CSOPartnership for Development Effectiveness

The Reality of Aid ASIA PACIFIC

LOCALIZING EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FROM ASIA

Localizing Effective Development Cooperation:
Challenges and Strategies from Asia

Published by:

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Reality of Aid - Asia Pacific
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June 2025

This publication has been produced with the financial assistance of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Introduction

Locally-led development (LLD) is increasingly recognized as essential for achieving effective development cooperation (EDC) outcomes. This means that local actors must drive the priorities, strategies, and implementation of development efforts. Civil society organizations (CSOs) play a critical role in this process, ensuring that development is rooted in local contexts, needs, and capacities.

A key step towards this direction is the **Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC)**, a multi-stakeholder platform for driving the effectiveness of all types of development cooperation to deliver sustainable development. GPEDC held its third Effectiveness Summit in December 2022 (also referred to as the 3rd High-Level Meeting or HLM3) to assess progress and identify future directions for improving partnership for development cooperation. The Summit underscored the importance of effective development cooperation that is country-led, results-focused, transparent, and accountable. The resulting **'Summit Report: Rebuilding Trust through Effective Development Co-operation'** outlines a trust-centered approach to strengthening partnerships and EDC. The GPEDC facilitates a process of monitoring EDC called a monitoring round where countries voluntarily evaluate their progress against set targets and goals. As of writing, the GPEDC is on its 4th monitoring round (4MR), which will end in 2026.

Building on ongoing global discussions around locally-led development and effective development cooperation, the Reality of Aid - Asia Pacific (RoA-AP) and CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness Asia (CPDE Asia) convened their regular Regional Meeting and Workshop (RMW) in February 2025. This gathering aimed to further the agenda of effective development cooperation in the Asia region.

Outcomes of the RMW include the identification of key issues and challenges in development cooperation, campaign strategies for achieving locally-led development, and country projects advancing EDC at the national level.

About this primer

Drawing from the discussions during the Regional Meeting and Workshop, this primer provides a background on the importance and role of locally-led development in EDC and synthesizes campaign strategies proposed by CSOs that promote LLD as a framework in EDC. This primer also highlights how CSOs can leverage the GPEDC as a platform to advocate for more inclusive, locally-driven approaches to development. Case studies from Asian CSOs are included to illustrate key challenges and lessons learned in engaging in the GPEDC processes.

Aimed at civil society organizations, this primer serves as both a learning and advocacy tool. CSOs can use the primer to deepen their understanding of locally-led development, identify practical strategies to apply in their own work, and strengthen their engagement with development actors in policy spaces.

What is locally-led development?

Locally-led development is a transformative approach to development where local actors exercise control and ownership of resources in their areas of responsibility, as well as agency in shaping their development priorities. This is part of a shift in the international development architecture aimed at addressing the failures of the aid effectiveness paradigm and introducing development effectiveness.

At the core of this approach is the recognition that those closest to development issues – local communities, organizations and institutions – are best positioned to understand their own contexts, and thus to develop their own development goals and strategies. These goals must not only be rooted in local priorities, but also aligned with national policies and international frameworks for human rights and sustainable development.

For local organizations specifically, this means that they should have the autonomy to design their own strategies, make decisions about how to allocate resources, and manage their own funding. Too often, funding comes with conditions that force communities to reshape their work to fit donor templates or priorities. Locally-led development challenges that dynamic, insisting that funding should support local efforts, not dictate upon them.

What is Effective Development Cooperation?

The shift to locally-led development is part of high-level processes that sought to reform the shortcomings of international development cooperation and aid delivery to help poor nations meet development goals. Aid reform processes initially centered on **aid effectiveness**, which focused on improving the management and delivery of aid or Official Development Assistance (ODA) based on mutually agreed success indicators. The agenda has since evolved into the broader model of **development effectiveness**.

Development effectiveness integrates human rights-based approaches and emphasizes the effective use of resources – public, private, domestic, and international – for sustainable development. This new paradigm also emphasizes the importance of inclusive, coordinated efforts involving a wide range of stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, and local governments, anchored in national priorities and driven by local needs.

The evolution began with the high level fora on aid effectiveness (Rome, 2003; Paris, 2005; Accra, 2008; Busan, 2011), which gathered a wide range of stakeholders to help outline key aspects of EDC and how to assess progress towards it. Crucially, the signing of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), represents the commitment of international donors and partner governments to the principles of ownership, alignment, harmonisation, results and mutual accountability.

The *Accra Agenda for Action* (2008) reaffirmed the principles agreed upon in the Paris Declaration, and the *Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation* (2011) reformulated these principles as four "shared principles to achieve common goals". The principles of effective development cooperation agreed upon in the 2011 Busan Partnership Agreement include:

- **Focus on results:** Development cooperation seeks to achieve measurable results by using country-led results frameworks and monitoring and evaluation systems.

- **Country Ownership:** Countries set their own national development priorities, and development partners align their support accordingly while using country systems.

- **Inclusive Partnerships:** Development partnerships are inclusive, recognizing the different complementary roles of all actors.

- **Transparency and Mutual Accountability:** Countries and their development partners are accountable to each other and to their respective constituents. They are jointly responsible for ensuring development cooperation information is publicly available.

Why is the role of CSOs important in effective development?

Civil society organizations (CSOs) play an indispensable role in ensuring development effectiveness. This role was first officially recognized at the 2008 Accra High-Level Forum where CSOs were referred to as independent development actors in their own right, and later by the *2010 Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness*.

The Accra Agenda for Action emphasizes the importance of an enabling environment for CSO participation in policy dialogues and implementation processes. It marked a shift from viewing CSOs solely as service providers to recognizing their contributions to influencing and shaping policies, monitoring commitments and seeking accountability, and empowering grassroots movements.

Building on this, the Istanbul Principles outlined a set of values and commitments to guide CSOs in their development work, including human rights, gender equality, democratic ownership, and environmental sustainability. These principles serve as a normative framework for CSO accountability and effectiveness. To operationalize the Istanbul Principles into a practical framework, CSOs developed the *International Consensus for Development Effectiveness (Siem Reap Consensus)*.

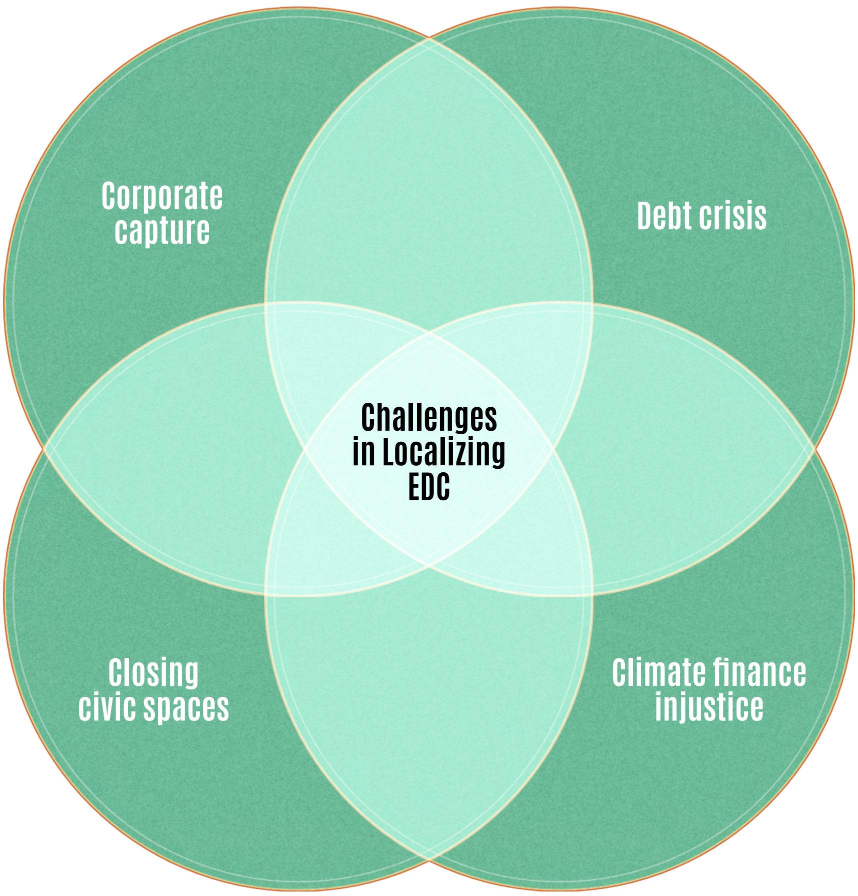
Part 1

Key issues in effective development cooperation

While the shift to the development effectiveness model has been a crucial step towards ensuring that local actors take the lead in setting and implementing their development agenda and strategies, there remains huge barriers to making locally-led development a reality.

In the Asia region, many of these barriers have been long-standing, systemic issues that are often repackaged as progressive steps in addressing the pressing issues of climate change and providing resources to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The experiences of local communities and CSOs, however, paint a different picture of how development processes and projects further worsen inequalities and harm.

The following outlines key issues identified during the RMW discussion on issues and trends in development effectiveness.



Corporate capture of development

The development agenda has increasingly been shaped by the imperatives of capital at the expense of the rights and needs of communities, and of the planet. Big businesses, empowered by neoliberal policy frameworks, exert significant influence over global development institutions and strategies.

International Finance Institutions (IFIs) play a key role in facilitating the corporate capture of development. Since the 1990s, IFIs such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have used structural adjustment programs (SAPs) and policy conditions tied to international financing to pressure developing countries to liberalize markets and privatize goods and services. This has effectively turned development cooperation into a means for expanding corporate access, especially to the Global South.

With the adoption of the SDGs and the signing of the Paris Agreement, there has been a strong emphasis on the role of IFIs in meeting financing requirements as promoted by the agenda, "from billions to trillions"[1], through leveraging private finance. Mechanisms like blended finance are increasingly promoted by IFIs to de-risk private investment through channeling public resources into corporations. Often, corporations that benefit from blended finance contracts are based in donor countries, raising concerns on how these undermine ODA concessionality in favor of commerciality.[2]

Development projects that are designed and implemented in the interest of profit enables the elite capture of public resources, all while displacing communities, causing environmental degradation, and further perpetuating structural inequalities. Even with IFIs' Environmental and Social Frameworks (ESFs) – safeguard mechanisms supposedly aimed at preventing and mitigating harmful impacts of development projects – are riddled with loopholes that allow borrowers to evade transparency and accountability.

'Bypassing accountability and transparency: the case of RIDF in Indonesia'

In Indonesia, the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) receives financial support from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the World Bank to fund projects like road development in Trans-Sumatra, West Kalimantan, and Papua. RIDF operates through a financial intermediary model, where intermediaries select projects and determine their risk level (low, medium, or high), often bypassing environmental and social safeguards put in place by the AIIB and the World Bank. This "hands-off lending" practice contributes more to environmental degradation and the erosion of consumer rights than to genuine development for local communities. Although plans like the Environmental and Social Management Plan commit to addressing social and ecological issues – such as preventing involuntary resettlement, improving livelihoods, and recognizing women as a vulnerable group – these safeguards are often undermined in practice.

While RIDF promotes large-scale infrastructure construction, the financial burden falls heavily on the people. High-interest loans benefit the banks while forcing the Indonesian government to prioritize debt repayment over social spending, cutting funds for subsidies and public services. The cost of new toll roads in Java, Kalimantan, and Sumatra is extremely high, with users paying even more for newly-built routes. Many local communities face displacement, losing their land and primary sources of income, leading to migration for low-wage, unprotected labor abroad. Overall, RIDF's model has raised serious concerns about accountability, transparency, and the true impact on communities in Indonesia.

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[1] From Billions to Trillions: Transforming Development Finance Post-2015 Financing for Development: Multilateral Development Finance. https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/622841485963735448-0270022017/original/DC20150002EFinancingforDevelopment.pdf

[2] Yumnam, J. (2020). 'IFI Financing in a Changing Context in Asia' in Torres, S. (Ed). Asserting Democratic Space Amidst Corporate Capture of Development. https://realityofaid.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/RoA-AP-Regional-Meeting-2019-Conference-Proceedings.pdf

Debt crisis

The debt crisis in developing countries has escalated dramatically, with external debt reaching a record USD 11.4 trillion in 2023 – nearly quadrupling over two decades and equating to 99% of their export earning[3]. This surge is attributed to increased borrowing for development projects, volatile commodity prices, and the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. High interest rates have exacerbated the situation, with developing nations paying USD 847 billion in net interest in 2023 – a 26% increase from 2021. Consequently, governments are forced to choose between repaying creditors and funding essential services, with 3.3 billion people living in countries that spend more on debt servicing than on health or education.

IFIs have been criticized for their lending practices that often include strict conditionalities. These conditions – such as austerity measures and market liberalization – undermine developing countries' capacities to deliver social services and reach national development goals.

To address this crisis, there is a growing call for urgent reforms in the global debt architecture. UNCTAD has emphasized the need for more equitable lending practices, greater transparency, and inclusive decision-making that empowers debtor nations. Without such changes, IFIs risk perpetuating a development model rooted in inequality and dependency, hindering sustainable growth and violating the development effectiveness principles of country ownership, inclusive partnerships, and results-oriented development.

Climate finance

As the impacts of the climate crisis continue to intensify, the imperative for climate finance rooted in climate justice is greater now more than ever. This is due to the fact that while the climate crisis is a global concern, its impacts are disproportionately felt by poorer countries, fragile states, and marginalized communities, and countries that have been historically liable for driving the increase in greenhouse gas emissions bear more responsibility to mobilize resources to address these impacts.[4]

Crucially, Global North countries continue to fall short on their long-standing pledge to provide USD 100 billion annually in support to the Global South by 2020, a target that has now been tripled during the COP29 to USD 1.3 trillion by 2030. While the OECD reports that the USD 100 billion mark has been reached[5], a large portion came in the form of loans[6], which exacerbates the debt and austerity in developing countries bearing the brunt of the crisis.

The current framework for climate finance – divided into mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage – is likewise failing to support a just transition. Ninety percent of climate finance is directed towards mitigation[7],

[3] UN Trade and Development (2025 March 17). Debt Crisis: Developing Countries' External Debt Hits Record $11.4 Trillion. shttps://unctad.org/news/debt-crisis-developing-countries-external-debt-hits-record-114-trillion

[4] This is in line with the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" enshrined in Article 3 of the Paris Agreement. https://unfccc.int/resource/ccsites/zimbab/conven/text/art03.htm

[5] OECD (2024). Climate Finance Mobilised by Developed Countries in 2013-2022. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/climate-finance-provided-and-mobilised-by-developed-countries-in-2013-2022_19150727-en/full-report.html

[6] Oxfam. (2024). Rich countries overstating true value of climate finance by up to 88 billion. https://www.oxfamamerica.org/press/press-releases/rich-countries-overstating-true-value-of-climate-finance-by-up-to-88-billion-says-oxfam/

[7] Climate Policy Initiative (2024). Global Landscape of Climate Finance. https://www.climatepolicyinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Global-Landscape-of-Climate-Finance-2024.pdf

most of which are infrastructure and technologies that are nothing but false climate solutions, and cause displacement and further degrade ecosystems. Meanwhile, adaptation and loss and damage remain severely underfunded. This leaves frontline communities, particularly in the Global South, more exposed and less equipped to survive the impacts of a crisis they did little to cause.

Further, CSOs face systemic barriers to accessing climate finance. The Green Climate Fund (GCF), the most important multilateral instrument for climate financing focused on supporting least developed and vulnerable countries, does not provide an enabling environment for CSOs to access and engage in. This is due to barriers to CSO accreditation, limited direct access, complicated project approval processes, lack of local rootedness, weak national consultation processes and lack of all-of-society country ownership.[8]

Closing civic space

Despite the commitment articulated in the Busan Partnership Agreement to foster an enabling environment for CSOs,[9] the trend of shrinking and closing civic spaces persists in the Asia region.

Attacks on civil society target human rights defenders, land rights activists, environmental activists, and other individuals and organizations that demand accountability and express dissent. These are enacted through a range of repressive mechanisms, including:

- Criminalization of human rights defenders through anti-terror, national security, and public order laws
- Increased restrictions for CSOs to operate, such as through funding barriers
- Crackdown on protests
- Harassment, arrest, and killing of activists
- Use of digital technologies for increased surveillance

These assaults take place on top of the lack of spaces for civil society to participate in effective development processes. The CPDE report for the 3rd monitoring round of GPEDC[10] notes the non-existence in many countries of government consultations with CSOs on development policies, and issues of timeliness, transparency, and accountability in countries where these consultations do take place.

The closure of civic spaces is inimical to development effectiveness. Civic spaces are sites of engagement and the exercise of democratic rights and freedoms. With these attacks and the lack of spaces for participation, the role of CSOs as independent development actors is greatly impeded, and local communities and actors are prevented from contributing to development.

[8] CIDSE (2021). Improving CSO's Access to the Green Climate Fund: A report based on an analysis of GCF policies and lessons learned from five case studies. https://www.cidse.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/EN-CIDSE-Climate-finance-study.pdf

[9] Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, paragraph 22

[10] Civil society reflections on progress in achieving development effectiveness: Inclusion, accountability and transparency

Part 2
Campaign Strategies

CSOs who took part in the Regional Meeting and Workshop came up with various strategies to address the key development effectiveness issues (climate change and development finance) in the Asia region. Outputs from the strategy workshop are synthesized below:

Campaign Strategy:
Just Climate Finance

Objectives:

1. Hold International Finance Institutions (IFIs) accountable for their role in the climate crisis.
2. Advance community-led, accountable, and equitable alternatives that prioritize people and the planet over profit.

Tactics

1. ***Effectively monitor IFIs and exert institutional pressure.***
   a. Engage in policy assessments, reviews, and consultations to push for reforms in:
      - Safeguards, Environmental and Social Frameworks, and Mutual Reliance Frameworks
      - Climate and energy policies
      - Gender and climate mainstreaming policies

   b. Engage Executive Directors, bank management, and key staff
   c. Intervene in relevant fora and the banks' annual meetings

Recommendations for IFIs:

- Ensure full transparency, accountability, and remedy for legacy harms.
- Ensure meaningful participation of communities, sectors, and movements in all processes, and provide a safe environment free from reprisals.
- Align with international human rights norms and standards, EDC principles, and climate commitments and require clients to do the same.
- Provide climate finance in grants, not loans.
- Cancel debts and provide climate reparations.
- Junk false solutions and support transformative shifts.
- Recognize and respect the fundamental right to self-determination of Indigenous Peoples.

2. ***Strengthen CSO capacity for engaging communities.***
   a. Organize and empower grassroots and frontline communities to better engage in climate policy spaces
   b. Build cross-movement solidarity across defenders working on land, climate, gender, and labor sectors, including Indigenous Peoples
   c. Push back against civic space closure and defend human rights defenders
   d. Develop benchmarks and track IFIs using community-developed and informed methodologies

3. ***Exert media and public pressure.***
   a. Develop strategic media campaigns to expose IFI's greenwashing and fossil fuel investments
   b. Develop creative, mass-oriented campaigns like "Banking on Renewables" to counter false solutions and promote real ones
   c. Target outreach around high-impact energy and extractive projects
   d. Amplify grassroots' voices through storytelling and solidarity actions

4. ***Strengthen and amplify alternative narratives to false solutions through creative slogans or campaign calls.***

Campaign Strategy:
Reclaim Development Finance

Objectives:

1. Advocate for the democratization of development finance.
2. Strengthen the capacity of CSOs and local actors on accessing development finance and influencing the international development agenda.

Tactics

1. ***Strengthen advocacy in relevant high-level, multi-stakeholder bodies such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).***
   a. Advocate for multi-stakeholder platforms at national, regional, and global levels that include civil society as equal partners
   b. Target institutions and spaces such as:
      - Member states and regional alliances
      - Dialogue platforms like the Open Government Partnership (OGP), Financing for Development (FfD) Forum, and Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD)
      - CSO networks like the Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (APRCEM) and the DAC-CSO Reference Group
   c. Maximize communication initiatives and publish evidence-based research
   d. Organize awareness-raising activities like study sessions, art exhibits, or other cultural events

2. ***Strengthen movement-building and capacity building of CSOs.***
   a. Develop short- and long-term capacity-building plans for grassroots movements, civil society organizations, and local government actors
   b. Strengthen local actors' knowledge on development processes, including designing programmes, monitoring and evaluation, and accessing funds
   c. Support grassroots mobilization and participation in policy and advocacy spaces

Part 3
Localizing the EDC Agenda: Case studies from the 4MR country projects

About the 4MR process

The Fourth Monitoring Round (4MR) of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) is a country-led and voluntary initiative that spans from 2023 to 2026. Its primary goal is to help countries assess and strengthen the effectiveness of their development cooperation by examining how well they adhere to the four principles laid out in the Busan Partnership Agreement: country ownership, a focus on results, inclusive partnerships, and transparency with mutual accountability.

At the heart of the 4MR is a commitment to national leadership and inclusive engagement. National governments steer the process, bringing together a diverse range of actors – CSOs, the private sector, and parliaments – to ensure broad and meaningful participation. Countries have the flexibility to decide when to participate within the three-year window, aligning the monitoring process with their national priorities and planning cycles.

The monitoring framework covers a wide range of issues critical to development cooperation. It assesses whether development efforts are truly inclusive by examining the level of whole-of-society participation, particularly the involvement of marginalized groups. It looks at how well development partners align with and use national systems, the transparency of their actions, and whether their efforts genuinely aim to leave no one behind – evaluated through disaggregated data and inclusive policy approaches. Importantly, the 4MR also integrates the Kampala Principles[11] to measure the effectiveness of private sector engagement in development.

One of the strengths of the 4MR is its emphasis on practical outcomes. Participating countries receive detailed results briefs that not only provide data but also support evidence-based dialogue among stakeholders. This creates an opportunity to build consensus, refine strategies, and collectively push for improvements in how development is planned, delivered, and monitored.

The Global Partnership monitoring is the official source of data for three SDG targets:

- SDG 17.15: Respect each country's policy space and leadership
- SDG 17.16: Multi-stakeholder partnerships for development
- SDG 5.c: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls

[11] Global Partnership for Development Cooperation (2019). Kampala Principles. https://www.effectivecooperation.org/kampalaprinciplesexplained

Case studies from the 4MR country projects

As a follow-up to the Regional Meeting and Workshop, CPDE released a call for proposals to its members to support initiatives that contribute to localizing effective development cooperation. Three small grants were made available to CPDE members in Nepal, Cambodia, and Indonesia to implement short-term projects. Of the three, the projects in Nepal and Cambodia focused on following up on the 4MR process through the conduct of multi-stakeholder dialogues. Meanwhile, the country project in Indonesia focused on improving effective development cooperation for better access and quality of health in the country.

Overall, the three projects contributed in bridging the gaps between national-level development agenda and local development initiatives. Concretely, the projects addressed the lack of awareness and engagement on the GPEDC monitoring process among local CSOs and development actors through the sharing of the 4MR results and gathering local inputs on the results. These also further emphasized the need to institutionalize more inclusive multi-stakeholder platforms among all actors, from the local to the national level.

Enhancing Local Governance in Nepal through Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

Center for Good Governance and Peace (CGGAP)

Localization of the EDC agenda in Nepal is still emerging and uneven, with national commitments slow to translate into local systems and practices. Awareness of EDC principles and the 4MR process remains low among local officials and civil society, limiting opportunities for multi-stakeholder engagement, accountability, and results-based planning. Despite the decentralized governance structure established by the 2015 Constitution, coordination between national and subnational actors is weak, and donor harmonization remains centralized, while local civil society groups face barriers to meaningful participation. However, participatory planning and budgeting are gaining traction in some municipalities, and civil society advocacy around transparency and inclusive partnerships is growing. Bridging knowledge gaps, strengthening coordination, and institutionalizing dialogue are critical to ensuring EDC becomes a lived practice rather than a top-down policy.

Nepal has submitted the results from its 4MR process. While this signals progress in the country's commitment to the whole-of-society approach to development, the 4MR process remained largely centralized, with limited engagement of local institutions. Data collection was dominated by national agencies and select development partners, with minimal participation from local governments, CSOs, and the private sector, highlighting gaps in inclusiveness and representativeness. The absence of a post-monitoring multi-stakeholder dialogue, low civil society involvement, poor performance on enabling environments for CSOs, and weak private sector engagement further constrained the process. Capacity limitations within government agencies, fragmented coordination, and the lack of an institutionalized platform for tracking indicators have undermined comprehensive and timely reporting. However, there is growing recognition from the government of the need for a more inclusive, routine national monitoring framework, integrated into planning and budgeting processes, to enhance policy coherence and development outcomes.

Intervention

The organization held a one-day multi-stakeholder dialogue with participants from local government bodies, civil society organizations (CSOs), women's rights groups, grassroots networks, and donor-funded initiatives.

The dialogue revealed major challenges to localizing the EDC agenda, including limited understanding of EDC principles at the local level and poor communication of national commitments to grassroots actors. Participants highlighted the lack of formal dialogue spaces, resource constraints, and persistent mistrust between civil society and local governments, all of which hinder consistent collaboration. Addressing these issues will require sustained, inclusive engagement beyond one-off events to rebuild trust and strengthen local ownership.

Key strategies discussed included creating formal spaces for regular dialogue between local governments and CSOs, such as quarterly fora or multi-stakeholder planning sessions, to build trust and accountability. Participants also emphasized embedding EDC principles into local governance frameworks by making budgeting more participatory and establishing clearer citizen engagement channels, alongside joint capacity-building workshops for local officials and CSOs. Other strategies included leveraging community-driven data collection for more bottom-up monitoring and using technology, like online portals and social media, to improve transparency and citizen feedback.

Partnership for better access and quality of health services in Indonesia

Pusat Rehabilitasi Yakkum

Indonesia has submitted the results of its 4MR data collection, and is currently on the Phase 5 (Reflection, Dialogue, and Action) of the process. The survey has been completed, and a consultation workshop was held to finalize the report. However, due to the presidential election on 14 February 2025 and subsequent changes in leadership, the Indonesian Ministry of National Planning (Bappenas), the agency leading the GPEDC 4th Monitoring process, has not yet conducted a multi-stakeholder workshop to present the results and recommendations of the report.

Localizing development effectiveness remains a challenge in Indonesia, especially in terms of creating an enabling environment for CSOs. Development partners only occasionally consult with a limited number of CSOs, often focusing narrowly on the implementation of their own programs. While some include aspects of the enabling environment in policy dialogues with the government – typically in response to CSO advocacy – funding remains largely driven by donor priorities and delivered through unpredictable calls for proposals, limiting access for many CSOs. Public information on donor support to CSOs is available only in aggregate form. Despite these challenges, there are positive examples of effective development cooperation, including a government grant mechanism for CSO-led development projects, strong collaboration and shared vision among CSOs, and the government's openness to engage in dialogue when approached by credible civil society actors.

National political dynamics and geopolitical developments further impact the localization of development effectiveness, including the achievement of development goals in relation to universal access to health. Shifts in global policies, often shaped by discrimination and stigma toward LGBTQ individuals, people with disabilities, immigrants, and informal workers, can undermine efforts to create inclusive, equitable health services. These vulnerable groups in Indonesia continue to be left behind due to economic hardship, geographic barriers, limited access to information, and insufficient capacity among medical personnel to serve marginalized populations.

Intervention

The country project in Indonesia focused on improving effective development cooperation for better access and quality of health in the country. YAKKUM conducted a survey among CSOs on the challenges of financing health and development cooperation and CSO sustainability in the country. The survey received responses from 70 CSOs working on health, disaster management, climate adaptation, and empowerment programs for vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, older people, transgender peoples, women, adolescents, and children. As a follow-up activity, YAKKUM organized a webinar to present the survey findings and discuss future partnerships for the health sector and development cooperation.

This project has contributed to the strengthening of local CSOs' participation in effective development cooperation by facilitating the exchange of knowledge and practices from both government and civil society. Specifically, it provided perspectives into maximizing project impacts in the health sector despite funding constraints, and yielded valuable insights into the challenges in localizing effective development.

Localizing Effective Development Cooperation Agenda in Cambodia

The NGO Forum on Cambodia

In recent years, Cambodia has advanced in localizing EDC, with CSOs playing a key role in shaping national development strategies. Notably, the NGO Forum on Cambodia and Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) were appointed by the government to contribute to the preparation of the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2024–2028, including hosting a consultative workshop in January 2024 to gather multi-sectoral input. While CSOs have engaged in partnership dialogues and contributed recommendations, such as improving collaboration with sub-national authorities and expediting the draft law on Access to Information, they still face challenges like limited participation in aid coordination mechanisms and insufficient capacity for policy engagement. Despite this, CSOs remain committed to advocating for inclusive and effective development cooperation, emphasizing the importance of their engagement in national development processes.

Cambodia has made notable progress in monitoring EDC, as seen in its consistent participation in the GPEDC monitoring processes. It has implemented comprehensive frameworks that promote transparency, accountability, and alignment with national priorities. Central to this effort is the Cambodia ODA Database (AIMS), managed by the Council for the Development of Cambodia, which tracks Official Development Assistance (ODA) using global indicators and requires biannual project-level reporting from development partners, including NGOs. The Joint Monitoring Indicators (JMIs), established in 2004, further support mutual accountability by enabling regular assessments of national development strategy implementation. Complementing these tools, the Development Cooperation and Partnerships Strategy (DCPS) 2024–2028 outlines strategic goals to enhance ownership, inclusivity, implementation efficiency, public information access, and monitoring practices, underscoring Cambodia's commitment to effective, data-driven development cooperation.

CSOs in the country face growing challenges related to financial sustainability, regulatory pressures, and operational freedom. Many CSOs, particularly smaller and provincial ones, struggle with limited, project-based funding and lack organizational support, prompting initiatives like the Civil Society Fund (CSF) by the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia and the Financing for Development Platform by the NGO Forum on Cambodia to diversify funding sources and enhance financial resilience. Meanwhile, increased government scrutiny, especially through selective tax audits, has raised concerns about the impartial application of regulations, particularly toward groups critical of the state. Additionally, a shrinking civic space marked by harassment, arrests, and repression has led many CSOs to adopt adaptive strategies, such as forming social enterprises, merging for efficiency, and building alliances. Despite these constraints, CSOs continue to play a vital role in society through innovation and resilience.

Intervention

To share and generate inputs on the results of Cambodia's 4MR monitoring, The NGO Forum on Cambodia (NGOF) conducted a multi-stakeholder forum that gathered 60 representatives from government agencies, development partners, civil society, private sector, and marginalized groups. The forum provided a space for raising awareness on the GPEDC framework, its indicators, and the importance of the monitoring process. NGOF framed the EDC agenda and GPEDC monitoring round in relation to Cambodia's National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) and Rectangular Strategy, making the EDC principles more relevant and actionable for national and sub-national actors. Country-specific experiences and lessons learned in past GPEDC monitoring rounds were likewise shared and documented.

NGOF also held a dialogue meeting with the government, the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC), Development Partners (DPs), and the private sector to discuss CSO inputs on the 4MR results. Provincial and district-level officials expressed interest in applying EDC principles, especially country ownership and mutual accountability, in planning and budgeting. This opens a pathway for decentralized localization of EDC, linking it with Cambodia's subnational democratic development process.

This project is a significant contribution to the Reflection, Dialogues, and Action Phase of the 4MR process, and to the longer-term goal of embedding EDC principles into Cambodia's development architecture.

CSOPartnership for Development Effectiveness

The Reality of Aid ASIA PACIFIC