ACCOUNT, BUILD, COMMIT
TOWARDS EFFECTIVE PEOPLE-CENTRED DEVELOPMENT

CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness
Strategic Plan 2016-2019
Towards the end of 2015, the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) found itself at a crossroads. At that juncture, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was just adopted setting the global development agenda. The global development discourse was replete with old issues, such as inequality and private sector role, which found new lease to life. On the other hand, development cooperation (largely of the traditional ODA/North-South variety) and civil society role were pushed at the sidelines. Development cooperation discourse was struggling to find its place within the new Agenda. Internally, CPDE in its 3 years of existence, has not defined a process, given the changes inside and outside the platform, to systematically ensure that its mandate, organisation, and work is fit for purpose. Operationally, the platform will conclude its first multi-year programme and commence a new one simultaneously by 2016.

With this, and in response to the strategic questions raised in the last Global Council Meeting of 2015, CPDE undertook a strategic planning process. This involved getting inputs from all constituents through surveys, interviews, and participatory workshops. This also involved getting inputs from various stakeholders who were witness to CPDE’s work throughout the years. We tried to map the terrain in which we operate, create consensus on our aspirations, and clarify how we want to work with each other.

In the coming years, we will strengthen our platform through enhancing the constituencies’ capacities to effectively pursue their advocacies for effective development cooperation as it is manifested in their context. Globally, we will endeavour to improve coordination, outreach, and communications work. Combined, this positions the platform to meaningfully contribute to a development framework that upholds principles of mutual respect, equity and gender equality, democratic ownership, accountability, and transparency for the world we want.
NEW AND COMMON GROUND, RIFE WITH CHALLENGES TO PEOPLE-CENTRED DEVELOPMENT

The Paris-Accra-Busan process and subsequent High-level Meeting (HLM) in Mexico have seen a shift from aid effectiveness to development effectiveness yet many promises still remain unfulfilled. Recent estimations of the amount of non-compliance to 0.7% commitment of ODA (Official Development Assistance) agreements since 2000 would add up to just over 2 trillion USD. The reports on progress on the Paris-Accra-Busan agenda showed limited progress on key development co-operation measures.

The 2030 process has now set one single universal development agenda. This gives the development efforts new and common ground; however it lacks clarity and perspective.

The promotion of the private sector as a development actor and a source of finance has recently been dominating the development discourse. Increasingly, governments favor the influx of capital and, thus, the control corporations exert over national (even global) policies rather than heed the voice of their citizens. We see states favoring privatization of public services, such as water and sanitation, telecommunications, and financial markets. Moreover, these global corporations garner an expanding control over the terms of trade and commercial agreements. Further, democratic processes are eroded through policies included in these agreements such as investor-state dispute settlement, which allows corporations to sue governments in tribunals established outside of national constitutions. This over-emphasis of the private sector’s role has only weakened the mandate of the state. Multilateralism is at risk as international governance is rapidly changing under the pressure of the economic and financial powers. Accountability of private finance is severely lacking and necessitates more than ever a concerted effort to correct structural changes and to ensure that development is transparent, accountable, and people-centred.

In the face of this new set of development goals, governments have also openly acknowledged the role and contribution of civil society in development. However, unlike multinational corporations, these have only remained in rhetoric. The reality is that globally, civic space continues to shrink due to persecution, harassment, or outright attack on citizens and most especially civil society, particularly in developing countries. Despite having constitutional safeguards in many countries, civil society continues to face repression from many state institutions-human rights violations, inequalities and injustices against the people and civil society organisations (CSOs) remain rampant.

Recent grave missteps in international affairs such as migration policies to curb the influx of people into Europe, due to climate change, the persistence of poor economic conditions, and war, particularly in the Middle Eastern region, have resulted in people continuing to be displaced and forced to leave their homes and seek better lives in other countries. Central to CPDE’s mandate is a commitment to peace realised through social justice as established by the Istanbul principles; essential in our pursuit of development effectiveness, therefore, is an enabling environment that puts primacy on the respect for human rights. This is especially true in the context of the 2030 agenda, which promotes peace and security and the resolution of conflicts as preconditions for development.

Aside from wealth inequality between rich and poor nations, inequality between the people within those nations still persists at an alarming rate. Half of the world’s poor live in Middle Income Countries (MIC), which still feature precarious working conditions and serious rights violations. South-South Co-operation by and with these countries also still needs to fully integrate the four development effectiveness principles, particularly transparency, accountability, as well as human rights-based approaches (HRBA).
The CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) is an open platform that unites CSOs from around the world on the issue of development effectiveness, in particular in the context of the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. The CPDE is open to the participation of any CSO that endorses its vision and goals, believes in its objectives, and adheres to the Istanbul Principles. The CPDE embraces the richness and the diversity of the world’s CSOs.

CPDE is an evolving platform. Since its creation in December 2012 in Nairobi the CPDE has:

- become a unique, inclusive and representative advocacy and capacity development network bringing together a diverse membership through its sectoral constituencies and its regional and subregional coordination structures;
- developed capacities of CSOs at the country level to help shape the development policies in relation to the effective development cooperation principles;
- been recognised as the Civil Society voice in the GPEDC by the European Union through its Policy Forum for Development and by governments from donor and partner countries;
- set the agenda for CSO accountability and its development effectiveness through Istanbul Principles and led the promotion and realisation of an enabling environment for CSOs;
- given Civil Society an increasing role in the accountability and the monitoring of development policies and strategies, in the GPEDC and in various development forums and processes;
- worked to ensure recognition and full inclusion of Human Rights Based Approach as central to effective development cooperation.

With the evolving political landscape there is a critical need for the CPDE to strengthen its advocacy positions and to sharpen its ways of working. The changing political landscape compels the platform to champion effective development cooperation, which is reflective of the realities on the ground and the struggles of the people and provides an alternative to the current development cooperation paradigm.

To achieve this, the CPDE will implement its work in a manner that engages all its members and reflects the realities from the ground and are relevant to the people we represent.

We envisage a world where respect for all human rights, including gender rights, participatory democracy, and economic, social and environmental justice are guaranteed, enabling effective people-centred development that ensures decent work, a peaceful world and a dignified life for all.

In our work together we will adhere to the following values: mutual respect, equity and gender equality; democratic ownership; accountability to our members and peers and transparency in all our decision-making and actions.

We will adhere to the Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness.

We give expression to this vision by:
- working together in partnership on a global scale in relation to the development effectiveness and accountability of the GPEDC;
- advocating for a transformative agenda for development and effective development cooperation by adopting a human rights-based approach that prioritises gender equality, decent work, and environmental sustainability leading to improved livelihoods of all people living in poverty or marginalised through disability or violence;
- striving to protect the gains made in Paris, Accra and Busan in realising effective development cooperation, and reversing the harmful processes that continue to guide these agendas; and
- working to improve our own effectiveness, with a strong focus on supporting country, sub-regional, regional and sectoral civil society - combining this with coordinated regional and global work on development effectiveness.

We do this by:
- promoting development effectiveness and accountability in all areas of work, both our own and the work of others, including through our active engagement, as the recognised representative CSO platform, with the GPEDC; and
- addressing exclusion and oppression, especially of women and marginalised communities, and by transforming structures of power that perpetuate injustice.

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Objective

Advance the implementation of an effective development cooperation framework, particularly in relation to the implementation of Agenda 2030.

Indicators

- Effective and functional CPDE working groups on the five advocacy areas - CSO Enabling Environment, CSO Development Effectiveness, South-South Co-operation, Private Sector as a development actor, and Security Peace & Development
- Development of a pamphlet/rallying-call on EDC and universality that is accessible and advocated by all members, regions, and constituencies of CPDE
- Engagement of CSOs in target forums which focus on highlighting EDC principles and HRBA
- References to continuing progress on commitments that were made in Paris, Accra, and Busan at the national level, GPEDC, and the 2030 Agenda process

Outcomes

- The (universal) application of a framework of effective development co-operation that will hold stakeholders accountable for commitments they have made over the years, including Rome, Paris, Accra and Busan.
- Human-Rights based approaches are practiced at all levels of development and development co-operation.
- CSOs at the country level are equipped and empowered to advocate for effective development cooperation, including in the implementation of Agenda 2030.
- EDC principles are integrated in the planning, monitoring, and implementation framework of Agenda 2030 at the country level.

Target Arenas

National and federal level governments, Local & Provincial levels (CSOs Local communities and peoples organisations), Global level (GPEDC & UN processes), EU & Regional formations / mechanisms

Key Messages

Be both forward-looking and deeply rooted in previous aid and development effectiveness commitments, drawing from the experience and lessons learned in the past fifteen years.

Bring together the principle of universality and the effectiveness agenda to forward the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda in a manner that espouses the highest level of mutual-accountability.

Effective Development Cooperation agenda is important in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals, but EDC should not be limited to this. There should be recognition that issues covered by EDC go beyond the 2030 Agenda.

Uphold the integrity and universality of the development effectiveness agenda. In the current development landscape there is still a strong need to reflect and provide a detailed account of the ‘unfinished aid business’ from Paris and Accra. This should feed into but remain distinct from the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) Reaffirm the development effectiveness principles agreed in Busan – democratic country ownership, focus on results, inclusive development partnerships, and transparency and accountability – as pillars of the effective development co-operation agenda.

Reiterate the centrality of human rights. In accordance with the Busan outcome document, the development effectiveness principles must be defined as consistent with agreed international commitments on human rights, decent work, gender equality, environmental sustainability and disability;

Empower rights-holders (people) to hold duty-bearers (governments) and other donors accountable in all development cooperation programs, projects and policies, as well as in governance structures at all levels; (HRBA)

Other Actors and Alliances/Partnership Plan

Allied CSOs & NGOs, local authorities, parliamentarians, and philanthropic organisations; Major group system of the UN and other CSOs and organisations working on development and development co-operation (T2030 & others);

Contacts and organisations in the UN system, GPEDC, OECD, and other inter-governmental and multi-stakeholder organisations; Donor countries & Private Sector (small-medium enterprises & multi-nationals); Developing countries
**OUR ADVOCACY AREAS**

**PRIVATE SECTOR ACCOUNTABILITY**

**Objective**

Ensure business accountability in the context of development cooperation programmes, to guarantee positive and significant development results.

**Key Messages**

Private sector interventions, particularly Multinational businesses, must be held to account. Governments must set standards for aid effectiveness, measuring impacts and results of private sector intervention in development cooperation.

The involvement of private sector in development cooperation should be matched in the same proportion by involvement of civil society and trade unions.

ODA should be solidarity-based and focused on the poor and the vulnerable. Often private sector interventions result in increased indebtedness of developing countries, and partial privatisation of basic public services and common goods.

Governments must support SMEs and the social economy, and must and promote sustainable and decent work.

**Outcomes**

Elaboration of criteria to assess the interventions of the private sector in development cooperation at country level, in order to evaluate their compliance with development effectiveness principles.

**Indicators**

Development of CSO indicators to assess the adequacy with effective development cooperation principles of targeted private sector interventions in developing countries.

**Target Arenas**

Multinational and Social Businesses, Development banks, FFD, HLPF, DCF, GPEDC

**SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION**

**Objective**

Influence the development of a global accountability framework for South-South cooperation that is consistent with the principles of horizontal development cooperation, i.e. solidarity, mutuality, equality, respect for sovereignty, human rights, non-interference, and non-conditionality.

**Key Messages**

The principles of horizontal development cooperation – including solidarity, mutuality, human rights, respect for sovereignty, non-conditionality – should be used in assessing effectiveness of South-South partnerships, particularly with respect to unequal conditions of partnership that often prevail even between South-South cooperating countries.

Southern aid providers should work towards ensuring that their policies and operations adhere to international law and standards on environment and human rights as these apply to programs and projects in partner countries. This is consistent with Bandung, which declared the fundamental principles of human rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations.

Democratic country ownership of SSC should be enhanced so that recipient countries’ own needs and priorities drive the development partnership, and that these priorities and policies are rooted in the participation of, and accountability to, stakeholders and citizens.

The relevance and importance of the principles for effective development cooperation in enhancing accountability and development impact of SSC should be recognised and upheld.

**Outcomes**

Development of a framework for horizontal development cooperation that can be used by civil society and non-traditional Southern partners in assessing the quality and impact of SSC.

Adoption of rights-based approaches and principles for effective development cooperation in global accountability frameworks for South-South cooperation.

**Indicators**

Completed framework document on horizontal development cooperation.

**Target Arenas**

BRICS Forum, UN Development Cooperation Forum, Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, OECD measurement framework on TOSSD, UN Conference on South-South Cooperation, IBSA Dialogue Forum, G20 Summit.

**Other Actors and Alliances/Partnership Plan**

Southern think tanks and non-traditional Southern providers.
**Objective**

Expand CSO accountability frameworks to include effectiveness compacts applicable at the country and sectoral levels.

**Outcomes**

In three year’s time, country-level CSO effectiveness compacts will be developed or identified in a defined number of countries. The effectiveness compact will include the Istanbul Principles and will be applicable at the country level and the sectoral level.

**Indicators**

The number of countries that have achieved effectiveness compacts that include the Istanbul Principles.

The number of countries that apply and interpret CSO effectiveness through the lens of the Istanbul Principles.

**Target Arenas**

Donors, national governments, and intergovernmental organisations

**Other Actors and Alliances/Partnership Plan**

Donors, INGOs, CSOs, governments, and other stakeholders.

**Key Messages**

All accountability frameworks should be developed and applied with the Istanbul Principles, and therefore development effectiveness, at the heart. Appropriate mechanisms for CSO accountability are those that are based on their commitment to the people they serve rather than merely complying with requirements. Frameworks that include the Istanbul Principles will strengthen CSO accountability and maximize their contribution to development effectiveness.

CSOs are independent development actors and should be key players in their own accountability. As independent development actors in their own right, CSOs should demonstrate their effectiveness through an effectiveness compact and play a key role in developing the compact. The obligation of demonstrating CSO accountability includes a commitment to upholding democracy and the rights of the people to organise themselves around common advocacy and multi-stakeholder dialogue. As representatives from the ground, CSOs possess pertinent knowledge and experience that will be central to an effectiveness compact.

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**Objective**

Promote the reform of legal and regulatory frameworks based on human rights standards, to facilitate CSO space in policy and practice in compliance with the Istanbul Principles

**Target Arenas**

National governments, GPEDC, relevant UN agencies, regional-level development effectiveness facilities, TT on CSO DE and EE

**Key Messages**

Respect and uphold the stakeholders commitments to provide an enabling environment for CSOs, including recognizing their independence, supporting their operations through enabling financing, and strengthening their capacities

Reverse trends of shrinking and closing civic spaces, and assert the people’s fundamental freedoms of association, of expression, of the press, and political participation, and their rights to peaceful assembly, and information

Uphold the rights of human rights defenders, social activists, and civil society actors, against the culture of impunity, and harassments perpetrated by both public and private actors

**Other Actors and Alliances/Partnership Plan**

Retract restrictive laws hindering the full operation of CSOs, review disabling conditions for CSO formation, registration and operations, including arbitrary policies, duplicating processes and requirements, especially for those working on human rights in critically sensitive environments

The three-year CPDE program aims to make concrete contributions to global development through the promotion of development effectiveness and an enabling environment in all areas of work, among CSOs and to key development actors, guided by the human rights-based approach through active engagement with the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC). This is characterized by CSO action at global, regional, sub-regional and national levels utilizing a mix of approaches in policy advocacy, engagement, outreach, and capacity development. This programme is undertaken with the financial support of the Swedish International Development Agency, Finland Foreign Ministry, Global Affairs Canada, IrishAid and Austrian Development Agency.

2. Enhancing Civil Society Role in Development Partnerships Post 2015 (2016-2018)

The programme aims to ensure significant contributions in global and regional development policy arenas, particularly through the GPEDC and other relevant processes, with focus on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is characterized by influencing favourable policy outcomes in Development Partnerships (DPs) at the global and regional levels through institutionalising CSO participation, advocating enabling environment, and aligning development frameworks to human rights based approaches; and increases CSO capacity to contribute and monitor DPs and Istanbul Principles implementation. This programme is undertaken with the financial support of the European Commission with co-financing from the Swedish International Development Agency.
AN EFFECTIVE WORKING STRUCTURE TO FULFILL OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

1. Working group structures aligned with the Strategic Goals

Working groups and reference groups will be aligned with Strategic Goals and will be rationalised to maximise effectiveness. Their objectives, leadership, technical expertise and expertise on the issues on the ground, expected outcomes, timeline and outputs will be clearly defined. The working language of these groups should maximise participation by the whole membership. New “network-working” methods, including internet-based online discussions, conferences, webinars, and meetings will be introduced to enable broader and more decentralised and country based participation. The platform will invest in training of moderators, internal communications, and documentation and information systems to sustain these groups.

2. Work focused at the Country Level

Scope of country focus mandate will be agreed upon. The country-focus will ensure the link of the mandate to the (1) operating CPDE programme, (2) list of priority country, and (3) political imperatives of the countries and the units. Different work streams of the platform, i.e. advocacy, communications, capacity development will be relevant to the country. Roles of the different CPDE units will be clarified to ensure accountability in country work. Mechanisms for supporting resources, better reporting and monitoring of country work will be created.

3. Information managed to maximise member participation and advocacy

All communication will be aligned with the organisation’s strategic objectives. Programme implementing units of CPDE will carry out communications work in accordance with the global communications strategy taking into account their specific context. Communication and communication materials that impact on participation and decision-making will be released/translated in three languages (i.e., English, French and Spanish) by the Global Secretariat. Constituents are encouraged to translate to other local languages to ensure broader reach and participation.

4. Constituents and membership engaged meaningfully at all levels

CPDE work will be democratic and inclusive. The work is organised into regions, sectors and working groups each with their own governance/coordination structures and secretariats to lead and monitor implementation of CPDE work. At present, CPDE has seven regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, North America, Pacific), eight sectors (Faith-Based, Feminists Group, Indigenous Peoples, International CSOs, Labour/Trade Union, Rural, Youth, Migrants) and six working groups (CSO DE, CSO EE, Private Sector, South South Cooperation, Agenda 2030, and Security, Peace, and Development).

The platform will improve current mechanisms for membership engagement and outreach work. Internal communications and work synergy will be geared towards animating members to take part in political discussions and programme implementation at different levels of work. Constituency-specific membership engagement strategies will be developed by Global and Unit Secretariats to enhance coordination and consolidation of members in different CPDE constituencies.

5. Light and Flexible Governance Structure

The Global Council (GC) remains the highest governing body of CPDE providing statutory authority and setting political leadership and direction. The Coordinating Committee’s (CC) role in providing operational leadership and direction will be strengthened. The Programme and Finance Committee will provide guidance to the Global Secretariat in the preparation of the annual plan and budget and on programme and expenditure decisions. The Co-Chairs will make executive decisions to expedite the work of the CC and the Global Secretariat. CPDE will maintain an Independent Accountability Committee (IAC) that help and assist governance and operational structures maintain highest standards of openness, transparency and accountability in all CPDE affairs.

6. Effective administration of programme work and funds

Appropriate staffing of the Global Secretariat will be ensured to provide support to the different bodies and programme functions. The secretariat will maintain good relations with funders to ensure the adequate financial resourcing of CPDE. It will be the hub of the CPDE structure, ensuring all its constituent bodies are working in alignment with the strategic goals and objectives.
With the evolving political landscape, CPDE needs to strengthen its advocacy positions and sharpen its ways of working. The current challenges compel the platform to continue to champion effective development cooperation, particularly in relation to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This kind of effectiveness responds to realities on the ground, sensitive to the struggles of the people, and provides an alternative to the current development cooperation paradigm.