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# **CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN AID EFFECTIVENESS DISCOURSE**

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## INTRODUCTION: UNDERSTANDING THE AID EFFECTIVENESS AGENDA FROM A CIVIL SOCIETY PERSPECTIVE

The formulation of a set of principles for effective aid - now adhered by over 100 countries as the blueprint for maximising the impact of aid - grew out of a need to understand why aid was not producing the development results everyone wanted to see and to step up efforts to meet the ambitious targets set by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Against the backdrop of the MDGs and the Monterrey summit, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) established the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness which, in turn, organised multilateral High Level Forums (HLFs) to elaborate goals, action plans and operation modalities. The first HLF was held in Rome in 2003, the fourth was held in Busan, South Korea late last year.

**The First High Level Forum (Rome, 2003):** Ministers, Heads of Aid Agencies and other Senior Officials representing 28 aid recipient countries and more than 40 multilateral and bilateral development institutions endorsed the Rome Declaration on Harmonization in February 2003. This was the first occasion where the principles for aid effectiveness were outlined in a concrete declaration. The Rome Declaration listed the following priority actions:

- that development assistance be delivered based on the priorities and timing of the countries receiving it
- that donor efforts concentrate on delegating co-operation and increasing the flexibility of staff on country programmes and projects
- and that good practice be encouraged and monitored, backed by analytic work to help strengthen the leadership that recipient countries can take in determining their development path

**The Second High Level Forum (Paris, 2005):** In 2005 civil society organizations bore witness to the signing of the **Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (PD)**—history’s most recent agreement by donor and recipient countries to reform the delivery and management of aid money in order to strengthen its impact and effectiveness. In 2005, more than 106.8 billion USD

flowed in the form of Official Development Assistance (ODA) from bilateral and multilateral funding agencies to developing country governments<sup>1</sup>.



The commitments were laid out in the Paris Declaration. Beyond its principles on effective aid, the Paris Declaration lays out a practical, action-oriented roadmap to improve the quality of aid and its impact on development. It puts in place a series of specific implementation measures and establishes a monitoring system to assess progress and ensure that donors and recipients hold each other accountable for their commitments.

The Paris Declaration outlines the following five fundamental principles for making aid more effective:



Five Principles For Greater Aid Effectiveness

1. **Ownership:** Developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improve their institutions and tackle corruption.
2. **Alignment:** Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems.
3. **Harmonisation:** Donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication.
4. **Managing for Results:** Developing countries and donors shift focus to development results and results get measured.

1 Kerr, Joanna (AWID). Second Funder Report, “Financial Sustainability for Women’s “movements Worldwide,” p. 48, 2007.

5. **Mutual accountability:** Donors and partners are accountable for development results.



Source:OECD/DAC

The Paris Declaration (PD) is not only the most recent agreement for implementing the aid regime, but is distinct from previous frameworks because it was designed to serve as a practical roadmap for distributing aid. Moreover, the PD is relevant because:

- The agreement seeks to hold donor and recipient countries accountable for their actions through specific **reforms** and **global commitments** (defined by donor countries).
- The PD is in part an **acknowledgement of the failures** of the previous structures that were in place in the 90s: the aid conditionality associated with Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs).
- The PD was agreed to by over one hundred Ministers, heads of Agencies and other Senior Officials<sup>2</sup> who when committing their countries and organisations to the five guiding principles agreed to be evaluated with corresponding measurable **targets and indicators** developed by the DAC and the World Bank to be achieved by 2010<sup>3</sup>.
- Agreements as to the PD implementation, lead by donor countries through the OECD, will influence other negotiations related to

2 [http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_3236398\\_36074966\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.htm](http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,3343,en_2649_3236398_36074966_1_1_1_1,00.htm)

3 DAC/World Bank, "Baseline and suggested targets for the 12 indicators of progress" in Box 2 or at [www.oecd.org/dataoecd/45/46/35230756.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/45/46/35230756.pdf)

development issues that are taking place in other arenas (mostly at the United Nations level).

**Civil Society engagement in Aid Effectiveness Agenda:** The aid effectiveness agenda that emerged as a result of the signing of the PD is based on a commitment to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of aid management and delivery. While the PD principles were welcomed by CSOs, it is crucial to note that many CSOs did not endorse or supported the PD and were pushing for significant review of the agreement as they believed that the declaration was narrowly structured on aid delivery alone, and it failed to address the issues of conditionality imposed by the donors besides having limited civil society participation in the decision making processes.

In the face of these concerns, a group of CSOs came together and initiated an unofficial parallel process open to all organizations, and aimed at feeding knowledge and strategies into the multi-stakeholder advisory group on civil society (AG-CS), the HLF3 Steering Committee, and thus effectively influencing the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) and the overall AE process in the longer run. This **International Civil Society Steering Group** made up of CSO networks and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from the North and South started out as a Facilitating Group of CSOs, established at a workshop held in January at the 2007 World Social Forum in Nairobi. Further discussions took place in March, when CSOs came together in Paris to prepare for a dialogue with the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness at the DAC, and finally, the facilitating group made its final transformation into what is now called the International Civil Society Steering Group (SG).

#### **Recommendations from the international Civil Society Steering Group for making aid more effective and accountable:**

1. Recognize the centrality of poverty reduction, equality and human rights to aid effectiveness
2. End all donor-imposed policy conditionalities
3. Donor and recipient governments must adhere to the highest standards of openness and transparency
4. The AAA must recognize CSOs as development actors in their own right

and acknowledge the conditions that enable them to play effective roles in development

5. Create an effective and relevant independent monitoring and evaluation system for the Paris Declaration and its impact on development outcomes
6. Introduce mutually agreed, transparent and binding contracts to govern aid relationships
7. Create new multi-stakeholder mechanisms for holding governments and donors to account
8. Establish an equitable multilateral governance system for ODA in which to negotiate future agreements on the reform of aid
9. Donor countries must be held to account for commitments they have already made under the PD
10. Commit to giving aid for poverty reduction and the promotion of human rights
11. Expand commitment on untying aid
12. Reform technical assistance to respond to national priorities and build capacity
13. Improve aid allocation to respond to needs
14. New targets to improve multi-year predictability of aid
15. Ensure meaningful participation by CSOs in the Accra HLF

These recommendations are an instrument for pushing towards a more effective aid system that promotes sustainable development that is inclusive of the perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders.

As Brian Tomlinson from CCIC (Canadian Council for International Cooperation) concluded in a background paper:

*The Paris Declaration is an important initiative to reform aid practices, which if implemented will contribute to more effective aid delivery. However, reform will be incomplete and limited in its impact on poverty*

*if the crucial roles of civil society actors in development processes are ignored<sup>4</sup>.*



At the **Third High Level Forum (HLF3 Accra, 2008)**: The forum emphasised the need to deepen implementation towards the goals set in 2005 was identified, along with a set of priority areas for improvement. Designed to strengthen and deepen implementation of the Paris Declaration, the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) takes stock of progress and sets the agenda for accelerated advancement towards the Paris targets. The Accra HLF3 process drew together a unique gathering of developing country government officials, donors and civil society development actors in a process whose goal was to address complex issues of aid and development effectiveness. ‘Many of those involved in HLF3 commented on the influence which CSOs uniquely brought to these deliberations; the CSO presence in Accra was the hallmark of HLF3’.

In their engagement in the Accra HLF3 process, CSOs managed to consolidate recognition of the importance of CSOs’ voice in the aid dialogue, while also influencing the substantive outcomes of the process, most notably seen in its outcome document, the Accra Agenda for Action. In an effort to deepen Paris Declaration commitments, CSOs provided inputs that resonated with the demands of developing country governments on pivotal topics, particularly local ownership, South-South cooperation, transparency, predictability, and policy conditionality. In addition, the Accra Agenda for

Action’s paragraph 20 specifically recognizes CSOs as development actors in

<sup>4</sup> The Paris Declaration on Aid effectiveness donor commitments and civil society critique: Summary of a CCIC Backgrounder, May 2006.” See [http://www.ccic.ca/e/docs/002\\_aid\\_2006-05\\_paris\\_declaration\\_summary.pdf](http://www.ccic.ca/e/docs/002_aid_2006-05_paris_declaration_summary.pdf)

their own right, and commits to greater engagement with them in efforts to address CSO effectiveness and to put in place enabling environments in which CSOs can maximize their contribution to development<sup>5</sup>.

Key strategies of CSO engagement in the HLF3 process included:

- **Solidarity** - Relationships of solidarity among participating CSOs, with Southern CSO leadership and facilitated by the creation of the Better Aid Platform through which CSOs globally could be informed and get engaged.
- **Quality, consistent analysis and messaging** - Through collective reflection and analysis, the ISG built a global, joint message, articulated in the Better Aid policy position paper and applied repeatedly in dialogue with the WP-EF and others. Their messaging was ambitious, constructive and often positive, not least of which was the core message on the importance of ‘democratic ownership’. Through the AG-CS, CSOs also brought quality analysis that informed and was fed by a broad consultation process, ultimately leading to a Synthesis of Findings and Recommendations endorsed by the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF).
- **Balancing insider/outsider tactics** - CSOs chose a dual strategy, ‘playing ball’ both from inside the official aid dialogue framework of the WP-EF through their involvement in the AG-CS, while maintaining an outsider, CSO-led and independent means of dialogue through the ISG.
- **Multi-stakeholder aspect** - The AG-CS provided a living framework of key principles for multi-stakeholder engagement that were carried over to the broader dialogue with the WP-EF and to some degree at country-level, contributing to a high quality dialogue with a constructive tone, in an environment of equality and respect.
- **Leadership and commitment** - A convergence of interest and leadership from key individuals and institutions incited and sustained CSOs’ active

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5 Wood and Valot (October-2009), Strengthening Civil Society’s Roles and Voice: Reflections on CSO Engagement with the Accra Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizen Participation IBON Foundation

involvement in shaping the dialogue and its outcomes within a complex and unpredictable environment. Key stakeholders demonstrated a high level of commitment, including considerable time and energy dedicated by CSOs, despite lack of financing.

- **Widespread consultations** - Widespread regional and national consultations were organized under the mandate of the AG-CS and were a pre-condition for CSO participation in it, including the AG-CS International Forum and the CSO Parallel Forum in Accra. The consultation process served to raise awareness of the aid effectiveness debates; inform analysis and messaging; build ownership and ultimately buy-in by stakeholders; mobilize Southern CSO voices; and contribute a critical political momentum to HLF3.
- **Networking and strategic alliances** - The ISG, itself a formal network comprised primarily of networks, broadened its reach and the voice of CSOs through the informal network of CSOs that voluntarily and proactively identified with the ISG positions and sometimes participated actively in the dialogue and policy influencing opportunities. CSOs and the AG-CS also advanced their positions synergistically through strategic bilateral alliances with other stakeholders affiliated with the WP-EFF.

Following Accra, CSOs launched their own processes to ensure effective implementation of the outcomes of HLF3, but they are also now full members of the WP-EFF, planning the next HLF.

**4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF4):** The Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF4) took place in Busan, South Korea, from 29 November to 1 December 2011.

Busan has been a crucial point in multilateral negotiations on international aid and development cooperation which started at the first High Level Forum in Rome back in 2003. It was a monumental event to take stock of the progress made in delivering aid and furthering development activities across the globe, and to make collective plans for the future of aid and development for all stakeholders.



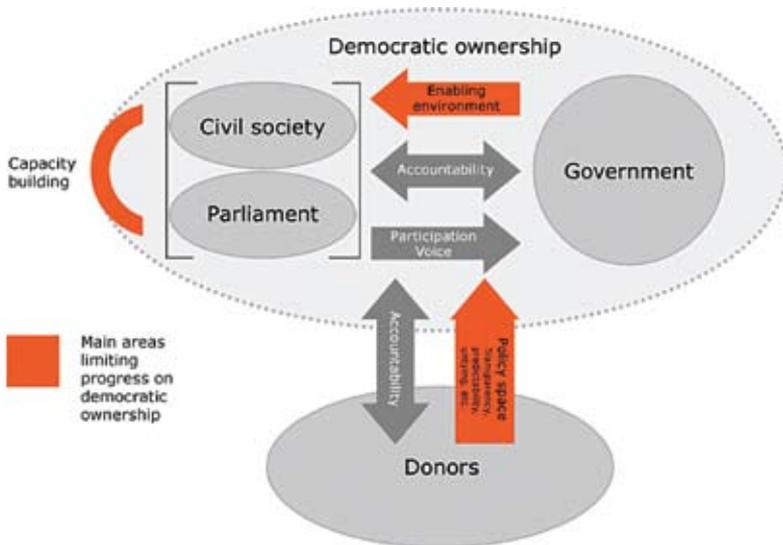
부산 세계개발원조총회  
**4<sup>th</sup> High Level Forum  
 on Aid Effectiveness**  
 29 Nov – 1 Dec 2011, Busan, Korea

For civil society organizations, HLF4 was a particularly significant milestone as it marked the first time that civil society participated as a full and equal stakeholder in aid effectiveness negotiations alongside governments and donors. CSO representatives put forward the conclusions of the BetterAid and Open Forum processes for endorsement. It was thus a unique opportunity to influence development cooperation from the point of view of people's organizations and further the shift from a technical aid effectiveness approach to development effectiveness based on long term sustainability, addressing the root causes of poverty and the realization of human rights.

HLF4 aimed to:

- Assess global progress in improving the quality of aid against the agreed commitments of Paris and Accra
- Share global experiences in delivering the best results and
- Agree on a Busan Outcome Document to further enhance efforts globally and within countries to make aid more effective in reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals

#### HLF4 STAKEHOLDERS AND DEMOCRATIC OWNERSHIP

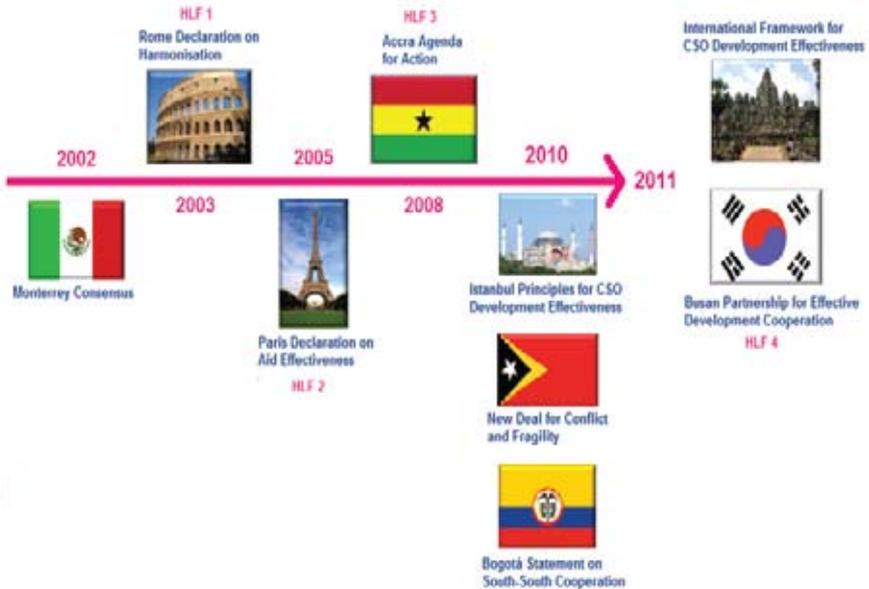


Source: [http://cso-effectiveness.org/4th-high-level-forum-on-aid\\_080](http://cso-effectiveness.org/4th-high-level-forum-on-aid_080)

## For CSOs

- The Busan declaration took into consideration both Istanbul principle and the Siem Reap consensus.
- It has the mention of right based enabling environment for the CSOs but it's too generic in nature.
- Also, there is no explicit commitment for equal role and also BRICS contribution is voluntary

## The Development Effectiveness process



Source: <http://www.oecd.org/dev/devcom/45223738.pdf>

**Launch of CSO Development Effectiveness Partnership-CPDE:** Civil society organisations from across the world launched a new development effectiveness platform in Brussels on June 21, 2012 at an event organised by Concord and Civicus. The CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) is an open platform that brings together CSOs from all over the

world. It is borne of civil society engagement in the aid and development effectiveness agenda. It is the product of two platforms, Better Aid (BA) and Open Forum (OF), both taking stock of the work they have done leading to the HLF-4 and reorganizing themselves in order to more effectively engage the new policy context.

The CPDE is organized as a platform encompassing all levels from local to national to global; it is a coalition that does not require formal membership for a CSO to join except for agreement with the Key Asks paper.

**Need of CPDE:** The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation marked a shift from “aid effectiveness” to “development effectiveness” and reflected a new focus on addressing poverty reduction and factors affecting development, such as human rights, participatory democracy, social and environmental justice and sustainability, gender equality, decent work, sustainable change, and peace and security.

The changing nature of development also reinforced the need for non-aid-based development relationships. The CSO Partnership is an executive member of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation and has structures in place to engage governments and donors, as well as other sectors, such as labour and faith-based organisations.

CPDE focusses on promoting development effectiveness, especially in developing cooperation. Its intention is to mobilise the broadest possible scope and diversity of CSOs to meaningfully and critically engage in the Busan partnership. CPDE also endeavour to focus on delivering outcomes at the country level.

The CPDE works to achieve **human rights, social justice, equality (specifically gender equality) and sustainability in development** as a whole as well as in its own work as a platform of voluntary organizations.

The CPDE aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- **Maintain advocacy efforts in the spirit of the CSO Key Asks to Busan.** The Rights Based Approach to development and especially democratic

ownership and the enabling environment for civil society remain at the heart of the CSO Partnership’s mission;

- **Strengthen the focus on development effectiveness in development cooperation.** This requires addressing the root causes, as well as the symptoms, of poverty, inequality (in particular, gender inequality and women’s rights), marginalization, injustice, and disability;
- **Hold new donors accountable to Paris, Accra and Busan** in their development cooperation. Advocate that emerging donors and governments engaged in South-South cooperation implement the principles of Paris, Accra and Busan, and do not undermine, but contribute to the human rights of all people;
- **Challenge the mainstream notion of economic growth and the private sector as the drivers** of development and articulate alternative approaches in keeping with the CSO Partnership’s vision and goals. The Busan Partnership Document retains economic growth as the framework for development while excluding a comprehensive human rights-based approach, vision and policy framework to hold business to account and to promote decent work for all;
- **Influence new areas of work as they arise through the Global Partnership,** in keeping with our vision, values and goals.
- **The CSO Partnership will continue to mobilise, outreach and advocate** around these key asks to influence the changing architecture and understanding of aid and development effectiveness<sup>6</sup>

**CPDE Policy Engagement and Action at all levels:** The CPDE consistently organize its work in a manner that is “country-focused” and ensures that structures and groups at sub-regional and regional levels enhance this focus

**Constituencies of sectoral and major groups engaged at all levels -** The CPDE also fully acknowledge the importance of thematic and sector groups, whose expertise are valued at all levels. Sectors are key constituencies

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.concordeurope.org/250-launch-of-cso-development-effectiveness-partnership>

essential for effective reach especially at grassroots level and application of rights-based approaches in our work. There would be effective constituency building and participation in CPDE for major sectors and groups such as labor, women, youth, rural folk, indigenous, disabled, faith-based organizations and NGOs/INGOs at all levels of work. Marginalized grassroots groups will also be strongly represented in all governance and working group structures and be assured of resources allocated for their participation.

**National Level** - The CPDE will work in ways that promote the construction of democratic ownership, involving the creation or strengthening of multi-stakeholder country platforms that advocate CSO engagement in policy dialogue and monitoring and evaluation of development cooperation processes. It will

- Ensure development efforts are strategic, operational and effective and resources will be maximized.
- demand CSO participation in the planning, implementation, M & E
- broaden citizen participation and hold governments accountable by reporting on and raising these in venues where they can be addressed
- Push for/lobby to make aid information accessible

**Regional and Sub-Regional Levels** - The CPDE will work in a way that sub-regional frameworks will support the country focus, the regional frameworks will ensure policy engagement with institutions and processes as well as operational coordination to support sub-regions and will orient countries on access to funding opportunities.

- Establish connection between the local and global
- Monitor of country/local level and raise critical issues at the global level
- Regional formations engage with state actors and interstate frameworks
- Members of regional formations are able to share goals and share resources

## Global Level - The CPDE will

- (1) engage with the Post-Busan Interim Group (PBIG)/ Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF),
- (2) engage in long term governance mechanisms of the GPEDC,
- (3) respond to the monitoring needs of Paris, Accra and Busan implementation,
- (4) engage with the Building blocks such as the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI),
- (5) initiate CSO-led multi stakeholder initiatives and
- (6) Engage with the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) to strengthen CSO partnership<sup>7</sup>.

**CPDE focus on CSO Roles:** CPDE focusses the following roles of CSOs

- Community Organizations
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Research and Policy Dialogue
- Platform and Network formulation
- Service Delivery
- Resource Mobilization
- Information and Education

With such development, the aid development is surely moving from aid effectiveness to development effectiveness.

<sup>7</sup> Consultations for Establishing the CSO Platform for Development Effectiveness (CPDE), [http://cso-effectiveness.org/IMG/pdf/info\\_sheet\\_cpde\\_regional\\_and\\_sectoral\\_consultations.pdf](http://cso-effectiveness.org/IMG/pdf/info_sheet_cpde_regional_and_sectoral_consultations.pdf)

