



European
Commission

A large crowd of people, mostly men, with their hands raised in the air, suggesting a public event or protest. The image is overlaid with a large, semi-transparent orange and purple circular graphic.

Info Note

EU Country Roadmaps

for Engagement with
Civil Society

June 2017

International
Cooperation and
Development

Abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific	EDF	European Development Fund
CPDE	CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness	EED	European Endowment for Democracy
CBO	Community-based Organisation	ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
CCC	Cooperation Committee for Cambodia	EU	European Union
ChSA	Charities and Societies Agency, Ethiopia	IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
CSIS	Citizens Satisfaction Index System	INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
CSJWG	Civil Society Joint Working Group - Afghanistan	LA	Local Authority
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	LANGO	Law on Associations and Non-governmental Organisations Cambodia
CSO-LA	Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities	LGU	Local Government Unit
CSR	Corporate social responsibility	LG Watch	Local Government Watch, Philippines
CSSG	Civil Society Sub Group	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
CSSWG	Civil Society Sector Working Group, Ethiopia	MIP	EIDHR Multiannual Indicative Plan
DAG	Development Assistance Group	MP	Member of Parliament
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument	NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
DG	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development	NSA-LA	Non-state actors and local authorities in development
DEVCO		ODA	Official Development Assistance
DG NEAR	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations	PAC	Public Advisory Council
EaP	Eastern Partnership	PASC	Programme d'Appui à la Société Civile - Tunisie
EC	European Commission	PSP	Parliamentary Support Project
ECNL	European Center for Not-for-Profit Law	RM	Roadmap
EEAS	European External Action Service	RMF	Roadmap Facility
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights	SCEFI	Strengthening Citizen Engagement in Fiji Initiative
EUD	EU Delegation	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
GPEDC	Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation	SPF	Strategic Project Facility
ICNL	International Center for Not-for-Profit Law	TECS	Tracking Trends in Ethiopia's Civil Society

Rationale

In 2012, the EU adopted a policy shift to push its long-standing support for civil society a step further.¹ In particular by reinforcing its support to civil society organisations (CSOS) as actors of governance in their own rights.

In April 2017, in accordance with the request of the Council to report back five years later, the Commission adopted a Report on EU engagement with Civil Society highlighting the track record of achieved results.

This report is completed by four Info Notes that present concrete cases and good practices on each of the three pillars of this policy shift and the Roadmap process..

- Info Note - EU Support to Meaningful & Structured Civil Society participation in Domestic Policies
- Info Note - EU support to Promote an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Organisations
- Info Note - EU Support to Capacity Development of Civil Society organisations
- Info Note - EU Country Roadmaps for engagement with Civil Society

1. COM(2012) 492 Communication: The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with Civil Society in external relations, September 2012 <http://www.euneighbours.eu/library/content/roots-democracy-and-sustainable-development-europes-engagement-civil-society-external-rela-0>

“

The EU and the Member States should develop country Roadmaps for engagement with CSOs, to improve the impact, predictability and visibility of EU actions, ensuring consistency and synergy throughout the various sectors covered by EU external relations. These Roadmaps are also meant to trigger coordination and sharing of best practices with the Member States and other international actors, including simplification and harmonisation of funding requirements.

Roadmaps should be based on a sound understanding of the CSO arena and the wider socio-economic context in which they operate. This is a prerequisite for a more strategic engagement of the EU at country level, particularly if relevant stakeholders have to be identified in order to establish or facilitate effective and meaningful dialogue schemes.

The Roadmaps should identify long-term objectives of EU cooperation with CSOs and encompass dialogue as well as operational support, identifying appropriate working, namely bilateral, regional and thematic cooperation. The human rights country strategies currently being developed by the EU will be an important reference.

The roadmaps should be developed taking into account the views of civil society, be regularly updated and where appropriate, made publicly available and shared with national authorities.

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COM(2012) 492 Communication: The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with Civil Society in external relations, September 2012, p. 9-10

Contents

Rationale	1
Introduction	4
Seven reasons why Roadmaps matter	5
Reason 1 Integrated approach among EU actors	5
Reason 2 Strengthened and more inclusive dialogue with CSOs	6
Reason 3 Reinforcing EU commitment to promote an Enabling Environment for CSOs	8
Reason 4 EU as a broker facilitating CSO involvement in domestic policies	10
Reason 5 Active support for the capacity development of civil society	12
Reason 6 Reinforcing mainstreaming efforts of civil society into EU focal sectors of cooperation	14
Reason 7 Innovation of funding modalities and overcoming the instrument-driven approach	16
Abbreviations	17

Seven reasons why Roadmaps matter

REASON 1

Integrated approach among EU actors

RMs provide donors with a deeper understanding of the Civil Society landscape. This is of particular importance for countries with challenging and/or fragile contexts. RMs also promote enhanced coordination amongst Member States (MS), by ensuring a better division of labour and preventing fragmentation and the duplication of effort. In more

advanced contexts, where coordination was already under way prior to the arrival of the RMs, they are contributing to the development of a shared vision and common framework to engage with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Furthermore, RMs are serving as key building blocks in EU joint programming, either at the level of shared analysis or shared responses.

MS involvement in numbers

As a general trend, **in 75% of the RMs**, MS participated actively or very actively in the RM process, although experiences are diverse across the spectrum of countries. In most countries, the process has been led by the EUDs, although MS present in the country have contributed, even if sometimes on an *ad-hoc* basis.

Of the 91 RMs analysed, **in around 45% of cases, MS participation is “high”** (i.e. full involvement of a varying number – from 3 to 8 – of MS from the beginning of the process until adoption of the RM final version). In around 28% of the RM drafting processes, the MS participation can be defined as “moderate”, with only some consultation during the process or with consultation during the whole process but with a reduced number of MS.



Source: “The EU Roadmap process: taking stock. Capitalisation report”. Roadmap Facility. October 2015.

In Peru the RM is the result of a highly participatory process, with involvement of both Peruvian and International civil society actors. It has resulted in greater cooperation and division of labour amongst the EU Delegation (EUD) and Member States. Additionally, it has prompted a more structured dialogue with CSOs on issues beyond funding, which used to be the traditional focus of EU dialogue.

In Cambodia the RM provides a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the CSO landscape. It sets out a shared vision of the EU and its partners (Czech Republic, Germany, Finland, France, Italy, Ireland, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK) in putting together a strategy for more ambitious and coherent support of CSOs. This strategy will address the relevant governance and development challenges the country currently faces. The RM is a first step, and European development partners are exploring joint approaches to support civil society under the European Development Cooperation Strategy for Cambodia 2014-2018. The process has been closely coordinated with the joint programming process, which is progressing well and has the potential to become an example of good practice and to inspire others.

REASON 2

Strengthened and more inclusive dialogue with CSOs

First, the various in-country processes to develop the RMs have themselves been in-depth consultations with CSOs about the key development and governance issues in the country. As a consequence, the analysis presented in the document, the strategy and the corresponding action plan, for most RMs, are jointly owned by both the EU and the CSOs that were involved in the process.

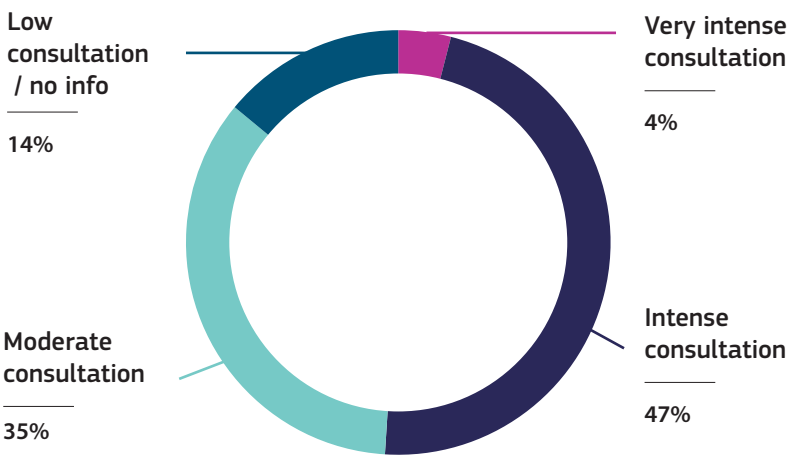
Second, the RMs have recognised local actors as having significance beyond being only partners or subcontractors of international

non-governmental organisations (INGOs), underlying the need for policy dialogue. This is particularly relevant in contexts of rehabilitation, where local CSOs have traditionally been used by INGOs as subcontractors, and where INGOs used to be the key partners for the EU.

Third, in a number of cases the consultations also resulted in the establishment of a permanent scheme for dialogue with CSOs where relevant issues are discussed, rather than focusing only on the next Call for Proposals.

Consultations with CSOs in numbers

Of the 91 RMs analysed in the capitalisation exercise, **50% show an intense level of consultation with CSOs**. Around 47% of the RM consultation processes were labelled as intense (i.e. with several meetings organised and even a survey conducted) and around 4% “very intense” (meaning full involvement of civil society from the beginning of the process until adoption of the RM final version). In roughly 35% of the cases, CSOs were moderately consulted (i.e. with only some consultation during the process) and, for around 14% of the RMs, CSOs were barely consulted.



Source: "The EU Roadmap process: taking stock. Capitalisation report". Roadmap Facility. October 2015.



This trend is also echoed by CSOs. As evidenced in the survey conducted by CONCORD², EUDs are managing **to reach out more widely and more locally**, and the RM is allowing several of them to identify the remaining challenges and explore options for overcoming them. However, consultations have also raised a number of relevant **challenges and questions**. First and foremost, it has become evident that there are no **“blueprint” approaches** on how to

consult and establish dialogue with CSOs, as national contexts are simply too diverse to allow for uniform approaches. Also, **targeting and/or identifying the right actors continues to be one of the most fundamental questions** in consultations, to ensure that the process is effective. Beyond the effectiveness question, it is important to create legitimacy and credibility for the whole process. Hence there is a need to carefully map out the actors and their roles.

In Afghanistan, an extensive consultation process was used to elaborate the RM, but has additionally been maintained since then. The elaboration process entailed an online consultation with civil society, donors and other international partners, targeted interviews, and focus group discussions. To ensure that the voice of particular groups was also heard, focus group discussions were also organised, with youth and trade unions also involved.

In Kenya, the RM is the culmination of a process of consultations with national CSOs (in Nairobi), with grassroots CSOs (in Turkana) and with CSO experts of the MS represented in Kenya. The RM puts forward three priorities for implementation: (i) an enabling policy and legal environment for CSOs at national level in Kenya; (ii) the institutional environment and leadership for CSO participation in country decision-making and (iii) the need for a framework for CSO participation. It represents a first step to developing a common framework for EU support to CSOs, in a context of many donors with sometimes conflicting visions.

2 CONCORD (2015): Mutual engagement with EUD and CSOs. Lessons from the field.

REASON 3

Reinforcing EU commitment to promote an Enabling Environment for CSOs

RMs play an important role in proactively supporting the revision, updating and/or streamlining of the legal and institutional framework governing CSOs. They also advocate to trigger the use of EU leverage, through diplomacy and political discussion, in order to open up spaces for dialogue, as well as, where possible, influencing and counterbalancing the trend towards a narrowing operating space for both CSOs and individuals.

RMs also help to promote fundamental rights and freedoms, including the protection of human rights defenders, particularly in fragile contexts and where space for CSOs is shrinking.

Moreover, in a number of countries where restrictions or administrative constraints have fallen upon the funding of CSOs, RMs address the adaptation and mitigation that donors have to adopt in terms of priorities and modalities.

The RMs also address the question of CSOs financial sustainability, and in the context of 'graduated' countries where cooperation is being withdrawn, the evolution of priorities for support towards more governance related issues.

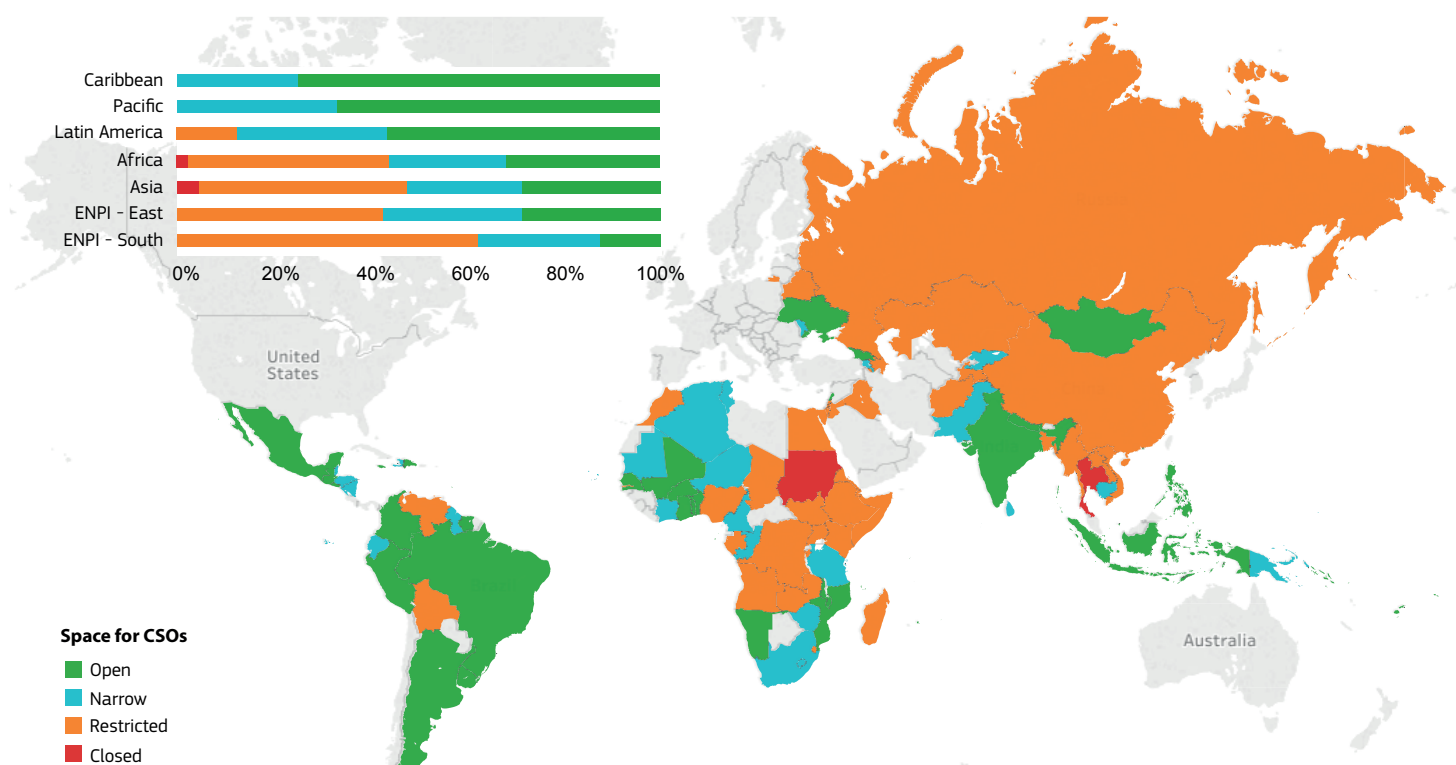


In Somalia, the RM provides added value through closer partnerships between the EU, MS and CSOs to support an improved environment, including an adequate legal and institutional framework, to allow for political and civic rights. The RM also contributes to having more structured dialogue between CSOs and authorities, as well as the visibility of the role of CSOs. It enhances the coordinating capacity of platforms and their ability to better represent their constituencies, and lends support to the coordinating capacity of the government and alignment strategies. Specific attention is being given to coordination and collaboration to increase the effectiveness of Civil Society engagement in the New Deal mechanisms.

In Ecuador, the RM confirms the commitment of the EU to work closely with CSOs in an increasingly restrictive and difficult environment. The RM can be considered not just as the EU strategy, but also the joint EU-Civil Society strategy, as it shows a high level of involvement of CSOs. Other than the traditional work on capacities for CSOs, the RM aims to support CSOs in addressing their main obstacles in the environment as well as internal weaknesses, including the legal framework, citizens' perception of civil society, access to public information and civic participation and financial sustainability of CSOs.

How do EUDs rate the space for CSOs

Most countries do not fully guarantee the space for CSOs which their constitutions and international obligations require. EUDs in most partner countries have identified specific concerns with the legal, regulatory and political environment for CSOs. As the following map shows, Latin and Central America and the Pacific are the only regions where EU Delegations identify a stable or improving space for CSOs.



Source: Roadmap state of play spreadsheet, December 2016 (RMF)

REASON 4

EU as a broker facilitating CSO involvement in domestic policies

RMs help to raise awareness of public authorities about CSOs, their work and added value, with the ultimate goal of improving mutual trust. They also support the systematic participation of CSOs in relevant national and sectoral level legislative and institutional reform processes. They promote the concept of public accountability and enhance the civil society

watchdog role over issues such as climate change, environment and natural resource management in sectors of national importance including oil, gas and forestry. At the same time, they promote a stronger role for CSOs in discussions on sustainable and inclusive growth, employment and social protection.



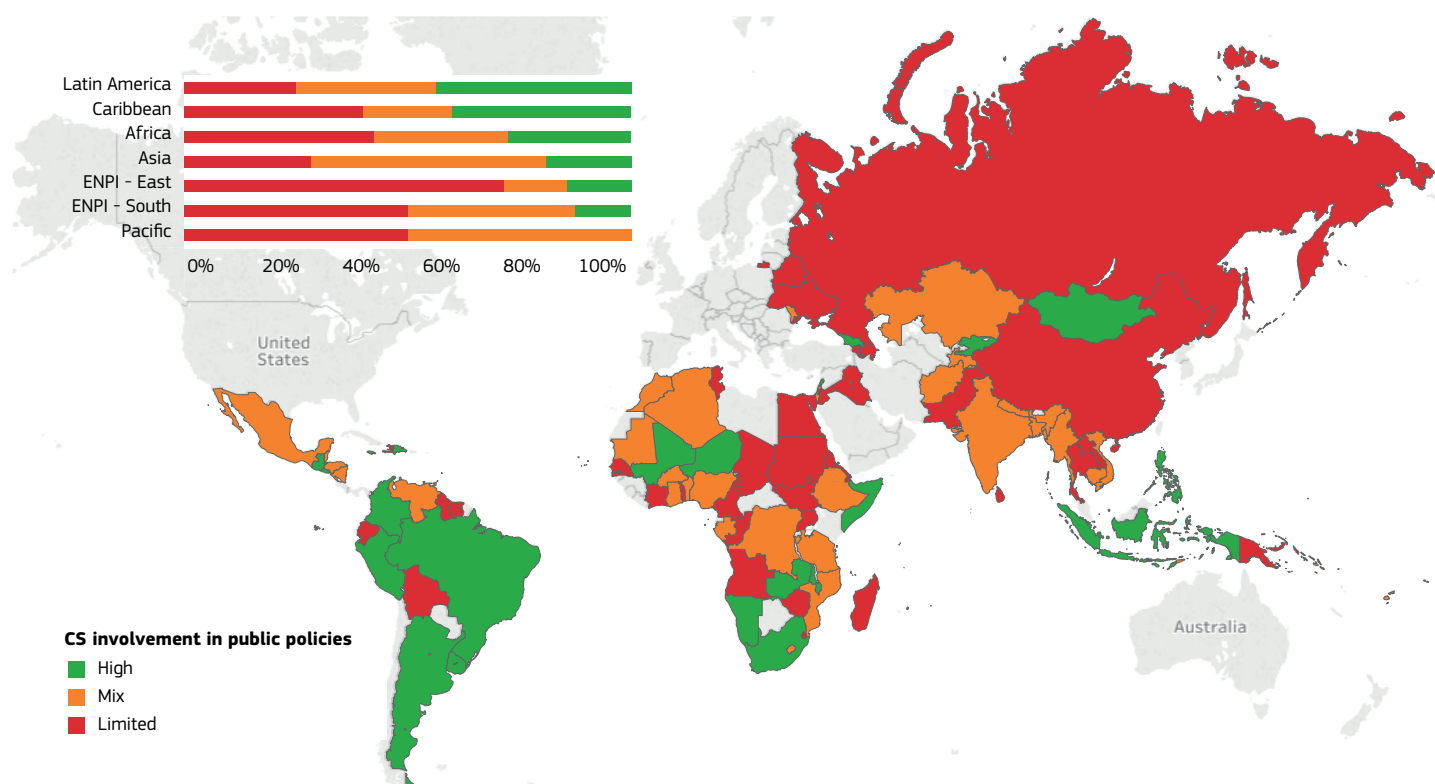
© ANP - AFP, Sergei Supinsky

In Ukraine, civil society involvement in policy-making is limited and ad hoc. Consulting committees are often “rather decorative” and consultations are tokenistic and restricted to very specific issues. The authorities often brush off civil society voices on key reform processes. CSOs’ and citizens’ capacity to influence policy-making remains weak. The RM emphasises the need to seize the opportunity of a relatively stable and open environment and support incipient CSO and citizen roles and capacities to influence political developments.

In Botswana, the RM is a timely process. It builds on past EU engagement with CSOs in Botswana and on the lessons learnt so far regarding the support of the enabling environment and inclusive policy making. Despite the recognition of their work in policy documents, CSOs are in reality rather unappreciated by the authorities and given relatively little space to contribute to public policy formulation. The RM therefore continues EU efforts to improve the legal and regulatory framework of CSOs, to improve dialogue between CSOs and the authorities on national priorities, and to enhance the financial sustainability of CSOs. This is imperative in a country where cooperation is being withdrawn.

How do EUDs rate the involvement of CSOs in domestic policies?

Not surprisingly, most countries with a restrictive environment for CSOs report little or no effective CSO engagement in domestic policy debates. There are also many countries, including Mexico, India, and Ukraine, where CSO engagement in policy debates is low despite a relatively open legislative and regulatory framework for civil society. In many African and Asian countries, CSOs find informal and pragmatic ways to engage even if the formal framework is more restrictive.



Source: Roadmap state of play spreadsheet, December 2016 (RMF)

REASON 5

Active support for the capacity development of civil society

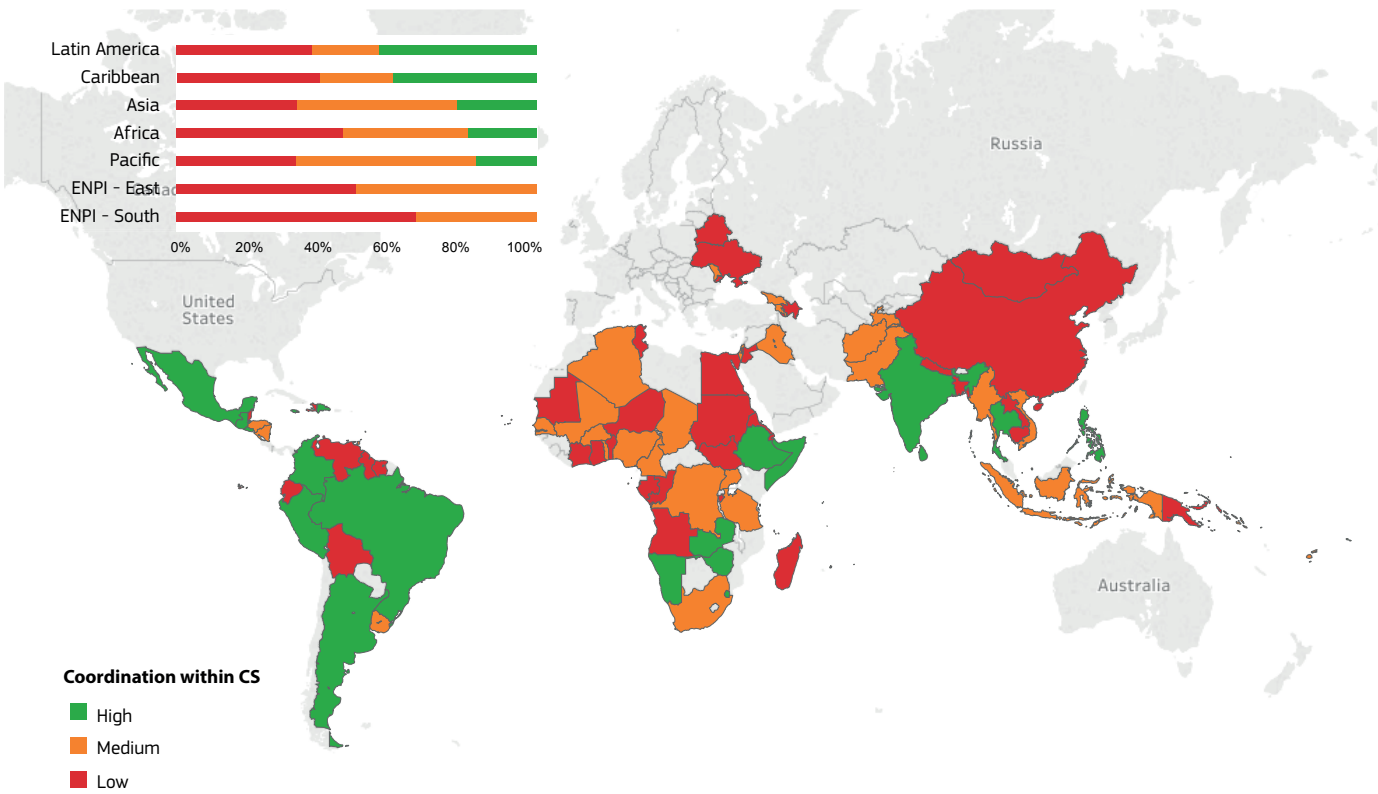
Most RMs have identified capacity constraints faced by local CSOs, ranging from limitations in management, skills, funding, or internal governance. RMs have allowed to identify priorities to support the capacity building and therefore strengthen the legitimacy, credibility, project delivery, evidence based advocacy and collaboration of CSOs.

Some RMs highlight the need for more capacity development efforts targeting formal and informal networking of civil society alliances and platforms. This can contribute to the

development of a structured civil society and a culture of ‘working together’ towards a common goal. They also underline the need for active support to bolster partnerships between local CSOs and like-minded INGOs, and to strengthen civil society’s internal governance systems or specific management and organisations capacities. In addition, RMs focus on the capacity of CSOs to link to the media, to reach out to new movements and to citizens in general, and to develop new mass mobilisation and social media strategies.

CS coordination and networking efforts

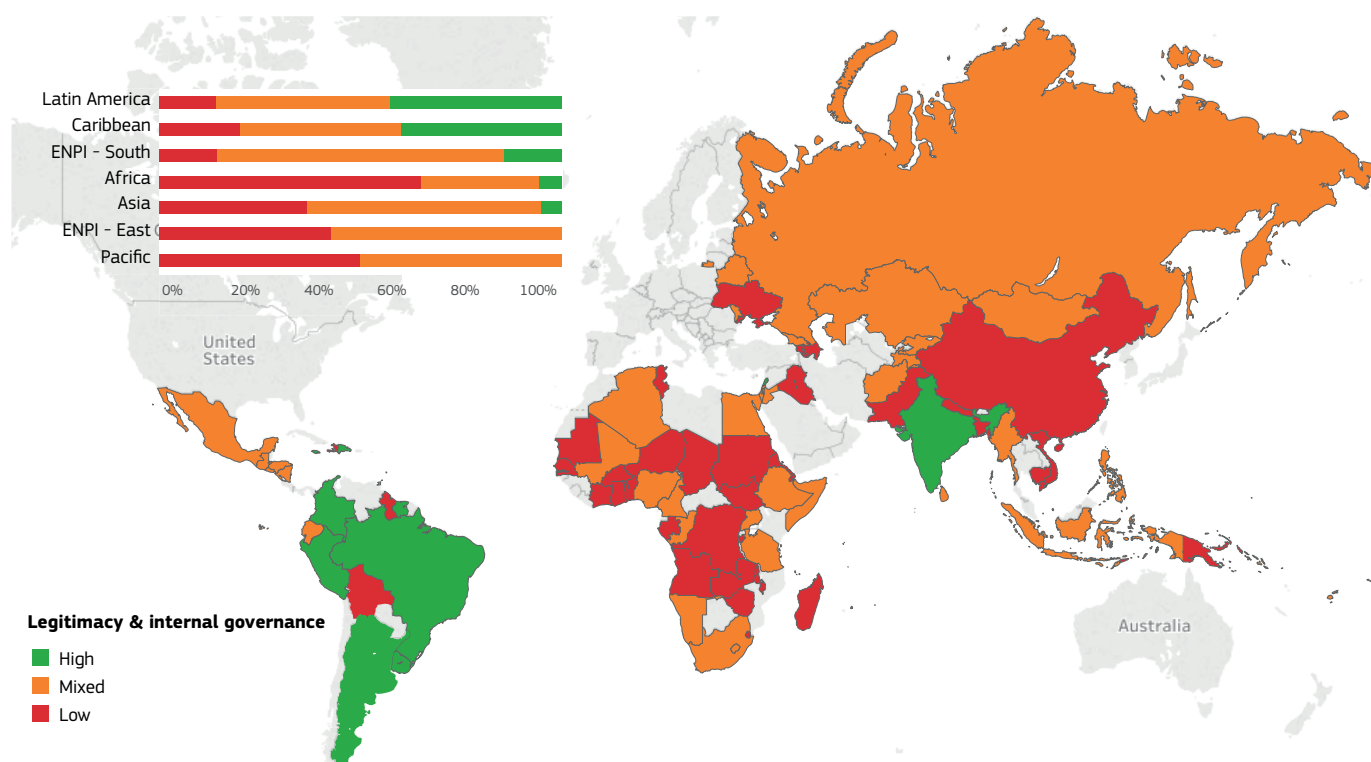
Outside Latin America and the Caribbean, EUDs report that the internal coordination of the CSO sector is limited or weak in most developing countries. In fact, there is less coordination in the Eastern and Southern ‘Neighbourhood’ countries than in some African and Asian countries. On a more positive note, in Ethiopia, Thailand, Mexico and India, EUD coordination within the CSO sector is relatively strong, even if CSOs find it relatively difficult to engage with the authorities and elected representatives.



Source: Roadmap state of play spreadsheet, December 2016 (RMF)

Internal governance of CSOs

The weakness of the CSO sector is also reflected in low levels of internal governance, lack of ‘constituency’ in society and low levels of public credibility. Indeed, outside Latin America, India stands out as the only country where the EUD reports a relatively high level of internal governance and public credibility of the CSO sector. The lack of other positive examples in Asia and Africa suggests that this is an area to which the EU and other donors will pay increasing attention in their future capacity development efforts.



Source: Roadmap state of play spreadsheet, December 2016 (RMF)

In Palestine, building on past work, the RM reaffirms EU support for civil society networking and coalition efforts in an increasingly fragmented and complex environment for Palestinian CSOs and citizens. The RM also acknowledges and applauds Palestinian efforts to promote an enabling environment. Furthermore, the process and document are also serving to shift attention to Palestinian CSOs (from INGOs) and helping them to be seen as “actors” rather than mere “service providers/project implementers”. Finally, the RM process promotes enhanced cooperation with MS which can be instrumental in the forthcoming joint programming exercise.

In Senegal, the RM aims to promote constructive relations between the state and civil society through support of the development and adoption of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regulating civic engagement. The involvement of CSOs in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies at sectoral and national level, particularly in the EU focal sectors of cooperation, is also seen as a priority. Furthermore, the RM invests in capacity development at three levels: (i) the Institutional and organisational capacity of CSOs; (ii) the capacity development of state representatives regarding their relationship with civil society and (iii) CSO advocacy capacities, including monitoring and evaluation of public policies, with specific attention to the capacity of opinion leaders.

REASON 6

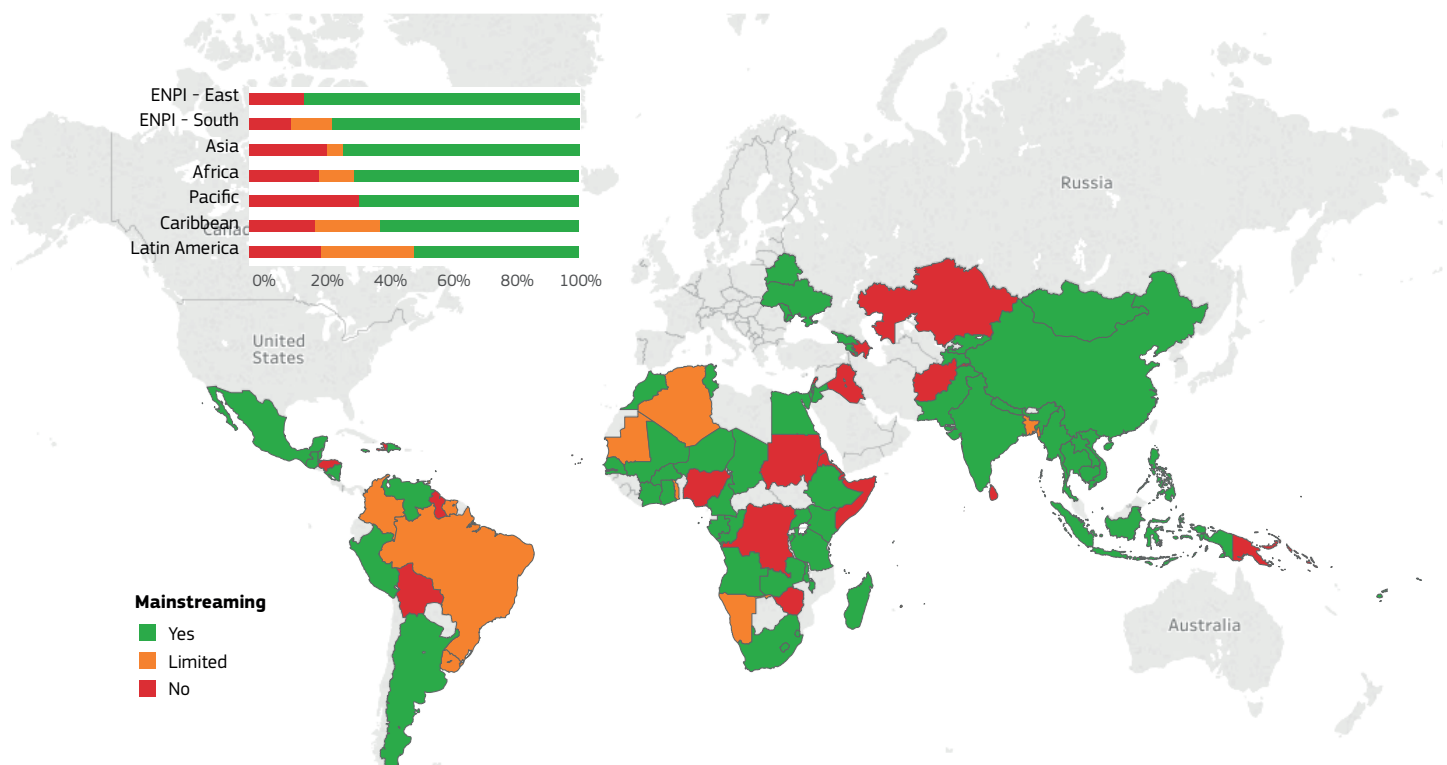
Reinforcing mainstreaming efforts of civil society into EU focal sectors of cooperation

RMs have proved to be instrumental in reinforcing efforts to mainstream civil society engagement in the EU focal sectors of development cooperation. They have built on the notion of CSOs as development actors in their own right, and on the acknowledgement of the importance of relying on

multi-stakeholder efforts (as duly stressed in the sustainable development agenda). Likewise, they help to increase civil society involvement in budget support schemes and programmes and they encourage closer cooperation between the political and operational sections within the EUDs.

CS support is being progressively integrated in the various aspects of EU work

EUDs have made considerable progress in integrating support to CSOs with the various sectors of development cooperation in each country. This is not just a 'technical' measure that affects only the efficiency and effectiveness of EU development cooperation. It also strengthens the platform for greater CSO engagement with domestic stakeholders. For this reason, it is particularly encouraging to see mainstreaming progress in many countries with little operating space for CSOs and/or low levels of CSO engagement in domestic policy debates.

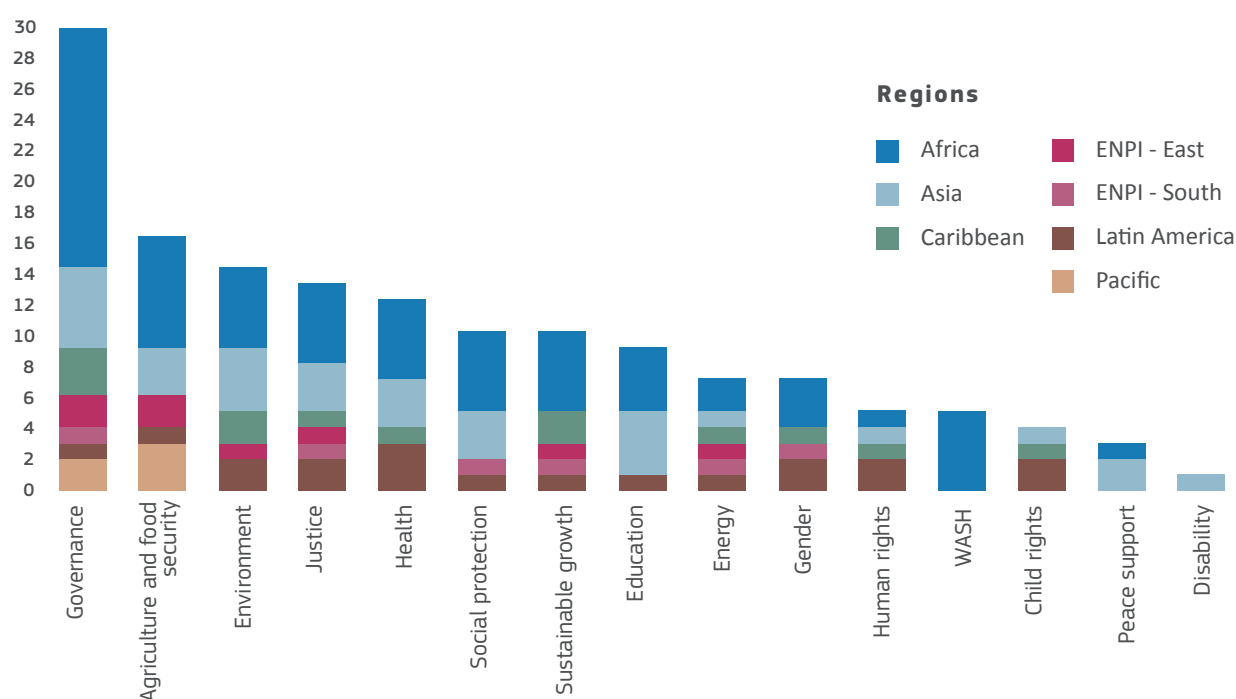


Source: Roadmap state of play spreadsheet, December 2016 (RMF)

*In **Ukraine**, the RM reaffirms EU willingness to support democratic reforms in the country through a greater role for civil society, closely linked to policy objectives, as specified in the Association Agreement. The RM builds on past EU engagement with CSOs, particularly concerning dialogue, and focuses support on some of the main issues at stake in a relatively open environment for CSOs. These are: (i) seizing the opportunity of a relatively stable and open environment and supporting incipient CSO and citizen roles and capacity to influence political developments; (ii) strengthening civil society's voice and agenda, as well as civil society legitimacy in representing the voices of the public, moving away from the "donor-driven" "NGO-cracy", that somehow prevails and (iii) connecting to new movements and citizens in general and developing new mass mobilisation and social media strategies.*

*The RM in **Timor-Leste** represents a breakthrough in the interactions between the EU and CSOs, as it acknowledges for the first time the paramount role of CSOs as development actors in their own right (beyond their traditional role as service providers) and proposes mainstreaming them in the two focal sectors of cooperation: (i) governance and (ii) rural development, food security and nutrition. The RM also fosters division of labour and coordination amongst the EU family and commits to ensuring regular dialogue with CSOs, making their voices heard in policy and political dialogue with the government of Timor-Leste.*

Almost two thirds of the EUDs assessed report an improvement in mainstreaming CSO support into their work on governance. Other sectors where a significant proportion of EUDs report progress on mainstreaming include agriculture, food security, environmental protection, and justice. Many EUDs regard their CSO support as central to their human rights agenda. Almost one third of EUDs report an improvement in mainstreaming CSO support into EUD work on one or more human rights themes. Fifteen percent of EUDs identify CSO support as mainstreamed into their support for gender equality, and 9% identify CSO support as mainstreamed into their children's rights work. Many conflict and post-conflict countries also report success in mainstreaming CSO support into their peace support work. There is some regional variation in the sectors and themes where mainstreaming is progressing most. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, and the 'Neighbourhood' countries, there has been more progress in mainstreaming CSO support into the various sectors of EU development co-operation, while in Latin America there has been more progress in mainstreaming CSO support into EUD human rights work.



Data on 104 countries, of which EUDs in 46 countries identified one or more specific themes of success in mainstreaming of CSO support.

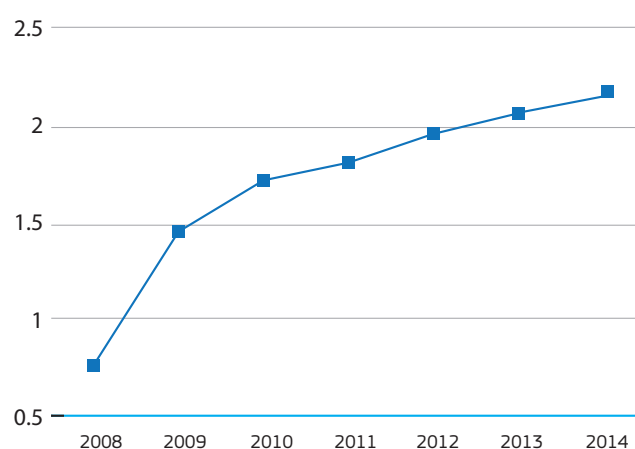
REASON 7

Innovation of funding modalities and overcoming the instrument-driven approach

EU support to CSOs has rocketed during the last decade and CSOs have become prominent beneficiaries of funding. In a number of countries the RM has contributed to ensuring a more strategic and long-term approach to development programmes including avoiding fragmentation in funding and integration of a whole new array of support modalities that go beyond project support based on Calls for Proposals.

This includes block grants, directly awarded programme funding to national platforms, etc. Furthermore, RMs help to ensure the strategic alignment of the different EU programmes and instruments, both bilateral and thematic, and make them the servants of the agreed vision and priorities, instead of the other way around. RMs hence serve to overcome the hitherto EU instrument-driven approach.

EU ODA going to CSOs



Source OECD/DAC figures in million dollars

*In **Moldova**, the RM builds on the track record of EU engagement with local CSOs, particularly regarding EU efforts to mainstream CSOs into the EU areas of cooperation with Moldova - i.e. budget support in the areas of public administration reform (PAR), trade and agriculture - and to use innovative funding modalities. The RM further bolsters the EU strategy to support CSOs in Moldova particularly by: (i) enhancing EU efforts to involve Moldovan CSOs in policy dialogue and (ii) developing modalities better suited to support Moldovan CSOs.*

*The RM in **Honduras** is the result of a joint effort between the EUD and MS in a highly participatory process (the first of its kind in a country where EU dialogue with CSOs was limited, and often limited to the Call for Proposals). The RM strategically aligns the different EU programmes and instruments, to support the agreed vision and priorities, revolving around reinforcement of the legal and institutional framework, protection for human rights defenders and participation of Civil Society actors in regional/international processes.*

Authors



Main authors: Beatriz Sanz Corella, Juan Nicolas Adan and Pamela van de Bunt (RMF core team)
Contributions from: Lluís Castellar, Gemma Piñol, Carlo Merla, Adam Novak and Susana El Kum Molina
Maria Tomankova: data expert and data visualization
Bill Pringle: proof-reader

All experts from the Roadmap Facility on behalf of
The European Commission's Directorate-General for International
Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO)
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