

RT6: The role of civil society in enhancing aid effectiveness

Key messages to the Ministerial Dinner, on Wednesday 3rd September

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Background

The aim of RT6 was to build upon the work of the AG-CS, a multistakeholder group reporting to the WP-EFF, which engaged in considerable preparatory work over the past 18 months through an extensive consultation process, analytical work, and case studies intended to provide practical guidance.

The roundtable had three objectives:

- a. to consolidate a shared understanding and recognition of the roles that civil society organizations (CSOs) can play in development, and in advancing the aid effectiveness agenda;
- b. to discuss actionable ideas on CSO effectiveness; and
- c. to develop a sense of momentum around a forward agenda for multi-stakeholder dialogue and action between now and the next HLF.

The first part of the roundtable focused on the promise and possibility of greater CSO involvement, including

- a. practical examples of experience;
- b. issues and obstacles (e.g. accountability, legitimacy, capacity); and
- c. proposed solutions to ensure that the contributions of CSOs to aid effectiveness achieve their full potential.

The second part focused on the forward agenda.

Results

A first result of the work of the AG-CS has been increased recognition and understanding of the many roles of civil society and of the importance and value of CSOs as developing actors in their own right and as aid recipients, donors and partners. That recognition is now very widespread.

But beyond mere recognition, there is also:

- a. a desire by all parties to work together more closely; and
- b. a desire by CSOs to include CSO effectiveness as a topic worthy of serious attention.

That this recognition and desire to engage are now recognized in the AAA is a significant development.

Forward agenda

There are many things in the AAA of direct relevance to CSOs. Looking towards the future, we propose several lines of work:

- a. working together to provide a more enabling environment for CSOs, including appropriate models of donor support;
- b. capacity development and strengthening of civil society at country level;

- c. work on how CSOs themselves can better work together in partnership with each other (North-South, South-South, global networks, national umbrella organizations...);
- d. support for the independent CSO process on CSO development effectiveness;
- e. start preparing the ground for CSO engagement in HLF4, and to ensure that a multi-stakeholder perspective on CSO effectiveness is a major theme of HLF4.