

CIVIL SOCIETY REFLECTIONS ON PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS:

INCLUSION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

**BRIAN TOMLINSON
AidWatch Canada**



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Brian Tomlinson
AidWatch Canada
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ACRONYMS

3MR - Global Partnership 2018 Third Monitoring Round
A4SD - Action for Sustainable Development
CPDE - CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness
CRF – Country Results Framework
CRS – Creditor Reporting System (DAC)
CSOs – Civil Society Organizations
DCF – Development Cooperation Forum (UN)
DPs – Development Partners
GPEDC - Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
HLF - High Level Forum
HLPF - UN High Level Political Forum
HRBA - Human Rights-Based Approach
IATI – International Aid Transparency Initiative
IBP - International Budget Partnership
IMS – Information Management System
INGOs - International Non-Governmental Organizations
LDCs – Least Developed Countries
OECD DAC – OECD Development Cooperation Committee
PEFA – Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Tool
PFM – Public Financial Management Systems
SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals
SLM - Senior Level Meeting (GPEDC)
SWAPs – Sector Wide Approaches to Program
VNRs – Voluntary National Reviews

KEY MESSAGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2019 CPDE *Monitoring Report's* Key Messages and Recommendations aim to inform and augment dialogue in the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (henceforth the Global Partnership). CPDE is committed to dialogue on outstanding development effectiveness challenges, including 'unfinished business' for many key commitments and indicators agreed in Paris (2005) and Busan (2011).

The *Report* focuses on the centrality of democratic country ownership by examining in more depth issues of inclusion in development policy and practices, in the context of a **human rights-based approach** (HRBA) to development cooperation.

A HRBA guides both the content of development, based on the intrinsic human rights of people as rights-holders, and the ways in which States as development actors and duty-bearers, undertake development cooperation. This latter dimension of HRBA informs this *Report*, given the mandate of the Global Partnership.

A. Overview: Advancing inclusive partnerships

The *Monitoring Report* looks closely at the implementation of norms for inclusion and democratic participation in development cooperation processes, with respect to non-discrimination, accountability to rights-holders, and the extension of genuine ownership over development in all its stages.

Both the GPEDC's Third *Progress Report (2019)*¹ and this CPDE *Monitoring Report* confirm mixed, modest progress in some areas relevant to the four principles for development effectiveness – country ownership, focus on results, inclusive partnerships, and transparency and accountability.

Yet the evidence from both Reports establishes the least progress since 2016 in advancing inclusive partnerships, despite repeated affirmations of their essential importance for development effectiveness and the achievement of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs.

Recommendation #1: The Global Partnership must demonstrate its commitment to maximize efforts to strengthen the conditions in which inclusive partnerships can flourish, ones in which civil society can act as equal partners.

The July Senior Level Meeting should initiate a GPEDC multi-stakeholder work stream to assess the different constraints that are currently affecting our shared support to civil society to play

¹ Accessed June 2019 at <http://effectivecooperation.org/monitoring-country-progress/making-development-cooperation-more-effective/>.

its full roles as development actors. This work stream should propose recommendations to accelerate concrete measures on the part of all development actors to protect and enable space for civil society.

This overarching recommendation is based on a summary of evidence coming from both the Third Monitoring Round (3MR) in 86 countries and CPDE's own Survey and monitoring in 22 countries (with varying coverage for different indicators).

B. Inclusion of CSOs in development planning processes (supporting democratic country ownership)

Inclusion of people's needs and interests in development planning processes is an important aspect of democratic country ownership. People's needs and interests are often represented by CSOs, many of whom have a mandate of linking policy discussions with people's interests, especially people living in poverty and those who are marginalised. While government dialogues with CSOs on development policy and practices often exist, these processes continue to be a very challenging space for effective engagement for CSOs in many countries. CSOs in more than half the 44 3MR countries (53%) reported either no consultation (2 countries) or consultations that were only occasional, where the quality of the consultation was not sufficient (21 countries). An even higher share of countries had non-existent (6 countries or 14%) or weak consultations (18 countries or 42%) for the prioritisation, implementation and monitoring the SDGs. Almost all CSOs suggested that consultation practice needs substantial improvements in their timeliness, their overall transparency, and as an iterative process going forward.

Multi-stakeholder mechanisms are an important expression of democratic country ownership as they structure an engagement with all relevant development actors. But such processes were seen in only 40% of the 22 countries examined by the *Monitoring Survey*. Similar to conditions affecting policy dialogue, most CSOs assessed the quality of existing multi-stakeholder dialogue practices as highly unsatisfactory (30% very poor and 48% needing significant improvement) – compromised by a lack of institutionalized regularity, limited CSO engagement, and often structured only to endorse existing government priorities.

Recommendation #2: Processes for CSO dialogue on development policy and implementation of the SDGs at the country level must be strengthened as regular predictable opportunities for engagement, including their institutionalized, access by a full diversity of CSO stakeholders, and deliberate efforts to take practical steps to improve the quality of this dialogue.

C. An enabling Environment for CSOs as development actors and CSO development effectiveness

CSOs in the 3MR point to continued critical challenges in the quality of CSO enabling conditions, for both effective operations and for their roles as development actors in their own right, in more than two-thirds of countries surveyed. These restrictions were experienced in almost half (46%) of the 54 countries

surveyed by CSOs (performance at the basic level). In another quarter of the countries (24%) performance was said to be highly disabling for different conditions affecting CSOs as social actors (at the negligible or narrow level).

CSOs continue to face difficult and disabling legal and regulatory issues in a third (33%) of the 54 countries responding to Indicator Two. In about 40% of 70 3MR participating countries, independent indices suggest that CSOs are subject to unreasonable government control, where they were severely or moderately repressed. In close to a fifth (19%) of the 54 3MR countries, governments have implemented what CSOs describe as severe restrictions in accessing domestic and international finance for their work, with others facing various levels of limitations. Governments generally ranked these conditions as moderate to good practice in these same countries. These findings strongly suggest the need for dialogue with Government on laws, regulations and practices affecting the effective roles of CSOs in development.

The results of the 3MR (Indicator Two) also confirm that a CSO enabling environment is not being facilitated by most Development Partners. Both CSOs and Governments consistently ranked the practices of Development Partners considerably below good practice (at a basic level or less) for a) consultations with CSOs, b) promotion of an enabling environment, c) enabling modalities of financial support, and d) provider country-level transparency. Development Partners ranked their overall performance at the level of moderate good practice.

Fully three-quarters (72%) of the 86 countries participating in 3MR were assessed as closed, repressed or obstructed by the CIVICUS *Monitor* of civic space. Among these 86 countries, 970 million people, or more than half (58%) of their total population, live in conditions for civic space that is either closed (22%) or very restricted (36%) where civic space is very highly constrained. A further 700 million people (41%) live in societies where civic space is highly contested and state authorities are reported to undermine CSOs (obstructed).

Recommendation #3: A renewed commitment on the part of all stakeholders is required, with immediate urgent and concerted action to reverse the continued deterioration of the legal and regulatory environment for CSOs to fully contribute to development and the SDGs. (See also Recommendation #1 above.)

Serious discrimination, inconsistent legal protection and little juridical recourse for CSOs working with marginalized and vulnerable populations is reported in a third (33%) of the 54 countries with Indicator Two data. Since 2016, more than 900 human rights defenders have been murdered around the world, with many more reportedly harassed, imprisoned and verbally abused or smeared. These numbers have been growing in both 2017 and 2018. In 14 of the 86 countries responding to the GPEDC's 3MR, at least 182 human rights defenders were killed in 2017 and 2018.

Recommendation #4: Human Rights Defenders require deliberate action to fully ensure the protection of the full expression of their rights, including freedom from political killing and harassment, which is a significant issue in some GPEDC-monitored countries.

The 3MR results also suggest that CSOs have faced significant challenges in demonstrating progress in their own development effectiveness in areas of equitable partnerships, accountability and transparency. With the exception of coordination at the country level, CSOs and Governments assess CSO performance with respect to equitable partnerships and CSO-initiated accountability mechanism as basic or weak (particularly for equitable partnerships). A majority of CSO country respondents (54%) for Indicator Two say that their partnerships are mainly project-based, and are largely designed by financing CSOs. Even worse, 34% say they experience short-term, one-off, project relationships defined exclusively by the financing CSO program interests.

Recommendation #5: Civil society must reaffirm its commitment to strengthen its development effectiveness, as set out in the *Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness* and the *Siem Reap Framework* for implementing these *Principles*. They must ramp up demonstrable efforts in capacity development and make progress in CSO equitable partnerships, transparency and accountability practices, accordingly.

D. Transparency and access to information in law and practice

Progress in global aid transparency, national information systems and freedom of information laws is often not translating into meaningful access for CSOs on the ground. In 40% of CPDE-surveyed countries, access to required information at the national level was seen to be non-existent or very poor – poor implementation of laws, fragmented across many ministries, limited by cost, broad interpretation of privacy and security laws, and difficult to interpret for many country contexts. Very few country-level CSOs are accessing or using OECD DAC or IATI data.

However, CSOs, Governments and Development Partners rank access to information for consultation purposes at a level of good practice in a majority of responding 3MR countries. Two-third of all CSO respondents (3MR and CPDE Survey respondents) indicated that practice in this area was either good (31 countries at Level 3) or excellent (5 countries at Level 4).

Recommendation #6: Deliberate measures are needed to create and maintain up-to-date portals to all relevant data for assessing development progress, accessible for all interested citizens and country-level CSOs. They should be accompanied by measures for capacity development for country stakeholders to be effective in using this data, in strengthening accountability, including data from the DAC CRS and IATI.

E. Mutual accountability for development outcomes

Inclusive mutual accountability at the country level is an essential mechanism for strengthening the four principles for development effectiveness and for implementing the SDGs, in the context of a HRBA. It can be a forum for advancing institutional policy and behaviour change on the part of all stakeholders.

Progress has been documented for increased practice of mutual accountability in many countries, and in the elaboration of development cooperation country policies that guide these processes. But both the UN Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) and CPDE's *Monitoring Report* point to a third of existing accountability mechanisms that had no CSO presence, and another 20% reporting very minimal involvement. In many countries, CSOs confirmed that they conduct parallel investigations on various issues in development effectiveness, which can offer a rich body of evidence for dialogue with / accountability for other development actors.

Recommendation #7: Significant attention is needed to improve institutionalization of mutual accountability mechanisms on the full spectrum of development cooperation policy and implementation, to ensure representative inclusion of a full diversity of stakeholders (CSOs), their predictability, and full transparency in their agenda, deliberations, and decisions for follow up.

F. Gender equality and women's empowerment

Very large gaps exist for the majority of countries in translating policies for improving gender equality into effective institutions and sustained programs to promote and monitor gender equality outcomes. According to UNDP's Gender Inequality Index, in at least 68% of GPEDC-monitored countries, different aspects of gender inequality remain a very significant challenge for development progress.

It is alarming that almost two thirds (61%) of DAC providers' bilateral ODA still have no explicit gender equality objectives in 2017, and only 4.3% of programs were focused exclusively on gender equality outcomes. Women's organizations as key drivers for mobilizing change at all levels received only US\$380 million in 2017. These funds include all allocations to UN Women, government women's mechanisms and women's rights CSOs. The *Progress Report* documented that only 19% of responding countries had a fully comprehensive and transparent tracking system of gender budget allocations.

Recommendation #8: All development actors must commit to both gender-specific initiatives, such as increased support for women's rights organizations, and the fully mainstreaming of gender equality actions in their programs. Much more concerted action is needed to close existing gender gaps and to create effective institutions and fully resourced programs that address and effectively monitor gender equality outcomes.

G. Effective Public Expenditure Financial Management Systems

The 3MR found that access to fiscal information improved in only 37% of the countries reviewed. The actual level of access remains very low in many countries, according to the independent Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability tool used to assess partner country financial management systems. CPDE's Survey also ranked performance in these areas very poor in a third of the 22 countries reviewed, and needing significant improvement in another 50%.

Recommendation #9: Concerted action is needed to improve timely public access to fiscal information, to procurement policies and practices, and to the outcomes of external audits on government finances, including through accessible parliamentary reviews and hearings.

H. Tied Aid

In 2015 (the last year for which there is complete data) more than a third (38%) of real bilateral aid commitments were tied to provider country suppliers, when substantial amounts informal tied aid are included. The latter is the result of procurement terms and conditions through a high technical bias, requirements for specialized knowledge, limited advertisement in partner countries, and a scale that is beyond local capacities. Untying aid provides better value for money, but is also an essential consideration in strengthening country ownership and the development of partner country suppliers.

Recommendation #10: Providers of development cooperation assistance must review and reverse their procurement policies and practices to ensure that their aid is fully untied, both in relation to laws and regulations that formally tied aid to provider country suppliers, and in informal practices that continue to tie significant additional levels of their aid.

CHAPTER ONE

DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY OWNERSHIP² AND ACCOUNTABILITY – SETTING THE STAGE

An Introduction

From June 2018 to March 2019, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC - henceforth the Global Partnership) implemented the Third Monitoring Round (3MR) on progress in realizing development effectiveness commitments.³ These commitments were agreed at the Busan Partnership High Level Forum (HLF) in late 2011.⁴ The Busan HLF mandated the Global Partnership to undertake a country-led, multi-stakeholder, biennial monitoring process and report to several High Level Meetings, with the last one held in Nairobi in November 2016.⁵ The 3MR will be reporting to a Global Partnership Senior Level Meeting (SLM) taking place in New York in July 2019.⁶

A GPEDC *Third Progress Report (2019)*⁷ summarizes the evidence from the 3MR and contributes to the Global Partnership's Co-chairs summary coming out of the July SLM.⁸ The conclusions of the SLM will also establish the framework for the future priorities for the Global Partnership to advance development effectiveness among its stakeholders. The *Progress Report* is intended to inform the 2019 UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its various targets. The Global Partnership's work on development effectiveness is acknowledged to be a key consideration for advancing the SDGs.

The outcomes of the 3MR directly relate to several SDG targets: respect for each country's policy space and leadership (SDG 17.15), multi-stakeholder partnerships for development (SDG 17.16), and policies and legislation to support gender equality and women's empowerment (SDG 5c).

² This Report focuses democratic country ownership in monitoring progress in relation to the 2011 Busan Partnership Agreement and its acknowledgement of the importance of democratic country ownership (§11 and 12), which implies processes of development and accountability on the part of all stakeholders, not just government. See below.

³ See <http://effectivecooperation.org/monitoring-country-progress/making-development-co-operation-more-effective/>

⁴ See the Busan Partnership Agreement at <https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/49650173.pdf>

⁵ For the outcomes of the Nairobi High Level Meeting see <http://effectivecooperation.org/events/2nd-high-level-meeting/>

⁶ See <http://effectivecooperation.org/event/2019-senior-level-meeting/>

⁷ Accessed June 2019 at <http://effectivecooperation.org/monitoring-country-progress/making-development-co-operation-more-effective/>.

⁸ This Report references the outcomes of the 3MR as set out in early drafts of the *Progress Report*, which have been checked against the final published version of the *Progress Report*.

The Global Partnership's 3MR monitoring has been guided by a detailed methodology for ten indicators that has been implemented in 86 countries.⁹ As the representative of civil society, the Civil Society Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) is an equal partner within the Global Partnership, alongside Development Partners (official providers) and Partner Countries. CPDE currently (2019) is serving as the first Non-Executive Co-Chair on behalf of other non-executive stakeholders – trade unions, the private sector, foundations and the parliamentarians. As an active stakeholder, CPDE has contributed directly to the 3MR process at both the country level through CSO focal points and at the global level through the Steering Committee of the Global Partnership. CPDE proposed a revised framework for Indicator Two on CSO enabling environment and CSO development effectiveness, which was substantially accepted and implemented in the 3MR.

CPDE welcomes the *Third Progress Report* and offers its *CSO Monitoring Report* as a complementary set of evidence and commentary on progress in key areas of development effectiveness.

In implementing the monitoring exercise, Global Partnership stakeholders focus on upholding accountability for all actors, encouraging multi-stakeholder dialogue on development cooperation, and on making progress in implementing the four Busan Principles for development effectiveness at country level:

- a) Ownership of development priorities by developing countries;
- b) Focus on results that have a lasting impact on eradicating poverty and reducing inequality, on sustainable development, aligned with the priorities of developing countries;
- c) Inclusive development partnerships, recognizing the different and complementary roles of all actors; and
- d) Transparency and accountability to each other.

These principles are to be implemented in ways that deepen, extend and operationalize the democratic ownership of development policies and processes, consistent with agreed international commitments on human rights. [*Busan Partnership Agreement*, §11 and §12(a)]

Through the *CSO Monitoring Report*, the CPDE aims to augment the 3MR by encouraging and informing further dialogue on the outstanding development effectiveness challenges for CSOs as development actors in their own right and in multi-stakeholder partnerships for development. It takes up the challenges for democratic country ownership by examining in more depth issues of inclusion in

⁹ See 2018 Monitoring Guide for National Coordinators from Participating Governments, Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, August 2018, accessed May 2019 at http://effectivecooperation.org/pdf/2018_Monitoring_Guide_National_Coordinator.pdf.

development policy and practices, in the context of a human rights-based approach (HRBA) to development cooperation.¹⁰

While an HRBA provides guidance in terms of the content of development based on the intrinsic human rights of people as rights-holders, it also focuses on the ways in which development actors, as duty-bearers, undertake development cooperation. Given the mandate of the Global Partnerships, this Report is guided by the latter as it looks more closely at norms for inclusion and democratic participation in development cooperation processes in terms of non-discrimination, accountability to rights-holders, and the extension of genuine ownership over development in all its stages.¹¹

The Centrality of Norms for Democratic Ownership

The first Busan principle for effective development cooperation is “ownership of development priorities by developing countries” in which approaches are “tailored to country-specific situations and needs.” Development partners’ investments “must have a lasting impact on eradicating poverty and reducing inequality, on sustainable development and on enhancing developing countries’ capacities, aligned with the policies and priorities set out by developing countries themselves [Busan Partnership Agreement, §11(a) and (b)].”¹²

Country ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals is also a key principle for the 2015 *Transforming our world: Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development*. The latter affirms that each government “will set its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition” and the “global targets should be incorporated into national planning processes, policies and strategies [Transforming

¹⁰ A human rights-based approach is a conceptual framework an approach to development cooperation rooted in international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyse inequalities, which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress. It does this by integrating human rights norms and principles into every area of development co-operation, including the process itself, and in every thematic area of work. This helps to promote the sustainability of development work, empowering people themselves - especially the most marginalized - to participate in policy formulation and hold accountable those who have a duty to act. (See the common understanding of human rights based approaches to development within the UN system at <https://undg.org/document/the-human-rights-based-approach-to-development-cooperation-towards-a-common-understanding-among-un-agencies/>.)

¹¹ See UN High Commission for Human Rights, Frequently Asked Questions on Human Rights Based Approaches to Development Cooperation, 2006, accessed May 2019 at <https://undg.org/document/un-inter-agency-common-learning-package-on-human-rights-based-approach-to-programming/>

¹² CPDE has reaffirmed the four core dimensions of democratic country ownership at its 2019 Beirut Global Council: It has four essential areas, namely 1) the creation of multi-stakeholder formal bodies and effective broad consultation process to determine and monitor development plans and policies; 2) the existence of an enabling environment for CSOs; 3) transparency and access to information on development plans; and 4) accountability for the use of development resources and aid provided to the government.” See https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/9f29ee_3dd4e3b1ff6247aa83357be375afd5fd.pdf

our world, §55]”.¹³ The Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) confirms the importance of “adherence to agreed development effectiveness principles” in achieving *Agenda 2030* [AAAA, §58].¹⁴

In implementing these principles, the GPEDC affirmed an essential commitment to deepen democratic processes in development. Country ownership, therefore, cannot be separated from the third Busan principle for effective development cooperation – inclusive development partnerships that recognise “the different and complementary roles of all actors.” [Busan Partnership Agreement, §11(c)].

Inclusive partnerships will constructively involve civil society when all development actors create the enabling conditions for civil society and CSOs to maximize their roles and contributions to development at all levels. International human rights standards, relating to inclusion and participation, freedom of assembly and freedom of expression, must guide policies, regulations and laws for this enabling environment. In turn, CSOs committed in Busan, and reiterated at the Nairobi High Level Meeting in 2016, to enhance their own development effectiveness, transparency and accountability, framed by the eight *Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness* (henceforth, *Istanbul Principles*).¹⁵

The legal, regulatory and policy conditions for fully enabling civil society are a critical pre-condition to advance the Sustainable Development Goals. Real and transformative progress in poverty eradication, in tackling hunger, in decent work and sustainable livelihoods for all, in addressing gender and all forms of inequality, and in action for climate justice, will not be possible without a fully engaged civil society and population.¹⁶ In April 2019, more than 150 CSO Platforms, Coalitions and organizations launched an urgent **Call to Action** in Belgrade, calling on all governments and development stakeholders to take sustained concrete steps to protect and enable space for civil society to realize the SDGs (See **Annex Ten**).¹⁷

¹³ See *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld/publication>.

¹⁴ See Addis Ababa Action Agenda at https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/AAAA_Outcome.pdf.

¹⁵ See the *Istanbul Principles* at <https://www.csopartnership.org/single-post/2018/02/15/Istanbul-Principles-for-CSO-Development-Effectiveness>.

¹⁶ For an overview analysis of the specific linkages between inclusive partnerships, enabling conditions for CSOs and the SDGs see ACT Alliance / IDS, Naomi Hussein et al., *Development needs civil society. The implications of civic space for the SDGs*, May 2019, accessed June 2019 at <https://actalliance.org/act-news/development-needs-civil-society-the-implications-of-civic-space-for-the-sustainable-development-goals/>.

¹⁷ See *The Belgrade Call to Action and its Action Agenda: Positive Measures for Enabling Civil Society towards Maximizing Civil Society Contributions to the SDGs*, April 2019, accessed May 2019 at <http://aidwatchcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Revised-April-Action-Agenda.pdf> and <http://aidwatchcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/April-24-Final-Belgrade-Call-to-Action.pdf>.

The strengths of civil society are its diversity, its rootedness in communities, its direct development experience, and its capacities for public engagement. CSOs contribute to development outcomes for the SDGs through:

- a) Direct involvement with communities of poor and marginalized populations to support their development efforts;
- b) Engagement with governments to exchange policy knowledge; working at many levels to ensure greater accountability; help to prevent corruption; and address other challenges of governance;
- c) Defence of the rights of vulnerable groups and advocating on behalf of those whose voices are sidelined by more powerful actors, where development is highly contested;
- d) Promotion of transformative change by addressing underlying causes of poverty, hunger, economic inequality, gender inequality or raising new issues and perspectives based on their experience; and
- e) Building trust and social cohesion, particularly important in rebuilding communities affected by humanitarian crises or at risk of political violence, armed conflict or ethnic strife.

These key areas of contribution for CSOs and the SDGs inform the analysis and observations derived from the CPDE parallel monitoring process and its *CSO Monitoring Report*.

The Structure of the CPDE *Monitoring Report*

CPDE's *Monitoring Report* brings together data from a Survey completed by CPDE CSO focal points in more than 50 developing countries as well as several independent indices that complement this data.¹⁸ This CPDE investigation is structured by the Global Partnership's ten-indicator framework for the 3MR (see **Annex Two** for this Indicator Framework). The CPDE Survey included questions relating to the following GPEDC indicators¹⁹:

Indicator 1a and 1b **A focus on country-led strategies and results frameworks.** To what extent are stakeholders included in determining and legitimizing developing country strategies, priorities and results frameworks to which development partners are aligning? To what degree are inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogues a means of expressing democratic ownership in setting development priorities?

¹⁸ Not all country focal points completed the Survey. Overall 54 CSO country focal points completed the questionnaire for Indicator Two. Responses for other indicators came from 22 country focal points. See **Annex One** for a list of countries involved.

¹⁹ Note that this CPDE Report does not deal with Indicator 3 on public private sector dialogue. CPDE has significant methodological issues with the structure of this Indicator and suggests that it be reformulated so that it measures the degree to which the private sector is accountable to the development effectiveness principles, in the context of the recently adopted Kampala Principles for Effective Private Sector Engagement (see <https://effectivecooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SCM17-Private-Sector-Engagement-Principles.pdf>.)

Indicator 2 A CSO enabling environment and CSO development effectiveness. To what extent has governments and development cooperation providers created an enabling environment for CSOs to be effective development actors in all their roles? Are CSOs improving their own development effectiveness in relation to equitable partnerships, coordination, human rights based approaches, transparency and accountability?

Indicator 4 Transparent information on development cooperation is publicly available. To what extent do CSOs have access to timely and relevant information from their government's information systems and from international databases on development cooperation?

Indicator 7 Mutual accountability for development outcomes. To what extent are CSOs fully 'at-the-table' in inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue for mutual accountability in development cooperation, including CSO engagement in goal-setting for development cooperation results frameworks?

Indicator 8 Gender equality and women's empowerment. To what extent is there comprehensive protection of women's rights and the inclusion of women's rights organizations in the development, implementation and review of gender equality development plans and programs?

Indicator 9a and 9b Use of country systems. To what extent are CSOs aware of systems for oversight and greater transparency in public financial management? To what extent are providers impeded from using country systems due to the perception of corruption and impunity as well as government efforts to maximize fair access to social services and "bottom-up budgetary?

Indicator 10 Tied Aid. To what extent are providers continuing to tie their aid procurements to provider country suppliers through formal laws and regulations and informal terms and conditions?

Each chapter of this *Monitoring Report* sets out the GPEDC indicator framework and the focus for CPDE's complementary Survey. The chapter then summarizes the indicator findings from both the GPEDC's 2018 *Progress Report*, where available, CPDE findings arising from the data received, and commentary from respondents, and relevant data and information from several independent sources (See **Annex Nine** for a list of these sources). This summary is followed by details for the findings from the Survey and independent sources. Together these findings form the basis for the *Report's Key Messages and Recommendations* found in the opening section.

The **Table of Contents** \ provides a good overview of the structure for each Chapter. These chapters can be read independently for the respective GPEDC indicator of interest. Findings for Indicator Two on CSO enabling conditions (Chapter Three) are more fully developed. Unlike other indicators, this Chapter is supplemented in **Annex Three** with a detailed analysis of each Module Question, with related analysis of independent data sources. In addition, **Annex Four** provides Charts for each Module Question with a comparative breakdown of answers by Government, CSO and Development Partner Stakeholders.

CHAPTER TWO

INDICATOR ONE – A FOCUS ON COUNTRY-LED STRATEGIES AND RESULTS FRAMEWORKS

An Introduction

The GPEDC approach towards democratic country ownership is reflected in several indicators in the 3MR.²⁰ In Indicator One, the focus has been to assess the extent to which existing country-led results frameworks guide development partners' development cooperation efforts, thereby rooting them in developing country priorities. The Indicator looks at the overall development partner coherence with developing country strategies. At the programmatic level, it looks more closely at the country alignment of results framework for the largest six programs or projects for each development partner. A second part of this Indicator examines the ways in which a country has assumed leadership in strengthening its national results framework.

While such alignments is key to country ownership for many partner countries, CPDE stresses the importance of country-level processes for stakeholder inclusion in the determination, and therefore the legitimacy, of developing country strategies, priorities and results frameworks to which development partners are aligning. This CSO data is intended to complement government perceptions of the inclusion of other development actors in the government's strategy/plan.²¹ CPDE data goes further to assess the degree to which such processes are institutionalized in multi-stakeholder bodies for the preparation and implementation of country development policies, plans and strategies. These processes are crucial indications of democratic country ownership – country ownership that goes beyond considerations of government roles in managing development processes.

CPDE's complementary assessment for Indicator One also looks at the degree to which CSOs are acknowledged to be independent development actors with their own results frameworks that may broadly align with country strategies. This aspect of CPDE data is closely related to GPEDC's Indicator Two on an enabling environment for CSOs as development actors.

An Overview of Findings for Indicator One

The GPEDC's *Progress Report* finds that the alignment of development partner projects with partner country results framework has declined since 2016. The extent to which Country Results Frameworks (CRFs) are used in the design and monitoring of new development projects fell from 64% in 2016 to 62% in 2018, which is even more pronounced for bilateral development partners (from 64% to 57%). As noted by the *Progress Report*, this lack of progress signals a decline for SDG 17.15, for which is tis a

²⁰ See Indicators One, Two, Three, Five, Seven, Nine and Ten.

²¹ Indicator One (B), question 2.

measure of “respect for each country’s policy space and leadership.” (Part 2, 28-29)²² Interestingly, the *Progress Report* notes that there is no correlation between the perceived quality of national development strategies and CRFs and development partner use of these strategies to align their country programs and results. Rather, “decisions on closer alignment to partner country priorities [seem] to hinge on factors that are specific to the development partner.” (Part 2, 23-24) Alignment increases when there has been a longer-term partnership with partner country governments and a large share of partner ODA is directed to the public sector (Part 2, 20). (See also Chapter Seven below on use of partner country systems.)

The *Progress Report* acknowledges the importance of “inclusive and equitable participation from all parts of society” for country ownership. It also points to Government’s unique responsibility to lead development and “to play an enabling role – among both domestic stakeholders and international partners – to facilitate this “whole-of-society approach (Part 1, page 16).” Both are essential dimensions for effective country ownership. The 3MR results indicate that there has been a significant improvement in the overall quality of national development planning, including the integration of SDG targets as well as inclusion of stakeholders. This result was particularly true for low income and lower-middle income countries more highly dependent on aid resources in carry out their development plans. Overall, 88% of countries have results frameworks linked to their national development strategy. Issues remain, however, in linking these results frameworks to annual budgeting processes and many countries still lack the statistical capacities to effectively monitor implementation.

The *Progress Report* concludes, “national development planning is becoming more inclusive, but more systematic and meaningful engagement of diverse stakeholders throughout the development processes is needed (Part 1, page 36) [emphasis added].” While almost all Governments in the 3MR (77%) report consulting with CSOs in designing national development strategies, only a small number (17%) confirmed that they allowed CSOs to engage in a participatory process to shape the national development strategy.²³

The CPDE Survey results are largely consistent with these overall findings of the *Progress Report*. CPDE focal points are aware of national development strategies and results frameworks. But this awareness can be partial due to limitations on access to comprehensive information from government, which is also an issue for CSOs in monitoring these results frameworks. Similarly, these strategies and frameworks may not truly inform actual development activities and budgets (as also noted in the *Progress Report*).

²² The *Progress Report* also drew attention to the finding that only 35% of partner country governments reported that timely, regular and accurate government data are available for most or all indicators for their results framework (Part 2, 24). Limitations on accessible data would naturally affect the ability of development partners to use these frameworks in monitoring the outcomes of their projects based solely on CRFs.

²³ For the 3MR, “consulted” means the government made proposals to the stakeholder group and sought opinions. “Participatory process” means stakeholders were allowed to make proposals and some of these proposals were used in designing the national development strategy. See the Monitoring Guide for definitions.

Independent surveys (Bertelsmann) suggest that partner countries “inconsistently” integrate provider resources into their national strategies and results frameworks.

In a majority of cases, various forms of multi-stakeholder processes exist for dialogue on development priorities. But many of these processes are highly compromised by a lack of institutionalized regularity and can be perfunctory mechanisms to endorse existing government priorities with limited CSO engagement. CSOs continue to rate broad government consultation practices, in terms of timeliness, transparent documentation, openness, and iterative processes, either as very poor or needing significant improvement.

CSO results frameworks exist in a majority of countries, but are often organizationally or sector-specific depending on the degree of coordination among CSOs. Indicator Two data suggests that CSO coordination is improving in many countries (see Indicator Two, Module 2). As development actors in their own right, CSOs’ engagement is diverse and often relating to specific vulnerable populations. In this sense, their individual results frameworks are aligned broadly with the aspirations of country SDG strategies, and in particular those that are focused on “leaving no one behind.”

Analysis of CPDE Focal Point Responses:

a) Role of CSOs in development of country strategies and results frameworks is mixed

Almost all CPDE country focal points (91% of 22 focal points) indicated that they were aware of their country’s results frameworks and strategies. However, this broad awareness was often qualified or limited to a few CSOs. A smaller majority (73%) said they had full access to the documentation of frameworks and strategies. In some cases, CSOs had access to only a broad development plan, without specific results frameworks (Vietnam); full documentation was not available (Indonesia); or only a short-term plan to guide the economy is accessible to CSOs (Zimbabwe). For several countries, only a small number of CSOs had practical access to these strategies and results frameworks (Armenia, Bulgaria, Fiji) and in others access may be at the discretion of particular ministries (Cameroon).

With regard to inclusion of CSOs, a similar majority of countries (16 or 75%) said there was a law or policy that recognized CSO participation in government decision-making. In Bulgaria this inclusion is driven by European Union policies. In other cases, involvement has been at the sectoral or thematic level (Bangladesh). There are often no institutionalized structures and the quality of engagement is seen to be problematic (Ghana, Cameroon).

Access to country strategies and results frameworks is further limited by the absence of agreed mechanisms for monitoring these strategies and results frameworks. Among 20 CPDE Survey countries only a third (8 countries) had a mechanism for this purpose. For another 7 countries, CSOs indicated that such mechanisms might exist, but CSOs qualified their answer, as mechanisms were quite limited – they

lack serious attention to evidence and information (Macedonia, Bulgaria), or were limited to a particular government office (Kyrgyzstan).

b) Serious limitations in multi-stakeholder processes in preparation and implementation of country strategies

The record for multi-stakeholder processes is mixed. Well over a third of the CSO Survey respondents (41%) indicated there were transparent and functional multi-stakeholder processes for the preparation and implementation of country strategies. But CSOs are clearly included in only 58% of the countries with multi-stakeholder processes. CSOs in other countries pointed out:

- A multi-stakeholder body exists on paper, but it is unclear whether it is functional (Macedonia);
- They exist mainly at the sectoral level depending on the ministry, sometimes with mixed functionality (Kyrgyzstan, Bangladesh, Cameroon);
- They are mainly ad hoc and function to legitimize existing government directions (Zimbabwe, Fiji);
- Included CSOs are very few, at the government's discretion or seen to be political supporters, or are seen as invited participants for knowledge sharing only (Kyrgyzstan, Ghana, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Armenia, Fiji); or
- They are mainly organized by providers, with only formal government leadership (Lebanon).

The case of Kenya seems indicative: "Whereas some CSOs are sometimes meaningfully consulted, there is no unified process of consultative input, and thereafter implementation, monitoring and validation of the results of development efforts are similarly limited."

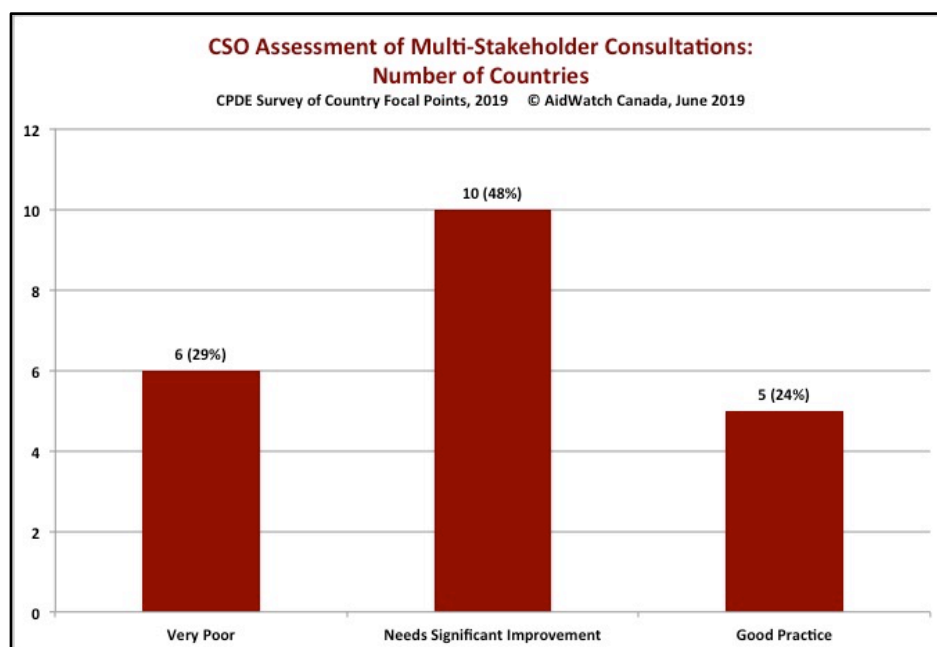
The CPDE Survey asked respondents to rate the quality of best practice standards in carrying out multi-stakeholder dialogue. The results suggest that much more attention should be devoted to improving practice and the capacities to undertake meaningful consultations with CSOs. While significant number suggested that these practices were very poor (particularly on timeliness and an iterative process), only one to four countries had good practices. More than half of the country respondents indicated that practice in all the main areas of concern needed significant improvement. (See **Table 2.1**)

Table 2.1: Quality of Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

Quality of Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue	Very Poor (Score 1 to 3)	Need Significant Improvement (Score 4 to 6)	Good Practice Performance (Score 7 to 10)
Timeliness	9 (43%)	10 (48%)	2 (10%)
Openness, Inclusivity	6 (29%)	11 (52%)	4 (19%)
Availability of Relevant Information	5 (24%)	12 (57%)	4 (19%)
Transparency	7 (33%)	12 (57%)	2 (10%)
As an iterative on-going process	9 (45%)	10 (50%)	1 (5%)

CPDE respondents were clear that their assessment of existing opportunities, including the implementation of multi-stakeholder dialogue, is highly unsatisfactory (See **Chart 2.1**)

Chart 2.1: CSO Assessment of Multi-Stakeholder Consultations



c) CSO results frameworks are often organizationally or sector-specific

As development actors in their own right, CSOs are highly diverse with a range of legitimate roles and different forms of engagements in development cooperation. Indicator Two, Module Two, (see below) looks at several core dimensions of CSO development effectiveness in this regard (CSO coordination, equitable partnerships and CSO transparency/accountability). Given CSO diversity, it is only through

institutionalized participatory consultations with CSOs that government or development partners can take into account the richness of country-level CSO contributions to development.

Here, in the context of government national development plans, strategies and results frameworks, the CPDE Survey asks whether CSOs, either as an individual CSO or as collaborating CSOs, establish CSO results frameworks for monitoring.

Approximately one-third (35%) CPDE country focal points indicated that CSOs for the most part had explicit results frameworks. Another third (35%) answered that this was somewhat the case. For the latter, respondents suggested that such frameworks exist in certain sectors such as children's rights, health care, environment (Vietnam); collective results frameworks exist for progress in women's rights (Ghana, Bulgaria, Moldova) or in education and humanitarian assistance (Fiji). CSOs in Sierra Leone and in Cameroon have created specific platforms to assist CSOs in developing their capacities for monitoring and evaluation.

While beyond the scope of the CPDE Survey to measure, several countries indicated that CSO results frameworks are broadly aligned with the aspirations of country strategies and results frameworks.²⁴

Zambia is a positive example: "Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) is the lead CSO in coordinating and facilitating CSO participation in the National Development planning process and has developed CSO thematic working groups mirroring the national official monitoring structures to monitor and input into the government processes. CSPR has developed a National Development Plan Monitoring Barometer to monitor progress of the national priorities as contained in the National Development Plan.

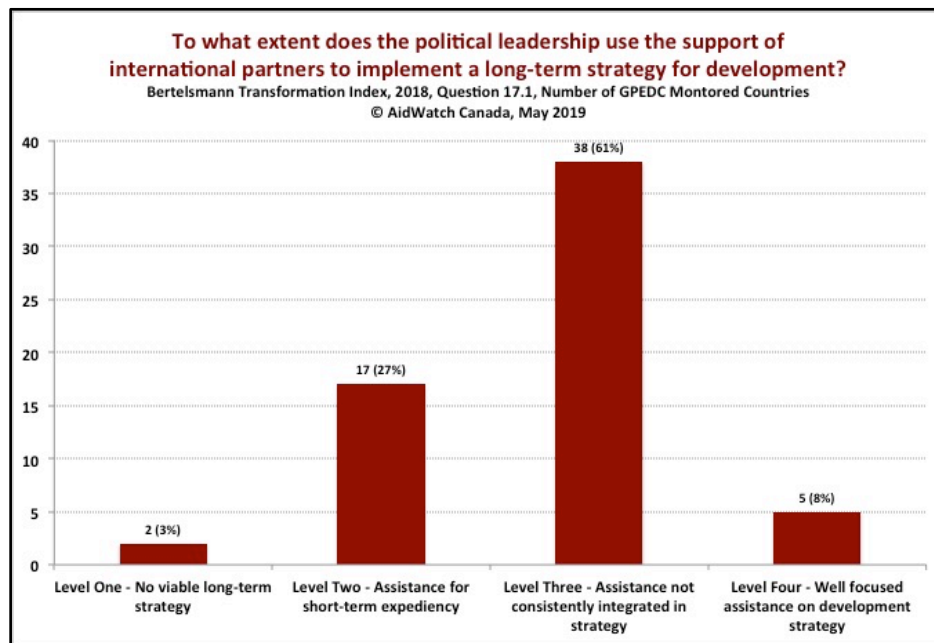
Independent Data Sources

a) Bertelsmann – Perception of the use of international assistance for long-term development strategies

A section of Bertelsmann's Transformative Index on good governance is a measurement of the degree to which a country's political leadership is able and willing to cooperate with external supporters and organizations. Within this section, country experts are asked the extent to which the political leadership uses the support of international partners to implement a long-term strategy of development. The data available for GPEDC-monitored countries (62) has been summarized below (See **Annex Seven**).

²⁴ See for example, Kenya Focal Point, "Responses to the Additional Questions by the CPDE," February 2019, unpublished document.

Chart 2.2: Use of provider resources to implement long-term strategies for development



The Bertelsmann data indicate that most GPEDC-monitored countries (43 out of 62) have a substantial long-term development strategy. But in more than 60% of the countries, Bertelsmann experts report that the political leadership have failed to devise a consistent long-term strategy capable of integrating development partner support. These experts reported that only 5 countries make well-focused use of international assistance in order to implement its long-term strategy for development. (See **Chart 2.2**)

This finding is consistent with the CPDE/3MR results that suggest that developing countries have made important advances in developing long-term strategies for their development, but many countries have not yet succeeded in linking development resources to these strategies in annual plans, implementation and monitoring for these strategies. Establishing such an integrated approach to development strategies and their resource requirements is essential for both reaching the SDGs and maintaining effective ownership of external assistance for SDG priorities.

CHAPTER THREE

INDICATOR TWO: A CSO ENABLING ENVIRONMENT AND CSO DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

An Introduction

A key foundation for assessing democratic country ownership is the degree to which CSOs operate within an environment that maximizes their engagement in and contribution to development. Alongside CSO development effectiveness, these aspects, informed by human rights to freedom of assembly and freedom of expression, are the focus for Indicator Two. This GPEDC indicator was developed in close consultation with CPDE. As a result, the CPDE Survey did not expand on this indicator framework. The Indicator offers a unique perspective on the views of government, CSOs and development partners on the current state of enabling conditions and CSO development effectiveness in each 3MR country that participated.

A fully engaged civil society, with open civic space and active peoples' engagement, provides a critical foundation to achieve key Agenda 2030 commitments. Civil society is essential to 'leave no one behind', to reduce inequalities, to address gender inequality and women's empowerment, to promote decent work for all, and to realize climate justice and environmental sustainability for a planet under siege.

Recent attacks on civil society across the globe have taken many forms –

- Increasing and alarming levels of organized violence, including assassinations, against human rights defenders, with women human rights defenders facing additional risks of sexual and gender-based violence.
- The use of laws and regulations as tools to undermine, harass and marginalize CSOs.
- Limiting access to quality policy dialogue, particularly for dissenting voices, or those representing marginalized populations on the part of both governments and development partners. Timely access to public policy documentation and budgets is an essential pre-condition for effective policy dialogue.
- Growing religious fundamentalisms and political intolerance create a climate that further restricts space for vulnerable groups to make their voices known, and particularly for women and girls to organize, to freely choose the life they wish to live, including full access to sexual and reproductive health rights.
- Systematic stigmatization or criminalization of CSOs and human rights defenders as “self-serving”, “foreign-influenced” or “foreign agents,” or threats to the ‘stability’ of the nation.²⁵

²⁵ In the words of the Human Rights Defenders World Summit 2018 Action Plan: “At the root of this rhetoric lies a dangerous presumption that some people are less human than others. This ‘politics of demonization’ has

- The use of social media, cybercrime laws, anti-terrorism legislation, as a vehicle for surveillance, harassment, the spread of false information and demonization.
- Increasingly restrictive provider funding modalities for CSOs that reduce civil society actors to development contractors and limit CSO capacities to be development actors “in their own right.”
- Growing regulatory restrictions on CSO receipt of funding from private and official international sources, including the stigmatization of certain private donors.
- The denial of access to multilateral fora, arbitrary or politically motivated limitations for UN accreditation, country intimidation and reprisals against those who speak out in UN bodies.

At the same time all development actors, including civil society, have challenged CSOs to enhance their development effectiveness, accountability and transparency. CSOs have directly participated in shaping a wider development effectiveness agenda that includes commitments to address conditions for their own effectiveness in development and achieving the SDGs.²⁶

Indicator Two, as a measure of progress in an enabling CSO policy and operational environment, does not address all of the above areas of concern. But the Indicator makes a substantial contribution through its four Modules, which in turn reflect three critical aspects of enabling conditions, as well as the implementation of important principles for CSO development effectiveness:

- 1) Space for CSO Dialogue on National Development Policies
- 2) CSO Development Effectiveness: Accountability and Transparency
- 3) Official Development Cooperation with CSOs
- 4) Legal and Regulatory Environment

In the methodology for Indicator Two, development actors were asked to place their country at one of four levels, which reflect different levels of practice, for each question within these modules. Country placement was facilitated by descriptions of “characteristics of practice” for each level.

While the Indicator methodology also expected substantial dialogue among stakeholders on the results for each Module, each actor had the opportunity to present their own data for the four Modules. The results therefore not only provide an overview of the current trends in CSO enabling conditions and development effectiveness, but also point to substantive areas where Government, Development Partners and CSOs may have different perceptions of these conditions.

The results from Indicator Two were also limited by a reduced number of countries that participated in this Indicator. The overall participation rate in the 3MR was very good at the 86 countries listed by the

witnessed countries long committed to human rights, increasingly turning their backs on the very idea of human rights.” (<https://hrdworldsummit.org/action-plan/>)

²⁶ See the related commitment to the [Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness](#) in the [2016 Nairobi High Level Forum Outcome Document](#)).

Joint Support Team (April 2019). However, the response rate for Indicator Two was disappointing and less than the Second Monitoring Round in 2016 (although based on a very different indicator framework). On average 41 governments, 44 CSOs and 30 development partners responded to each of the questions in Indicator Two.²⁷

CPDE distributed the Indicator questionnaire to 10 additional countries, where CSO focal points provided data to add to those from the 3MR process, for a total of 54 country responses by CSOs. This Report analyzes this CSO data. In addition, the Report draws on other credible databases, usually based on surveys by country-level experts, in order to provide an objective foundation for assessing stakeholder responses in the four Modules.

An Overview of Findings for Indicator Two

This Overview of Findings is based on a detailed analysis of CSO, Government and Development Partner responses to the 16 Questions in four Modules for Indicator Two. This analysis is set out in **Annex Three** and is complemented by a breakdown of responses by stakeholder for each question, which can be found in **Annex Four**. These two Annexes should be read alongside each other when examining the details for any given Question.

a) A perspective on global trends

Enabling conditions for CSOs have continued to deteriorate The *Progress Report* finds that “constraints on civil society have increased, negatively affecting its ability to participate in and contribute to national development processes (Part 1, 40).” Conditions have deteriorated since the 2016 2MR in each of the four areas covered by the Modules, which the *Progress Report* remarks is consistent with “the widely reported view that space for civil society is shrinking.”²⁸ This Report concurs with this finding based on its review of Indicator Two, the CPDE Survey data and independent data sources.

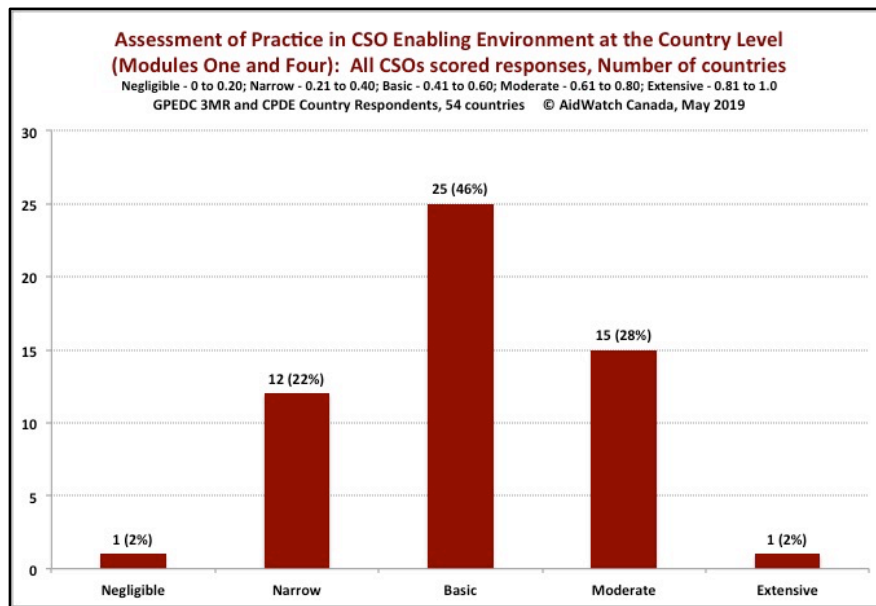
Divergent views on country-level enabling conditions in the 3MR Government and CSO respondents in many countries diverged in their individual responses to 3MR questions, particularly in areas under the purview of governments (consultations, transparency, legal and regulatory conditions and the protection of the rights of vulnerable populations – combining Modules One and Four).

²⁷ Because the methodology for Indicator Two has changed significantly, it is not possible to compare specific answers for Indicator Two between 2016 and 2018.

²⁸ This conclusion is based on 37 countries that reported on Indicator Two for the 2MR and the 3MR. See also the review of data from the CIVICUS Monitor below.

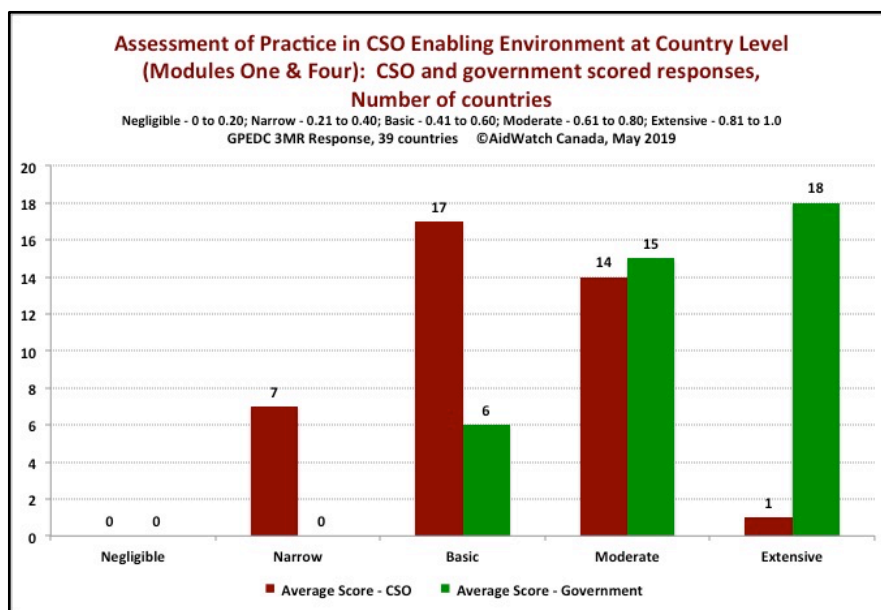
To assess overall performance for each area of enabling conditions and CSO development effectiveness, a weighted score that values good practice has been deployed.²⁹ Using this score, differences in the perception of CSO and Government can be presented for countries in common with both Government and CSOs in the 3MR (39 countries) and for all CSOs surveyed (54 countries from the 3MR and CPDE Survey). **Charts 3.1 and 3.2** combine performance scores for Module One and Module Four. Of the 54 countries for all CSOs surveyed, close to a quarter (24%) consider country level enabling conditions to be negligible or narrow. Only less than a third (30%) consider government performance to be moderate or extensive good practice (**Chart 3.1**).

Chart 3.1: An Assessment in CSO Enabling Environment (Modules One and Two) – All CSOs



²⁹ The weighted score is based on the four levels of practice for each question: Level 1 – 0 points; Level 2 – 1 point; Level 3 – 2 points; Level 4: 3 points. The total points for each country is then divided by what would be the score for excellent practice. The results are then ranked: negligible practice – 0 to 0.2; narrow practice – 0.21 to 0.4; basic practice – 0.41 to 0.6; moderate practice – 0.61 to 0.8; extensive practice – 0.81 to 1. These qualitative categories are also used by the Joint Support Team’s methodology for Indicator Two.

Chart 3.2: Assessment of CSO Enabling Environment (Modules One and Four) – Government / CSOs



It is apparent that Governments are much more optimistic about CSO enabling conditions in their countries. (**Chart 3.2**) In more than 60% of the 3MR 39 countries CSO experience enabling conditions that are “basic” or less, with 7 of these countries having conditions that are considered highly disabling (18% of countries). Basic conditions include inter alia episodic consultations with minimal expectations for policy influence, political harassment of select CSOs, lengthy and costly regulatory processes, severe to inconsistent discrimination against marginalized and vulnerable populations, and some restrictions on access to national and international financial resources.

b) Trends in space for CSO dialogue on national development policies (Module One)

Numbers of consultations with Government on national development policies have improved in many countries, but CSOs observe continued very low quality for most consultations At the Busan HLM (2011), development actors committed to enable the effectiveness of CSOs as development actors by engaging them in shaping national development goals, strategies and actions. CSOs and Governments / Development Partners have widely divergent views on the degree to which relevant consultations take place, and particularly on the quality of consultation practices.

The GPEDC’s Report on the Second Monitoring Round observed an increase in the number of countries that host consultations with civil society on national development policies. This trend in the frequency of consultations has likely continued in the 2018 3MR.

Nevertheless, CSOs reported in more than half of the 42 GPEDC monitored countries (53%) that either no consultations on national development policies took place or only occasional consultations of

insufficient quality happened. A similar percentage (56%) stated that consultations relating to the SDGs had not started or only a few select CSOs have been occasionally consulted. These findings contrast with a much more positive view by Government and Development Partners.

The GPEDC's *Progress Report* reaches similar conclusions that consultations are not of sound quality and that these consultations are most often not used to inform the design, implementation or monitoring of national development policies (Part 1, 44).

In a majority of countries CSOs have experienced very little improvement in the quality of consultations, which remains poor and challenging for many CSOs to participate effectively. For the most part, consultations have not been regularized or institutionalized, are not developed with CSOs, and are not inclusive of broadly representative CSO interests. Rather the majority are still organized at the sole discretion of government, and are most often under its control for the choice/selection of participants and for the establishment of themes and consultation process. These results are also consistent with the CPDE Survey on the quality of multi-stakeholder processes for Indicator One (see **Table 2.1** above). Nevertheless in a majority of countries (55%), CSO country respondents report that consultations with CSOs do occasionally inform the design and implementation of national development policies.

The considerable differences in the perception of country realities, between CSOs and Government and Development Partner respondents related to the frequency, regularity and quality of consultations. There are also significantly fewer countries covered by Development Partners, and therefore the trends for the Development Partner sample countries are not comparable to those for CSOs/Government respondents.

Independent reviews of CSO engagement in the UN-mandated Voluntary National Reviews of SDG implementation also point to significant challenges for inclusive consultations in a majority of the 62 3MR-countries surveyed. They confirm the trends in CSO responses in the 3MR. V-Dem Institute's independent experts 2018 scoring for CSO consultations by policy makers indicated that half the 72 GPEDC-monitored countries for which there is data never or seldom consulted CSOs.

Transparency and access to information for consultations scores good CSOs, Government and Development Partners rank access to information for consultations in the majority of responding countries at a level of good practice. Two-third of all CSO respondents (3MR and CPDE Survey respondents) indicated that practice in this area was either good (31 countries at Level 3) or excellent (5 countries at Level 4).

This Indicator Two question is limited to information for consultations, not broader questions on the implementation of access to information legislation (See also Chapter Four below). Many countries have existing laws, but CSOs report mixed access to required information depending of the country, the type of information being sought, and sometimes the CSO seeking information. An independent assessment

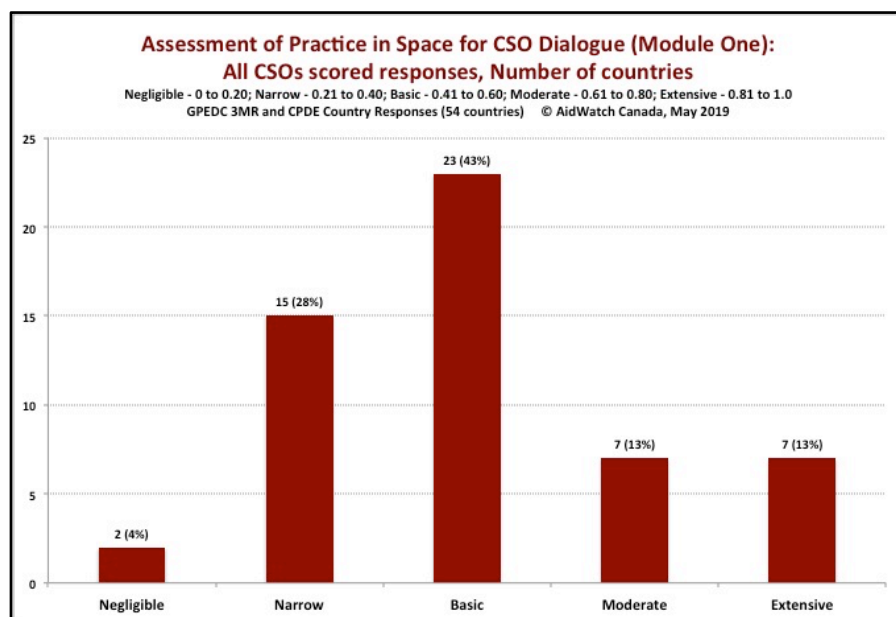
of public access to budget information had low scores for open budget processes in a substantial number of these countries. A more comprehensive and more nuanced approach to access to information and its relation to an enabling environment for CSOs may be required in the next iteration of the monitoring framework.

A summary CSO performance Score for Module One – a third rank their country as negligible or narrow

In order to better understand overall performance for each area of enabling conditions and CSO development effectiveness a weighted score that values good practice has been deployed.³⁰ Using this weighted score, **Chart 3.3** demonstrates the level of practice for space for civil society dialogue as perceived by all CSO respondents from both the GPEDC 3MR and the CPDE survey (54 countries).

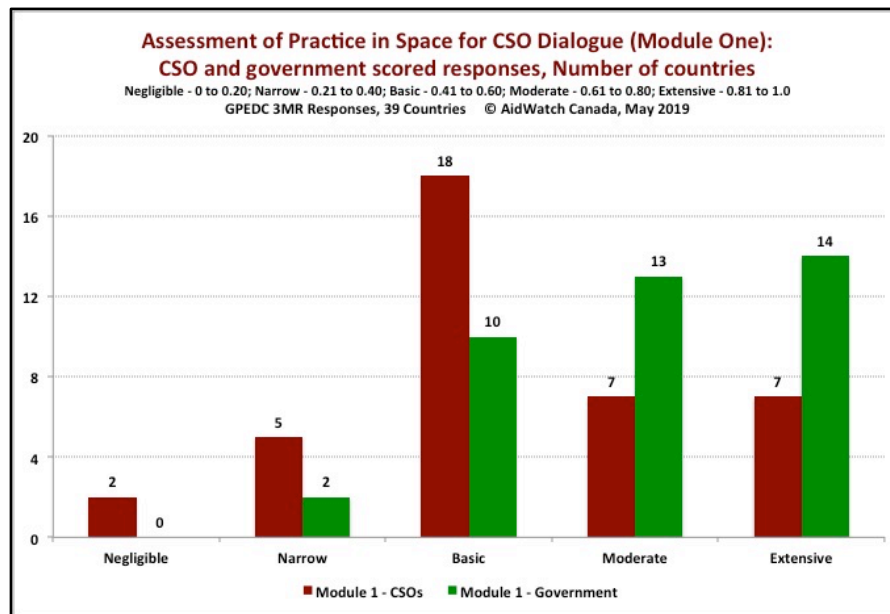
CSOs in close to a third (32%) of these reporting countries ranked their country’s performance in enabling policy dialogue at either negligible or narrow. CSOs in another 23 countries (43%) put their country’s performance at a basic level, i.e. occasional, often poor quality consultations, involving select CSOs at the government’s discretion, with CSO advice occasionally taken into account. CSOs experienced good consultation practice at a moderate or extensive level in only 26% of 54 countries surveyed.

Chart 3.3 CSO Assessment of Practice in Space for CSO Dialogue (Module One)



³⁰ The weighted score is based on the four levels of practice for each question: Level 1 – 0 points; Level 2 – 1 point; Level 3 – 2 points; Level 4: 3 points. The total points for each country is then divided by what would be the score for excellent practice. The results are then ranked: negligible practice – 0 to 0.2; narrow practice – 0.21 to 0.4; basic practice – 0.41 to 0.6; moderate practice – 0.61 to 0.8; extensive practice – 0.81 to 1. These qualitative categories are also used by the Joint Support Team’s methodology for Indicator Two.

Chart 3.4 Assessment of Practice in Space for CSO Dialogue – CSOs and Government



In 39 countries where both CSOs and Government completed the four questions, **Chart 3.4** demonstrates the difference perceptions of practice around CSO dialogue.³¹ Governments in almost 70% of the 39 countries consistently rank their policy dialogue with CSOs on average as good practice, with 14 countries at a level considered extensive good practice. CSOs, on the other hand, rank performance poorly in two-thirds of the countries, with only 14 countries (36%) at a level of good practice (moderate or extensive). Here again, CSOs considered close to half (46%) of the countries at a level of basic practice. The differences between CSOs and Government were quite striking in the perceived degree to which governments have consulted CSOs on SDG priorities and the degree to which the results of consultations inform government development policies.

c) Trends in CSO development effectiveness – Accountability and transparency (Module Two)

Overview In 2010/11, CSOs from more than 75 countries developed and adopted the *Istanbul Principles for Effective CSO Development*, which are intended to guide CSO practice, with a focus on human rights based approaches.³² Development stakeholders at the 2011 Busan High Level Forum of the Global Partnership acknowledged the *Istanbul Principles*. At subsequent High Level Meetings of the Partnership, CSOs committed to adhere to the *Istanbul Principles*, with “practices that strengthen their

³¹ There were 39 countries for Indicator Two where both Government and CSOs provided responses. The response rate for Development Partners was too low to include them in this exercise.

³² See the *Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness* at <https://www.csopartnership.org/single-post/2018/02/15/Istanbul-Principles-for-CSO-Development-Effectiveness>.

transparency, accountability and development effectiveness.”³³

CSOs across the global have put in place tools and training in relation to the eight guiding *Istanbul Principles*. The CSO Partnership for Effective Development (CPDE) has documented many of these initiatives.³⁴ The *Istanbul Principles* have also influence the evolution of a new *Global Standard for CSO Accountability*, which was recently launched by nine major civil society accountability networks from around the world, with the overarching aim to strengthen the effectiveness of CSOs worldwide.³⁵

Independent surveys with data from more than 70 GPEDC-monitored countries indicate that peoples’ engagement in civil society organizations, including women, remains quite robust. However, evidence from this Module suggests that development effectiveness of these CSOs, in the areas of equitable partnerships, accountability and transparency, continues to be challenging in many country contexts.

Equitable partnerships by financing CSOs very weak

According to 3MR CSO respondents, financing CSOs, as development partners, continue to determine the content and terms of partnership relationships, based on their own programming priorities, a narrow focus on fiduciary conditions, and inflexible contractual terms. The *Progress Report* adds, “equitable CSO partnerships would bolster local and national ownership and the ability of CSOs to operate and respond to the needs of their target communities (Part 1, 47).” Understanding some constraints to equitable partnerships should take into account back-donor terms and conditions for financing CSOs (see Module Three).

CSO-initiated coordination exists and is improving in many countries

Overall there is agreement that in most countries CSOs have initiated coordination mechanisms, although these are sometimes influenced by provider/government needs, competition among CSOs, resource constraints and weak participation of the diversity of CSOs in the country. There is a strong correlation between countries where CSOs report weak coordination mechanisms and those where they report weak dialogue with governments on development priorities and SDGs. CSOs own coordination seems to be a key element in seeking dialogue with government and in strengthening CSO capacities in this dialogue.

Significant CSO efforts in human rights based approaches

International human rights standards are very much a part of CSO discourse and influence the articulation of their policies. Nevertheless there are different perceptions on the part of all stakeholders about the degree to which CSOs have been effective, or have the capacity to put in practice human rights based approaches. A

³³ See the outcome documents at <https://www.oecd.org/development/effectiveness/busanpartnership.htm> and at <http://effectivecooperation.org/events/2nd-high-level-meeting/>

³⁴ See for example, <https://www.csopartnership.org/single-post/2018/07/31/Sectors-report-work-on-its-development-effectiveness> and http://aidwatchcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/casestories_ebook.pdf.

³⁵ See the Global Standard for CSO Accountability at Accountability Now, accessed May 2019 at <https://accountablenow.org/future-accountability/global-standard/>.

majority of respondents see significant effort by some CSOs at the country level to do so, consistent with the *Istanbul Principles*.

CSO accountability and transparency mechanisms weak in a majority of countries The certification of CSO good practice through CSO initiated accountability and transparency mechanisms remains a significant challenge for CSOs in many countries. In a majority of the 3MR countries participating in Indicator Two, CSO respondents report that there are no CSO-initiated mechanisms or such a mechanism is still under discussion. Recent independent research found that the driver for CSO accountability was often not found within the CSOs, but were derived from provider / government requirements. Accountability in most countries is also an important part of government legal and regulatory frameworks for CSOs (see Module Four).

A summary performance score for Module Two – CSO performance rated as basic in more than half surveyed countries In order to better understand overall performance for each area of enabling conditions and CSO development effectiveness a weighted score that values good practice has been deployed.³⁶ Using this weighted score, **Chart 3.5** demonstrates the level of practice for CSO development effectiveness as perceived by all CSO respondents from both the GPEDC 3MR and the CPDE survey (54 countries).

In comparing CSO and Government responses (in the 39 countries for which there is data for both), **Chart 3.6** sets out the different perceptions of progress in CSO development effectiveness. There is a high degree of consistency between CSO and Government respondents in this Module. The quality of practice for most countries is perceived to be below levels of good practice (moderate and extensive). About half of the countries are performing at a basic level.

³⁶ The weighted score is based on the four levels of practice for each question: Level 1 – 0 points; Level 2 – 1 point; Level 3 – 2 points; Level 4: 3 points. The total points for each country is then divided by what would be the score for excellent practice. The results are then ranked: negligible practice – 0 to 0.2; narrow practice – 0.21 to 0.4; basic practice – 0.41 to 0.6; moderate practice – 0.61 to 0.8; extensive practice – 0.81 to 1. These qualitative categories are also used by the Joint Support Team’s methodology for Indicator Two.

Chart 3.5 CSO Assessment of Practice in CSO Development Effectiveness

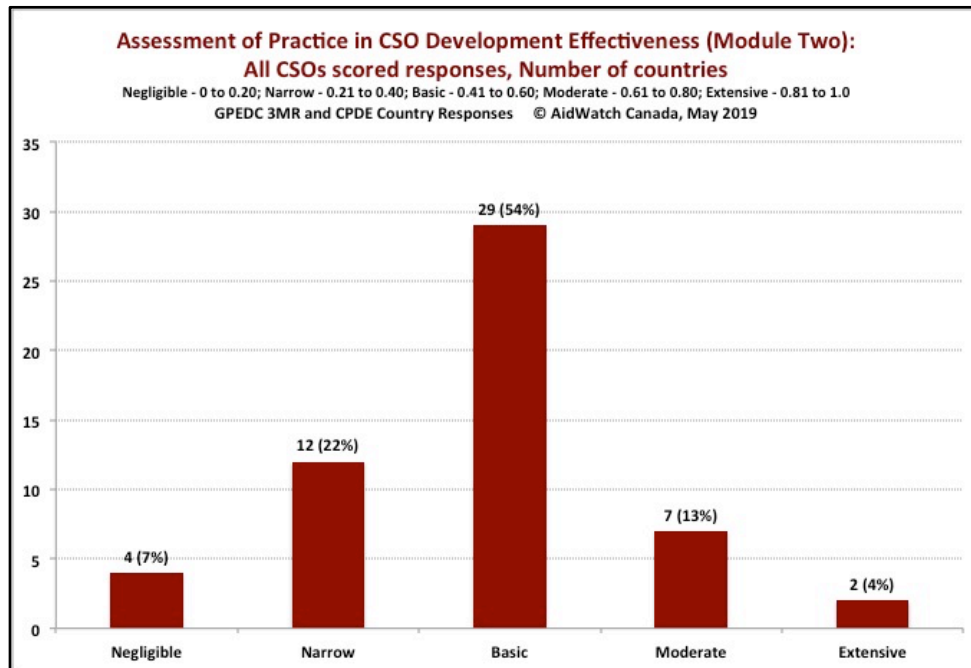
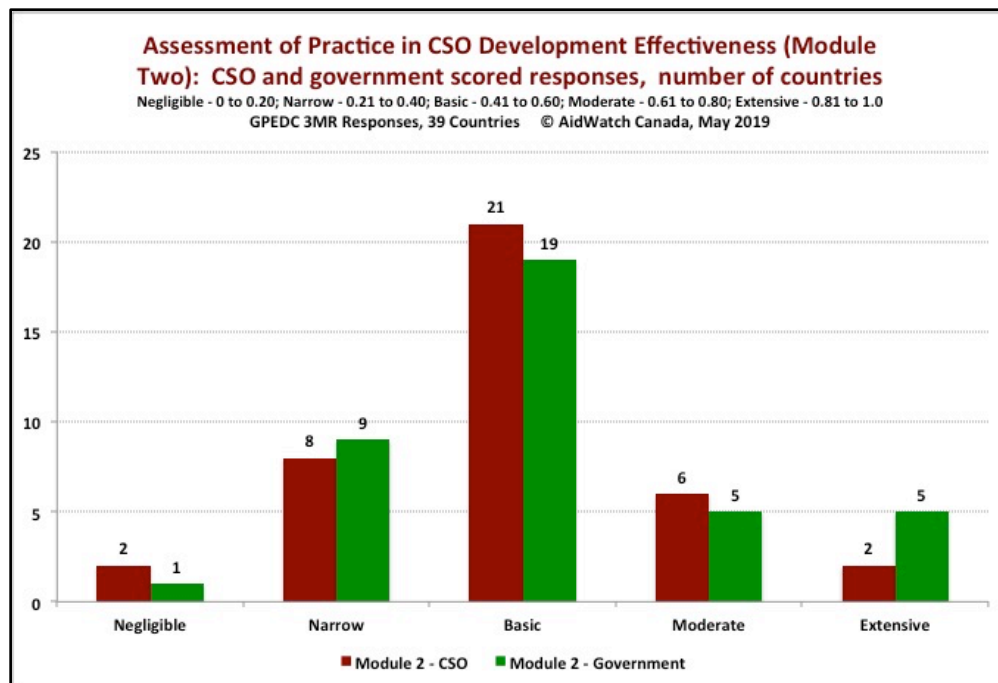


Chart 3.6 Assessment of Practice in CSO Development Effectiveness – Government and CSOs



When disaggregated by question, both stakeholders agree that the level of equitable partnerships is substantially below good practice in most countries. On the other hand, CSO coordination on average among the 39 countries is performing at the level of good practice and is the strongest among the four areas measured. There is also agreement that CSO-initiated measures for accountability and transparency are performing below good practice for the majority of the 39 countries.

d) Trends in Official Development Cooperation with CSOs (Module Three)

Development partners consult with CSOs on their own terms A majority of CSO and Government respondents characterized consultations with Development Partners as occasional, limited, focused on implementation of Development Partner programs (not CSO priorities), and involving a select group of CSOs at the Development Partner discretion. Development Partners were more positive about their consultations at country level, albeit in a smaller number of countries.

Development Partners promoting a CSO enabling environment episodically While most CSO respondents questioned the degree to which CSO enabling environment issues were included in Provider/Government dialogue, Governments were slightly more positive. But there is general agreement that these issues are not raised in a systematic way and there is little follow-up in most countries. Again Providers in 31 countries stated that they did raise these issues more regularly and followed up with CSO stakeholders.

Good practice in Development Partners enabling financial support for CSO weak A considerable divergence in perception between Development Partners and CSOs/Governments was observed on the extent to which Partner finance is fully enabling for CSOs. In 84% of countries CSOs stated that Development Partner finance focuses on implementing the latter's priorities, and is sometimes unpredictable and lacks transparency. A majority of Development Partners identified their funding practices at the higher levels, in which a diversity of CSOs were enabled through various mechanisms, including support for CSO-defined initiatives and influence over funding priorities.

Independent assessment of recent trends in Development Partner finance for CSOs (based on the DAC CRS databases) and studies of select European providers, confirm very weak direct support for local CSOs in developing countries, increased support for INGOs, and a move away from more flexible programmatic funding in some provider countries. There is a predominance of modalities that focus on provider priorities in funding CSOs and more complex conditions of support that exclude many CSOs.

Transparency in development partner support for CSOs at country level mixed A similar divergence between CSOs/Governments and Development Partners was observed in the perception of the degree to which Development Partners provided information on their CSO support at the country level. A majority of the former suggested that this information was not generally available, or only a few made information available at the aggregate level. A majority of Development Partners in fewer

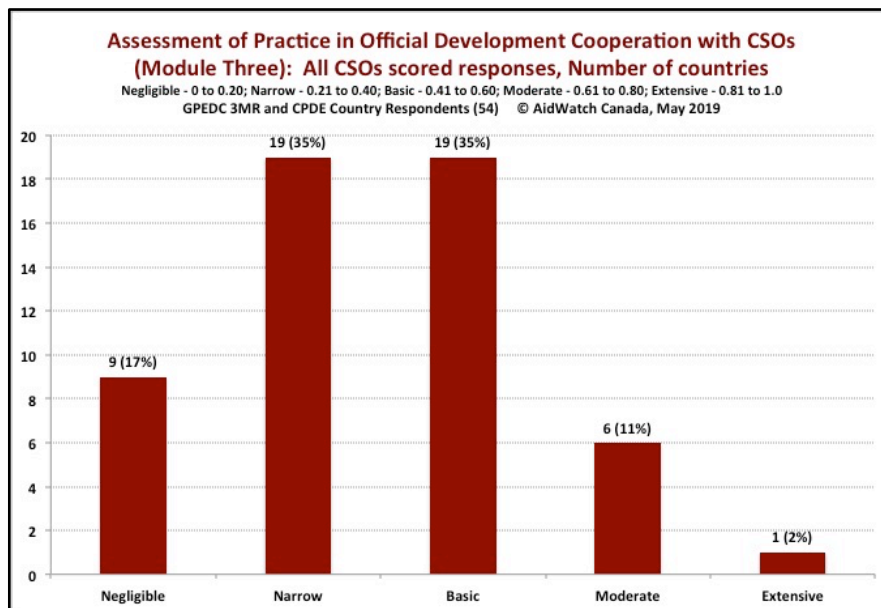
countries, on the other hand, said that most Development Partners made available aggregate information, and in some countries, gave detailed information on their CSO support. There are no independent assessments and no information presented in the responses that can explain this discrepancy.

A Summary Performance Score for Module Three – Overall Development Partners practices seen as weak In order to better understand overall performance for each area of enabling conditions and CSO development effectiveness a weighted score that values good practice has been deployed.³⁷

Using this weighted score, **Chart 3.7** demonstrates the level of practice for official development cooperation with CSOs as perceived by all CSO respondents from both the GPEDC 3MR and the CPDE survey (54 countries).

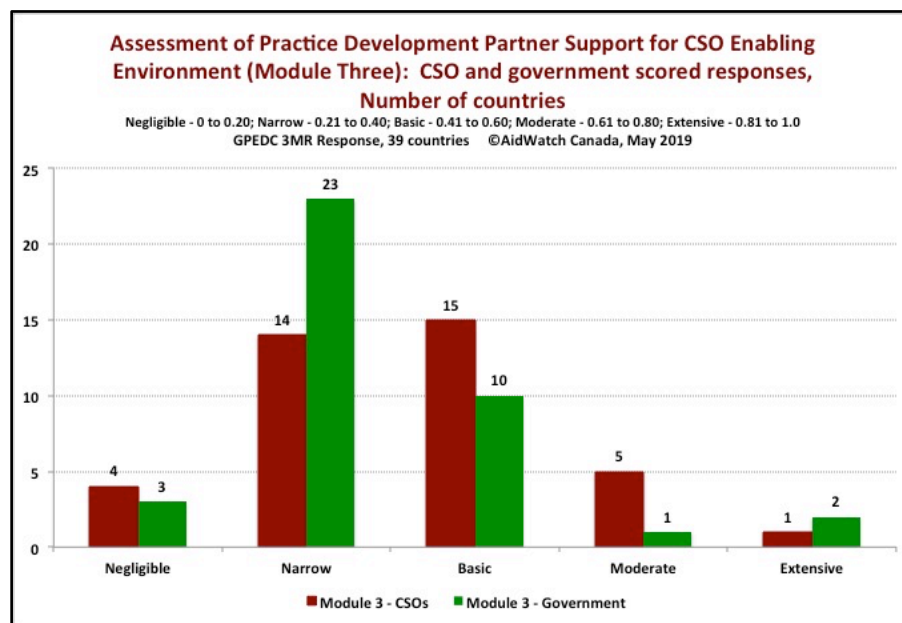
In more than half (52%) of the 54 countries surveyed, CSOs described Development Partner good practices as negligible (17%) or weak (35%) in consultation, enabling finance, promotion of an enabling environment with Government, and in transparency in their support for CSOs. CSOs experienced Development Partner good practice at the moderate or extensive level in only 7 countries (13%). Another third (35%) put good practice at the basic level.

Chart 3.7 CSO Assessment of Practice in Official Development Cooperation with CSOs



³⁷ The weighted score is based on the four levels of practice for each question: Level 1 – 0 points; Level 2 – 1 point; Level 3 – 2 points; Level 4: 3 points. The total points for each country is then divided by what would be the score for excellent practice. The results are then ranked: negligible practice – 0 to 0.2; narrow practice – 0.21 to 0.4; basic practice – 0.41 to 0.6; moderate practice – 0.61 to 0.8; extensive practice – 0.81 to 1. These qualitative categories are also used by the Joint Support Team’s methodology for Indicator Two.

Chart 3.8 Assessment of Practice in Official Development Cooperation for CSOs – Government / CSOs



Comparing the responses of CSOs and Government responses in the 39 countries where both completed the four questions, there was a high degree of consistency in their responses (**Chart 3.8**).

Both CSOs and Governments consistently ranked the practices of Development Partners significantly below good practice across all four areas of the Module in the 39 countries where there is common information. Only 6 countries were scored moderate or extensive good practice by CSOs, and even less by Government – 3 countries. Government scored 23 countries (60%) of countries as ‘narrow’ or ‘very weak’, and 3 others as ‘negligible’. This weak practice was particularly noticeable for Development Partners’ modalities for financing CSOs at the country level. While not included in the Chart due to the lack of responses from too many countries, Development Partners ranked their overall performance at least at the level of good practice (moderate).

e) Trends in legal and regulatory environment for CSOs (Module Four)

Freedom of Assembly mostly positive, but Freedom of Expression increasingly restricted CSO 3MR country respondents are relatively positive about the current degree of restrictions on freedom of assembly (in law and in practice), but differ with Governments on the degree to which some restrictions are in place in some countries. On the other hand, CSOs report a higher degree of control by Government over the freedom of expression of CSOs and their members, with close to 30% suggesting that this control is very extensive. Government respondents, by contrast, suggest that this control is non-existent (75%) or minimal (25%).

When measured against the independent assessment of the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) indicator for Freedoms of Assembly and Expression, the CSO country respondents provide a more accurate picture of conditions for the practice of these freedoms. Indeed, the BTI reveals that in approximately a third of the 62 3MR countries for which there is data, conditions are severely restricted or denied to citizens with respect to their freedom of assembly and expression. As well, 3MR CSO respondents reported significant challenges in CSO formation, registration and operations, thus qualifying freedom of assembly (see below).

Enabling CSO formation, registration and operation seen as challenging by many CSOs While Governments are very positive about their regulatory conditions for enabling the operations of CSOs in their countries, close to a third (30%) of CSO country respondents in 54 countries (3MR and CPDE Survey countries combined) suggest that registration is mandatory and either “difficult, lengthy, costly and required periodically” or “remains a difficult process, especially for advocacy-oriented groups” – key organizations for holding government to account.

Independent assessments also confirm CSO respondent observations. The USAID Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index recorded a challenging legal environment for CSO sustainability in 18 of 37 countries (49%) covered by the GPEDC’s 3MR. Several complementary indicators from the BTI are equally alarming. They document that a fully enabling environment for CSO social networks, self-organization and participation, including a regulatory framework that promotes these goals, does not exist in almost half (45%) of the 62 countries participating in the 3MR for which there is data.

The V-Dem indicators for government control of CSOs and repression of CSOs also confirm these trends. Close to 40% of the 71 GPEDC monitored countries were reported by country experts in 2018 to have conditions in which V-Dem considered CSOs to be subject to unreasonable government control and where they reported CSOs were severely or moderately repressed.

CSOs working with marginalized populations often challenged and subject to rights violations While Governments and Development Partners were much more positive about the protection of CSOs working with marginalized and vulnerable populations, almost a third (32%) of CSO country respondents pointed to high levels of discrimination, inconsistent legal protection, and few legal or judicial recourses in their countries.

Independent assessments confirm a growing concern for the protection of the rights of vulnerable and marginalized people and communities in an increasing number of countries. Since 2016 more than 900 human rights defenders (HRDs) have been murdered around the world, with many more harassed, imprisoned and verbally abused and smeared. These numbers have been growing for both 2017 and 2018. Among the 86 countries responding to the GPEDC’s 3MR, at least 182 HRDs were killed in 2017 and 2018 in 14 countries.

The BTI indicator for protection of civil rights and judicial recourse found that almost half (48%) of 3MR countries for which there is data (62 countries) had very high levels of violations of civil rights, with either no or very ineffective “mechanisms and institutions to prosecute, punish and redress violations of civil rights.”

The V-Dem indicators for equal protection of rights and for the likelihood of political killings confirm serious concerns for the rights of marginalized populations in a significant number of GPEDC monitored countries. In more than a quarter (27%) of the 72 countries with data, the protection of the rights and freedom of all social groups was considered very weak by country experts. In 21% of the countries, political killings were considered to be frequent, and top leaders in government either were inciting or not actively working to prevent them. In a further 10 countries (14%) political killings were reported to be practiced occasionally.

Access to resources for domestic CSOs problematic in select, but growing numbers of countries

Among 44 countries with 3MR data, CSOs reported that CSOs in only a small minority of countries (6 countries or 12%) experience severe restrictions in accessing international and domestic resources for their work. However, they suggested that some restrictions applied in many countries (66%), while Government respondents placed a majority of countries (55%) with few or no restrictions.

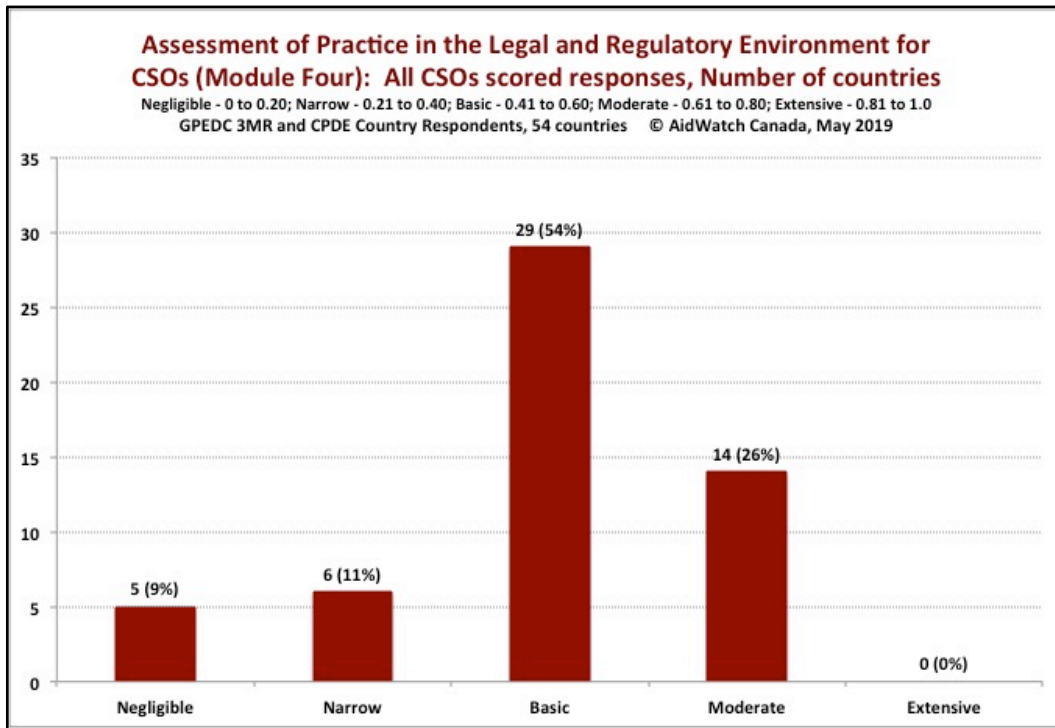
According to independent analysts these restrictions on funding may be growing. Both the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) and Amnesty International have databases on restrictions on receiving international funding by country CSOs. A review of these databases for 35 countries participating in the 3MR puts 15 (or 43%) of these countries with significant restrictions on access to finance (based on the author’s review of the database).

A summary performance score for Module Four – CSOs increasingly challenged by dis-enabling conditions in growing numbers of countries

In order to better understand overall performance for each area of enabling conditions and CSO development effectiveness a weighted score that values good practice has been deployed.³⁸ Using this weighted score, **Chart 3.9** demonstrates the level of practice for the legal and regulatory environment affecting CSOs as perceived by all CSO respondents from both the GPEDC 3MR and the CPDE survey (54 countries).

³⁸ The weighted score is based on the four levels of practice for each question: Level 1 – 0 points; Level 2 – 1 point; Level 3 – 2 points; Level 4: 3 points. The total points for each country is then divided by what would be the score for excellent practice. The results are then ranked: negligible practice – 0 to 0.2; narrow practice – 0.21 to 0.4; basic practice – 0.41 to 0.6; moderate practice – 0.61 to 0.8; extensive practice – 0.81 to 1. These qualitative categories are also used by the Joint Support Team’s methodology for Indicator Two.

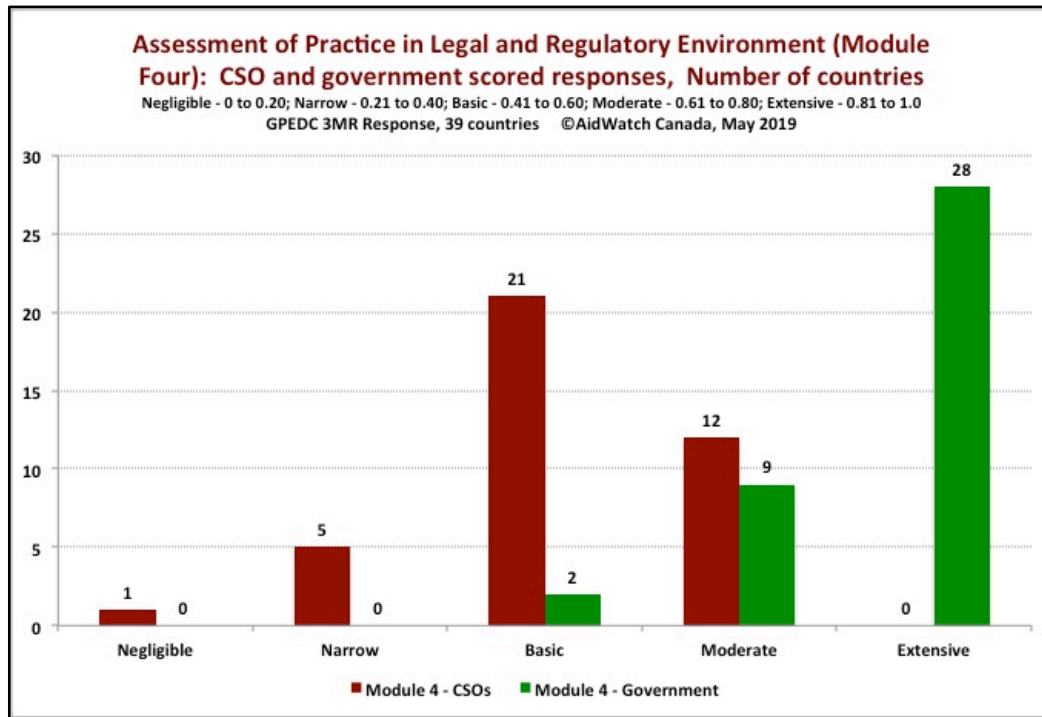
Chart 3.9 CSO Assessment of Practice in the CSO Legal and Regulatory Environment



In only a quarter of the countries (26%) were CSOs positive about these legal and regulatory conditions for their operations as CSOs. And no country had extensive good practice in this area of enabling conditions. In fifth of the countries (20%), 11 out of 54 countries, enabling legal and regulatory conditions were considered to be negligible or narrow. The majority of countries (54%) had a basic level of performance. In these countries CSOs faced some challenges in their claim to freedoms of assembly and expression, sometimes demanding conditions for registration, inconsistent protection for those working with marginalized populations and some formal and informal limitations on access to resources.

Chart 3.10 examines the differences between CSOs and Government scoring for good practice in the legal and regulatory environment for CSOs. These differences are striking. CSOs scored only 12 countries with moderately good practice, while Government placed 37 countries as exhibiting good practice, with 28 as extensive good practice. CSOs had the majority of countries (21) at the basic level of practice. The differences were most stark with respect to the perception of an enabling legal and regulatory environment and the degree to which marginalized populations were protected from discrimination.

Chart 3.10 Assessment of Practice in CSO Legal and Regulatory Environment – Government and CSOs



f) Independent Data Sources

i) The CIVICUS Monitor on civic space

The Civicus Monitor provides a global assessment of civic space in 195 countries based on country civil society informants and other independent data sources. Civic space is considered by the Monitor's assessments to be closed, repressed, obstructed, narrowed, or open.³⁹ A team of experts at CIVICUS undertakes the placement of countries in each category. The definitions of each of these five categories can be found in **Annex Six**.

According to the CIVICUS Monitor, civic space is defined "as the respect in law and practice for the freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression. Built into each of the three core freedoms is the understanding that a state has a duty to protect civil society, and must go beyond simply refraining from interfering in citizens' enjoyment of their rights." GPEDC Indicator Two monitoring assesses these freedoms in Module Four, but also examines the policy space available for civil society in Module One.

CIVICUS global assessment shows very substantial closure of civic space in growing numbers of countries

Among the 195 countries reviewed by CIVICUS, as of June 2019, more than a quarter of the world's population (27%) live in 23 countries that were classified by CIVICUS as "closed," with no possibilities for independent civil society voices; a further 20% live in 35 countries where civil

³⁹ All data from the CIVICUS Monitor has been verified as of March 2019. See <https://monitor.civicus.org/methodology/>

society was significantly “repressed;” and 33% live in 53 countries where civil society is “obstructed” (civic space is highly contested by power holders).⁴⁰

Altogether more than 80% of the world’s population – almost 6 billion people – today live in countries where civic space is closed, repressed or obstructed. Such conditions seriously undermine the capacities of civil society – and whole countries and societies – to advance democracy, human rights safeguards, Agenda 2030 and the SDGs.

CIVICUS ranking for GPEDC’s 3MR Countries paints a disturbing picture CIVICUS paints a bleak picture of the conditions for civil society in 86 countries that participated in the 3MR, with almost three-quarters (72%) of these countries closed, repressed or obstructed.

- 11 countries are considered closed (13% of total)
- 16 countries are considered repressed (19% of total)
- 34 countries are considered obstructed (40% of total)
- 10 countries are considered narrowed (12% of total)
- 11 countries are considered open (13% of total)
- 4 countries there is no information in the Monitor (5% of total)

Among these 86 countries, 970 million people or more than half (58%) of their total population, live in conditions for civic space that is either closed (22%) or very restricted (36%) where civic space is significantly constrained. A further 700 million people (41%) live in societies where civic space is highly contested and state authorities are reported to undermine CSOs (obstructed).

While there are 21 GPEDC monitored countries where civic space is either open or where occasional violations of rights takes place, only 18 million people, just over 1% of the population of the countries participating in the GPEDC 3MR, live in these countries. The countries where space is open or narrow tend to be small island states.⁴¹

There seems to be no correlation between countries that did not complete Indicator Two and a CIVICUS assessment of closed or repressed civic space. There are a total of 27 countries that participated in the 3MR that CIVICUS considers closed or repressed. Of these countries, 11 governments (41%) completed Indicator Two. Among the 45 GPEDC monitored country governments that did not participate in Indicator Two, about a third (16 countries or 36%) are considered closed or repressed by CIVICUS. Other reasons must be factors in determining participation in providing data for this Indicator.⁴²

⁴⁰ Author’s calculation based on a review of the CIVICUS Monitor, March 2019, with population statistics from the World Bank for 2016. See <https://monitor.civicus.org/>.

⁴¹ For the 42 countries that participated in Indicator Two monitoring (for which there is CSO/Government data), eleven (11) are considered by CIVICUS to be closed or repressed, with a further 24 considered obstructed. These form a clear majority of the 42 countries (83%).

⁴² Government perceptions of their practice in the 3MR often far exceed the CIVICUS Monitor’s assessment of their countries’ practice. There are 11 Indicator Two monitored countries that CIVICUS considers closed (Belarus, DRC, Egypt, Laos, Sudan and Yemen) or repressed (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Cameroon, Mauritania and Rwanda). There is

CHAPTER FOUR

INDICATOR FOUR: TRANSPARENT INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IS PUBLICLY AVAILABLE

An Introduction

Transparent information on development cooperation is an essential condition for effective development planning and for meaningful accountability. The 3MR framework for Indicator Four is the measure of publicly accessible information on development cooperation at the global level through data from the [OECD DAC Creditor Reporting System](#), the [OECD Forward Spending Survey](#), and from the [International Aid Transparency Initiative](#) (IATI) Standard.⁴³ These are assessed against three dimensions for transparency – timeliness, comprehensiveness and accuracy.

New to the 3MR, the methodology for Indicator Four is also gathering data about the availability of development cooperation information at the country level (the demand side). The methodology has a complementary questionnaire at the country level on whether Development Partner information is available in the Partner Country's management information systems, and whether this information is publicly available.

CPDE's complementary Survey for Indicator Four focuses on country-level CSO perceptions and assessments of their access to timely and relevant information on development cooperation from their government's information systems and from international databases. These CPDE questions go deeper into the degree to which CSOs have the right in law and in practice to information. Its broader scope complements the question on access to information for consultations in Indicator Two, Module One (see above for an analysis of this question).

The CPDE analysis takes into account findings from several databases with comprehensive coverage for the majority of GPEDC and CPDE monitored countries. The first is an assessment of government openness and transparency by Freedom House in their annual Freedom in the World Index.⁴⁴ The second is the Open Budget Survey conducted by the International Budget Partnership (IBP). The IBP

little correlation to Government own assessment of conditions for civil society in these 11 countries in relation to freedom of assembly or freedom of expression – most at level four and 3 at level 3.

⁴³ The OECD DAC Creditor Reporting System is available at <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?ThemeTreeId=3>. The OECD DAC Forward Spending Survey is available at <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=FSS>. Provider data through the IATI Standard is available through the d-Portal at <https://d-portal.org/ctrack.html#view=search>.

⁴⁴ See Freedom House, Freedom in the World, 2019, accessible at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2019>.

monitors budget transparency, oversight, and participation at the national level, undertaken by rigorous independent research in each country.⁴⁵

An overview of Findings for Indicator Four

The *Progress Report* observes that a greater number of providers are making information on their development cooperation publicly available through the DAC CRS and IATI. Overall, the composite measure of transparency for these systems remained unchanged from 2016 to 2018, with 27% of providers rated as excellent and 31% as good in 2018, similar to 2016. Yet there are variations in the three dimensions and between systems. The most progress has been made with respect to comprehensiveness, while timeliness decreased slightly between 2016 and 2018 for CRS. But at the same time, 59% of Development Partners improved the timeliness of their reporting to IATI. Those rated excellent or good for reporting to the Forward Spending Survey declined from 66% in 2016 to 55% in 2018. Scores for at least one of the three systems declined for 38% of providers between 2016 and 2018. (Part 2, 66-71)

As the *Progress Report* notes “transparent information is critical to track progress and enhancing accountability and can be used to inform regular assessments that track country-level targets for effective development cooperation and link resources to results (Part 1, 62).” Almost all partner countries (96%) have one or more information management system (IMS), which collects information on development partner financial commitments, scheduled and actual disbursements, but less so for intended and achieved results of these disbursements. The *Progress Report* also finds that 83% of development partners on average report to a country’s IMS, “but that reporting lacks consistency and quality” (Part 2, 71).

The existence of country-managed IMS’s is important progress in relation to country ownership. But as a tool for accountability, how transparent are these systems and how accessible is provider country level information to CSOs and other stakeholders?

CPDE data for Indicator Four suggests that access to information related to country development efforts and development cooperation was either non-existent or poor for about 40% of the countries surveyed. While laws may exist in many countries, access to information is limited by poor implementation, fragmentation across ministries and by broad interpretation of privacy and security laws.

Few country-level CSOs are aware of the OECD DAC CRS data or the IATI, and almost all have never accessed this data. The DAC and IATI should initiate programs, not only with government for aid

⁴⁵ See the Open Budget Survey at <https://www.internationalbudget.org/open-budget-survey/>. See also Indicator Two, Module One, Question 3, where a comparison is made between the scores from the Open Budget Survey with the CSO/Government responses to Question 3 for 30 countries of which there is common data (see above).

management systems, but also with country-level CSOs, for training in accessing and interpreting their data.

A significant number of countries (43%) indicated that their access to information overall had deteriorated over the past two years, with another 48% confirming that their situation remained unchanged.

A UN ECOSOC study of access to information, in the context of Goal 16 to strengthen inclusive institutions, pointed to a range of concerns that limit access in practice in the implementation of freedom of information laws. A Bertelsmann survey of 100 GPEDC and CPDE monitored countries indicated that more than 40% of these countries had no transparency or poor transparency (**Chart 4.2**), while 35% had moderate transparency, broadly confirming the CPDE survey findings. In relation to access to budget information, an essential enabler for CSOs to hold governments to account, the International Budget Partnership found that fully 60% of 67 GPEDC/CPDE monitored countries had scant or no information or minimal information available for public oversight of their government's budgets. Another 35% of countries had limited information.

These independent sources confirm CPDE's finding that progress in systems for global aid transparency, national information systems and freedom of information laws is not translating into meaningful access for CSOs on the ground. Deliberate measures to create accessible portals and capacity development for country stakeholders is required to realize the Busan commitment to transparency, which in turn will enable CSOs to be effective and responsible in strengthening accountability.

Analysis of CPDE Focal Point Responses

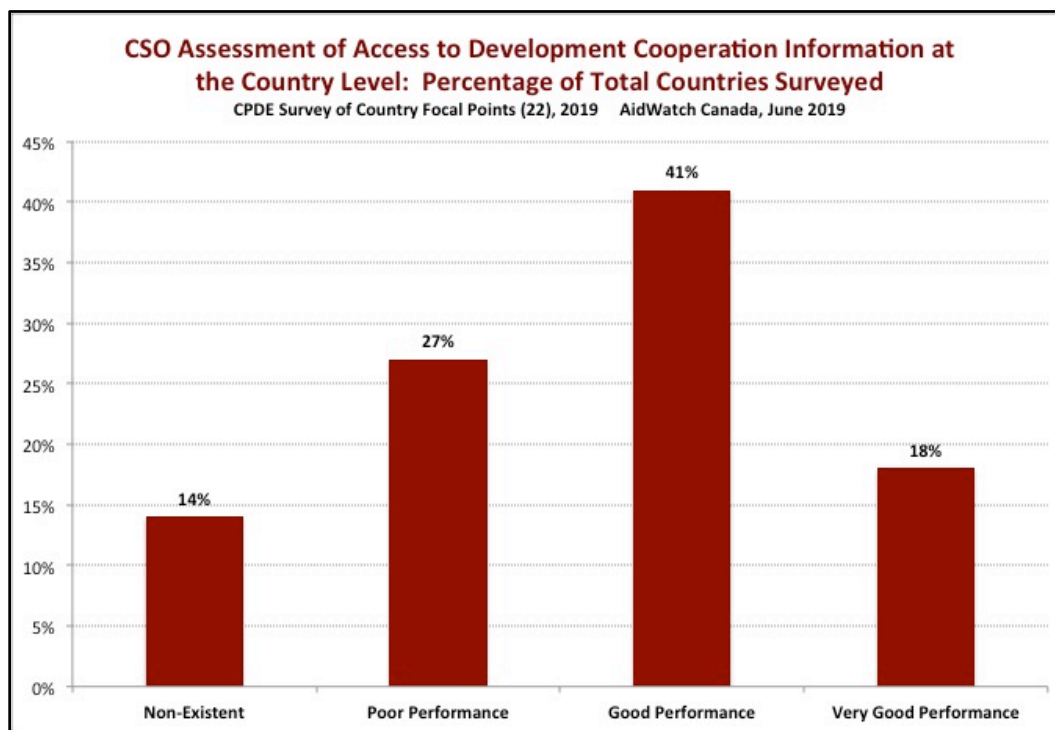
a) Access to timely and relevant information good for many, but challenging in a sizeable minority of countries

All but two of the 22 CPDE surveyed countries has freedom of information legislation. This result corresponds with results for Indicator Two (see Module One), While CSOs suggested that laws exist, but they have a mixed experience in timely access to relevant and comprehensive information needed for consultation. For Indicator Four, the CPDE Survey asked a number of questions that go beyond information for consultation, examining overall access to information on development cooperation.

Chart 4.1 provides a combined measure of CSO perceptions of performance in relation to a number of key areas in accessing information on development cooperation.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ These questions include 1) the degree of satisfaction with timely access to relevant information for stakeholders (scored 1 to 10); 2) a government disclosure policy for government documents (scored yes – 5, somewhat – 3, no – 0); and 3) accessible public information systems where transparent information on development cooperation is available (scored yes – 5, somewhat – 3, no – 0). The chart combines scores for each of these questions.

Chart 4.1 CSO Assessment of Access to Development Cooperation Information at Country Level



While a majority of countries reported that performance in access to information was either good or very good, a sizable minority (41%) had no access to information, or poor access. Even though a law may exist, there is sometimes no clear and consistent mechanism for governmental bodies to provide information to citizens, and not all government bodies implement the law fully (Vietnam, Indonesia, Fiji). Government can use privacy and security legislation selectively to limit access to information (Bangladesh, Moldova, Zimbabwe). Information can be rendered in a format that is very difficult for CSOs to process, often requiring special capacities unavailable to many stakeholders (Kenya). Publicly accessible information sites are fragmented, sometimes available only for certain ministries (Benin, The Gambia Sierra Leone). A few countries (Moldova, Bangladesh and Kyrgyzstan) report very good performance on access to information across all the areas examined.

b) CSOs generally not aware of global portals to access to data on development cooperation

Asked whether country level CSOs have accessed information on development cooperation through either the OECD DAC's Creditor Reporting System or the International Aid Transparency Initiative Standard, the uniform answer across all 21 countries is negative. CSOs are generally not aware of these systems, or at best a few technical CSOs in several responding countries have done so. The DAC and IATI must work not only with governments in improving their management information systems in relation to CRS and IATI data, but should also develop more inclusive training programs at the country level with

CSOs (perhaps in collaboration with specialized CSOs familiar with these systems for accessing and using this data).

Despite this lack of familiarity with global data systems for ODA, incomplete information can be available for CSOs in some countries. Country focal points were asked about overall access to information on different aspects of development cooperation. A little less than half of the respondents said that for ODA volume, ODA allocations, and ODA results, some information was available, but needed significant improvement. Similarly half the respondents were able to access some information on ODA tendering, while also saying that this system needs significant improvement.

c) Almost half of CSO Survey Countries reported that access to information from providers and government on development cooperation has deteriorated

Respondents were asked whether CSO access to relevant information on development cooperation has deteriorated, stayed the same or improved over the past two years. Only 10% (2 countries) had the perception that this access had improved (Tanzania and The Gambia). Almost half the countries (9 or 45%) indicated that their access had in fact deteriorated over the past two years. Another 10 countries said that their situation has remained largely the same.⁴⁷

Independent Data Sources

a) UN Economic and Social Council Review of Access to Information

A study by the UN ECOSOC has recently examined the degree to which the wave of laws on access to information, new standards for fiscal transparency and more open government data over the past several decades, represents progress and opportunity in relation to implementing SDG Goal 16 on strengthening accountable and inclusive institutions.⁴⁸

On transparency across a number of areas, the study concluded that laws may exist, but many are not implemented effectively and information is often denied, largely confirming CSO perceptions. In 2017, laws on access to information exist in 118 countries, with 40 additional countries developing a law on the

⁴⁷ Respondents were asked to rank this performance on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being deteriorated and 10 being much improved. These responses were grouped as following: Deteriorated - 1 to 3; Stayed the same (4 to 6); Improved (7 to 10).

⁴⁸ UN Economic and Social Council, Committee of Experts on Public Administration, "Progress on institutional aspects of Sustainable Development Goal 16: access to information, transparency, participation and accountability," EC 16/2019/7, January 24, 2019, access June 2019 at <https://undocs.org/en/E/C.16/2019/7>. On transparency, the note examines: access to information frameworks; mandatory disclosure; proactive, voluntary disclosure of information by governments, including open government data; and fiscal transparency.

right to information. However, this report sets out a number of issues that can limit access in implementing these laws,

- General laws that provide no practical details on implementation or enforcement;
- Terms that are often open to broad and selective interpretation;
- Commercial confidentiality that is used to restrict access to information where the private sector is involved;
- Poor monitoring of implementation and/or the lack of an independent oversight body;
- Lack of human resources, capacities and finance to implement laws effectively; and
- Low public awareness among citizens and/or stakeholder groups of their rights to access and their capacities to understand and process available data.

In terms of disclosure of government information, this UN report commented on significant progress in pro-active measures towards open government, but also pointed out that governments often put large amounts of raw and unstructured data in the public realm. Such ‘data dumps’ make it difficult for stakeholders to use and analyze data for their purposes. There is a need for capacity building among CSOs and other stakeholders in the use of data, which should accompany moves towards open government. The report concluded that the “challenge for the future is how to establish appropriate transparency infrastructure and put in place the enabling conditions that can enhance the impact of all types of transparency initiatives.”⁴⁹

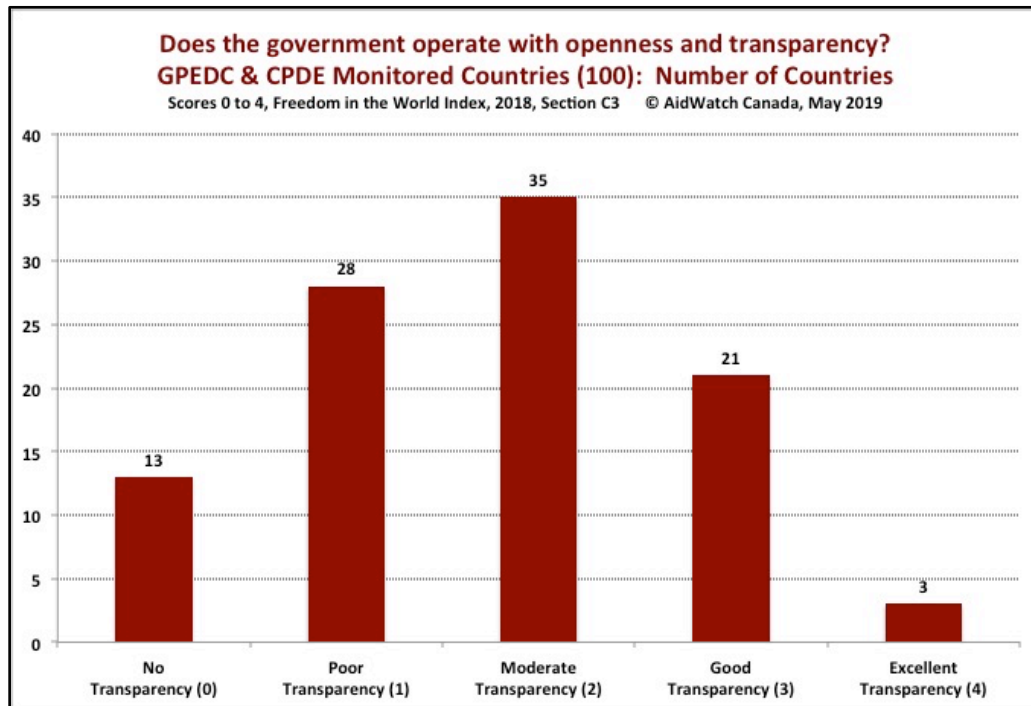
b) Freedom in the World Index: Indicator for government transparency

Freedom House publishes an annual index relating to democracy and freedom. An important component of this Index is the degree to which “governments operate with openness and transparency [Freedom in the World Index, Section C3].” This part of the survey, completed by country experts, covers the legal and practical access to information, the accessibility of information online, opportunities to comment on pending policies, transparency in the awarding of government contracts and asset declaration by government officials.

The survey for this indicator (**Chart 4.2**) found that more than 40% of the countries had no transparency or poor transparency. On the other hand, only a quarter of the 100 GPEDC and CPDE monitored-countries assessed had good or excellent transparency. A large number had moderate transparency with significant improvements required to meet international standards.

⁴⁹ ECOSOC, *ibid*, see pages 8 – 13.

Chart 4.2 Does the government operate with openness and transparency?

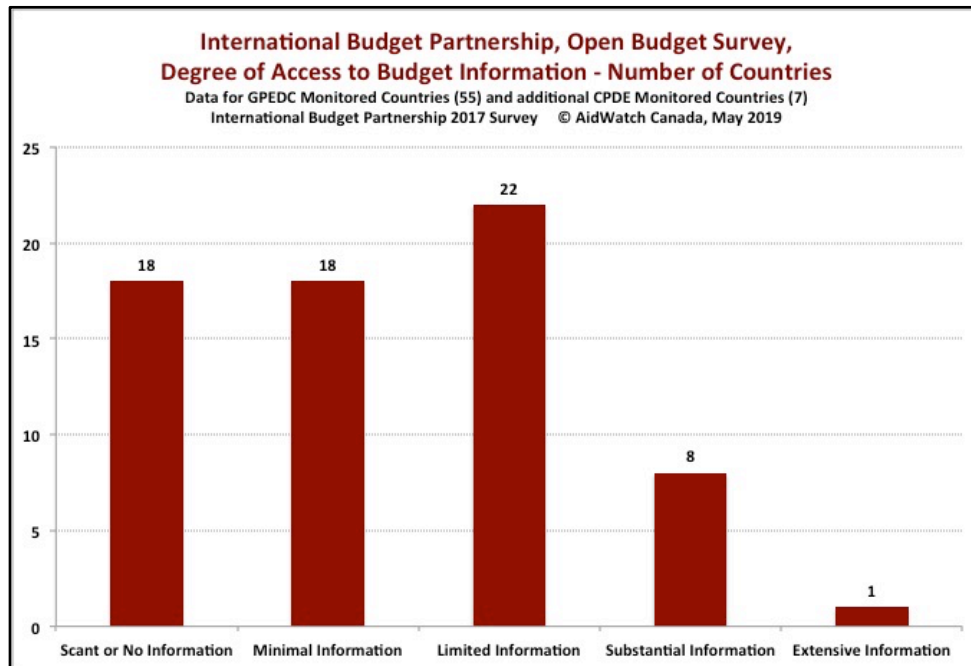


c) International Budget Partnership: assessing budget transparency

Budget transparency is a strong indicator for an enabling environment in which citizens and CSOs can hold their government to account for the allocation of development resources (See also Indicator 9a). As noted in Chapter Three, the International Budget Partnership conducts a survey by independent experts on budget transparency, oversight and participation at the national level. The IBP has scores for 62 countries that took part in the 3MR process or were additional countries surveyed by CPDE.

Almost 60% (38) of the monitored countries with data had scant or no information or minimal information available for public oversight of their government's budgets. Another 35% of countries had limited information. There were only 9 countries with substantial or extensive information. (**Chart 4.3**)

Chart 4.3 Open Budget Survey: Degree of Access to Budget Information



CHAPTER FIVE

INDICATOR SEVEN: MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

An Introduction

Inclusive mutual accountability mechanisms are a crucial opportunity for dialogue among development actors at the country level on all aspects of effective development cooperation. With developing countries taking the lead in mutual accountability processes, it is also an essential operational expression of the principle of democratic country ownership. Development stakeholders, including CSOs, are to hold each other accountable for advancing mutually agreed objectives related to the delivery of development cooperation priorities, measured against country results frameworks.

Mutual accountability builds incentives for behaviour change for all development actors, so essential in reforming development cooperation. It is therefore important to assess progress not only in whether mutual accountability mechanisms exist, but also in the quality of dialogue, its mutuality, and its inclusiveness of diverse development actors.

The GPEDC 3MR Framework for Indicator Seven looks at five dimensions that form the basis for good practice in mutual accountability.

- 1) A quality country-level policy framework in place to guide development cooperation;
- 2) Specific targets in development cooperation for the different development partners;
- 3) The extent to which development partners carry out joint assessments of these targets;
- 4) The extent to which these assessment have been inclusive of other development actors; and
- 5) Transparency and accessibility to the public of the results of these assessments.

The Indicator Framework sets out a matrix of poor to good practice for each of these five dimensions. Each country is scored and a country is considered to have a mutual assessment review in place when at least four of five dimensions are in place.

The CPDE Survey Framework for Indicator Seven builds on these five dimensions, as CSO respondents were not included in the GPEDC methodology for this Indicator (as they were for Indicator Two). It seeks more information from a CSO perspective on

- 1) The degree to which there is regular/institutionalized mutual accountability dialogue on development cooperation and the quality of this dialogue;
- 2) The engagement of citizens / CSOs in goal setting and implementation in development cooperation, including CSOs access to multi-stakeholder accountability dialogue, its representivity, and the ways in which CSO engage in this dialogue; and

- 3) The degree to which there are independent CSO processes of assessments of development partnerships.

An Overview of Findings for Indicator Seven

According to the *Progress Report* “the concept of mutual accountability in development cooperation refers to development stakeholders, under government leadership, holding each other accountable for agreed commitment (Part 1, page 57).” Achieving the SDGs requires broad government accountability with diverse development partners, civil society, citizens and other development stakeholders.

The *Progress Report* found that countries that rely heavily on ODA tend to have better quality mutual accountability mechanisms in place for development cooperation, whereas other countries rely on other accountability structures. With this background, fewer than half the 86 GPEDC monitored countries (45%) were found to have quality mutual accountability mechanisms, with four of the five dimensions list above. Development Partners (91%) reported that mutual accountability assessments were either somewhat or very effective in informing the ways of working in the country, consistent with the four development effectiveness principles. (Part 2, 72) Interestingly, 79% of countries indicate in the *Progress Report* that they conduct “inclusive assessments” of development cooperation (i.e. some form of multi-stakeholder dialogue).

Almost all partner countries (86%) have targets for effective development cooperation with traditional bilateral and multilateral partners. Forty-four percent (44%) of countries also set targets for civil society organizations as part of the development cooperation policy framework. The degree to which these targets are mutually established is not clear from the data. The *Progress Report*, based on data from government alone, suggests that CSOs have a “defined role” in 52% of the policy frameworks. In 74% of the countries, CSOs are involved in assessments that track country-level targets for development cooperation. How do these findings compare with those from the CPDE Survey?

CSOs strongly agree that inclusive mutual accountability at the country level is a central mechanism for strengthening institutional, policy and behaviour change for effective development cooperation. It should be firmly rooted within country processes for achieving country SDG priorities. The CPDE monitoring results confirm progress in both the existence of country-led development cooperation frameworks and modalities for mutual accountability, which is also reflected in the outcomes of the 2018 review of mutual accountability by the UN Development Cooperation Forum (DCF).

This progress, however, masks important gaps in the quality of these frameworks with respect to process, transparency and inclusion. The seeming wide-spread CSO engagement in multi-stakeholder accountability mechanisms as reflected by government respondents in the *Progress Report* is challenged by data from the UN DCF where it was reported that a third of the countries had no involvement of CSOs

and another 20% reported minimum involvement in mutual accountability mechanisms. Likewise, in more than 50% of the countries surveyed by CPDE, CSOs said they had no involvement in these mechanisms. The CPDE Survey found that mutual accountability mechanisms for most partner countries require significant attention to improved institutionalization, deeper and meaningful inclusion across a diversity of stakeholders, greater predictability, and full transparency in their agenda, deliberations and decisions for follow-up.

CSOs in many countries also confirmed in the Survey that they are active in the preparation of parallel reports on various issues in development effectiveness, social and environmental audits of development cooperation. Together with on the ground experience, they offer a rich resource in dialogue with other development actors, in the context of both mutual accountability and a shared interest in more effective measures to achieve the SDGs.

An Analysis of CPDE Focal Point Responses

a) Country-led development cooperation frameworks for all providers exist in only a minority of countries

CPDE respondents confirmed that in more than three quarters (77%) of the countries surveyed a development cooperation framework has been developed. But these frameworks cover all providers in only a minority of countries. In other instances, frameworks are provider-specific (e.g. Pakistan with China, Vietnam, Ghana, Armenia, Indonesia). In other cases they are part of a larger agreement with a provider (e.g. Bulgaria with the EU, Fiji). Such incomplete arrangements with providers can lead to fragmented relationships, which affect the coherence, and sometimes the possibility, of an effective mutual accountability mechanism.

b) Experiences with mutual accountability mechanisms are mixed

A development cooperation framework is the basis for mutual accountability in over half (59%) of the CPDE countries surveyed. An equal number of CPDE monitored countries indicated that there were regular fora for mutual accountability between government and development partners, although in some instances these may be ad hoc and sometimes with individual providers (Indonesia). In only a minority of CPDE countries did CSO focal points (6) indicated that CSOs were aware that the results of mutual accountability reviews had been adopted. This finding is not surprising given that for only 3 of the 12 countries with multi-stakeholder mechanisms, CSOs reported that they were aware of a report-back or feed-back mechanism for stakeholders to learn about the outcomes of mutual accountability mechanisms.

Strengthening mutual accountability for development cooperation should closely inform country mechanisms for the implementation of SDG priorities. Both Development Partners and Partner

Countries routinely reference Agenda 2030 and/or the SDGs in the narratives of country strategies and development cooperation frameworks. (*Progress Report*, Part 2, 24) CPDE's Survey confirmed that there were national mechanisms now in place for the implementation of SDG priorities in 80% of the countries surveyed.

While there are linkages with national development plans in many instances through these mechanisms, CSO focal points also indicated that the linkages between SDG platforms and development effectiveness approaches and mechanisms were weak or unclear (Macedonia, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Zimbabwe). But there were also some examples of SDG linkages with development effectiveness commitments present in both SDG and mutual accountability processes on the ground (Kenya, Cameroon).

Institutionalization and systemization of multi-stakeholder mechanisms, based on overarching country-driven development cooperation frameworks for all providers, integrating SDG priorities, is essential. Such mechanisms must have predictable regularity, transparent agendas, a public record of outcomes and explicit follow-up on agreements, if they are to contribute to more effective development cooperation and country ownership in the context of efforts to achieve the SDGs.

c) Meaningful CSO access to multi-stakeholder accountability dialogue often still limited

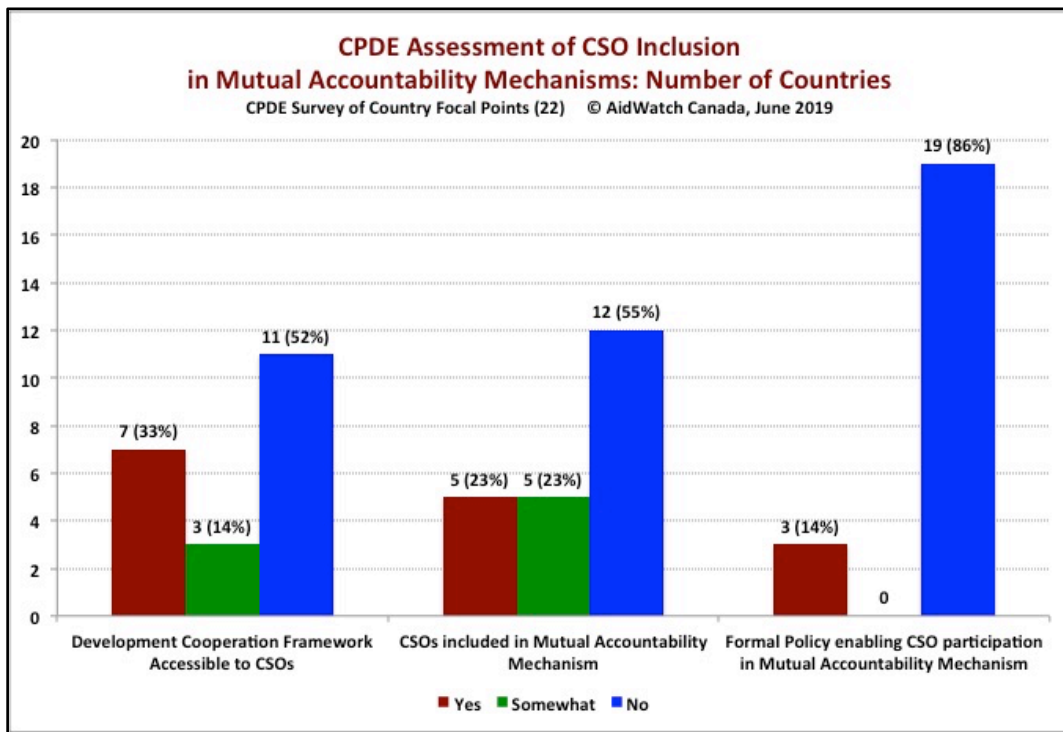
The inclusion of CSOs in the elaboration of country-led frameworks for development cooperation and in mutual accountability mechanisms with development partners is a critical ingredient for holding development actors accountable for results. The results of the CPDE Survey suggest that some progress on inclusion has been made in a minority of countries (10), but it is clear that CSOs are not yet able to play a meaningful role in processes related to mutual accountability in a majority of countries surveyed (**Chart 5.1**). Very few countries had a formal policy enabling CSO participation in mutual accountability mechanisms, which would indicate a degree of institutionalization of these processes.

CSO focal points commented that even though CSOs may be formally included in determining development cooperation frameworks and participate in mutual accountability mechanisms, CSO representation is for a select few, often by invitation (Kyrgyzstan, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Indonesia) or to fill a speaking role (Vietnam). While there is rhetoric that CSOs are essential development actors, CSOs are usually not included in practice as an equal country stakeholder in mutual accountability processes (Tanzania, Ghana, Moldova), or are included to add legitimacy to an exclusively inter-governmental process (Zimbabwe). On occasion CSOs are consulted with respect to particular project, but these consultations are not related to any processes for mutual accountability (Fiji).

On the other hand, for Kenya, "CSOs are part of the development effectiveness architecture and have been included at all levels for the domestication of the development effectiveness agenda," including effective participation in mutual accountability processes. CSO roles are recognized in the country's

development effectiveness strategy and CSO commitments to their own development effectiveness (*Istanbul Principles*) are also part of this strategy.

Chart 5.1 CPDE Assessment of CSO Inclusion in Mutual Accountability Mechanisms



When asked their perceptions about the status of multi-stakeholder consultations and review of ODA, 8 CSO focal points indicated that it had deteriorated in the past two years, while 10 suggested that there has been no change. There was a similar breakdown of views regarding the broad representation of most sectors in decision-making, with only 4 countries suggesting that the situation in this regard had improved in their country.

When asked more broadly to rate the degree to which there has been an increase in CSO input into different aspects of country-level development effectiveness efforts since 2016, 19% of focal points (4 countries) suggested that this engagement has decreased / remained very poor, 48% (10 countries) ranked their engagement as moderate with significant improvements needed, and a third (7 countries) said there was a visible substantial increase in engagement.

What are some of the conditions that affect CSO engagement in development effectiveness measures? Changing political leadership or in the political climate arising from changing governments (both positive and negative) was mentioned in several instances. Deteriorating enabling conditions in some countries in which CSOs are increasingly attacked, harassed and intimidated, or face serious financial challenges, affected space for CSO engagement in development effectiveness. CSOs on the other hand have been

empowered to participate more effectively through pro-active engagement in CSO country platforms / coalitions / networks that follow issues in development effectiveness, Platform-initiated capacity development efforts have been important. In other countries, divisions among CSOs (regional, political, orientation) have implications for the capacities for effective CSO representation and engagement.

d) Independent CSO assessments of development cooperation a resource for mutual accountability

In Armenia, CSOs “are actively involved in mutual accountability processes, including preparation of “shadow” reports and “alternative” reports on development cooperation,” which are “duly considered by development partners” who in turn “provide recommendations/feedback to relevant local stakeholders.” Through such initiatives, CSOs are bringing unique perspectives, rooted in their direct on the ground relationships, on development results and impact.

The CPDE Survey asked the degree to which such CSO efforts were common in the surveyed countries. In two-thirds of the countries (15), CSOs indicated that some form of independent and participatory performance assessment of development cooperation has taken place in the past few years. A slightly smaller number (13 and 12 countries) suggested that some CSOs carry out independent social or environmental impact assessments of development partnerships. A much smaller proportion (5 countries) could point to independent and inclusive audits of development partnerships. It was said that CSOs often lack necessary capacities for such audits.

Independent Data Sources

a) ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum: Survey of Mutual Accountability

The UN ECOSOC undertakes a biannual survey of practices in mutual accountability on behalf of the UN Development Cooperation Forum (UN DCF). The 2018 Survey reported considerable progress in several aspects of mutual accountability, but also some significant challenges.⁵⁰ Developing country respondents pointed to the inclusion of a greater diversity of development cooperation, including South South Cooperation, and most reported having a national framework for assessing development cooperation. The existence of these national policy frameworks, however, have not yet translated into alignment with provider support for national priorities, with only 38% of countries reporting that partner alignment with country priorities had improved.

⁵⁰ ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum, 2018. “National mutual accountability and transparency in development cooperation: Study on the findings of the Fifty DCF Survey,” Mat 2018, accessed May 2019 at https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/dcf/UNDESA_2018%20DCF%20Study%20on%20mutual%20accountability.pdf.

A significant majority of the surveyed countries (76%) reported that they consulted CSOs in the design of their National Development Cooperation Policies. The Report nevertheless recommended that multi-stakeholder review of these Policies be strengthened with the inclusion of “women and vulnerable populations.” It goes on to recommend, “More broadly, exploring the quality of consultations with non-state actors, including civil society, is a priority.”

Almost all surveyed countries (52 of 58 countries) had a National Development Cooperation Forum to discuss overall progress in international development cooperation, which are government-led and managed by government officials. Nevertheless, these seem to be often bodies for information sharing about priorities of Development Partners and Government, and less about alignment with national priorities. Most remain a discussion between Government and Development Partners, with a third of countries reporting no involvement of CSOs, and another 20% reporting minimum involvement. Well over half (56%) suggested that they never or almost never used sources of analysis from CSOs and another 28% “some of the time”. Close to half of the respondents (48%) said that these Forums are only moderately effective, with 19% evaluating them as ineffective or slightly effective.

CHAPTER SIX

INDICATOR EIGHT: GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

An Introduction

The GPEDC Indicator for gender equality and women's empowerment provides an assessment of progress through the lens of tracking public expenditures for gender equality in three areas. The indicator asks 1) whether the government has policies in place to address gender equality goals and whether resources are tracked through budget allocations for these particular goals. It examines 2) whether the Public Financial Management System promotes gender-related goals through sex-disaggregated data and whether policies and programs are subject to ex post gender assessments. Finally, it questions 3) whether data on allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment is made public.

This 3MR Indicator Framework for gender equality has been improved over the one used in 2MR in 2016. However, CSOs continue to be concerned that significant limitations remain in the method for aggregation of the different dimensions of the Indicator to achieve a score for a positive country performance. This methodology only required that a country have positive answers to a majority of the sub-questions in each of these three areas to have a positive response for that area. Furthermore, a country only need to have a positive response in at least one of the areas to be considered as "approaching requirements" for gender equality and women's empowerment. Moreover, there is no requirement to consult women's rights organizations in determining appropriate country responses, with only a suggestion that "the validation process can include a multi-stakeholder workshop [emphasis added]."

CPDE's validation of this indicator with CSO country focal points seeks additional information on the existence of official gender equality development plans, comprehensive legal protection for women's rights, and the inclusion of women's rights organizations in the development, implementation and review of gender equality development plans and programs.

An Overview of Findings for Indicator Eight

The GPEDC 2019 *Progress Report* found that 19% of countries responding to this Indicator (13 of 69 countries) had a comprehensive tracking system in place and make gender budget allocations publicly accessible. A further 59% of countries have "approached requirements," with steps to establish such systems. (Part 1, 33)

According to the *Progress Report*, almost all countries (90% who completed Indicator Eight) have policies or programs in place to address gender equality goals, but most of these are not stand-alone policies,

but part of national development strategies. Fewer than half (43%) report that they allocate sufficient resources to support gender equality activities. In relation to gender responsive budgeting, only 28% said they tag budget allocations to link with gender equality objectives and only 19% conduct gender audits of the budget. The *Progress Report* suggests that the best performers are those that have integrated gender responsiveness within their Public Finance Management Systems, rather than a stand-alone effort. But overall the data suggests that many countries have significant gaps in effectively translating gender equality policies into measurable outcomes for women and girls. (Part 1, 34-35)

CPDE Survey findings, and those of independent sources, confirm the 3MR results that progress has been made at the level of policies and laws, and in some expansion of programs sensitive to gender concerns. But it is clear also that significant gaps remain in translating these policies and laws into sustained programs and effective institutions to promote and monitor resulting gender equality outcomes. These gaps are not only with Governments, but also with Providers. With respect to the latter, almost two-thirds of provider bilateral programming (61%) still had no explicit gender equality objectives in 2017, and a mere 4.3% of programs were exclusively focused on gender equality outcomes.

According to the UNDP's Gender Inequality Index, in at least 68% of the GPEDC monitored countries, different dimensions of gender inequality remains a very significant challenge for development progress (see below). Women's access to public spaces has seen some improvement in recent years, but women's access to justice to protect and seek redress for their rights and women's civil liberties to make meaningful decisions in key areas of their lives still face major blocks (see below).

Women's organizations are key drivers for mobilizing policy change, holding governments and other stakeholders accountable, and in pushing for a mainstreamed gender equality lens in all development programming. A worrying indicator for sustained promotion of gender equality in the context of SDG5 is the alarmingly small allocation of US\$380 million by providers in 2017 for women's rights organizations. These allocations must cover all provider support for UN Women, government women's mechanisms, and women's rights CSOs.

An Analysis of CPDE Focal Point Responses

a) CSOs confirm progress in laws and institutions relating to gender equality, but these fail to translate into dedicated development plans and programs

The CPDE Survey confirms the findings of the 3MR whereby the vast majority of countries report gender equality development plans and programs are in place. For example, Zambia notes that there is a dedicated ministry of gender "whose mandate includes to protecting and promoting women's rights, curbing gender-based violence and reducing gender inequalities by making progressive changes to legislation to strengthen the protective environment." But significant gaps in practice are also reported.

In some countries, gender equality institutions, identified in the policy, are yet to be established or programs are not effectively carried out (Togo, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Benin, Kenya).

Only half the 22 surveyed countries report that there are regular review processes for gender equality and their integration into national development plans. Ghana, for example, has some well-developed policies and programs focused on gender equality, but the focal point reports that there is no gender review processes for these programs and plans. For Sierra Leone, any reviews are done generally by CSOs with recommendations for government.

b) Comprehensive legal protection for women's rights is mixed

The degree to which there is comprehensive legal protection for women's rights is mixed among the 22 countries. Half the CPDE surveyed countries report positive laws for the protection of women's rights; an additional two countries, report incomplete coverage; and 8 countries responded that laws are not adequate for the protection of women's rights. As is the case for development plans and programs, it was noted that legal protections are not sometimes translated into effective programs (The Gambia, Bulgaria).

c) Inclusion of women's rights organizations in gender equality programming positive, but often limited

Two-thirds of the surveyed country CSO focal points stated that women's rights organizations were included in the development, implementation and review of gender equality development plans and programs. Sometimes this inclusion was mainly in relation to the implementation of existing programs (Vietnam, Sierra Leone). Others involve a small number of national organizations (Bulgaria, Pakistan, Ghana). Indonesia is an example of serious limitations in the degree of inclusion of women's rights CSOs (and other CSOs) in gender equality programming: "[I]n practice, there is no exact and clear mechanism whereby the comments, critics, and suggestions in public consultations truly become a consideration in changing the direction of planning and development policies. ... [I]mplementation also seemed to only fulfill the need for formalities by involving CSOs ahead of international meetings, donor projects and only limited to provide recommendations, without certainty of follow-up."

Independent Data Sources

a) UNDP's Gender Inequality Index

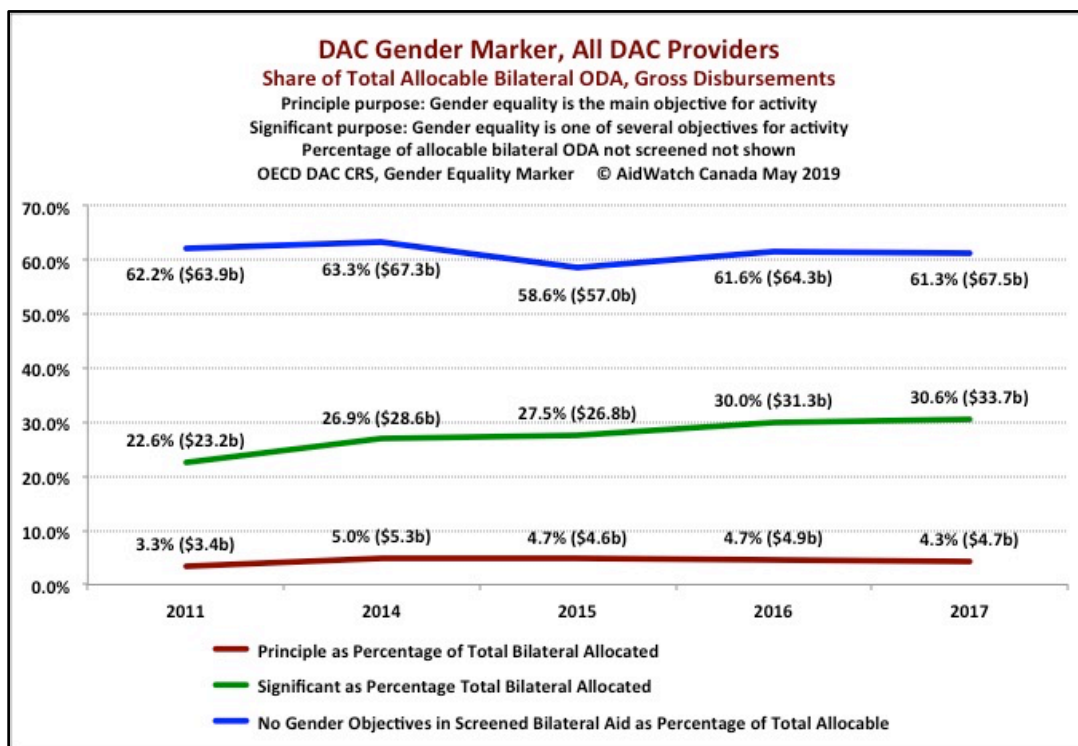
A widely respected measure of progress in women's rights is UNDP's Gender Inequality Index. Among the 72 GPEDC countries for which there is UNDP data, gender inequality remains a very significant issue for development progress. The UNDP measurement for gender inequality has improved slightly between 2015 and 2017 for all but 7 of these 72 countries. Nevertheless, 32 countries (44%) had a poor

performance score of more than 0.5 on this aggregate index in 2017. Another 17 countries (24%) were between 0.49 and 0.4 on the index, indicating that gender equality is still a very challenging issue.⁵¹

b) OECD DAC Review of Providers' Support for Gender Equality Programs

Indicator Eight rightly focuses on Government and country level initiatives in support of gender equality and women's empowerment. But the degree to which Development Partners' development cooperation is oriented to support these goals at the country level is an equally important indicator for progress in this area. The OECD DAC has a gender equality policy marker that assesses whether DAC provider bilateral projects have gender equality as a principal objective, as a significant objective (one among several objectives), or has no gender equality objectives.

Chart 6.1 DAC Gender Marker for DAC Providers



Most bilateral providers have an explicit policy relating to gender equality in their development cooperation. However, given the centrality of women's rights and gender equality for making progress on the SDGs, it is alarming that almost two thirds (61%) of bilateral projects had no gender equality objective in 2017. (**Chart 6.1**) Indeed, between 2011 and 2017 there has been no progress in improving this share allocable bilateral aid with at least one measurable gender equality objective – 62% of

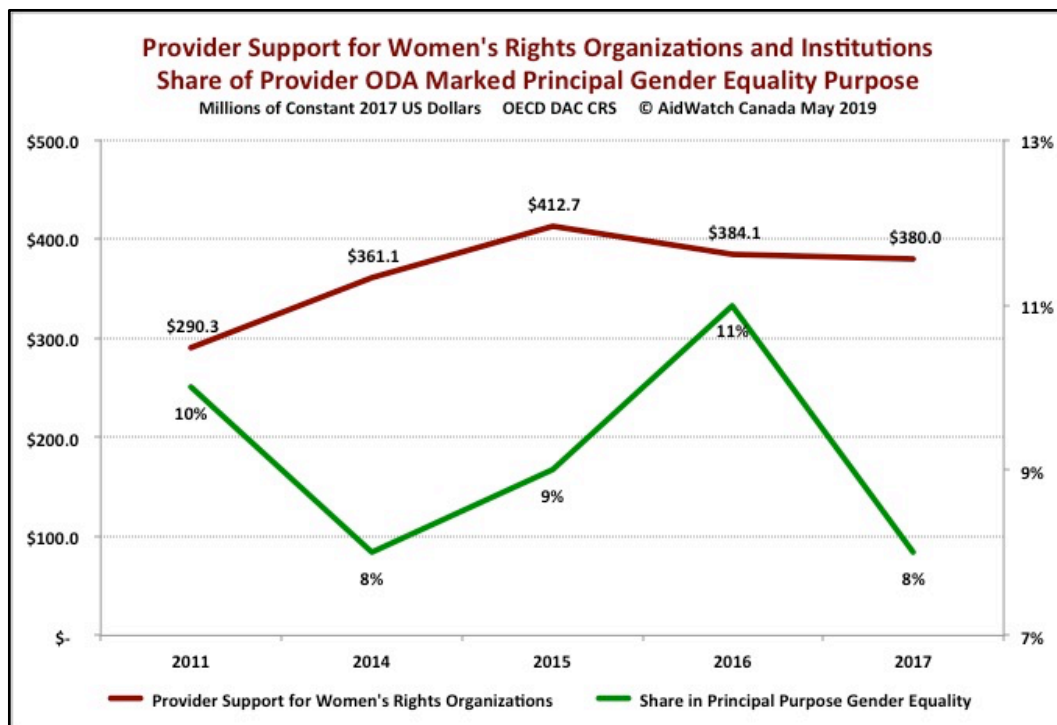
⁵¹ A higher score indicates higher levels of gender inequality.

allocable bilateral aid had no gender equality objectives in 2011 (at the time of the Busan High Level Forum).

The share of allocable bilateral aid for projects with gender equality as a principal objective has improved marginally from 3.3% to 4.3% between 2011 and 2017, and those with at least one gender equality objective improved from 23% to 31%. While this performance represents some improvement in gender mainstreams over these years, there is no independent verification of the degree to which mainstreaming has been realized in the actual implementation of these projects or programs.

Equally alarming is the small share of provider ODA devoted to women's rights organizations. Provider support to these organizations is a key catalyst for sustaining progress in gender equality. At US\$380 million in 2017, the value of this support has increased by 30% between 2011 and 2017 in 2017 dollars. However, as a share of principal purpose gender equality bilateral ODA, it has fluctuated between 8% and 11%. (**Chart 6.2**) In 2017, less than half (47%) of aid to women's rights organizations was channelled through women's NGOs/CSOs, 30% through multilateral institutions (UN Women) and the remaining 23% through developing country government (e.g. Women's Bureaus).

Chart 6.2 Provider Support for Women's Rights Organizations and Institutions



Women's organizations are key drivers for mobilizing policy change, holding governments and other stakeholders accountable, and in pushing for mainstreamed gender equality lens in all development programming, including measures for gender sensitive budgeting. This mobilizing focuses not only on

women and girls-centred issues such as the household, sexual and reproductive health rights, informal work and the care economy, but also on broader macro-economic, environmental and political structures that directly affect conditions for achieving gender equality.⁵²

A review for UNDP and UN Women on gender equality as an accelerator for the SDGs, concluded,

“To advance gender equality and ensure that women exercise their rights and fully contribute to and benefit from development, it is necessary to implement and reinforce legal and institutional arrangements on gender equality, while strengthening accountability mechanisms for fulfilling existing commitments. This requires political will along with stronger multi-stakeholder collaboration involving not only national and local governments, but also civil society, the private sector, academic institutions and the media.”⁵³

c) V-Dem Indices for Gender Equality

The V-Dem Institute provides some interesting indicators relating to women’s civil liberties, access to justice, and presence in public spaces for approximately 71 of the 86 GPEDC monitored countries.⁵⁴

i) Women’s Civil Liberty Index

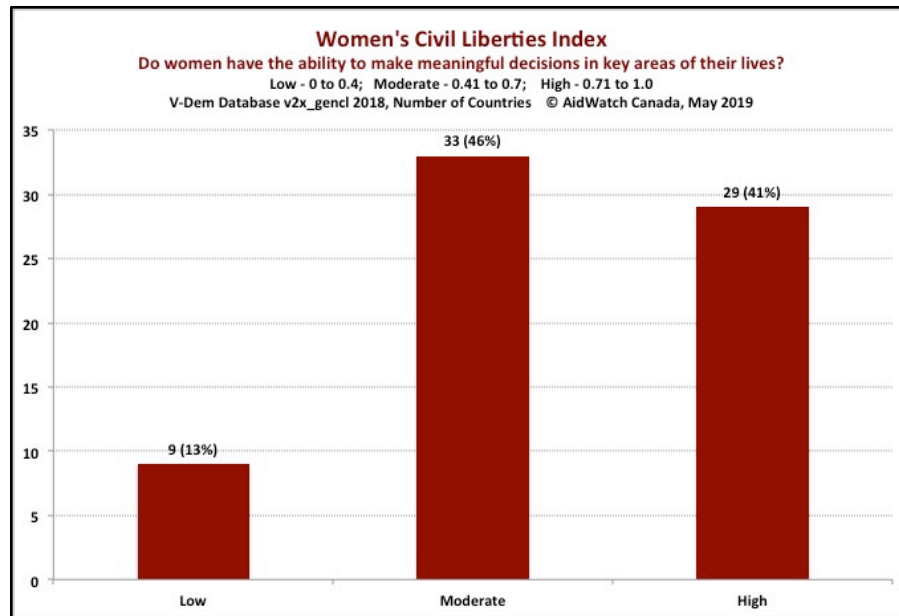
In a majority of the 71 GPEDC monitored countries with data, women are perceived to have considerable barriers in making meaningful decisions in key areas of their lives. (**Chart 6.3**) These areas include freedom of domestic movement, the right to private property, freedom from forced labour, and access to justice, which V-Dem combines into an index score. In 9 of these countries (13%) women have a very low chance to make meaningful decisions affecting their lives. In an additional 33 countries (46%), women continue to face some barriers in making their own decisions in these areas. Women enjoy a high level of capacities in civil liberties relating to decisions affecting their lives in only 41% of countries.

⁵² See Gita Sen, “Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Feminist mobilization for the SDGs,” Global Policy, Volume 10, Supplement 1, January 2019, accessed May 2019 at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330678547_Gender_Equality_and_Women%27s_Empowerment_Feminist_Mobilization_for_the_SDGs.

⁵³ Esuna Dugarova, “Gender Equality as an Accelerator for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals,” a paper for UNDP and UN Women, February 2019, accessed May 2019 at <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/gender-equality-as-an-accelerator-for-achieving-the-sdgs.html>.

⁵⁴ The V-Dem Institute, based at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, publishes a disaggregated set of annual datasets on democracy that reflects the complexity of democracy as a system of rule that goes beyond the simple presence of elections. The Institute relies on a team of over 50 social scientists on six continents and more than 3,000 country experts to develop and analyze the data. See **Annex Eight** for scoring details.

Chart 6.3 V-Dem Women's Civil Liberties Index

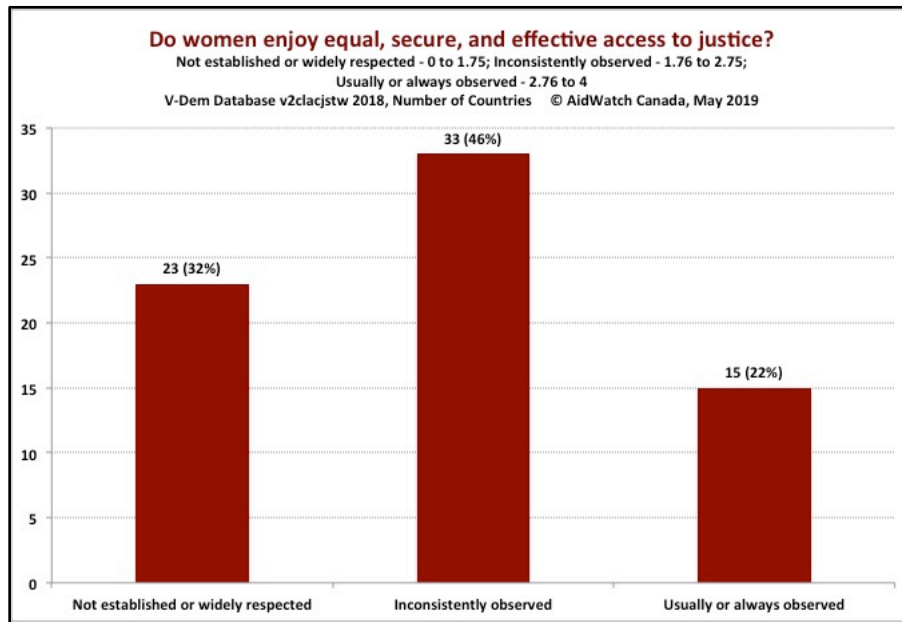


ii) Women's Access to Justice

Access to justice is a key determinant of women's capacities to defend their interests and civil liberties. This V-Dem indicator measures the extent to which women can bring cases before the courts without risk to their personal safety, trials are fair, and women have effective ability to seek redress if public authorities violate their rights, including the rights to counsel. (Note that this indicator is not a comparison with men's access to justice. Both men and women may face significant challenges in a give country.)

Women's access to justice in the majority of monitored countries continues to face significant hurdles. **(Chart 6.4)** In almost a third of these countries (23 countries or 32%) women's access to justice is not established and not widely respected. In another 33 countries (46%) access to justice for women is inconsistently observed. In only a fifth of the 71 countries monitored is women's effective access to justice consistently observed.

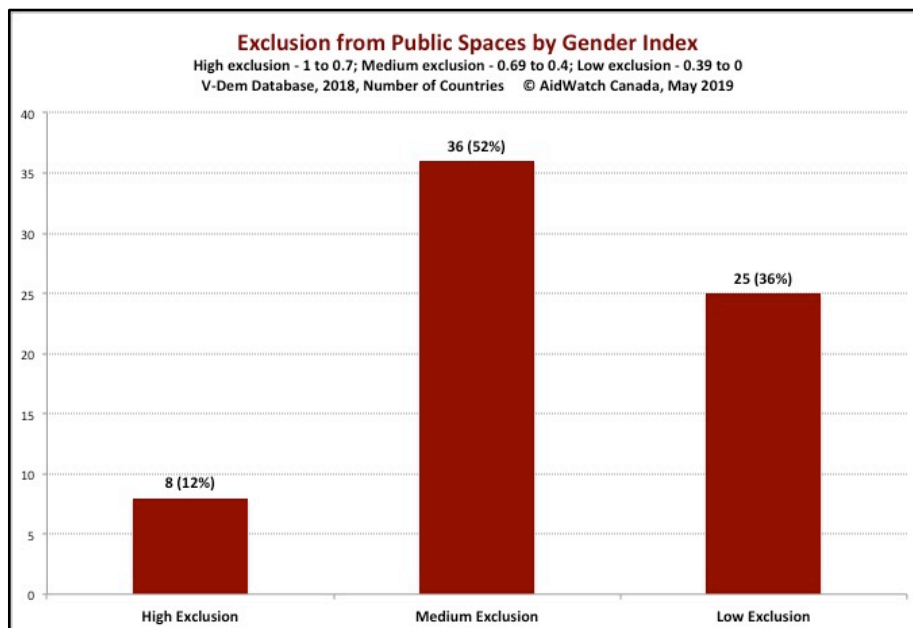
Chart 6.4 V-Dem Do women enjoy equal, secure and effective access to justice?



iii) Women's exclusion from public spaces

To what degree are women excluded politically from public spaces due to their gender identity? This V-Dem index measures exclusion when individuals are denied access to services or participation in governed spaces based on their identity or belonging to a particular group.

Chart 6.5 V-Dem Exclusion from public spaces by gender index



Most countries fall within a moderate score for exclusion from governed public spaces by gender. (**Chart 6.5**) More than half the GPEDC monitored countries (36 countries or 52%) have a score between 0.69 and 0.40. Eight countries (12%) are scored with high exclusion. A little more than a third of the countries (36%) are scored as having low exclusion.

d) Global Gender Gap Index

Achieving gender equality and empowering women is both a specific SDG (Goal 5) and a critical requirement for transformative development in all aspects of Agenda 2030. The 2018 Global Gender Gap Index (GPI) produced by the World Economic Forum demonstrated progress in health and education with a narrowing of the gender gap, but pointed to consistently wide gaps in women's political empowerment and in broader economic power and relations. These gaps affect progress in reducing poverty, attaining food security, addressing the climate crisis, or ensuring a more peaceful and inclusive society. Among the 65 GPEDC/CPDE monitored countries for which the GPI had data, 40 of these countries ranked in the bottom 50%.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2018, November 2018, accessed May 2019 at <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-gender-gap-report-2018> and see Dugarova, op. cit, p. 53.

CHAPTER SEVEN

INDICATOR NINE: USE OF COUNTRY SYSTEMS

An Introduction

GPEDC's Indicator Nine focuses on aid providers' use of country systems, which is a long-standing commitment, rooted in the 2005 *Paris Declaration* and the Busan principle of country ownership. The Indicator is closely related to the SDG targets for effective institutions and public procurement standards (SDG target 16.6 and SDG target 12.7). A country with strong and credible public financial management systems (PFM) is a critical foundation for implementing national development strategies and plans. They are available on a regular basis for both development cooperation and internal financial controls.

GPEDC's Indicator Nine has two parts –

- a) An independent measurement of the quality of a country's public financial management systems; and
- b) The degree to which development partners use a country's financial management and procurement systems.

The CPDE questionnaire supplements country level information on aspects of these two areas from a civil society perspective. This data is also complemented by an independent assessment of donor trust in partner country governments, data from the International Budget Partnership, trends in DAC provider budget support, and trends in relation to perceptions of corruption.

Indicator 9a: Strengthening Public Financial Management Systems

An Introduction to Indicator 9a

The principal guide and source for the GPEDC's assessment of a country's public financial management system is the independent Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability framework and methodology (PEFA).⁵⁶ PEFA is managed by eight international development partners and housed at the World Bank. The GPEDC has chosen nine PEFA dimensions from its Assessment Framework to inform Indicator 9a. Among these nine are several important dimensions related to public engagement for accountability in a country's finances. They include the public's access to fiscal information, the timing of legislative budget approval, and the completeness of annual financial reports. The Joint Support Team also created a parallel optional questionnaire in the 3MR methodology for countries with no recent PEFA assessment.

⁵⁶ See <https://www.pefa.org/>

The CPDE questionnaire for Indicator 9a explores the degree to which CSOs are aware of systems for oversight and greater transparency in public financial management.

An Overview of Findings for Indicator 9a

The *Progress Report* has found that a majority of partner countries (65% of 51 GPEDC monitored countries with PEFA assessments) have demonstrated overall improvements in their Public Financial Management Systems, particularly since 2010, with another 10% showing no change. (Part 1, 28-29) About 50% made progress in budget formulation; 57% made progress in ensuring that budgets are submitted to their legislative body for review prior to the fiscal year.

While annual predictability of aid (amount of aid committed that is delivered within the year) improved for all development partners, forward predictability was lower in 2018 than it was in 2014. Only 53% of DAC providers' aid that is made available to the public sector had forward expenditure plans for medium term predictability, down from more than 60% in 2016. (Part 2, 37 and 40) The 3MR data also shows that the proportion of development cooperation subject to parliamentary review has decreased somewhat to 61% in 2018 from 66% in the 2MR in 2016. (Part 1. 32)

This weakening of domestic oversight of aid resources may be a consequence of a lack of synchronization between forward-looking data from providers and national budget cycles. The *Progress Report* observes, "both underestimated and overestimated development cooperation funding in national budgets weaken the ability of government to account effectively for development cooperation to their domestic stakeholders." (Part 2, 39)

While progress has been modest in some areas of PFM systems, the 3MR found limited progress in other key areas – public access to fiscal information in only 37% of the countries reviewed, transparent procurement methods in only 29% of countries, and external audit coverage and international standards in 36% of countries. (Part 1, 30) These 3MR assessments of progress are based on an earlier PEFA methodology. A more recent revised methodology can be applied to 23 GPEDC monitored countries. Substantial progress is still required to ensure access to fiscal information in most countries, with more mixed results for access to procurement information and transparent legislative scrutiny of external audits.

The CPDE Survey confirmed that CSOs are somewhat aware of parliamentary systems for oversight of a country's budgetary processes, with a few specialized CSOs in a majority of countries aware of the PEFA methodology. However, awareness is significantly hindered by widespread limitations in the transparency of budgetary information, procurement systems and the results of external audits. These challenges are confirmed by several independent assessments as well as current data from the revised PEFA itself.

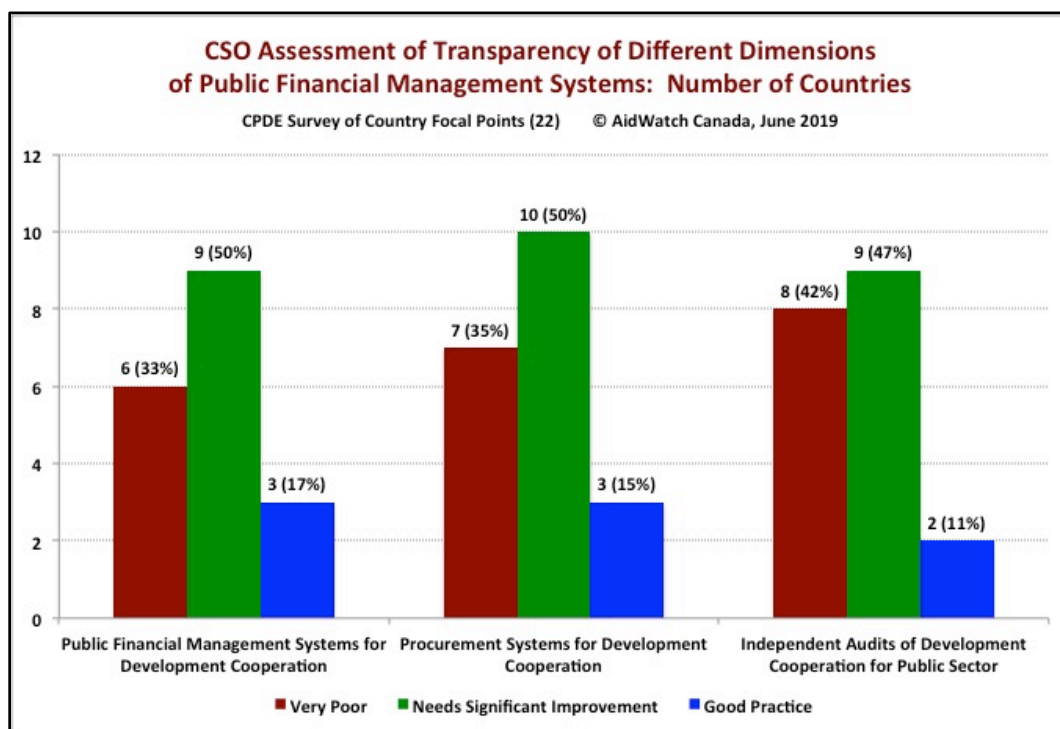
An Analysis of CPDE Focal Point Responses for Indicator 9(a)

a) CSO awareness of public financial management systems, but transparency of public accountability ranked poor or needing significant improvement

In all but three of the 22 CPDE surveyed countries, CSO focal points were aware of systems of parliamentary oversight, providing greater transparency in public financial management, procurement and audits. For 17 countries CSOs indicated that some specialized CSOs were aware of the government's Public Financial Management System, and in nearly 60% of the 22 countries, these specialized CSOs were also aware of the World Bank's Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Tool, used by the GPEDC to assess public financial management systems.

In all but a few countries, however, CSOs rank transparency of public accountability very poor or needing significant improvement for a majority of countries (**Chart 7.1**). For more than a third of the countries, CSOs perceived poor performance for transparency in public finance accountability for development cooperation, procurement processes for development cooperation, and independent government audits of development cooperation.

Chart 7.1 CSO Assessment of Transparency for Public Financial Management Systems



Independent Data Sources for Indicator 9(a)

a) Public Expenditure Financial Management Assessment (PEFA) Revised Methodology (2017 to 2019)

The GPEDC 3MR methodology for Indicator 9a uses an earlier PEFA assessment framework to determine the degree of progress since 2010. The methodology for PEFA was revised for assessments after 2016, of which there are 32 in PEFA's public database. There is not sufficient data using this revised tool to make comparisons for progress over time. But data using the 2016 revised methodology provide a snapshot of actual performance from the latest PEFA for 23 of the GPEDC monitored countries:⁵⁷

- a) In relation to public access to fiscal information, performance remains poor (confirming CSO perceptions in the CPDE Survey): 14 (60%) registered a D score, the poorest level of performance, for this dimension, 1 country registered a C, 3 registered a B, and 5 registered an A.
- b) In relation to transparent procurement methods (the share of procurements through competitive methods), performance is mixed: 11 countries (48%) had a least 70% of the value of contracts through competitive methods, 9 countries had 60%, and 3 countries less than 60%.
- c) In relation to public access to procurement information, the performance needs improvement in some cases: 10 countries provided all or most documentation for most procurement operations, 9 countries provided some documentation for the majority of procurement operations, and in 3 countries procurement substantially lacked transparency.
- d) In relation to the transparency of legislative scrutiny of audit reports, the performance is mixed: For 9 countries (43%) parliament reviewed external audits in public with minor exceptions; for 3 countries only committee reports were published; for another 9 countries there were a few public hearings on external audits and a few committee reports are published.

b) International Budget Partnership – Budget Transparency

Consistent with the data from PEFA, the International Budget Partnership (IBP) concluded (for 2017) that roughly three-quarters of countries assessed publish insufficient budget information and improvement in budget transparency has stalled in recent years. As well, IBP reported that most countries have limited or weak legislative oversight practices, although basic conditions for auditors are present. More worrying is that there were no countries where the public opportunity to participate in budgetary processes is considered adequate (a score of 61 or more). In 2017 there was a small overall decline in the average performance by countries over 2015, in contrast to improved performances between 2008 and 2015.

⁵⁷ For details on the methodology for these four dimensions see PEFA Handbook, Volume One, Second Edition, November 2018, accessed June 2019 at https://www.pefa.org/sites/default/files/PEFA%20Handbook%20Volume%201%20-%20second%20edition_0.pdf

The IBP situates this faltering performance in the context of “a decline in public trust around the world, in part due to governments that have been unable or unwilling to respond to major challenges, such as mismanagement of public resources and dramatic increases in inequality.”⁵⁸

c) Bertelsmann - Donor trust in government as a reliable partner

A section of Bertelsmann’s Transformative Index on good governance is a measurement of the degree to which a Partner Country’s political leadership is able and willing to cooperate with external supporters and organizations. Within this section, country experts are asked their perception of the government’s credibility as a reliable partner in its relations with the international community. (See **Annex Seven** for details on this question.) While wider than the trust that development partners might have in government financial systems for development cooperation, it provides an overview of provider trust in government, in the context of providers’ cooperation efforts.

Chart 7.2 Government as a credible and reliable partner

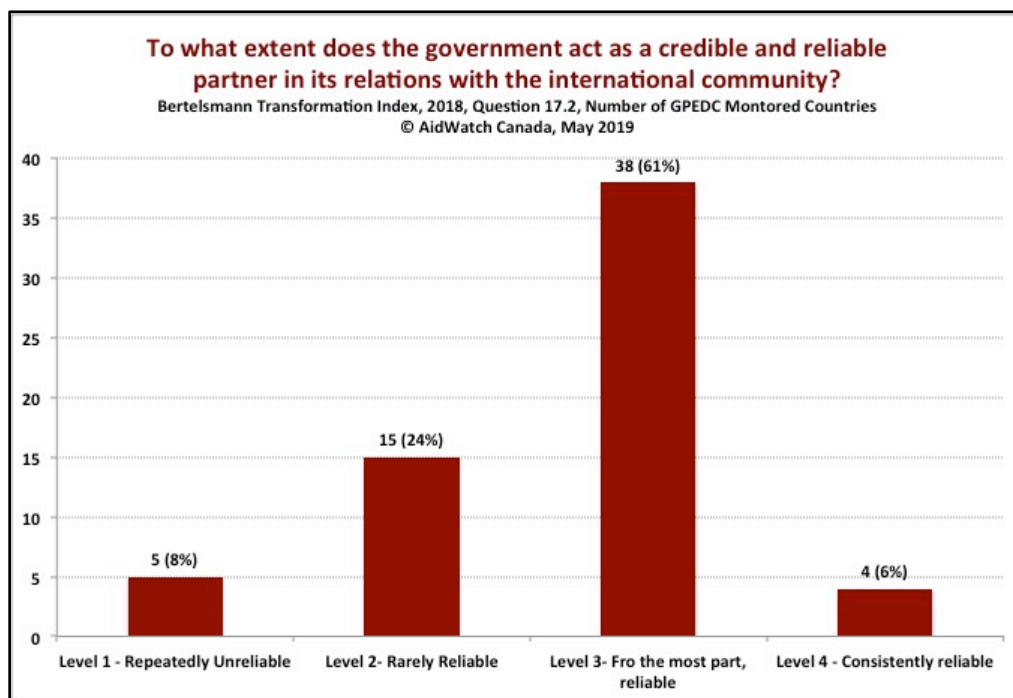


Chart 7.2 shows that the international community has little trust in approximately one-third of GPEDC-monitored governments for which there is data. However, for the majority, “for the most part, the government acts as a credible and reliable partner [Bertelsmann scale].” It is unclear however whether this level of trust translates into use of country systems as the default for providers’ development

⁵⁸ See IPB, “Open Budget Survey Key Findings 2017,” accessed May 2019 at <https://www.internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/open-budget-survey-2017-key-findings-english.pdf>.

cooperation, as agreed in Busan and reiterated at the 2016 Nairobi High Level Forum. [See the next section on Indicator 9(b).]

Indicator 9b) Effective Institutions: Country Systems are Used

An Introduction to Indicator 9b

The second part of GPEDC's Indicator Nine focuses on development partners' use of country public financial management and procurement systems for their aid to the government sector, without applying additional safeguard measures. Drawing data from a country's aid management systems, the questionnaire asks how much development cooperation uses national budget execution systems, national financial reporting procedures, national auditing procedures, and national procurement systems.

CPDE's questionnaire extends these areas of concern in the use of national systems to establish some contextual information. It asks for CSOs' perceptions about the degree to which graft and corruption is wide-spread in ODA-funded projects and the extent to which national budgets are based on fair taxation, are maximizing access to social services, and are using a multi-stakeholder 'bottom-up' approach in setting budgetary priorities. Negative trends in relation to these factors might impede providers' use of finance systems.

An Overview of Findings for Indicator 9(b)

The CPDE Survey suggests that perceptions and realities of corruption in many partner countries continue to be a reality affecting aid practices. This result is also confirmed by independent assessments, which show that anti-corruption policies and mechanisms were perceived to be largely ineffective in the vast majority of GPEDC monitored countries for which there is data.

The *Progress Report*, however, reports mixed results in Development Partners' use of country Public Financial Management Systems for development cooperation. Use has increased from 50% in 2016 to 53% in 2018 as a share of provider funds for the public sector. Use of country procurement systems increased by 13%, from 37% to 50% of aid procurements in the public sector. For DAC members, the use of PFM systems increased from 47% to 55% between 2016 and 2018. (Part 2. 42 -43)

The mixed use of country's PFM systems is reflected in declining trends in providers' use of budget support modalities for their aid may reflect concerns for fiduciary accountability that are reinforced in provider countries by reports of cases and perceptions of corruption. On the other hand, CSO focal points were relatively positive about the degree to which national budgets were focused on social development priorities and the ability of the tax system to redistribute wealth. The latter would suggest

that increased budget support by providers could create important synergies in efforts to achieve the SDGs.

Taking these trends into account, interestingly, the *Progress Report* could find no obvious correlation between the quality of a partner country's PFM systems and the extent to which development partners use them. (Part 2, 44 – 46) Factors other than PFM quality issues seem to determine provider use of these systems. One factor may be countries where providers have a high proportion of loans as opposed to grants in development cooperation with the public sector. Loans are much more frequently administered using country systems.⁵⁹ Other drivers for the use of country systems are case-by-case analysis by providers, long-term relationships that build trust, and a large share of country aid provided to the public sector, and perception of development partner capacities. No mention is made regarding perceptions of corruption.

An Analysis of CPDE Focal Point Responses for Indicator 9(b)

a) Perceptions of graft and corruption could influence provider options

Perceptions of corruption, and media coverage of aid corruption scandals in provider countries, could be a factor influencing providers' options for deploying aid resources through country systems. Close to a third (32% / 7 countries) of CSOs in Partner Countries participating in the CPDE Survey suggested that cases of corruption in ODA-funded projects is a wide-spread practice, and another 36% (8 countries) said that these practices were somewhat present in their country.

All but one country indicated that there were mechanisms to investigate corruption. When asked whether cases are being investigated, among these 15 countries, CSO focal points said that cases of corruption in aid allocations were investigated in only 7 countries, and somewhat in an additional 2 countries.

b) Maximizing scarce budgetary resources to social priorities are important for fair and people-centred national budgets

Overall, CSO focal points had a positive perception of the degree to which national budgets maximized the allocation of scarce government resources to social priorities of education, health etc. Nine (9) countries answered positively and an additional 8 countries indicated that such allocations were somewhat the case. A majority of countries (14) also said that the tax regime did serve to redistribute wealth, but only a small number (7) indicated that there had been reviews of wealth distribution in their

⁵⁹ The *Progress Report* notes that on average a 10 point increase in the use of loans translates into a 4.9% increase in the use of country systems (based on 80 countries in the 3MR process). (Part 2, 45)

country. Participatory bottom-up budgeting is a reality in 7 (32%) countries and somewhat the practice in an additional six (27%) countries.

Independent Data Sources for Indicator 9(b)

a) Trends in DAC Providers' Budget Support

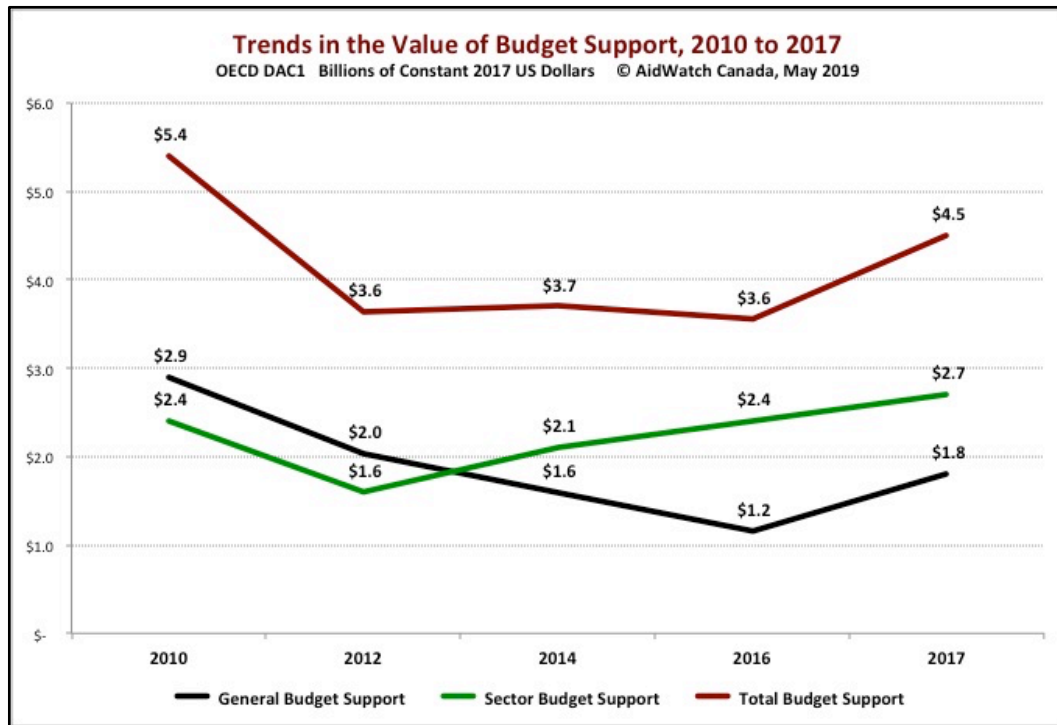
The degree to which DAC providers are using budget support as a modality for delivering aid through partner country budgetary systems is an indication of the overall use of these systems. The provision of General Budget Support or Sector-wide Programming (SWAP)⁶⁰ has been an important mechanism for advancing a country's ownership of its development priorities through aid. With budget support, a developing country government deploys aid through its budgetary framework and uses its systems for accounting for development initiatives.

From a peak of US\$5.4 billion in 2010, aid through General Budget Support and SWAPs has unevenly declined to US\$4.5 billion in 2017, with the EU providing almost half of this budget support (US\$2.2 billion). (See **Chart 7.3**) In 2017, total budget support was only 4.4% of Real Bilateral ODA, including EU ODA. While aid offered in the form of projects may also use national budgetary systems, these initiatives are much more fragmented and are more likely to be conditioned by the provider's own policies and fiduciary rules. A recent German review of budget support evaluations concluded that there was strong evidence for positive impacts of budget support as a funding modality. It called on providers to reassess their withdrawal from this modality of aid as the current trends seem to indicate.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Sector-wide programming support the sector budget of a given ministry, while general budget support is allocated to the overall budget, under policy conditions negotiated between the provider and the government.

⁶¹ See Orth, M., J. Schmitt, F. Krisch, S. Oltsch (2017), "What we know about the effectiveness of budget support. Evaluation Synthesis," German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval), Bonn, accessed June 2018 at https://www.deval.org/files/content/Dateien/Evaluierung/Berichte/2017/DEval_Synthesen_Bericht_2017_EN_bffinal.pdf. They found "convincingly broad evidence that budget support is indeed an effective modality in promoting important development outcomes, such as improvements in public financial management and budget processes and improved provision of public goods and services. In view of these findings it appears worthwhile for donors – including those who have largely withdrawn from budget support – to re-assess the modality."

Chart 7.3 Trends in the Value of Budget Support, 2010 to 2017

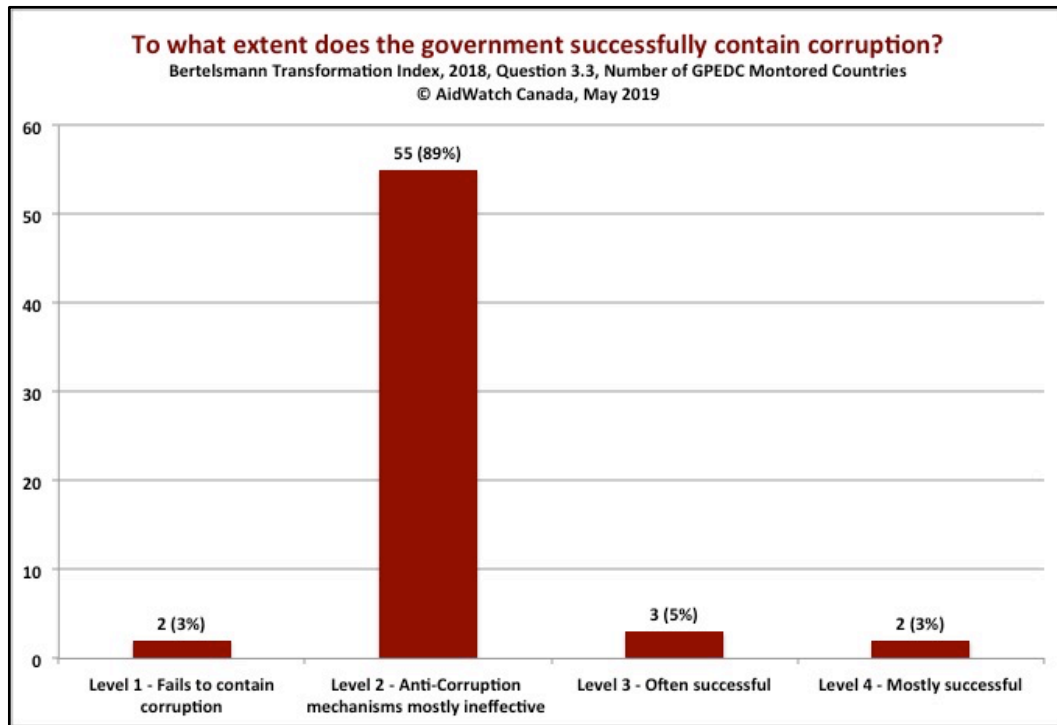


b) Bertlesmann – To what extent does government successfully contain corruption?

The Bertlesmann Index demonstrates a deep perception that anti-corruption policies and mechanisms are largely ineffective among the majority of GPEDC-monitored countries for which there is data. (See **Chart 7.4** and **Annex Seven** for details on this question.) Almost all countries (89%) were placed at level 2 (mechanisms mostly ineffective) in this assessment. These findings are largely confirmed by a parallel ranking of countries in the annual Freedom in the World Index on the strength and effectiveness of safeguards against official corruption, with a vast majority of GPEDC monitored countries perceived to have weak safeguards.⁶²

⁶² See Freedom House, Freedom in the World Index, Section C2 in the Methodology accessed at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/methodology-freedom-world-2018>.

Chart 7.4 Bertelsmann To what extent does government contain corruption?



CHAPTER EIGHT

INDICATOR TEN: TIED AID

An Introduction

There is strong evidence over several decades that aid, when it is tied to procurements in provider countries, substantially reduces the effectiveness of this aid.⁶³ Aid that is untied provides better value-for-money and is an important consideration in strengthening country ownership over the financing of its development priorities. Tied aid generally costs more than untied aid – an estimated 15% – 30% more for many goods and services, and more still in the case of food aid.⁶⁴ Tied aid is often less suited to local contexts and it significantly reduces the multiplier effects of aid in strengthening local producers and suppliers within their national economy.

At the Global Partnership’s 2016 High Level Meeting in Nairobi, all providers of aid agreed to “accelerate untying of aid, and promote development cooperation that supports local businesses throughout the supply chain” [Nairobi Outcome, §42(g)]. The 2015 Addis Ababa Agenda for Action on financing for development also confirmed the continued importance of untying aid in the achievement of the SDGs: “We will align activities with national priorities, including by reducing fragmentation, accelerating the untying of aid, particularly for least developed countries, and countries most in need.” [AAAA, §58]

The GPEDC indicator for tied aid is established at the global level, derived from data collected in the DAC’s Creditor Reporting System (CRS). It is calculated as a share of total ODA commitments for 2018, excluding donor administrative costs and in-donor refugee costs. The benchmark year is 2010. The latest public data on tied aid (for 2016) is available in the DAC’s [2018 Report on the DAC Untying Recommendation](#).⁶⁵

Donors report to the CRS the tied status of their aid when it is legally, or through regulations, tied to provider-country suppliers. All DAC policies and recommendations to its members relate to formal conditions of aid tying. While an important consideration for the flexibility of aid, this limited reporting misses provider practices that might informally tie additional aid to provider-country suppliers. Informal tying can occur when provider procurement tendering terms and conditions,

- Are established with a technical bias towards the capacities of provider-country suppliers;
- Require specialized knowledge in provider operational requirements;
- Are not advertised widely in local media and in local languages; or

⁶³ This section has drawn substantially on research conducted by Eurodad: Polly Meeks, “Development, untied: Unleashing the catalytic power of Official Development Assistance through renewed action on untying,” Eurodad, September 2018 access May 2019 at <https://eurodad.org/files/pdf/5ba3a41be1899.pdf> and on tied aid section of the Aid Trends Chapter in the *2018 Global Reality of Aid Report*, accessed May 2019 at www.realityofaid.org.

⁶⁴ See <http://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/dcdndep/44375975.pdf>

⁶⁵ See [https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/DCD-DAC\(2018\)12-REV2.en.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/DCD-DAC(2018)12-REV2.en.pdf).

- Are tendered at a scale that is beyond local supplier capacities.

While technically untied, many of these procurements tend to be mainly accessible to suppliers in provider countries.

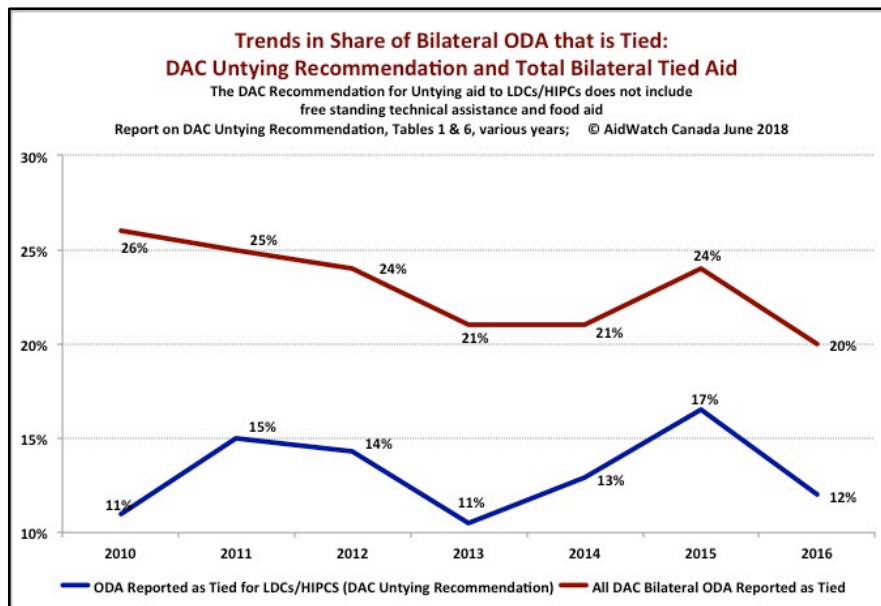
CPDE's analysis therefore includes data relevant to reducing tied aid in all of its forms.

An Analysis of Trends for Tied Aid

The *Progress Report* observes, “the share of untied ODA increased in the period 2015 to 2017, but progress has been uneven across development partners.” While many providers report almost all of their aid untied, 14 DAC members report less than 90% of their aid as untied, including 7 that report less than 70%. Despite a DAC Recommendation focusing on full untying for least developed countries (LDCs), the *Progress Report* also notes that untied aid decreased in 17 of the 43 LDCs participating in the 3MR. (Part 2, 48-49)

In 2017 (the last year for [official data](#)), providers reported that US\$16.3 billion of their aid was tied to provider-country suppliers. Aid that is tied by law or regulation is therefore approximately 15% of Bilateral Aid for that year, an improvement from 20% in 2016. According to DAC rules, however, providers can exclude technical assistance from these calculations, and may also exclude food aid. The overall trend since 2010 for officially reported tied aid has been mixed. (Chart 8.1)

Chart 8.1 Trends in Share of Bilateral ODA that is Tied

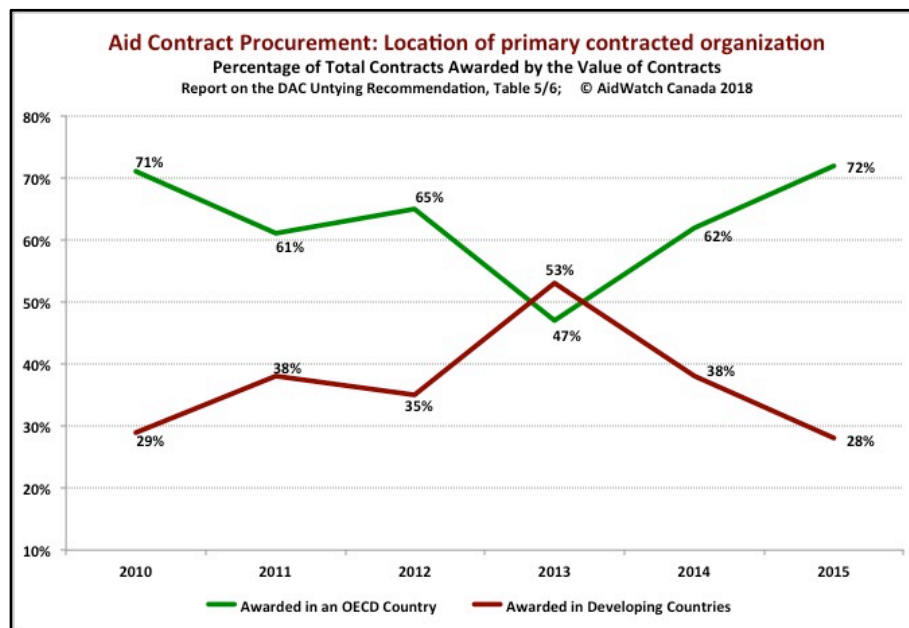


Procurement of goods and services is a very significant aspect of aid delivery. EURODAC conservatively estimates that more than 44% of Real ODA in 2015, or \$55 billion in aid, was subject to procurement

tendering by bilateral and multilateral aid providers.⁶⁶ Of this amount the OECD DAC identifies contracts tendered by bilateral providers totalled US\$28.0 billion in 2015 and US\$21.1 billion in 2016.⁶⁷ The results of these tenders paint quite a different picture in an assessment of the degree to which aid resources are linked to provider country suppliers.

Chart 8.2 allocates the results of aid contract tendering according to location of the primary contracted organization. While the proportion of aid contracts awarded in OECD countries has varied from year to year, on average since 2010, more than 60% of these contracts have been awarded in provider countries. This informal tying meant that an additional US\$20 billion in aid was actually tied to provider country suppliers on top of the US\$16.4 billion in aid tied by law or regulation.

Chart 8.2 Aid Contract Procurement: Location of primary contracted organization



In 2015 (the last year for which there is complete data), when officially reported tied aid and informally tied aid are combined, more than a third (38%) of Real Bilateral Aid commitments in that year could be considered tied to provider country suppliers.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Polly Meeks, EURODAC, op. cit., page 5.

⁶⁷ OECD DAC, 2018 Report on the DAC Untying Recommendation, June 2018, op. cit., Table Five, accessed May 2019.

⁶⁸ Bilateral aid commitments in 2015 were US\$118.4 billion. To calculate Real Bilateral Aid commitments at US\$97.1 billion, subtract in-donor refugee costs (US\$12.3 billion), debt cancellation (US\$0.4 billion), imputed student costs in provider countries (US\$1.9 billion), and provider administration costs (US\$6.7 billion). Official tied aid was US\$16.4 billion and informal tied contracts were US\$20.0 billion. Source: DAC CRS for 2015.