

IMPLEMENTING COUNTRY FOCUS

CPDE Guideline for Ensuring Work at the Country-Level

Approved by the CPDE Coordination Committee during its 9th CC Meeting, The Hague

This Implementing Country Focus document was prepared by the CPDE Global Secretariat to provide a framework ensuring country work of CPDE units. As a guideline, it gives liberty for all implementing units for interpretation based on their contextual needs and priorities.

Agreeing on country-focus mandate

1. Since its establishment in 2012, the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) is mandated to ensure the implementation of its work at the country-level. This mandate can be found in the CPDE Founding Document, *Building a CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness*, which commits CPDE to consistently organise its work in a manner that is country-focused.
2. For the platform, country-level work of CSOs is particularly important in the whole development landscape. The reasons for this include:
 - *The specific country context determines development priorities, initiatives and actions of all actors in the country, including CSOs;*
 - *This is where impacts of CSO work is most evident in the lives and conditions of the poor and marginalised;*
 - *This is where governments are shaping legal, regulatory and policy regimes affecting CSOs as development actors (whether or not they are aligned with international norms); and,*
 - *This is where the most direct, multi-stakeholder dialogues should be open and accessible for CSO participation and citizens' inputs.*
3. All CPDE units share the responsibility to demonstrate impact of their country work. However, there are differences in the execution of this responsibility depending on the nature and context of the constituency. In general, content and process of CPDE's country work and global frameworks (e.g., objectives, principles, strategies/approaches, policy asks, capacity assessment, plans, resources, etc.) should reciprocally, and perhaps progressively, align. Systematic and concerted efforts from respective units are required to achieve this.

Ensuring the country-focus mandate of the platform

4. Identification of country-level activities for all units must be aligned with: (a) the operating CPDE programme; (b) list of priority countries; and (c) political imperatives of the countries and the implementing units.
5. *On advocacy and campaigning.* CPDE recognises that the strength and credibility of its advocacy work is reinforced by evidence-based advocacy. To enhance this, the platform needs to strengthen the synergies between the global and local level, highlighting country realities and the struggles of its members and partners. The translation of CPDE advocacy at the country-level can be differentiated into two areas:

- a. *As a global CSO platform on development effectiveness, the main foci of CSO advocacy at different levels, including country, are the following:*

Aid and Development Effectiveness

- Advocacy work on development cooperation and aid and development effectiveness, including South-South Cooperation, Agenda2030 or Sustainable Development Agenda, Human Rights-Based Approach to Development, Fragility and Militarism, and Private Sector in Development
- Monitoring and evaluation of development policies and practices and reinforcing accountability of government, donors and the private sector
- Advocacy for and the role of CSOs can play in the delivery of basic services and programs
- Advocating inclusive partnerships as manifestation of democratic ownership
- Engagement in research and policy dialogue on the above-mentioned themes

Enabling Environment

- Mobilising grassroots communities, the poor and marginalised peoples for rights
- Enhancing civil society coordination and impacts, and building solidarity
- Educating the public and helping shape social values of solidarity and social justice
- Advocating human rights as basis for inclusive development
- Mobilising additional financial resources and volunteers, including developing means for local funding support through partnerships

CSO Development Effectiveness

- Promoting and implementing Istanbul Principles and the International Framework
- Advocating for and operationalising mechanisms for CSO Accountability

- b. *As a broad CSO platform for **universalising effective development cooperation** bymaking development issue grounded and meaningful for the people.* Country members should own the platform and utilise it as a channel for country-specific advocacies and campaigns concerning issues on development, which may directly or indirectly be related to development cooperation. Country CSOs should also use the platform as a mechanism for monitoring different stakeholders with their commitments for development.

6. *On communications and information management.* Implementing units (especially Regional Secretariats) are enjoined to develop a communications plan that address and highlight country level contexts and CPDE work at this level At the country-level, the platform functions to serve as information exchange channel between and among sectors, as well as bridge between organisations and the public ensuring transparency and accountability in CSO actions.
7. *On capacity development.* As with communications, implementing units (especially Regional Secretariats) will formulate a capacity development plan that support the implementation of CPDE programme at country-level. Concretely, working groups and

regions, in coordination with existing country structures or country focal organisation, are required to include plans for capacity development initiatives consistent with both CPDE programme and political imperatives of the country. Sectors, on the other hand, will maintain their *right to initiative* in planning and implementing country work. They, however, will be encouraged to coordinate their actions with concerned unit/s at the country-level. Country-level actions should also encourage the participation of different country sectors and CSO actors.

8. On CSO participation and multi-stakeholder engagement. CPDE country work should strive for the inclusion and broad participation of all sectors in development, particularly working on development cooperation. CPDE country units should endeavor to reach out to all sectors, including those not yet included in the formal structure of the CPDE. As an inclusive CSO platform working on development cooperation, CPDE country units have the responsibility to represent CSOs in engagements with the government and/or other stakeholders on the issue of effective development cooperation, and forge for meaningful participation in development processes.

Ensuring complementarity and accountability of country work

9. Regional Coordinating Committees, facilitated by Regional Secretariats, will be the focal units to facilitate and ensure implementation of country work. Each region will decide how best to coordinate and integrate country plans in the regional work plan. To effectively fulfill this task, **conduct of mapping exercises** to scope existing CPDE structures, and country platforms as baseline for country work will be the responsibility of Regional Secretariats.
10. In the absence of Regional Coordinating Committees, the Regional Secretariat and the Regional focal point/s will fulfill the roles stated above until such committee is formed. The Regional Secretariat and the focal point/s are encouraged to initiate mechanisms for communication and coordination at the regional level among different constituencies.
11. Whenever possible, Regional Units should work with existing CPDE country focal points and/or structures. Country focal points should ensure the **multi-sectoral, inclusive** nature of platform-building or expansion.
12. In countries which do not have such structures, Regional Units (and country focal points, if available) should link up and work with existing national CSO platforms or the equivalent to carry out the work of CPDE. The Regional Units (and country focal points) have the responsibility of introducing the development effectiveness agenda and the CPDE to the national platform, and discuss possible synergies.
13. CPDE's country-level work should have clear intended (country-level) results that benefit from inputs of all relevant units of CPDE. **Working Groups and Sectors** implementing country work will be required to comply with the *CPDE Protocols on the Ways for Working*. They will need to consult with the Regional Units, through the

Regional Secretariat, and the CPDE country focal points and structures, if they plan to do country work.

14. Likewise, CPDE country units can, through Regional Secretariats, solicit inputs and expert opinion from **Working Groups and Sectors** for initiatives or actions specific to their mandate.

Supporting CPDE country work

15. The Global Secretariat maintains responsibility of designing global planning framework. It will receive country level plans from the Regional Secretariats and endeavor to consolidate these in the global plan.
16. Allocation for country resources will be subject to negotiation between the Global Secretariat and the Implementing Units. However, it must be duly noted that country work and resource allocation should be prioritised by Regional Units.
17. CPDE's country level work is not limited by what is supported by the programme resources. Priority countries are identified primarily to focus resources where it is most needed and can make the most impact.
18. The Global and Regional Secretariats will cooperate to inform the country structures on the availability of technical support and non-financial resources from any units of the CPDE for country activities.
19. CPDE's global resources cannot fully fund all country-level activities. The principle adopted by CPDE of decentralised fundraising will be supported and encouraged at all levels. This level of fundraising is expected to supplement the resources coming from the global programme and bring the level of resourcing closer to the level of ambition.
20. In cases where different implementing units (e.g. sectors and working groups) will conduct work at specific countries, they are encouraged to pool their resources together and maximise their actions. The Global Secretariat and the Outreach Committee will have the oversight to ensure synergy of all work and actions, based on the platform protocol on Ways of Working.

Process of reporting and monitoring country programme

21. To facilitate internal and external communications and extension of assistance, basic information on all country activities will be relayed to the Global Secretariat. Communications can either come from the Regional Secretariats or directly from the country structures or focal points, with copy to the respective Regional Secretariat.
22. The Regional Secretariat will note activity reports and relay this to the Global Secretariat. The Regional Secretariats are also tasked to consolidate bi-annual reports and use this information to inform further facilitation of country planning. The Regional

Secretariats will relay these country reports, together with the regional consolidation/analysis to the Global Secretariat.

23. The Global Secretariat will consolidate all reports and come up with a report that will endeavour to reflect country focus. It will facilitate the global assessment process informed by all levels of reporting, especially country level.