

CSO Development Effectiveness Brief Report on National Consultation in Georgia



საზოგადოებრივი ორგანიზაციები და ევროპური განვითარება CSO Development Effectiveness

სასტუმრო ვერე პალასი, ბაკურიანი, 25-27 ივნისი, 2010
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At the outset of the meeting the participants have discussed the chief components of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action. It was noted that the shift of emphasis from the aid effectiveness to the development effectiveness and recognition of CSOs as equal partners in this process was a progressive and a rather significant step in the Accra document. This in its turn rests even more responsibility on CSOs for them to be more effective and engage actively in the development process.



The participants have discussed the role of CSOs in the development process. It was observed that the Georgian CSOs are actively engaged in various areas of the development process and they have a cooperative advantages in a number of aspects. In particular, the knowledge on various aspects of development is accumulated in the sector, developed mechanisms for passing on this knowledge exist, organizations are well aware of local and thematic problems, they possess research skills, and often they propose new and innovative initiatives. Yet, there are numerous challenges that the sector faces at the

moment. Among others it was particularly stressed that the sector has been considerably weakened, public recognition and feedback with the population is low, no consistent vision on development exists, partnership and sector solidarity are poor, and more attention should be paid to transparency and accountability.

The participants have discussed in individual groups the internal and external factors that have impact on the effectiveness of development of the CSOs. At the plenary session each group has presented the analysis of chief factors, which are of most concern in the given reality.

Four consolidated issues have been identified among the internal factors: institutional development, accountability and transparency, effectiveness, and partnership. Existing situation and challenges have been analyzed in respect of each factor. The importance and priority was stressed of issues such as the new leaders and faces, homogeneity of funding, lack of monitoring and evaluation systems and skills, low degree of involvement of target groups, ineffective practice of accountability to the public, shortage of platforms, networks, and coalitions, etc.



Three main issues have been identified during the analysis of external factors: relations with the authorities, policy of the donors and international organizations, and funding sources. Priority challenges have been outlined based on the discussion and the analysis – need for institutionalization of relations with the authorities, robustness of the authorities in the dialogue concerning the issues of political importance, lack of effective communication with the donors and international organizations, and the homogeneity of funding sources.

On the next day of the meeting the participants have discussed the valuable principles that determine CSOs effectiveness. 26 principles have been pinpointed, which in the opinion of participants are most significant in the Georgian reality. Namely, focus on the public, solidarity, communication with the population, orientation on sustainable results, accountability, transparency, focus on overcoming the poverty, consistency, partnership/cooperation, cost-effectiveness, human rights and social justice, sustainable impact, good faith, drive, representativeness/legitimacy, civil courage, rule of law, self-development, high quality services, involvement of target groups, volunteerism, independence/impartiality, equality/equal opportunities/tolerance, adherence to principles, gender equality, coordination of activities. Out of pinpointed principles, 6 most priority principles have been selected by the participative ranking method: focus on the public, human rights and social justice, partnership, orientation on sustainable results, civil courage/responsibility, and the high quality service. Participants in the groups have developed the ways of effective realization of the priority principles.

In addition, the meeting participants have discussed the standards of enabling environment and have elaborated the steps necessary for improving the environment. In respect of the donors' policy they have identified issues like the improvement of communication between the CSOs and donors, fitting the programs in existing problems more effectively, programmatic funding and promotion of institutional development, need for more effective coordination among the donors, minimization of bureaucratic procedures, and orientation on long-term policies.

It was observed with respect to the legislation that the legislative base is quite developed; however, it requires further improvement for it to gain the mode that promotes the CSO development. Importantly, this requires the improvement of tax legislation and introduction in it of provisions stimulating the development of CSOs, as well as more stimulation of support of the sector from the business at the legislative level. Legal regulation of volunteerism, absence of which considerably hinders the development of this institute in Georgia, is necessary. It is equally important to establish effective mechanisms/forms of state funding of publicly beneficial activities, and its institutionalization and founding on the principles of transparency and civil sector participation.



The participants have identified the accountability and transparency as a separate issue. Major issues such as accountability to the public, donors, and the state, transparency, trust building and raising of awareness have been discussed. It was noted that the accountability to the donors and the state is functioning properly as this issue is regulated under the legislation and the contracts. As for the accountability to the public and the target groups, challenges in this field are still weighty. Proposals for resolving the issue have been developed. It was observed that it is necessary to develop a uniform strategy of CSOs on the accountability and to introduce the culture of the so-called sectoral accountability.

At the end of the meeting the work carried out has been summarized. It was noted that the work on the effectiveness of development of CSOs is a rather significant process and shifting emphases on it was timely. As the development of the public sector, as well as the effectiveness of the country's development will benefit considerably from continuing the process and heading it in the right direction. A working group has been set up from the meeting participants, which has undertaken responsibility for drafting the report on the workshop and further development of the processes. It was stressed also that the processes should head towards building the national platform on CSO Development Effectiveness.

