

Theme Statement for CPDE CSO Progress Report 2018

Background

The Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) has launched its 3rd Monitoring Round (3MR). The process is a biennial endeavour to track country-level progress in implementing the four agreed principles for effective development co-operation at the Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011. These are 1) country ownership, 2) a focus on results, 3) inclusive development partnerships, and 4) transparency and accountability.

The monitoring framework of the GPEDC is not to watch development outcomes themselves but is centred around behaviour change in development co-operation efforts. From the spirit of Busan, the purpose of the monitoring framework is to uphold accountability and to support country-level implementation efforts. It comprises a set of indicators to track international commitments to enhance the four agreed principles.

The GPEDC used the monitoring framework during the 2014 and 2016 monitoring rounds. This was refined in 2017-2018 to reflect the commitments made at the Nairobi High Level Meeting in 2016 to respond to the challenges of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG). In particular, the GPEDC provides information to monitor the progress of countries in implementing SDGs 5c (policies on gender equality), 17.15 (policy on poverty eradication and sustainable development), and 17.16 (enhancement of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development).

The CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) has had engagement with monitoring Indicator 2 on CSO enabling environment. It has also contributed inputs to the refinement process in 2017, particularly of Indicator 1 on country results frameworks and Indicator 7 on mutual accountability. After two monitoring rounds, CPDE has noted however that despite some modest progress across all four development effectiveness principles, there are many areas where significant challenges persist, such as mutual accountability, democratic ownership, and even CSO enabling environment.

CPDE aims to strengthen its engagement in the GPEDC process for the 3MR by producing a CSO Progress Report. The two previous monitoring rounds have only partly captured the picture of what is happening on the ground, thus the CSO Progress Report aims to gather data collected by CSOs to be analysed and published as an independent study by CPDE. It shall provide a different angle on the 3MR and underscore what is crucial for CSOs to move the development co-operation agenda forward. The CSO Progress Report shall also build CPDE's capacity in selected indicators, in terms of building data sources, and capacity of country focal-points at the national level.

Democratic Ownership (DO) and Human Rights-Based Approaches (HRBA) to development as focal themes

After two monitoring rounds, there remains the need to strengthen civil society role. A CSO perspective in the 3MR is ever more relevant now in facing the outstanding challenges to development co-operation. As full members of the GPEDC, CSOs are responsible for ensuring

that what is produced by the multi-stakeholder body reflects the realities of all constituencies, including civil society. They also have the role to show where there is lack of progress and what needs to be done further to attain real progress. Monitoring 10 technical indicators can itself limit the framework of behaviour change. Through the CSO Progress Report, the CPDE aims to supplement the technical limitations of the 3MR by encouraging and informing further dialogue on the outstanding challenges at all levels of the CSO partnership. The CSO Progress Report shall also be a valuable contribution to ensuring and upholding accountability of all development actors to their commitments at Busan and Nairobi.

But the more significant contribution that the CPDE hopes to make in designing the CSO Progress Report is the revitalization of the discussion of the principles of rights-based Democratic Ownership (DO) and Human Rights-Based Approaches (HRBA) to development, which have become peripheral during monitoring but are crucial in making progress. These principles shall be the focal themes of the CSO Progress Report and shall be the foundation of a holistic analysis and conclusion of the monitoring round.

Rights-based DO adheres to the principle of people's sovereignty in identifying aid and development policies and programs as well as in the delivery and evaluation of such. It is not simply about participation, which still depends on the discretion of governments and donors, but it places people's rights at the heart of development processes. From Accra to Busan, CSOs refined the concept of country ownership to the more inclusive concept of rights-based DO as a principle for all development actors. It has four essential areas, namely 1) the creation of multi-stakeholder formal bodies and effective broad consultation process to determine and monitor development plans and policies, 2) the existence of an enabling environment for CSOs, 3) transparency and access to information on development plans, and 4) accountability for the use of development resources and aid provided to the government.

Meanwhile, development actors have tried over the last few decades to integrate human rights with development policy and practice, and they have identified HRBA to development as one of the strategies. Most agree on five core principles according to the International Human Rights Network (IHRN), namely 1) the explicit, accurate use of the international human rights framework, 2) participation in development decisions as a right, 3) empowerment as a right and a precondition for effective participation, 4) non-discrimination and prioritization of groups vulnerable to human rights violations, and 5) accountability of duty-bearers to rights-holders.

Prior to Busan, the Reality of Aid (ROA) 2011 Report noted that there was lack of progress in realizing democratic ownership, and more broadly human rights, and this weakened the potentials of both the Paris Declaration in 2005 and Accra Agenda for Action in 2008 to contribute to poverty eradication, gender equality, decent work and environmental sustainability. Persistent donor conditionality and tied aid undermined DO.

Drawing evidence from 32 country chapters, the ROA 2011 Report showed that there were deep-seated structural and political barriers to reforms that would pave the way for more profound investment in an equitable social order. These barriers are mainly defined by dominant economic and social class interests, including donors' control over development results. The context for reforms, or the local and global architecture for development as the ROA defined it, is shaped by grossly unequal power dynamics that restricts citizens' voices and by unsustainable development models, instead of solidarity, democracy and human rights. The

ROA 2011 Report put forward that in order to achieve transformational outcomes, all development actors – governments, donors, CSOs, the private sector – should uphold their commitments and human rights obligations.

Busan shifted the discourse from the narrow concept of aid effectiveness to development effectiveness. The latter more clearly upholds the necessity for democratic ownership, human rights and social equity in development cooperation. The outcome document of the Busan High-Level Forum is explicit that the four agreed principles of ownership, focus on results, inclusive development partnerships, and transparency and accountability are framed within human rights. “As we embrace the diversity that underpins our partnership the catalytic role of development co-operation, we share common principles which – consistent with our agreed international commitments on human rights, decent work, gender equality, environmental sustainability and disability – form the foundation of our co-operation for effective development.”

Busan has also recognized the role of civil society as development actors and widened government and donor accountability to communities and the people’s development agenda. The outcome document is also explicit that such role is crucial in the assertion and exercise of human rights. “Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) play a vital role in enabling people to claim their rights in promoting rights-based approaches, in shaping development policies and partnerships, and in overseeing their implementation. They also provide services in areas that are complementary to those provided by states.” Having recognized this, the Busan High-Level Forum has committed to provide an enabling environment for CSOs to exercise their roles as development actors and to implement practices that strengthen their accountability and contribution to development effectiveness. All are made consistent with agreed international rights.

After Busan, however, the elements of DO and HRBA to development have remained scattered in the set of indicators of the four agreed principles, if not absent, making monitoring and accountability still difficult. Several commitments may also run counter to the principles of rights-based DO and HRBA to development, such as Busan’s recognition of the need to increase the role of the private sector in development co-operation. Apprehensions are not unfounded, as the neoliberal framework of placing private sector-led economic growth mostly based on profit differentials has contributed to the violation of people’s rights. Tied aid and policy conditionality attached to aid for instance is mostly driven by the donors’ promotion of private sector development. The 2016 monitoring round by the GPEDC notes that the share of untied aid has marginally increased since 2010, with the global average hovering around the peak percentage in 2013. Creating an enabling environment for civil society also requires further effort.

The CPDE has adopted HRBA to development, including rights-based DO, and advocates that human rights are at the very heart of development agenda. HRBA veers development framework from a narrow focus on economic growth towards a more holistic appreciation of the multiple and interrelated dimensions of human development, the CPDE articulates in its 2017 policy research. Development, after all, is the process whereby people are able to fulfil their full potential through realizing their human rights.

CPDE's focal themes even take on more importance in the context of neoliberalism – the worldwide imposition of liberalization, privatization and deregulation policies and the promotion of 'private sector development'. Neoliberal policies continue to dominate development strategies, and this allows governments to minimize or even deny human rights in favour of the commercial and profit-oriented provision of goods and services by the private sector. These are policy impositions by the powerful states, international financial institutions and transnational corporations, which are embodied not only in trade and investment deals but also as policy conditionality in aid.

A 2013 World Bank-Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) study found out that many donors have made references to human rights in their governing policies on development co-operation, but few have actually implemented HRBA in their programs. In the 2017 CPDE policy research, Brian Tomlinson of AidWatch-Canada noted that Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors of the OECD spent only 2% of "real aid" on human rights purposes and civil society participation. Eight of 24 DAC donors comprised 78% of aid allocated to human rights purposes and 71% allocated to civil society participation. Even among the eight donors, implementation of their human rights policies was uneven.

The 2017 CPDE policy research on development partnerships in 25 countries identified challenges to implementation, to include: the simple omission of human rights from state policies; other elite policies outweighing human rights; social and environmental guidelines or safeguard mechanisms adopted by development partners are not enforced or implemented; and partnerships ignore structural social conditions or deeper political economy. The study also highlights the lack of meaningful civil society participation and redress mechanisms to ensure accountability of duty bearers to rights holders.

The adoption of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and its incorporation in the monitoring of commitments towards effective development co-operation thus presents both opportunities and challenges to HRBA to development. There are key concerns that require monitoring, such as the integration of human rights principles in wealth distribution, financing, civil society participation, and accountability. For example, Agenda 2030 barely recognizes the need for an accountability framework for the private sector considering its current extensive role in development co-operation.

Rights-based DO and HRBA to development will be the framework of the CSO Progress Report. CPDE's country focal-points will gather evidence relevant to these principles and bring out key issues for CSOs in effective development co-operation. By the evidence, the CSO Progress Report will point out limitations of the current monitoring framework and provide recommendations for improving future monitoring.

Also, CPDE has an expanded engagement with the refined set of indicators for the 3MR. This will be with: Indicator 1 (Results Framework), Indicator 2 (Enabling Environment for CSOs), Indicator 3 (Public-Private Dialogue / Private Sector); Indicator 4 (Transparency); Indicator 7 (Mutual Accountability); Indicator 8 (Gender); Indicator 9b (Procurement); and Indicator 10 (Tied aid). Although only Indicator 2 has an official recognized space for CSOs, CPDE has added its own questions for a few of the indicators, which are necessary and reflective of its focal themes.

Objective:

Addressing issues of DO and HRBA to development, the CSO Progress Report aims to:

1. Assess the extent of application of the essential areas and elements of rights-based DO and HRBA to development and implementation of enabling environment for CSOs at the national level
2. Uphold the accountability of governments for the achievement of their commitments since Busan
3. Contribute additional evidence and perspective to the body of evidence that will be produced by the 3MR to reflect realities of the constituencies of the multi-stakeholders, key points about effective development co-operation that may not be addressed by the 3MR, and holistic analysis and conclusion of the monitoring exercise
4. Identify challenges and limitations of the GPEDC monitoring framework and come up with recommendations for improvement

Methodology

The CSO Progress Report will utilize mainly primary data obtained through focus group discussions (FGD) and key informant interviews (KII). CPDE shall finalize a Questionnaire on its selected engagement (Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9b, 10) that shall be framed within DO and HRBA to development principles. The Questionnaire shall be accompanied with Guidelines in administering each question or variable. The country focal-points shall be officially communicating with the National Coordinators on the implementation of the 3MR especially in relation to Indicator 2. They shall organise and gather broad CSO participation at the country level to gather data for the other priority indicators for CPDE's engagement. In the process, they shall organize FGD with CSOs and conduct KII with government officials and ministers, donor representatives and CSOs. The Questionnaire needs to be pretested in an identified country and finalized for implementation. Each country focal-point will analyse the results and prepare the country report. Primary data shall be complemented with secondary literature, documents and statistics for global as well as country-level data, official or otherwise, through extensive desk research.