

CSO-LA thematic programme – consultation on the multi-year action programme for 2015

PLATFORMA Comments - DRAFT

PLATFORMA is the network representing local and regional governments (LRGs), and their associations, active in the field of development cooperation between Europe and partner countries. PLATFORMA has 24 members: national, European and international associations, as well individual local and regional governments (more information on www.platforma-dev.eu).

PLATFORMA has represented local and regional governments throughout the Structured dialogue process and has two seats in the Policy Forum, as the European platform representing LRGs in development policy.

Since its launch, in 2008, at the European Development Days in Strasbourg, PLATFORMA has actively engaged with the European institutions to inform and constructively participate in shaping the EU development policy with two main objectives; i. strengthening EU support to local governance in partner countries and, ii. strengthening EU support to decentralised cooperation as an implementation means of development cooperation.

Comments on the process of multi-year programming

- We welcome the initiative of the European Commission to start multi-year programming;
- Providing that country Delegations (for priority 1) and headquarter (for priority 3) inform all stakeholders on their programming and the timeframe to launch the Call for Proposals (CfP), it would enable longer term planning and predictability for beneficiaries;
- The European Commission should take the opportunity offered by to undertake consultations with LRGs and their associations, in Europe and in partner countries, on the guidelines for the Call for proposals, to ensure that they fit with beneficiaries' needs, but also with their constraints;
- We recommend that forecast of Calls, by year and by country, be made available as soon as the programming cycle is over.

Comments on annual action programmes 2015, 2016 and 2017

- The repartition of funds between CSOs and LRGs is fair, for the three priorities of the thematic programme, over the three years.
- Overall we are very glad to see that figures show increase support to local and regional governments in partner countries.
- We would welcome more information on the programming by regions.

Pooling of funding

- We understand the rationale behind this trend. We would like attract the Commission's attention on some possible undesired collateral effects; systematically setting higher minimum allocations for projects could be an impediment and a severe constraint for a substantial number of LRGs to enter the competition, as they don't all have the capacity to manage and co-finance multi-millions grants. In that regard the guidelines for the DEAR CfP launched in 2013 were quite restrictive.

Opening of the programme to other actors

- We remain concerned by the fact that the DCI opens the programme and funding possibility to others actors as it is reminded in this document.
- We don't see it as a positive evolution; the programme is actor based and we pledge for an empowerment of local and regional governments by their peers, through decentralised cooperation.
- We would like to see complete transparency with regards to this exceptional measure, in terms of beneficiaries and amounts granted.