

**Global Policy Forum on Development 2019
Perspectives of CSOs, Private Sector and Local Authorities**

Communiqué

From the 13th to the 15th of March 2019, the Global Policy Forum on Development (PFD) was held in Brussels, Belgium. This year's edition gathered more than 90 participants from CSOs, LAs, the private sector, philanthropy, EU Member States and EU Institutions to debate crucial elements of the Development agenda. This PFD takes place at a very important moment when future EU instruments are being debated and the EU will be reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals to the UN High-Level Political Forum, following its commitments in the new European Consensus on Development.

As a strong and inclusive platform for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue for CSOs, LAs, and private sector, the Forum deliberated on three key issues:

1. How the EU is planning to report and monitor its achievements towards Agenda 2030 in collaboration with key development actors;
2. Financing for development including specific financial instruments; and
3. How multi-stakeholder partnerships can help achieve environmental goals

The forum:

RECOGNISING the European Commission's 2012 Communication on the "Roots of Democracy and Sustainable Development", which clarifies the definition of CSOs in all their diversity and specificity;

ACKNOWLEDGING the European Commission's 2013 Communication on empowering local authorities in partner countries for enhanced governance and more effective development outcomes;

REMEMBERING the European Commission's 2014 Communication on "A Stronger Role of the Private Sector in Achieving Inclusive and Sustainable Growth in Developing countries"

WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK of the developmental and co-operation policies and instruments of the European Union, including the 2017 European Consensus for Development, and the 2030 Agenda;

BEARING IN MIND the need to maintain and develop this political and strategic inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue in order to promote shared values and this being the rationale of the establishment of this Forum.



UNDERSTANDING that all constituencies who are part of the PFD and all development actors have the responsibility to find ways of working together towards a more sustainable society.

proposes the following **key messages**.

Key messages

a. Inequalities

- i. The issue of inclusion/exclusion is a core challenge for all stakeholders. Specific attention must be placed on people living in poverty and marginalised groups, and their inability to participate effectively in development and decision-making.
- ii. The 2030 agenda is a transformative agenda that calls for a change of paradigm which moves away from development models that reproduce poverty, inequalities and human rights violations, and impact negatively on vulnerable groups, such as women, persons with disabilities, migrants and children.
- iii. Climate change is an important factor affecting inequalities and therefore requires concerted action by all stakeholders. Efforts should be made to ensure inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue in discussions around climate justice and just transition.

b. Enabling environment

- i. The PFD recognises that each country has its own specificities and there can be no one-size-fits-all approach to development, but also that development action should encourage a rights-based approach where legal, political, social or financial restrictions do not undermine the roles and actions of development actors.
- ii. In particular, there should be concrete actions to protect and expand the enabling environment for CSOs, LAs and local businesses; including capacity building, and providing consultative spaces and resources.
- iii. Concerns were repeatedly raised in relation to violence against human rights defenders, environmental activists, women and migrants, and a call was made to enhance their security as a prerequisite for their effective participation in development.
- iv. The EU delegations should institutionalise a structured and inclusive policy dialogue which brings together LA's, CSOs, private sector, philanthropy and national governments. This focus on multi-stakeholder dialogue and strategic engagement should be reflected in the EU delegation Roadmaps.

c. Ways of working

- i. There needs to be an evolution from the old paradigm of donor-centric relations to a more collaborative model that promotes cooperation and alliances and supports collective development efforts;
- ii. When selecting regional and national priorities, the EU institutions should take into consideration local, regional and national strategies, promote multi-level governance and ensure both policy coherence and effective consultative processes with CSOs, LAs and



local business networks.

iii. Global principles need to be localised. There should be a continued focus on how development can transform societies through local action, for example how local actors should contextualise the role of digital transformation for development in a manner that protects the end user.

iv. Last but not least, constituencies that are often excluded from the development debates, like youth, should be proactively consulted and engaged.

d. Urbanisation

i. Big and medium sized cities will have to include more than 3 billion people by 2050. This massive urbanisation has consequences on environment, rising inequalities, and access to basic services.

ii. In order to tackle these issues in a transformative manner, following the spirit of the 2030 Agenda, LAs, CSOs, the private sector and international actors need to work jointly with national governments.

iii. Responding to the recognized necessity to localise the implementation of the SDGs, the EU should move beyond the national governments and encourage earmarked budgets for local authorities.

e. Monitoring and reporting mechanisms on the 2030 Agenda implementation

i. The EU should put in place as soon as possible its own strategy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda internally in order to have credibility when engaging with partners and national governments on SDG implementation.

ii. Both within the EU and when engaging with national governments, the EU should urge to consult and engage with CSOs, LAs and private sector for the design, implementation, monitoring, reporting and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda, including the local level (transforming UN macro indicators into local indicators), and particularly in exercises such as the Joint Synthesis Report (JSR) and the Voluntary National Reports (VNRs). Specific processes should be established to that effect as well as mechanisms of production and access to public information.

iii. CSOs, and LAs should join in accountability and transparency efforts for development, since sustainable development and democracy is based on the premise of governance from all stakeholders.

f. Financing & new financial instruments

i. New EU financial efforts, including the upcoming NDICI, should adhere to the principles and policies set out in the 2030 Agenda and the new EU Consensus on Development, two frameworks which are consistent with our shared values. Stronger language should be adopted in policies that touch upon financing and international co-operation with EU's partner countries. Governments has to be responsible for effective and inclusive monitoring, reporting and evaluation as well as remediation, adaptive management and corrective actions.

ii. Efforts should be made at multiple levels to ensure constituencies (with a particular



emphasis on those at the local level) are resourced and capacitated to participate in consultations, programming, implementation of projects and the evaluation of EU financial instruments (including in the AU-ACP post Cotonou cooperation framework).

iii. EU financing should continue to be allocated to a diverse range of areas such as social dialogue, gender mainstreaming, decentralisation, environmental protection, fair trade, decent work, etc. At the same time, efforts for peace building necessitate an effective European political contribution for conflict resolution and building democratic, just, fair and durable peace based on the core principles of Human Rights. Last but not least, European standards for migration and asylum seeking should prioritize the root causes of migration before enforcing security in the host countries and countries of transition.

iv. Support to private sector under the new financing instrument, should focus on innovative financial support to sustainable development (including a territorial approach), ensuring human rights and considering the capacities of local entrepreneurs, cooperatives and SMEs.

g. Environment and climate action

i. Climate change and environmental degradation undermine development achievements and more needs to be done to accelerate progress because the current pattern of development is unsustainable and must change to safeguard our planet and people's lives.

ii. The EU needs to lead the change in consumption patterns, think beyond economic growth, and put people, planet and prosperity before profit, to achieve a just transition and climate justice.

iii. In that context there is an added value for an inclusive multi stakeholder approach to the discussions, encouraging the active participation of CSOs, LAs and the private sector to support the achievement of environmental goals.