



Macedonian Center for International Cooperation

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Report on the participation at the Second High Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) in Nairobi, Kenya

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1. Introduction and participation at sessions

I attended the Second High-Level Meeting (HLM2) of the GPEDC in Kenya from 28th of November to 1st of December 2016. The Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN) was recognized by Fond-Romania as very active on issues related to enabling environment for CSOs and development effectiveness, and was invited to participate in the discussions at the HLM2, network and engage with organisations all over the world on these issues. Particularly important is that the Balkan region was recognized as a region with separate challenges than the Black Sea thus the need for own representative at the CPDE. After the internal call for representative amongst the members launched by BCSDN, as a representative from MCIC, I applied for participation and was awarded full funding, thus representing the Balkans in the delegation of the European Region within CPDE. I took part at the three parts of the event. Namely the first preparatory days were the Women forum and CSO Forum. After that followed the two-day HLM2, where I attended mostly the plenary discussions as well as numerous side events. The objectives of the meeting were to track progress, exchange best practices and renew commitments for an effective development co-operation in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Moreover, the meeting also had the purpose of renewing the mandate of the GPEDC and setting up the working arrangements in the new context. Prior to going to the meeting, I prepared some key points regarding the environment in which Western Balkan civil society functions and development cooperation, as a guide messages for the discussions at HLM2, that were consulted with the project partners from the regional project on development cooperation. The participation of HLM2 was an intensive and very useful learning experience in terms of knowledge in the topic, different practices and challenges all over the world and examples of CSOs networks engaging in this issues. The event also offered a valuable experience through my participation in the global consultations. The delegates from CSOs jointly discussed their positions and messages, as well as the key requirements of CSOs worldwide. They were incorporated in a document that emerged at the end of the conference - Nairobi Outcome Document (NOD) as a guideline for effective development assistance.

2. Individual contribution

The European delegation which I was part of, being tireless in their work provided us with a lot of opportunity to contribute to our statement as CSOs towards the outcome document. Firstly, I contributed by giving a concrete suggestion for using stronger language concerning one point of the document.

Also, as part of the second day at the CSOs forum I had the opportunity to share my views regarding what is needed in the session of the European delegation, and later volunteered to support the creation of two points that will add up to the CSOs statement as outcome of the group.

At the last day of HLM2, I attended the meeting at the CPDE stand where few steps were agreed as a reaction to the outcome document depending on the final text. Later at the event, I participated at the stunt, and shared information timely with the BCSDN regarding our CSOs imperatives document (so they could further spread the message).

As a preparation before arriving in Kenya, I have drafted a document with key asks from WB countries reflecting our challenges, that helped me structure my discussion and interests further in the conference. Contribution to CSO commitments in NOD will be done on regional and national level. Regarding the regional level, I was representing also BCSDN as a network, and shared information with all the relevant partners in the project Western Balkan CSOs for Global Development, led by Horizon3000.



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3. Reflection of the event

The Western Balkans region constituencies were looking into communicating their own message (or key asks as they were named), and prior to the meeting we have prepared a document. Also we made efforts to share timely news through the BCSDN web-site. As I could witness, the level of preparation of the European region delegates was high, having very knowledgeable people always alert and experienced in involving others as well as working under pressure. The support provided by CPDE was great and they have really met all my questions and requirements regarding my stay. However the complete logistics of the conference were somewhat messy having in mind the first two days lengthy badges collection, the lack of solid information on the complete agenda but it is understandable since many organizers were involved in this conference. Also more space should have been provided for face-to-face discussions concretely for the European delegation, since we only had only the official 30 minutes workshop, but under time pressure and having numerous different delegates it was difficult to significantly engage everyone. The tireless flow of information by our colleagues from the European delegation regarding the CSO position regarding the NOD was very useful and informative, keeping us updated on the current happenings as well as giving us the possibility to react.

4. Future plans

As a follow-up of my participation at the HLM2, various actions will be undertaken. In terms of sharing knowledge and information, as well as networking, I will engage on regional and national level. On regional level I will engage with partner organizations (through BCSDN and the regional projects I am involved in), and I will encourage localizing and using the NOD. Additionally, I have acquired glimpse of the process of how global consultations are difficult and challenging to be organized, which is very useful especially when we collaborate regionally. On national level I will share my participation at the HLM2 with other interested CSOs.

As a project coordinator, of a project aiming to strengthen capacities of CSOs and influence national policies regarding development cooperation, I have obtained a lot of practical knowledge about the ongoing debates and pressing issues, as well idea on how civil society role should be imagined in relation to the SDGs. This will give me clear direction on how to steer the outcomes, discussions and materials (e.g. trainings, roundtables, policy briefs, in-depth study). This experience of attending the HLM2 is particularly important when it comes to a successful advocacy on national and regional level. The NOD commitments should be reflected in the policies of the national authorities in order for Macedonia, as well as the rest of the Western Balkan countries contribute firmly and effectively towards the global agenda for development until 2030. Namely, in Macedonia and all the other Western Balkan countries the significance of NOD will be further tested and hopefully would serve as a catalyzer of mutual action and cooperation between relevant stakeholders. In this regard, firstly together with other CSOs we will localize a CSO statement to communicate with different institutions such as: Ministry of Foreign affairs, Secretariat for European Affairs, the UNDP as well as the vice-premier cabinet leading the process of SDGs in Macedonia, as well as the biggest businesses in the country etc.

After HLM2, together with our partner organizations from the region we will further develop our key asks (or our WB CSOs imperatives) and use it as a regional advocacy tool. Particularly important is that this document recognizes the need for enabling environment for CS, especially when it comes to respect and implementation of the basic freedoms (association, expression and assembly) that are increasingly under threat in WB countries in the past few years.

Links of news shared related to HLM2:

- <http://mcms.mk/mk/vesti-i-javnost/vesti/1863-globalno-partnerstvo-za-efektivna-razvojna-sorabotka.html>
- <http://www.balkancsd.net/hlm2-kenya-civil-society-standing-up-for-civic-space-and-enabling-environment-as-imperative-for-effective-development-cooperation/>