



CSOPartnership 
for Development Effectiveness

A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE GPEDC EFFECTIVENESS SUMMIT



I. Overview

The Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) held its 3rd High-Level Meeting (HLM), also referred to as the Effectiveness Summit or DevCo Summit, in Geneva, Switzerland from December 12 to 14, 2022.¹ This was three years after the Senior-Level Meeting held at the side lines of UN High-Level Political Forum in 2019, and six years after the 2nd HLM held in Nairobi, Kenya in 2016.

While it was anticipated that no new commitments would be made, the Summit was an important milestone to reassert the relevance of the effectiveness agenda midway into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Summit aimed at upholding existing EDC commitments, revitalising efforts around the agenda and rallying support for the GPEDC's initiatives, as articulated in the Geneva Summit Declaration. Specifically, a revised effectiveness monitoring framework was endorsed after years of review, consultation and revision. Certain EDC-related issues such as climate finance, locally-led development, and CSO Enabling Environment, were discussed.

Civil society, through CPDE, undertook extensive preparations to engage the agenda and influence the discourse and outcome of the Summit by:

- organising CSO engagement in all sessions of the Summit;
- coordinating CSO perspectives and contributions to the monitoring reform;
- leading the Summit in addressing issues related to the enabling environment for CSOs forwarding trust building as a key approach for multi-stakeholder action; and,
- providing feedback to the outcome document, which consequently reflected many of CSOs' forwarded positions

CPDE achieved varying degrees of success when assessed against its broad ambitions. This document, informed by the discussions from CPDE's governance bodies and the CSO delegation, details and analyses these achievements.

II. Key Actors in the Summit

CSO delegates identified several key players, including the government of Switzerland as the Summit's host and the governments of Sweden and Indonesia, the newly elected GPEDC Co-chairs, for shaping its agenda and content. The Non-Executive Co-chair, currently from CSOs, was fundamental in the negotiation process on the Summit Outcome. Other key players came from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the various country governments, and the other non-executive GPEDC constituents. UNDP and other international institutions played an active role, particularly in coordinating bilateral meetings for negotiations.

A total of 664 participants from 111 countries attended the Summit. The level of participation, with the presence of three heads of states, 20 ministers and 13 vice-ministers, seemed to indicate a mixed level of political buy-in to the effectiveness agenda.

1 Official Summit Report

III. CSO Coordination, Participation, and Engagement

Thorough preparations bore well on the overall participation and profile of CSOs throughout the meeting programme. CSO mobilisation and presence were felt by all constituencies, demonstrating how CSOs value this space and underlining the importance of civil society to the success of the effectiveness agenda.

CPDE coordinated the accreditation and advocacy engagement for more than 50 CSO delegates attending the Effectiveness Summit. There were also CSO speakers and/or reactors in almost every official session, making it possible for CSO voices to be heard and have a significant impact on all discussed topics. In addition, CPDE led/co-led two Spotlight Sessions-- one on Building Trust for Enabling CSOs in Development Effectiveness (DE) and the other on Gender Equality and DE. The platform also organised a side event to present the results and outcomes of its study on PSE in DE, specifically highlighting the role of Small and Medium Enterprises in EDC advocacy.

An advocacy strategy with a set of key messages was collectively developed, incorporating diverse constituency perspectives and positions on cross-cutting issues. Advocacy efforts were also planned out for delivering political messages and ambitions during the sessions.

Throughout the Summit, CSOs were able to convey messages reflecting the diversity of constituencies that CSOs represent. Drawing from the CPDE Key Asks, CSOs imparted to other HLM participants:

- the importance of the Effectiveness Agenda and the core business that is the foundation on which it sits;
- the urgency of providing an enabling environment for CSOs in light of shrinking and closing civic spaces in development;
- the call to hold the private sector accountable to effectiveness principles and other internationally agreed norms and standards;
- the need to address the systemic causes to reverse the impacts of ongoing conflicts, to prevent an irreversible web of sustained crisis, and to promote stability and just peace in conflict-affected areas; and,
- the potential of the effectiveness principles to optimise impacts of climate finance

Communication efforts were coordinated and undertaken in a timely manner, and a strong campaign on unfinished business was launched in Geneva as the Unmet Gala: A civil society parade for equality social justice, portraying strong, key messages emblazoned in costumes worn by members of the CSO delegation.

Lastly, partnerships were built to bring other relevant CSO platforms to join our common advocacy and engagement. All delegates, attending both in person and online - were provided relevant information in preparation for the official meeting, and several preparatory meetings were held in advance, at national, regional and global levels.

Our emphasis on Building Trust to enable civil society, and consequently make development cooperation more effective, has been a running theme throughout the conference. From nearly all corners of the Summit, the notion of trust is seen as foundational to achieving the collective commitments that underpin the GPEDC.

IV. Outcomes of the Effectiveness Summit

Civil society's footprint on the Summit Outcome Document is clear and our commitment and advocacy in this space has paid off. Our language has been understood and our ideas have been included. Still, our global advocacy is only as important as it reflects in changing realities on the ground. Whether the unfinished business will finally be addressed with commitment, dedication and support needed, is yet to be seen.

Based on our assessment, these are what we accomplished at the Summit against our Key Asks. They are arranged according to the extent to which we see commitments were made to take concrete actions.



Achieved. A clear commitment has been made that will result in concrete action following the Summit.

Key Ask: Place the effectiveness agenda at the centre of discussion given the multiple crises and the derailment of the 2030 Agenda.

- The continued relevance of the effectiveness agenda in achieving the Sustainable Development Agenda is clear. While the emphasis on effectiveness is increasing, the resource outlook looks tenuous making the future of the effectiveness agenda uncertain. Progress has stalled or reversed on many fronts and the tendency to give up on something that is failing cannot be underestimated. Still, a renewed focus on collecting evidence towards generating action at the country level gives us some window of hope.

Key Ask: Deliver new energy in efforts to provide an enabling environment for CSOs.

- Our efforts around CSO enabling environment advocacy have been substantial as reflected in the Summit outcomes. There is momentum and energy on this fundamental issue for civil society, but we have been here before. Grounding the global commitments on enabling civil society at the country level has always been where difficulties arise. Following the Summit outcome, there are grounds for an initiative that focuses specifically on this that can lead a conversation about progress at the next HLM.



Partially Achieved. There is some indication or willingness to act that can be built upon in the future.

Key Ask: Inform the discourse on the need for urgent and extraordinary action given the impacts of the pandemic, prevalent conflict and climate crisis on the vulnerable, especially to women and girls.

- There is little doubt that the magnitude of the challenge before us is recognised and reflected throughout the Summit and its outcome. Despite this recognition, it remains to be seen whether action will follow the discourse. Our sense is they will not. Resources are drying up or being pulled in different directions, suggesting that the action needed will not live up to the discourse that has preceded it. We must hold the effectiveness community to its commitments despite the trying circumstances and challenging outlook.

Key Ask: Ask governments to ensure private sector entities adhere to the Kampala Principles for Private Sector Engagement and implement labour and human rights standards,² promote and practise decent work, and social dialogue, and adopt transparency and accountability standards.

- While the effort remains an uphill struggle, we are starting to see a shift in the discourse around the private sector to be more nuanced and at times even critical. For its part, CPDE is trying to elevate socially and environmentally-driven private enterprises to bring some balance and provide proactive inputs to the area of private sector engagement.

Key Ask: Ask governments to upscale and deliver on climate finance commitments in order to meet the urgent need for sustainable and effective climate response.

- Climate finance is a clear priority going forward and there is an obvious ambition to marry commitments on climate with commitments on development cooperation and vice versa. That said, resourcing remains tenuous and the distinction between the two resource flows is increasingly blurred, ignoring entirely the principle of additionality for climate finance.

Key Ask: The revised GPEDC Monitoring Framework, including participation in the national Action Dialogues and provision of evidence of behaviour change in response to monitoring results, will be fully implemented and inclusive of Civil Society.

- A revised framework has been adopted, but it remains to be seen how inclusive the rollout will be at the country level.

Key Ask: CSOs will be actively involved in the national development planning processes, including development cooperation forums, Action Dialogues and INFFs.

- There is a global ambition to ensure CSO inclusion in regional and country discussions but without a clear commitment to support. There is not really any strong lever of accountability at the global level to guarantee this and by contrast, global processes defer to national-level contexts and the autonomy of national governments when it comes to such processes.

Key Ask: Private sector will play its part in inclusive recovery through just and fair taxation and contribute to nationally-owned development plans, especially to cover health systems improvement in LDCs and finance climate loss and damages.

- The ongoing discourse among private sector actors, which includes calling for windfall profit taxes, has not moved beyond political rhetoric to action or policy.

Key Ask: Our aspiration that the development community will contribute in localising humanitarian, development and peace nexus approach in line with the Grand Bargain agreement by 2025.

- The focus on localisation seems to be ascending in a significant way, though has yet to be fully unpacked. CSOs will continue this push as the debate around localisation continues.



Not Achieved. There have not been any clear gains made at the Summit and there is little evidence that any immediate action will be taken.

Key Ask: Ensure that effective development financing at all levels needs to meet the urgency of the moment.

- Throughout this Summit, the overwhelming sentiment is that resources are dwindling. The underlying narrative emerging from the Summit is we will have to do more with less. This is perhaps the biggest disappointment of the Summit that the entire community, not only civil society, will need to grapple with. If we were to assess the future outlook of the sustainable development agenda and the GPEDC on this ambition alone, the situation would be dire. But CSOs are known for their resilience and optimism even in the face of dire circumstances, so we will continue to be relentless champions of this agenda and do our part to deliver a just and sustainable development the world over.

Key Ask: Ask governments to address the systemic causes to reverse the impacts of ongoing conflicts, to prevent an irreversible web of sustained crises, and to promote stability and just peace in conflict-affected areas.

- Regrettably, there is little evidence to suggest that governments are ready or capable to confront the systemic failures that drive conflict.

Key Ask: ODA providers will increase development finance volumes, specifically in realising the 0.7% target by 2030, including the aid levels agreed for the LDCs, and increase donors' share of concessional resources.

- Beyond the halls of the Effectiveness Summit, ODA providers are changing entirely the concept of ODA and where it is delivered. The original intent of ODA as a resource or investment to support developing countries to achieve development at home seems but a distant memory as ODA continues to leave the countries that are most reliant upon it. Even in the instance that some providers might reach their decades-old commitment, it will not be due to increased investment in partner countries' national development plans and budgets.

Key Ask: ODA providers will commit to setting a clear quantitative target for CSO support and other provisions.

- The aspiration goes beyond the halls of the Effectiveness Summit but is until now yet to be realised. With an increased focus on 'localisation', in particular by the provider community, there will be grounds to further push this advocacy forward.



Unclear: There are very general/broad indications of political support (i.e., government statements/positions) but no demonstrable gains in the Summit outcome

Key Ask: There will be increased accountability for investments to women's rights and gender equality by making gender budget allocations publicly available.

- CSO calls to have gender budget allocation be fully accounted for and transparent have been met with positive responses, but whether this translates into data being collected in this way remains unclear.

Key Ask: The development community will contribute to having the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance address climate adaptation, loss and damages, and public resource availability.

- The aspiration goes beyond the halls of the Effectiveness Summit and will become clearer between now and the next climate conference.

CPDE released the official Civil Society Statement on the HLM3.

V. Recommendations for follow-up and steps ahead for CSO work post-HLM3

1. Provide continuity to the work in the post-HLM3 period in the way it was done in the pre-HLM mode (“keep up the speed”).
2. Actively pursue ways of involving marginalised or underrepresented groups in their work, such as women, youth, and indigenous communities. Expanding our membership or network is essential.
3. Collaborate with other CSOs to conduct more critical engagement and political work, i.e., jointly coordinated social media campaigns on key issues.
4. Explore new and innovative approaches to addressing global challenges, such as using technology or adopting more sustainable business models. This could involve participating in research and development initiatives or collaborating with other organisations that are working for effective development cooperation.
5. Improve CSO capacity for dialogue with governments in each country, especially in the follow-up processes to the new monitoring instruments of the Global Partnership.
6. Follow up on the implementation or adherence of the Geneva Summit Declaration and strategising around key priorities on the way forward, notably on CSOs engagement in the Monitoring Framework. The new monitoring framework, with a renewed emphasis on the local level, might offer new opportunities for CSO involvement.

VI. Conclusion

The development cooperation landscape has significantly changed since the Busan Forum in 2011. Global efforts to drive sustainable development are facing profound challenges, from growing inequality to escalating conflicts compounded by climatic shocks. Convergence on the value and relevance of effectiveness principles amid debates around the meaning of country ownership. For instance, USAID chose to announce the Donors Declaration on Locally-led Development during the HLM, which was endorsed by 15 donor governments. The next challenges will be how to:

- socialise and implement commitments and delivery models,
- address tensions between locally-led development and traditional development partnership, and
- get the private sector meaningfully engaged in development cooperation vis-a-vis its profit-oriented ideology.

The urgency of taking a more critical look at the various crises that currently exist will undoubtedly have an impact on the process of implementing the effectiveness agenda. A call should resound for the international community to assume greater responsibility and determination in implementing commitments made and not just remain as good intentions.

VI. Documentation

To view related articles and images, check out these links:

1. CPDE's Road to HLM3, featuring what went before, the delegation, resources, news articles, and our demands: <https://csopartnership.org/cpde-road-to-hlm3/>
2. NEWS RELEASE: Post-HLM3, civil society vows to continue championing effectiveness: <https://csopartnership.org/2022/12/post-hlm3-civil-society-vows-to-continue-championing-effectiveness/>
3. The CPDE Unmet Gala: A civil society parade for equality and social justice: <https://csopartnership.org/unmet-gala>

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