In its recent global webinar, civil society platform CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) described the pandemic response around the world as ineffective and seriously lacking in terms of human rights and the Leave No One Behind principle, drawing from its multistakeholder research World in lockdown, development on hold: A special CPDE report on the (in)effectiveness of the Covid-19 response.

Dr. Michael Ryan, Executive Director of the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Emergencies Programme and keynote speaker at the event, echoed the findings: “A lot of communities right now are in the rearview mirror and not being observed through the lens of equity and human rights. This pandemic is uneven around the world, it’s uneven in its impacts. It’s been a great revealer: it peeled away the bandages from old wounds in our society and it’s also revealed and driven new inequities.”

Dr. Ryan lamented that while there had been great examples of community resilience and international cooperation, including in the civil society, to fight the pandemic, the world is “not doing a really good job at ensuring that basic human rights are being upheld: the right to
“We got an F (fail), in terms of not leaving everyone behind.”
- Dr. Michael Ryan, WHO

health, the right to have access to health, the right to personal dignity, and in some cases, Covid-19 has been actually utilised as a means of denying people their rights. “We got an F (fail), in terms of not leaving everyone behind,” he said.

Dr. Ryan later congratulated CPDE on the report, remarking, “It’s quite impressive. I really like the way you looked at democratic ownership and inclusive partnerships, transparency, accountability. And that focus on results, I think that’s really important,” adding, “Too many times, we speak in abstractions. We really need to look at how we generate results, at how we measure results. And how we use results to drive what we do.”

Co-Chair Beverly Longid, and Latin America and the Caribbean region’s Josefina Villegas shared that many states have used the pandemic to attack human rights and civil liberties, such as the freedoms of movement, association, and organisation, and that some countries have deployed excessive police force, instead of comprehensive medical solutions as the primary response to the pandemic.

The attacks on democratic rights and spaces, the research explains, “limit systems and mechanisms for promoting effective development cooperation (EDC) principles in the pandemic response and undermined the position of civil society organisations (CSOs) as development partners and independent actors in their own right.” At the same time, the study recognises that despite the pandemic’s challenges and the shrinking of civic space, CSOs have continued to engage in advocacy work, helping create alternative development plans especially for the marginalised, to leave no one behind.

On the subject of Covid-19 and its impact on implementing the effectiveness agenda at country level, Ulrika Modeer, Assistant Secretary General, Assistant Administrator, and Director of the Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy at the United Nations Development Programme, explained that the pandemic’s main challenge to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) would be the growing
inequalities – between poor and rich countries, and inside rich countries as well – which have enabled the spread of the pandemic. She also pointed to the need to look at the principle of development effectiveness and challenge countries, donors, and government to leverage resources around it.

Meanwhile, in her session ‘Making aid transparent, predictable and accountable to improve the effectiveness of the pandemic response,’ Gabriella Fesus, Head of Social Inclusion and Protection, Health and Demography, European Commission, spoke of the Commission’s efforts to mobilise resources, including financial and technical support, and acknowledged that there is a need to improve the system, and develop further ownership, alignment, and inclusiveness.

Independent researcher for the CPDE International Civil Society Organisations (ICSO) sector Catherine Turner found the same impacts on international civil society, in their research. CSOs, she explained, faced limitations to their operating environment, in the form of shrinking civic space and movement restriction, as well as concerns around funding and being excluded by the government from decision-making, even as they are being engaged by governments.

Helen Holm, coordinator for Covid-19 response at the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), accepting Dr. Ryan’s point regarding the world’s failure in promoting human rights in its pandemic response, and talked about how donors can do better in applying the effective development cooperation principles in the pandemic response in order to truly Leave No One Behind and deliver results. For instance, she explains that Sida early on recognised the need to support civil society, even more as restrictive measures were put in place.

Finally, Monica Asuna, Deputy Chief Economist at the National Treasury of Kenya, shared challenges in addressing the country’s priority concerns, especially the need for social assistance to the heavily affected and for health equipment and other resources to fight the pandemic, in her segment on whether Covid-19 responses are respecting the EDC principle on Country Ownership.

The discussions were moderated by CPDE Co-Chair Justin Kilcullen. CPDE is an open platform that unites civil society organisations from around the world on the issue of effective development cooperation (EDC). It strives to make development more effective by reshaping the global aid architecture and empowering CSOs working on the ground.

To download the study and learn more, visit CPDE’s webpage on its Covid-19 engagements, csopartnership.org/covid-19.
The COVID-19 pandemic and related crises call for higher levels of ODA

Statement by the OECD-DAC CSO Reference Group

Today, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) announced that over the course of 2020 DAC donors allocated 161.2 billion USD of official development assistance (ODA), more commonly known as ‘development aid’. Despite the long-standing commitment to contribute 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) towards ODA, the 2020 figures show that only 32 cents for every $100 in national income was allocated to addressing global development and humanitarian challenges. Such low ODA levels are both economically unwise and morally flawed, given the current pandemic and interconnected crises, including climate change, conflict, fragility, and rising poverty and inequalities.

COVID-19 is not a fleeting crisis – it has already left a lasting impact on all aspects of our societies, disrupting 25 years of global progress against poverty and inequalities in a matter of months. The world’s most marginalised are disproportionately affected. COVID-19 is pushing an estimated 150 million people into extreme poverty, and 137 million to the brink of starvation, representing an increase of over 80% in acute hunger since before the pandemic began.

Before the pandemic, donors were already off-track to achieve their international aid commitments. The consequences of COVID-19 requires the DAC community to considerably increase its ODA levels. ODA is a vital resource for supporting those most in need to help counter the negative trends coming from the pandemic, compounded by the climate emergency and persisting conflicts and fragility. In 2020, DAC donors prioritised their national responses towards COVID at the expense of international aid. This 2021, a substantial and immediate increase in ODA levels must be the top priority to ensure the achievement of the 2030 Agenda on time. Now is the time to move beyond mainly protecting existing aid budgets as the released figures show.

76 civil society organisations across the world are calling on DAC members to fulfill and exceed the 0.7% target for ODA and the 0.15% to 0.2% target for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), prioritising unconditional grants and technical support. We urge the DAC to work with the experience of partner countries, DAC members and other stakeholders to ramp up the role of aid in support of health, education, social protection, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention in the midst of this unfinished crisis. Furthermore, we call on donors to uphold the integrity of ODA, building on decades of lessons for effective development cooperation, and to uphold human rights and development effectiveness principles.

For the full list of signatories, visit https://bit.ly/3nr0Wxz
We, the Co-chairs of CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness, wish to express our solidarity with our co-chair Beverly Longid, a leading rights advocate from the Philippines and also the Global Coordinator of the International Indigenous People’s Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation.

As a global civil society platform, we work towards the advancement of human rights and civil liberties. We believe in upholding the people’s rights to free expression, peaceful assembly, association, civic participation and social dialogue. We stand for an empowered civil society, which can speak truth to power and perform the necessary checks for governments and corporations.

These pillars of democracies must be protected at all times. They are the people’s means to fight for their welfare and interests, and to seek redress against oppression and exploitation. They are key to the attainment of social justice and genuine development.

Sadly, civic freedoms and civil society and people’s organisations have been under attack around the world, in what we refer to as the global pattern of shrinking civic space. We have especially been closely monitoring the situation in the Philippines, and facts reveal that human rights defenders in the country are being targeted relentlessly and with impunity. Hundreds of rights advocates are being harassed, imprisoned, abducted, tortured, even murdered. Civil society organisations are being prevented from doing advocacy work through bureaucratic restrictions. Our colleagues and partners are being tagged as terrorists for devoting their lives in the service of the marginalised.
In Beverly’s case, one of her affiliations, the Cordillera People’s Alliance (CPA), along with other progressive organisations, is being tagged as an enemy of the state. Other indigenous people’s leaders in the country also face threats to their lives: there is a shoot-to-kill order on Windel Bolinget of CPA, and just before the year ended, nine Tumandok leaders in Central Philippines were killed.

Having worked with many members of these formations, we at CPDE know that they are responsible for legitimate and important work for the promotion of Indigenous Peoples rights and human rights, such as campaigns in defense of ancestral land, self-determination, environmental protection, and sustainable production and consumption. For over three decades, CPA has campaigned against large-scale mining, dam construction, logging, and militarization, among other activities that brought great harm to their communities. The murdered Tumandoks were resisting a mega-dam project that will destroy their homes and livelihood.

Indigenous People leaders and advocates deserve State support and recognition, not defamation or vilification. We strongly denounce these attacks on human rights under the rule of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte. We demand accountability for all the crimes being committed against the people’s civic freedoms.

Last year, we led civil society organisations in the Belgrade Call to Action campaign. We asked United Nations Member States - which include the Philippines - to act to reverse the closing and shrinking space for civil society, to stop the attacks on human rights defenders and the undermining of democratic participation, and to renew the prospects for an inclusive agenda 2030, and the full realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We continue to uphold these calls, for Beverly Longid and the rest of our Filipino allies, as well as for the human rights defenders around the world. We laud their commitment and stand by them in their fight for a better society for all.

Signed,
Marita Gonzalez
Justin Kilcullen
Monica Novillo
Richard Ssewakiryanga
CPDE Co-Chairs
CPDE LAC’s DECA Equipo Pueblo holds presscon for recovering and strengthening civic spaces in Mexico

In line with their mission to strengthen democratic participation through civil society, DECA Equipo Pueblo, a Global Council member and the Mexico and Central America sub-regional representative of the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness held a virtual press conference on January 15, 2021 titled, “For the defense of civic spaces and an enabling environment for CSOs.”

Throughout the event, 11 civil society actors based in six different regions across Mexico from Baja California Sur to Yucatan, provide a complete picture of the challenges and struggles civil society face in the country as their rights to association, expression, and participation become increasingly limited.

The event speakers were:

- **Laura Becerrra**, Executive Director of DECA Equipo Pueblo
- **Luis Pineda**, Project Manager of Municipal Strengthening and Local Development at DECA Equipo Pueblo
- **Miguel Concha**, President of the Fray Francisco de Vitoria Human Rights Centre
- **Rafael Reygadas**, Executive Secretary of SEDEPAC (Service, Development and Peace)
- **Monserrat Flores Higuera**, Executive Director of Society, Culture and Environment
- **Carmen Novelo**, Project Coordinator at ADL Visión Compartida
- **Eugenia Mata**, Director of IDEMO (Initiative for the Development of Oaxacan Women)
- **Jorge Figueroa Cancino**, President of the Sinaloa Council of CSOs
- **Julio Cesar Hernandez**, Director of IMAC (Mante Institute)
- **Oscar Miron**, Coordinator of the Veracruz Council of CSOs
- **Margarita Argott**, Coordinator of CSO Convergence

This event is part of a wider National Campaign launched by CSOs in Mexico to denounce the tendency of canceling civic spaces based on measures that are contrary to development. Close to 200 organisations and personalities have joined the National Campaign movement, demanding that the various spheres of government intervene to stop the closing of Mexican civic spaces.
More concretely, in this conference, the organisations that join the Campaign demand that the Executive reconsider the restrictive measures adopted in February 2019 and consequently push forward:

- **A political dialogue** to agree on joint strategies to reverse the progressive closure of civic spaces
- **Compliance with the obligations of the Federal Law** for the Promotion of CSO Activities
- **The formalisation of a Special Promotion Program** that obliges all levels of government, including state authorities, to implement public policies based on strengthening civil society
- **Consultations with the legislative branch** regarding possible reforms to formalise mechanisms for citizen participation
- **Advancement of multi-stakeholder dialogues** between governments, donors, recipients, multilateral agencies and the media.
- **Measures and mechanisms that reverse the closure of civic space** and create an enabling environment for CSOs

**The full conference is available on their Facebook page** on fb.com/decapueblo.

Civil society organisations in Mexico are not alone in their fight against shrinking civic spaces. Across the globe, a pattern of repression has been limiting the autonomy of civil society and people's organisations.

In response, CPDE has led a campaign called **Belgrade Call to Action**, which asks United Nations Member States to act to reverse the closing and shrinking space for civil society, to stop the attacks on human rights defenders and the undermining of democratic participation, and to renew the prospects for an inclusive agenda 2030, and the full realisation of the SDGs.

The global civil society platform working on uniting CSOs on issues around effective development cooperation has also organised the National Campaign Against Shrinking Civic Spaces which calls for civil society and people's organisations around the world to unite in urging governments to take concrete steps in protecting civic space.

Get to know more about the global pattern of Shrinking Civic Space and Belgrade Call to Action by downloading these explanation cards, prepared by CPDE. #
The regional civil society meeting on sustainable development in the Arab region “Voices from civil society in preparation for the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development 2021” took place on 25 and 26 March 2021 on the eve of the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development organized by ESCWA, in cooperation with the League of Arab States, and in preparation for the High-Level Political Forum.

The meeting was organized by the Civil Society Platform on Sustainable Development, a framework of regional networks monitoring sustainable development action and the extent of states’ commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda. It includes the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), the Arab Women Center for Training and Research (CAWTAR), the Arab Trade Union Confederation (ATUC), the Arab Forum for Disability (AFD), Habitat International Coalition, Arab Network for Democratic Elections, and the Arab branches of Transparency International.

The meeting was divided into five sessions covering the main themes of Agenda 2030: people, prosperity, partnership, planet, and peace, emphasizing the goals set by the UNGA in 2021: poverty, hunger, equality, decent work, and climate. Between 110 and 220 participants joined the discussions over the two days.

The following general recommendations were drawn from the discussions:

Firstly, the need to achieve what presidents, opinion leaders, thinkers, and politicians have reiterated on moving to a productive economy by strengthening productive sectors to build strong and capable economies and create decent job opportunities; confront challenges exacerbated by international intervention and the global economic, financial, and trade system through Arab integration and encouraging production value chains, which entails more political openness, strong public freedoms, and a general culture of tolerance.

Secondly, the need to enhance scientific research and develop tools for innovation, particularly in the field of clean technology production, and improve the infrastructure to spread digitalization in line with the challenges of the twenty-first century and rapid and remarkable technological development.

Read the full recommendations document via https://bit.ly/3gXXt8v. #
The People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty (PCFS), secretariat of the Rural Sector Constituency of the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE), co-organised the “#StandWithFarmers! Neoliberalism and Agriculture: A forum on India's Three Farm Laws” as part of the February 2021 Month of Global Solidarity with the Indian Peoples as the protests heightened and reached Delhi.

Farmer protests have continued in India, escalating further as the Modi government refuses to repeal the anti-farmers Acts of 2020. These new acts are set to erode any of the few safeguards and supports afforded to farmers and food producers in India. As protesters point out, it will open the floodgates for more corporate capture and further demise of small rural producers.

The resource persons stated that the 3 Farm Laws are not the only culprit of exploitation of small farmers, however, the introduction of these policies further allows corporations to enter and dominate agriculture and food systems, making the communities more vulnerable. The protests exposed various government policies such as deforestation and destructive large-scale mining that bleed the communities of land and life.

The Indian peoples continue to demand to scrap the 3 Farm Laws, support the agricultural sector, provide infrastructure, and reclaim the resources taken by corporations. Despite intensifying attacks, they pledge to continue actions for the achievement of people's rights to land and food sovereignty.

Organisations, formations, and individuals from Asian, African, and Latin American countries also expressed their support and solidarity for the struggles of the Indian peoples.

The resource persons were:

Dr. Narasimha Reddy Donthi (IFOAM-Asia)
Sarojeni Rengam (PANAP, PCFS-Asia)
Azra Talat Sayeed (Roots for Equity, PCFS Executive Committee, CSM-CFS)
Dr. Sandeep Pandey
Prof. Duvwuru Narasimha Reddy
Dr. Ujjaini Halim (IMSE)
Chennaiah Poguri (APC, PCFS-Asia)
Sylvia Mallari (PCFS Global Co-chair)

View a recording of the event via https://bit.ly/2QO0Vlj.##
PCFS also co-organized the SPEAKOUT workshop as part of the 8th Asia Pacific Peoples’ Forum for Sustainable Development (APPFSD) under the Peoples’ Workshop Theme 3.0: Harnessing the Power of Peoples’ Movements for a Fairer, Just and Equitable Asia Pacific. The APPFSD serves as an inclusive space for discussion and sharing among CSOs and peoples’ movements in the region on their positions on key sustainable development issues.

The workshop divided into two breakout groups to discuss (1) building just and equitable food systems, and (2) building healthy and sustainable food systems. The following are the key messages and recommendations of the workshop.

Building just, equitable, healthy and sustainable food systems start with the most important resource for food producers: land. Redistribution of land is the central theme of people’s organisations and civil society in their campaigns and initiatives especially for the landless, women, and indigenous peoples.

The Asia Pacific peoples need to expose and stop the corporate control on agriculture across the region and expel them from our lands and waters. We need to reject the entry and domination of corporations over food production for a just, equitable, healthy and sustainable food system.

The workshop also recommends the continuing and strengthening of people-to-people solidarity and initiatives while reinforcing our own organisations. Many good practices were shared by the participants such as land occupations, collective farming, farmer markets, community kitchens, self-sufficient food production, relief operations, and others that are essential to the survival of peoples and establishing the picture of just, equitable, healthy, and sustainable food systems.

Speakers at the event include: Wali Haider (Roots for Equity and AP-RCEM Focal Point, Farmers Constituency), Ajay Jha (CECOEDECON), and Sarojeni Rengam (PCFS-Asia Steering Council and Executive Director of the PAN Asia Pacific).

Watch the recording at https://fb.watch/4mjIXG1_jw/.

Sign the statement calling for the revocation of the 2019 Strategic Partnership between the United Nations (UN) and the World Economic Forum (WEF) and its implications for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: https://change.org/StopCorporateHijackUNFSS2021.#
The International Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation (IPMSDL) joins the global celebration of International Mother Earth Day by highlighting the lives and struggles of the world’s forefront defenders – the Indigenous Peoples (IP). In today’s unprecedented crisis, indigenous communities warrant our solidarity in the face of land dispossession, rights violations and health crisis endangering their lives and role as earth’s stewards.

The deep and spiritual link of indigenous culture to earth is highlighted on how they see earth as their mother, Unci Maka, madre tierra, Aberewaa or Asase Ya. Similar across every country and territory, the IP embraces how earth, its land and biodiversity gives life and sustains human existence. Therefore, it is no coincidence that the richest biodiversity and sustainably preserved wildlife can be seen in ancestral lands and indigenous territories.

Although indigenous territories contain 80% of world’s biodiversity, recognized indigenous land ownership remains only around 10%. Thus, indigenous areas increasingly become biodiversity hotspots where flora and fauna, natural resources and the environment are most threatened.

The lack of land rights recognition fuels the foreign capitalist encroachment of forest, mountains, lands and rivers for resource extraction, mega-dam construction, corporate plantation and agricultural and livestock production, illegal logging, ecotourism and pseudo-conservation.

Reports revealed that illegal gold and diamond mining in Amazon indigenous land increased by 30% resulting in poisoned rivers and killings by illegal miners. In the Philippines, President Duterte lifted the nine-year ban on new mining permits. This raised alarm to indigenous communities on the killings and attacks, given that mining contributed to putting the Philippines as the deadliest place for environmental and land defenders. Similarly, many palm oil plantation permits issued in Indonesia brought the occupation of biodiversity-rich forest on indigenous lands in Kalimantan and Sumatra, and in West Papua.

Resistance grows in defense of the environment and ancestral lands and rights. But increased militarization causing violent eviction and displacements, criminalization and terrorist-tagging of IP rights defenders, killings with impunity still challenge the Jumma communities in Bangladesh, the Karen in Burma, the Ogiek and Sengwer villages in Kenya, and indigenous Igorot, Dumagat and Lumad in the Philippines, among many others.
Facing both the blow of land dispossession and human rights violations, IP vulnerabilities also increase in the face of COVID-19 with systemic and long-standing poverty and neglect in terms of medical, water, health care, and many social services. This further underscores the tragedy how the pioneering earth defenders are disproportionately impacted by infectious diseases and zoonotic pandemic caused by destruction of biodiversity they protect.

At the center of our campaign to save the mother Earth, the urgent action to stand for its defenders is resounding today more than ever. Let's affirm our commitment to struggle with the many IP communities and activists fighting not only for their lands, culture and rights but ultimately for the future generation.

We are well past the point of taking compromises borne out of the same system and policies that plunder our lands, and further marginalize the oppressed. Let our celebration be a testament to seek measures and solutions to save earth from the profit-seeking and exploitative powers that take away the lands and the riches of mother Earth provided for everyone!

Reference:
Beverly Longid, Global Coordinator
info@ipmsdl.org

**PUBLICATION UPDATE**

New research released by the International Trade Union Confederation - Trade Union Development Cooperation Network (ITUC-TUDCN) shows the gap between government responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa and Latin America and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8.

While the SDGs provide a coherent framework for responding to the crisis, most of the analysed government's responses have failed to prioritise them when addressing the devastating impact of the pandemic. As a result, poverty and inequality levels are rising across both continents.

Download the files [here](#), and [here](#).
The Reality of Aid-Asia Pacific (RoA-AP), together with the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE), created a training course to strengthen CSO capacities to monitor aid and promote CSO partnerships towards evidenced-based policy in the region.

The CSO Aid Observatorio Training Handbook 2020: Advancing Human Rights and Development Effectiveness is composed of four modules:
1. Aid and Development Cooperation Concepts and Principles
2. People’s Research and Development Cooperation
3. Data Sourcing and Management
4. Dissemination and Popularization

The Handbook is downloadable for free here.

To make the Handbook easier to follow, a four-part training video series containing the highlights of the modules were also created and will be soon launched on our website.

Watch the CSO Aid Observatorio Training Handbook introduction video on YouTube.com/RealityofAidAP.

The CPDE ICSO sector’s study on the impacts of the pandemic

The CPDE International Civil Society Organisations (ICSOs) sector has released its study One Year On: COVID-19 has made CSOs’ effectiveness harder on many fronts: A CPDE study on the impacts of the pandemic.

The report offers a snapshot from the point of view primarily of ICSOs of the global pandemic’s far-reaching effects, one year on, on this constituency’s ability to play its part, seen through the lens of the development effectiveness agenda.

In conducting the research, the sector aimed to highlight the main impacts on CSOs’ ability to operate effectively in order to help the INGO constituency group, and the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) as a whole, pinpoint next steps for more in-depth research and/or action to support CSOs in implementing their development effectiveness principles more fully in these most challenging of times.

Download the study via https://bit.ly/3t0b2XH.
The *Progressing National SDGs Implementation* report provides an independent analysis of reporting by United Nations Member States to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). Supported by a coalition of civil society organisations from around the world, including CPDE, and prepared by Cooperation Canada, it examines the current status of 2030 Agenda implementation, unpacks trends in reporting and identifies good practice.

This year’s report showcases positive trends with respect to reporting on partnerships, including the role played by civil society, and policy coherence. However, it also underlines the continued silence by Member States in Voluntary National Review (VNR) reports on closing of the civic space, as well as the lack of reference to national accountability mechanisms. Moreover, this year’s report discusses the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on overall implementation of the sustainable development goals.


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We are the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness, a platform that unites civil society organisations (CSOs) from around the world on the issue of effective development cooperation.

We work in 117 countries, and our members come from seven regions and eight major sectors: faith-based, feminist, indigenous peoples, international CSOs, labour, migrants, rural, and youth. Together, we strive for a more effective development, the kind that truly responds to poverty and inequality.