoccupied with their national elections, and are still preparing for the parliamentary elections in March. Instead of March, they are proposing to hold the consultations in June. For updates, please contact:

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BANGLADESH

The CSO consultation in Bangladesh which is envisioned to have an average of 67 participants will take place from March 13-14 at the Hope Foundation in Ashulia, Dhaka and will be inaugurated by Prof. Mozaffer Ahmed of BAPA/SUJON. Possible resource persons are Dr. Salahuddin Aminuzzaman of Dhaka University, Dr. Tofail Ahmed of UNDP Bangladesh, Shaheen Anam of Manusher Jonno Foundation/DFID, Rezaul Karim Chowdhory of EquityBD, Dr. M. Sohel Iqbal of COAST Trust, Dr. Mohd. Matin of BAPA, S. Jahangir Hasan Masum and MM Mahbub Hasan of Coastal Development Partnership (CDP), and Iqbal Uddin of SUPRO. They are also inviting GFG member Anil Singh as a guest speaker.

Initial invitees to the multi-stakeholder dialogue are the Minister of Social Welfare, the Directors General of NGO Bureau and Social Welfare Ministry,

some members of the Parliament, and some advocates of civil society. All CSOs attending the two-day national workshop will also be present.

The CCG is planning a preparatory seminar for CCGs and a small group of CSOs, and, if there would be some savings, a couple of regional consultations as follow-up to the country consultation.

For more information, you may contact the following:

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SOUTH KOREA

The Korea CCG composed of the Korean NGO Council for Overseas Cooperation (KCOC), PSPD and Oda Watch recently signed the TOR and have agreed to fund a one day pre-session/orientation for CSOs in February. The formal consultation workshop will be on March 29~30 and will be divided into a CSOs-only session and a multi-stakeholder dialogue. For further

KYRGYZSTAN

information, contact Faye Lee at flee@ngokcoc.or.kr.

Three NGOs are in charge of holding the Open Forum consultation in Kyrgyzstan on April 3-5: the Forum of Women's NGOs of Kyrgyzstan, the Association of NGOs Support Centers, and the Media Osh Resource Center represented by Nurgul Djanaeva, Aidar Mambetov and Maksuda Aitieva, respectively. Soon they will come out of a list of invitees from the civil society and other sectors. Those interested to be involved may get in touch with Nurgul Djanaeva at dnurgul@yahoo.com or at Mobile: 996- 555-99 66 12

LEBANON

The Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) and the Lebanese Democratic Women Gathering (LDWG) which both were present at the Bangkok regional consultation have invited two more CSOs to join the country core group, namely the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) and the Lebanese Physical Handicapped Union (LPHU).

While there are no definite consultation dates yet (as they do not want to time it during the election period), the Lebanon CCG is now preparing a list of potential participants, mainly from organizations of women and youth, as well as those focusing on development, environment, human rights, and charity and service.

Please email Ahmad Mroueh (ahmadmroueh@gmail.com) for more information.

TAJIKISTAN

The Tajikistan CCG is composed of NGO Jahon, Club of Ecological NGOs, Coalition of NGOs on Realization of Paris Declaration, and the Akkra Action Agenda in Tajikistan. Tentative consultation dates are on May 14-15 for the CSOs-only segment, and May 17 for the multi-stakeholder dialogue.

Prior to that, on February 10, 2010, they will hold a preliminary workshop on CSOs efficiency and CSO role in the realization of the Paris Declaration.

For details, contact Shahlo Juraeva of NGO Jahon at ngo.jahon@gmail.com

CHINA

Some 44 CSOs working on a range of areas such as professional training, legal aid, health, environment, education, workers, migrants, youth, and the disabled are being targeted for the CSO-only consultation in China on May 22-23; while key people from government Ministry of Civil Affairs and Legislative Affairs Office, donor agencies such as WWF, and the academe such as Sun Yat-sen and Xiamen Universities will be invited for the multi-stakeholder dialogue on May 24th.

The China CCG is composed of 9 CSOs and may be contacted through the following persons: Zhou Shuwen (zhoushuwen@cango.org) and Ramon Bultron (rbultron@gmail.com).

MOROCCO

The Morocco workshops on May 29-31 will be preceded by consultations in the regions of North-Center, Chaouia Ouardigha, Tensift-El Haouz, and Oriental. Espace Associatif, Transparency Morocco and the Moroccan Democratic League for Women's Rights (LDDF) are the organizers and may be contacted through Anas El Hasnaoui at elhanas13@gmail.com

THAILAND

Given their current situation, our colleagues in the Thai NGO movement in Thailand do not see it fit to organize the consultation workshop. Nevertheless, they are offering to contribute to the Open Forum process and towards the effectiveness of the country's NGO and people's movement by designing other activities, such as action research. The GFG Asia is now considering

OTHER COUNTRIES

moving the consultation to another country.

Preparations are also underway in the following countries. Those who wish to contribute to the preparations, or interested to attend as participants may contact the following:

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