

PREPARATORY DOCUMENT FOR THE ELABORATION OF THE THEMATIC PROGRAMME

'CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES'

2014-2020

DISCLAIMER

It must be underlined that DCI negotiations on the involvement of the co-legislators in programming are still on-going with the European Parliament and the Council; therefore this note and the attached documents may not prejudice their outcome, in particular concerning the specific objectives and priorities for each programme fixed in the Regulations themselves or in future delegated acts. The Commission has also proposed to hold a Strategic dialogue with the European Parliament by which the latter will be able to exert an ex ante political control of the objectives, priorities and allocations to be included in the Multiannual Indicative Programmes before they are adopted.

Background information

The new programme 'Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities' is the successor to the thematic programme Non State Actors and Local Authorities in Development (2007-2013) currently being implemented.

The new programme covers the period 2014-2020. Its objectives and expected results will be detailed in the so called Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP). This note presents a first proposal of priorities for the period 2014-2017. The legal basis of the new programme will be the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) Regulation. A proposal for the new DCI Regulation for 2014-2020 was adopted by the European Commission in December 2011. It stipulates that thematic programmes *should add value and be complementary to actions funded under the geographic programmes.*

The DCI negotiations on the involvement of the co-legislators in programming are still on-going with the European Parliament and the Council. The content of this document should be adapted to the outcome of such negotiations, in particular with regards to the objectives and priorities to be established in the final text of the DCI and, if agreed during the legislative negotiations, in the applicable delegated act and the subsequent strategic dialogue with the European Parliament.

Broader policy context

"Support to" and "participation of" CSOs and LAs in pursuit of internationally agreed goals and development effectiveness is acknowledged as a core EU policy orientation.

The *Agenda for Change* Communication (October 2011, Council Conclusions in May 2012)¹ sets out a more strategic EU approach to reducing poverty. It provides the policy direction for EU development cooperation by proposing a concentration of development cooperation around two main pillars: i) human rights, democracy and good governance; and ii) inclusive and sustainable growth for human development. Informed by the outcomes of the "Structured Dialogue on the involvement of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Local Authorities (LAs) in EU Development Cooperation"², the *Agenda for Change* recognises both actors as key players in its two pillars. It calls for

¹ The Agenda for Change (2011): [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0637:FIN:EN:PDF](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0637:FIN:EN:PDF;); Council Conclusions (2012): http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/130243.pdf

² The 'Structured Dialogue' (March 2010-May 2011) was a multi-actor process for consultation, reflection and stocktaking. At the end of the process participants (representatives of CSOs, LAs, the European Commission, Member States, the

strengthened "links with civil society organisations, social partners and local authorities, through regular dialogue and use of best practices" and "support the emergence of a local civil society which can effectively contribute to dialogue with public authorities and to oversee public authorities' work". It also highlights the value of multi-actor partnerships including public actors, civil society, the private sector and local communities.

The importance of Civil Society actions within accountability systems is also emphasised in the Communication on the *Future approach to EU budget support to third countries* (October 2011, Council Conclusions May 2012), proposing to facilitate CSO's oversight role and participation in budgetary processes, particularly in countries where the EU provides budget support.

The recent Communication '*The Roots of Democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with civil society in external relations*', adopted in September 2012 and endorsed by the Council of the European Union in October 2012, recommends an enhanced and more strategic EU engagement with CSOs in developing, enlargement and neighbourhood countries, with a particular focus on *local* civil society organisations. An empowered civil society is valued as a crucial component of any democratic system and as an asset in itself. Recognising the importance of constructive relations between states and CSOs, the Communication puts forward three priorities for the EU:

1. Enhance efforts to promote a *conducive environment* for CSOs in partner countries.
2. Promote meaningful and structured participation in programming and policy processes to build stronger *governance and accountability* at all levels.
3. Increase local CSOs' *capacity* to perform their roles as independent development actors more effectively.

It also outlines a new approach to support CSOs with regards to the promotion of inclusive and sustainable growth as well as in service delivery. As for the latter, it emphasises the need to build quality systems, sustainable over time, with clear division of labour between public authorities and other stakeholders to avoid duplication, parallel structures and overlap.

The Communication "*Empowering Local Authorities in partner countries for enhanced governance and more effective development outcomes*" adopted by the EC on the 15 May 2013 provides orientation on EU support to Local Authorities in partner countries, on the basis of the subsidiarity principle. As the part of the State structure closest to citizens, they hold special institutional responsibilities in enhancing good governance and sustainable development at local level, particularly in light of decentralisation processes. Focus will be on empowering LAs and LA associations at country, continental and international levels, to enable them to respond to citizens' demands and to redistribute more equitable socio-economic benefits at local level.

Furthermore, the 2012 *European Commission Staff Working Paper (SWP) on Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR)*³ takes stock of experiences and policies in the field in Europe. It values DEAR contributions to enhance European citizens' understanding, skills and critical engagement on development issues, human rights, social responsibility, gender equality, and global solidarity. DEAR is considered essential for an ambitious EU development policy and represents an integral part of EU development assistance.

This Thematic Programme represents an essential element to progressively support multi-actor approaches and inclusive partnerships for development aimed at poverty eradication and sustainable development, recognising the value of different stakeholders' contributions.

The ambition of this programme is to provide a coherent strategy benefitting both CSOs and LAs as partners and complementary players. Building on their different nature and specific functions, this programme will aim at systematically promote partnerships and synergies.

PAST OPERATIONS

European Parliament and EU Delegations) agreed on a Final Statement. For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/who/partners/civil-society/structured-dialogue_en.htm

³ Informed by the Structured Dialogue DEAR support Initiative and related studies:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/index.php/DEAR: Development education and awareness raising>

The predecessor of this programme - the "Non-State Actors (NSAs)⁴ and Local Authorities in Development (2007- 2013)" Thematic Programme currently implemented at country, regional and global levels has been a key instrument to channel EU support to Civil Society and Local Authorities, particularly in partner countries. It has integrated important innovations, including opening up the eligibility criteria to allow access of partner countries' organisations to funding (before 2007 only European organisations were eligible). Other key channels for support to CSOs and LAs have been the geographical instruments (bilateral and regional programmes) as well as other instruments and thematic programmes (the EIDHR, the IFS, other thematic programmes under the DCI, the Civil Society Facility for the ENP Region).

LESSONS LEARNT

This programme will incorporate lessons and best practices from the implementation of various support schemes, and evaluations and assessments⁵ on CSOs and LAs involvement in EC development cooperation (for instance the above-mentioned Structured Dialogue), as follows:

- *Go beyond the traditional model of CSOs as pure service deliverers to acknowledge CSOs work to empower populations, promote inclusion and enhance governance and accountability – beyond project implementation and service delivery.*
- *Frame support to service delivery to build sustainable systems avoiding the creation of parallel structures, hampering or overlapping with public services, according to country contexts. Multi-stakeholder partnerships and innovative schemes of collaboration between public authorities, including LAs, and non-state providers can bring added value in terms of impact and sustainability as well as effectiveness.*
- *Along the same line, avoid fragmentation and duplication through coordination and dialogue.*
- *Better define the scope of support programmes in order to be more strategic and improve impact of actions.*

The findings of the final evaluation of the programme NSA-LA 2007-2013, (ongoing) will further feed the formulation and implementation of new programme. This evaluation will assess the overall performance and impact of funded interventions and the programme as a whole. It will identify key lessons learnt from the programming, management and support delivered under the programme.

MAIN CHALLENGES FACED BY CSOs and LAs

The TP will address a number of key challenges briefly outlined as follows. Despite the increasing recognition of CSOs and LAs as partners in development, they still face significant constraints, hampering their capacity to effectively contribute to development, governance and poverty reduction. First and foremost, CSOs and LAs' ability to contribute to development depends on the context in which they operate (their 'enabling environment'). Both need a set of guarantees that ensure rights and opportunities to operate, act and perform. The absence of enabling conditions often constrains their ability to address and respond to development challenges.

Overall, capacity constraints can be considered a major transversal challenge faced by CSOs and LAs, affecting their capacity to operate effectively in their various areas of work. This is particularly true in the realm of governance processes (notably in policy dialogue). Inclusive policy-making processes are complex and often delicate exercises, new to many countries. They require first and foremost political will and leadership, adequately structured mechanisms, spaces for interactions and operating rules, specific skills and analytical

⁴ In this context, the terms NSA and CSOs may be considered equivalent.

⁵ See: European Court of Auditors (2009), Special report no. 4 'The Commission's management of Non State Actors' Involvement in EC development cooperation'. URL: <http://eca.europa.eu/portal/pls/portal/docs/1/8038812.PDF>. Particip (2008) 'Evaluation of EC Aid Delivery through CSOs: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/evaluation_reports/2008/1259_docs_en.htm. Floridi, M. and Sanz-Corella, B. (2009) 'Capitalisation Study on Capacity Building Support Programmes for NSAs under the 9th EDF' http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/civilsociety/documents/final_rep_capit_study_en.pdf David McCormick, Yves Rambaud, Paola Minoia (2009) 'NSA&LA thematic programme Mid-Term Review'. URL: <http://ec.europa.eu/development/how/consultation/index.cfm?action=viewcons&id=4886>.

capacities and competences, both on the side of CSOs and public authorities. In absence of the above, the impact of CSOs' and LAs' participation to policy dialogue would be very limited.

Both actors face challenges in relation to their own governance and accountability, which can substantially hamper their effectiveness . CSOs and LAs are in some cases unable to significantly influence policies and budgets, they may face problems in ensuring their responsiveness to populations' priorities.. Necessary information is not always available and when it is, they may lack the capacity to analyse it, to provide evidence-based input and to negotiate. These constraints apply at the country level, but also in regional and global policy fora.

In broader settings-, CSOs and LAs networks are increasingly contributing to regional and global dialogues and arenas. In doing so, they face a number of challenges, including difficulties in linking (with) country level work and in ensuring effective and real representation of their local members with a view to bring their views and experiences up to regional and global debates.

MAIN PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE THEMATIC PROGRAMME CSOs - LAS (2014-2020)

The objectives of this programme, within the framework of the (Draft) DCI overall objective of poverty alleviation, will be to improve governance and accountability through inclusive policy-making by empowering citizens and populations through the voicing and structuring of their collective demands to contribute to tackle injustice and inequality. The Programme will also seek to contribute to enhance livelihood opportunities for populations to participate in and benefit from a just, inclusive and (environmentally) sustainable in the long term economic growth.

This Programme will support actions aimed at **enabling CSOs and LAs to respond to populations needs and to participate in inclusive policy-making at different levels**. It will focus on the reinforcement of CSOs and LAs as actors at the service of citizens and population at large.

Whilst respecting actors' specificities and diversity, this programme seeks to promote their coordination, actions' coherence and synergies. In fact, focus will be on the promotion of innovative forms of interactions between CSOs and LAs in the local public policy making processes aiming at the coproduction of development and governance outcomes.

The Programme will support actions initiated and directly implemented by CSOs and LAs. It will also support actions implemented by other actors which aim is to strengthen CSOs' and LAs' in relation to the overall programme objectives.

Three priorities are pursued:

1. Focus on country level: enhancing CSOs' and LAs' contributions to governance and development processes.

Support will be provided to:

I. Enhance CSOs' contributions to governance and development processes as:

- a. actors in governance and accountability;
- b. partners in fostering social development
- c. key stakeholders in promoting inclusive and sustainable growth.

II. Enhance LAs' contributions to governance and development processes as:

- a. actors of local governance and creators of local public space;
- b. providers of public services, including social services, and promoters of inclusive and sustainable growth at local level.

III. Test pilot actions promoting local development through a territorial, multi-stakeholder approach.

2. Reinforcing regional and global CSO and LA networks.

3. Develop and support Education and Awareness Raising initiatives fostering citizens' awareness of and mobilization for development issues.

COVERAGE: The Programme will support actors originating from all developing countries including in countries that will not benefit any longer from bilateral EU development assistance (the so-called 'graduated countries'). In countries benefitting from bilateral cooperation, actions may be supported both within and outside of the sectors of cooperation where assistance from the geographical programmes will be concentrated. To ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of overall assistance, this programme should complement actions funded by EU geographic programmes (on bilateral and regional funds). The programme will act in complementarity with other programmes and instruments benefitting Civil Society and/or Local Authorities, namely the European Instruments for Democracy and Human Rights, the thematic programme on Global Public Goods and Challenges, the Instrument for Stability, the Partnership Instrument, the European Neighbourhood Instrument, the Pan African Programme and projects supported by the regional or bilateral cooperation.

Focus on country level: enhancing CSOs' and LAs' contributions to governance and development processes.

The programme will pay special attention to:

- *Address capacity gaps* through a demand-driven and flexible approach covering different needs.
- *Support reinforcement and structuring* of CSOs and LAs into sector/thematic, national, transnational networks and alliances.
- *Support multi-stakeholder approaches and testing of innovative partnerships* that facilitate optimal synergies and utilisation of different stakeholders' experience and capacities
- *Foster effective coordination*, particularly at country level, to avoid duplication, fragmentation and ineffectiveness of actions, especially when it comes to the delivery of services to populations.
- *Support genuine and equitable partnerships* between European and partner countries actors.

Attention will be paid to the promotion of a *conducive environment* for CSOs and LAs to operate in their respective roles and areas of engagement. Where conditions are appropriate, and in complementarity with other instruments and programmes, this Programme may contribute to addressing gaps, improve the understanding, capacity and skills, and monitoring of progress in the various components of an enabling environment for CSOs and LAs including the legal, regulatory and operational dimensions.

The empowerment of local actors is at the heart of the programme. Actions by local CSOs will be given special focus, with efforts to facilitate access to funding and investing in capacity development. Nevertheless, support to European CSOs and LAs may be provided, individually or in networks, where their experience adds value, upon condition that their action respond to a local demand and to locally identified needs and include support to local partners (e.g. through mentoring, peer support, joint advocacy, and direct financial support).

Considering the diversity of civil society actors, differentiation of support to NGOs, social partners, cooperatives, chambers of commerce, foundations, community based or grassroots organisations, etc. is particularly encouraged, as well as supporting their structuring.

EU roadmaps for engagement with CSOs

Interventions of this programme with regard to CSOs will be progressively integrated in EU country Roadmaps for engagement with CSOs. As envisaged in the Communication 'the Roots of democracy and sustainable development'(COM(2012) 492) and related Council Conclusions, the EU and the Member States should develop country roadmaps to activate and ensure structured dialogue and strategic cooperation, improve the impact, predictability and visibility of EU actions, and 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 for simplification and harmonisation of funding requirements. EU Delegations should coordinate the process locally.

Within each strategic objective, specific objectives are identified below.

1.1.a: CSOs in governance and accountability.

Reinforcing governance and domestic accountability is essential to improve development results. The voice and actions of CSOs as monitors, advocates, partners in national and local policy dialogue and providers of information and expertise (e.g. through think tanks and research institutes) can foster transparency, public knowledge and participation. CSOs can thus play a decisive role in improving the quality and effectiveness of public policies and promoting fair management of public resources. Together with institutional bodies such as parliaments and supreme audit institutions, CSOs can contribute to ensure that public resources are used effectively and efficiently and budgets are reflective of people's needs and priorities.

The programme will seek to support CSOs to hold public authorities to account at all levels, with a view to ultimately empower citizens. Focus will be on building-up the necessary expertise and capacity of CSOs to engage with public authorities over the long term, including on highly technical themes such as budgetary issues.

Particular consideration will be given to CSOs' capacity to positively contribute to improved transparency and accountability in the framework of the different EU budget support schemes.

The programme will support initiatives promoting improved governance and accountability at country level and with public authorities, such as independent budget analysis, expenditure tracking, monitoring the implementation of policies and laws, anti-corruption initiatives, integrity pacts, participatory budgeting, participatory audits, procurement monitoring and public access to information legislation. Special attention will be paid to capacity building, research and knowledge dissemination, networking and structuring of networks, and mentoring opportunities for CSOs.

National CSO platforms can play an important role in this regard having more potential to impact on policy work, favouring a broader representation of interests and positions and potentially benefitting from a large variety of skills, expertise and capacities.

1.1.b: CSO actions to enhance social development

The programme will seek to support CSO actions to enhance social development by improving populations' access to (and benefit from) social services.

In the sphere of social sectors (health, education, sanitation, social protection, etc.) it is particularly important to build synergies and complementarity with actions led by public authorities as the organisation of social services provision is primarily a state responsibility (at the central or sub-national level).

As a general rule, the implementation of this component of the programme will require strong coordination between CSOs and public authorities to prevent duplication, overlap and parallel systems, as well as ineffective and unsustainable interventions. All initiatives carried forward by CSOs should take place in an "institution – building" logic, particularly when public institutions are weak and/or under-resourced. It is encouraged that supported initiatives include community mobilization and capacity development, in order to enable the targeted population to acquire increased understanding and ability to influence the underlying causes of the challenges they face in accessing services. The aim is to favour and stimulate a demand for social services by population to which public authorities should, in the long run, be able to respond, reinforcing their 'downward accountability' towards their citizens.

The programme will support CSO actions aimed at improving population access to (and benefit from) quality social services, notably in:

- *testing innovations and improving responsiveness of social policies to populations' needs*, through advocacy and participation to policy dialogue in social sectors. To this end, support will be provided to advocacy campaigns, capacity building, research and knowledge dissemination, networking and structuring of networks, and mentoring opportunities for CSOs, etc.

- *contributing to the improvement of service quality* by contributing to policy work, stimulating informed demand and social accountability initiatives, including using Information and Communication Technologies.
- *improving capacities to participate in multi-actor partnerships*, within sound organisational arrangements agreed with public authorities (including outsourcing schemes where public authorities share selected functions and tasks with CSOs and the private sector, etc.)
- *reinforcing social service provision* where public authorities have limited the capacity or the resources to effectively deliver services to populations with no or limited access to social services, including disenfranchised and marginalized groups. This will be supported in Least Developed or Low Income Countries, fragile states and in crisis situations. In Middle Income Countries, only in duly justified cases, direct service provision by CSOs could be supported to ensure that disenfranchised populations and out of mainstream segments of society can benefit from social services.

While supporting the above actions, particular attention should be devoted to ensuring that initiatives funded by this Programme do add value and complement support provided with bilateral, thematic and regional actions in the same sectors.

1.1.c: CSOs contribution in promoting inclusive and sustainable growth.

This programme component will aim at improving the livelihoods of populations in need, particularly vulnerable groups, through CSO initiatives. Different CSOs, notably cooperatives, farmers' associations, chambers of commerce, NGOs, social partners including the trade unions, environmental organisations etc., each have a role to play in the economic realm, as they engage at various levels in (often innovative) social economy initiatives, combining beneficiaries' economic empowerment with ambitions of social development and/or long term sustainability.

The programme will support CSO actions aimed at promoting advancement in the following areas:

Inclusiveness: Inclusive growth is characterised by people's ability to participate in, and benefit from, wealth and job creation. This requires creation of decent work and income-generation opportunities in the productive and income-generating sectors, particularly for the vulnerable (e.g. in agriculture and rural development). The level of inclusiveness thus depends on the distribution of income, employment opportunities, but also on gender roles and other factors.

Sustainability: Development is not sustainable if it damages the environment, biodiversity and natural resources and increases the exposure or vulnerability to natural disasters. Growth can only be sustainable in the long term when it does not harm the environment over time and avoids depletion of natural resources. Promotion of greener economies, sustainable and inclusive urban policies, sustainable management of and access to natural resources (including land management) are therefore of pivotal importance.

The programme may support CSO actions aimed at promoting inclusive and sustainable growth such as:

- *Stimulating policy innovation and improving responsiveness of economic policies to populations' needs*, through advocacy and participation to policy dialogue in relevant sectors. To this end, support will be provided to advocacy campaigns, capacity building, research and knowledge dissemination, networking and structuring of networks, and mentoring opportunities for CSOs, etc.
- *Improving capacities to participate in multi-actor partnerships* with the private sector and public authorities. To this end, support will be provided to capacity building, research and knowledge dissemination, advocacy, networking and structuring of networks, and mentoring opportunities for CSOs, etc.
- *Supporting social-economic initiatives* aimed at wealth and job creation, targeting populations with limited opportunities for economic empowerment.
- *Reinforcing service provision* for productive activities and access to productive resources (e.g. , business support, market access, opportunities for integration of the informal economy, micro credit) to populations with limited access to such means to enhance their livelihoods.

- *Contributing to the improvement of business practices and economic services' quality* highlighting governance and corporate social responsibility by stimulating informed demand and structuring feedback mechanisms, notably using Information and Communication Technologies.

In all cases it is encouraged that supported initiatives include capacity development and community mobilization, in order to enable the targeted population to acquire increased understanding and ability to address the challenges they face in improving their livelihoods.

Strategic objective 1.2: Enhance LAs' contributions to governance and development processes.

Top-down approaches have revealed their limitations in fostering sustainable and equitable development for the benefit of entire populations and territories, highlighting the need to enhance LAs' contribution to development processes. Depending on country context, LAs are representative political bodies and have a legally defined mandate to ensure the delivery of public services and promote economic activity. In this context, national governments are also increasingly taking into account local knowledge and inputs when defining public policies (through locally-based deliberative processes), and entrusting the implementation of those policies to locally-based actors, particularly where decentralisation processes are being launched. As public institutions, LAs have a special responsibility in ensuring that development benefits all people in their localities, both by ensuring more efficient, equitable and accountable delivery of basic services and by contributing to building democratic institutions. LAs also have an important role to play in promoting and coordinating the overall development of the territory for which they are responsible, with the participation of all other relevant local actors.

1.2.1: LAs as actors of local governance and creator of public space at local level

A variety of positive outcomes are often associated with the concept of 'local governance', such as efficient service delivery, legitimacy, transparency and accountability of local authorities, security and participation of citizens in local decision-making.

Devolution of responsibilities and resources to LAs is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition. Greater attention should be given to local government capacity development. Of particular importance are the systemic factors, beyond the legal and regulatory ones, related to the structure of the local-central relations.

As decentralisation is introduced, LAs and communities become more enmeshed in a wider system of intergovernmental relations. Decentralisation involve the transfer of a range of powers (decision making, revenue-raising, etc.), responsibilities (service delivery) and resources (financial, human, and administrative) from higher levels in political systems (central governments) to authorities at lower level, in the context of wider public sector reforms. They may empower LAs and put them into a broader, more critical and proactive developmental role.

Decentralisation has the objective of improving the delivery of public services and to increase participation of citizens in policy-making processes. In fact local level governance is particularly important as this is where implementation of policies and budgets is directly verifiable by local populations. LAs are thus a particularly important entry point for participation in policy processes.

The Programme will support actions aimed at strengthening the accountability of LAs, including their self-governing capacity and their accountability as public institutions, both towards their own citizens and towards other levels of government including elected bodies (national parliament and local councils) and local or national independent audit bodies. In particular, it will support actions promoting effective budget implementation, tracking of public revenues and expenditures and budget literacy, accessibility of budgetary information and decision-making processes to citizens (including via participatory budgeting).

In particular, the Programme will support LAs' capacity to link budgets to populations' priorities and to ensure resources that are used efficiently to the benefit of local populations.

Attention will be given to support the build-up of the necessary expertise and capacity of LAs to engage with national authorities, including on highly technical issues, in policy work, negotiation and coordination, in line with their specific competences.

In countries where decentralisation reforms are underway, the programme may support the process of defining and establishing new LA's mandates for decision-making, delivering public services or raising revenues at local level.

The programme may also support the structuring of national association of LAs (ALAs), and networking, mentoring and twinning among LAs and Associations of LAs at country level, as well as with LAs and ALAs from partner countries⁶ and from Europe. Capacity building and transfer of relevant expertise by European LAs and ALAs may have an important multiplier effect. Decentralised cooperation by EU LAs offers an opportunity to strengthen specific capacities and skills of LAs in bringing various resources (management, tools, technical expertise, equipment, etc.) as well as financial assistance.

1.2.b: Strengthening the capacity of LAs to effectively deliver public services, including social services, and to promote inclusive and sustainable growth at local level.

In many countries LAs have the legal mandate to provide services to their citizens. However, they often lack the capacity to effectively provide quality public services, including basic social services, and to promote inclusive and sustainable growth. Depending on a country's institutional framework and its level of decentralisation, LAs can be of pivotal importance to ensuring access to quality basic services, particularly for marginalized groups. They may provide services directly or mobilise relevant stakeholders to ensure provision. This may include the promotion of public-private and public-civil society partnerships for service delivery.

LAs have also a role to play to encourage more inclusive growth. They may take appropriate measures, in the framework of their competences, to stimulate the local economy, reinforce its links to the national market, or promote entrepreneurship (e.g. by counselling and orientation). They may also mobilise different actors for joint efforts for inclusive and sustainable growth.

This Programme will support actions to strengthen the capacity of LAs to effectively implement laws and policies under their mandate and to ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to them to play their mandated functions. A better articulation between national and local policy-making processes will also be promoted, in order to enhance the contribution of LAs (including ALAs) to the design of national/sectoral policies and plans by national governments or to the negotiation of priorities for cooperation with Development Partners.

The Programme will also support actions to strengthen the capacity of ALAs at country level to provide advice and exchange of experience to their members in this respect and to contribute to policy dialogue.

The programme may also promote capitalisation on the expertise acquired by European LAs in delivering services and goods and in promoting growth at local level, through a peer-to-peer approach and by exchange of experiences with LAs and ALAs of partner countries, upon the initiative of the latter. This may cover various areas of legal competence (economic development, health and social sectors, land and civil registries, climate change adaptation, urbanisation management etc.).

Supported initiatives under this specific objective should include capacity development and community mobilization, in order to enable local citizens to acquire increased understanding and ability to influence the work of the LAs to deliver services or promote local development.

Strategic objective 1.3: a territorial approach to promote local development and social cohesion

The territorial approach to development may be defined as a dynamic bottom-up and long-term process tailored to territorial specific characteristics and results, including the local declination of MDGs, to meet good governance and sustainable and inclusive growth at local level. Cooperation between decision-makers and other stakeholders, one of the prerequisites of sustainable development, may be easier to facilitate at the level of a given territory.

LAs together with local multi-actor partnerships participate in this process by defining strategies integrating sector policies to respond to territorial development challenges requiring structural changes, in coordination with the central public sector and in line with national development objectives.

⁶ Eligible countries pursuant to Article 1(1)(b) and Article 8 of the draft DCI

In line with the *Agenda for Change's* focus on inclusive and sustainable growth for human development, this strategic objective will seek to enhance territorial approaches to development, including multi-actor local development processes, with the participation of LAs, CSOs and other relevant local actors.

1.3.a: Testing pilot actions promoting local development through a territorial approach.

The Programme will thus pilot multi-actors local development processes with a view to stimulate and promote concertation and coordination of various social and economic stakeholders in a particular geographical area, including LAs, CSOs, the private sector and others stakeholders, to formulate and implement development policies and strategies in a given territory.

The aim will be to bring together different decision-makers, local institutions and other actors in order to jointly define development priorities and strategies and to implement them more effectively. The Programme will also promote, where relevant, the involvement of national public authorities in the definition of local development priorities facilitating where needed the adaptation of national policies to local needs. This approach may integrate national sectoral policies at various territorial levels (counties, districts, provinces, regions, etc.).

The Programme will also support local plans for the sustainable management of rural areas, which should consider economic and social links between urban centres and rural communities, with a view to reduce disparities amongst the different parts of the territory in question.

The Programme will also support initiatives aimed at fostering social cohesion, i.e. the bonds that bring and hold people together in a given society. Social cohesion is the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members⁷, but it is not only a matter of combating social exclusion, polarisation and poverty. It is also about fostering solidarity, understanding, trust, tolerance and dialogue between and among different segments of the population.

Specifically, the programme will support initiatives aimed at improving the integration and participation in society of, for example, youth and the elderly, and promoting solidarity among generations. Support may also be provided to actions supporting the integration of ethnic minorities and migrants, particularly in countries where multiculturalism is perceived as a threat to traditional identities, and people with disabilities, whose specific needs must be addressed to be fully integrated in social life. The overall aim of these activities would be to manage diversity so that it becomes a source of mutual enrichment rather than a factor of division and conflict. All the initiatives should have a gender perspective integrated.

The design of programme-supported pilot actions will build upon existing successful experiences both in the EU and in partner countries.

Priority 2: Reinforcing regional and global CSO and LA networks

The last decades have seen a substantial increase of regional, international and global networks and platforms of CSOs and also of LAs. They increasingly contribute to the formulation and monitoring of policies and agreements in a variety of areas of the international agenda on issues as diverse as health, trade, human rights, migration, global justice, climate change aid effectiveness. Facilitated by the rapid evolution of information and communication technology and mirroring emerging transnational governance structures, different actors around the world are extending their contacts across national borders. They are playing a pivotal role in linking local concerns and priorities, often caused by global challenges such as climate change, to regional and global debates, including at EU level.

⁷Definition from the "Strategy for social cohesion", Council of Europe (2004): http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/socialpolicies/socialcohesiondev/source/RevisedStrategy_en.pdf

With a view to enhance CSOs' and LAs' contributions to policy development and thinking, including with regard to the (Post-) MDG framework, this priority intends to strengthen transnational alliances as well as initiatives for dialogue, exchange, networking and dissemination of good practices. The programme will particularly consider the role of CSO and LA networks in relation to policy debates at the European level, promoting structured dialogues between CSO and LA networks and among them, the EU and other institutions and where needed linking to the Policy Coherence for Development agenda.

Strategic objective 2.1: Reinforcing regional and global CSO and LA networks notably to dialogue on development issues

The Programme aims at strengthening transnational, regional and global civil society and Local Authorities networks, platforms and alliances notably to enhance their effective contributions to international dialogues on development issues. These dialogues may mirror and take place in existing or future fora and global governance structures. Special attention will be paid to dialogues at the European level.

The Programme will focus on the capacity of European and partner countries⁸ CSOs and LAs networks and platforms, to effectively contribute to policy dialogues on development related issues at regional, including EU, and global levels. Focus will be on i) strengthening their representativeness and capacities to effectively link local realities to regional and global debates and ii) supporting their networking initiatives, which will allow them, to join forces and act as strategic partners for key policy makers.

The Programme will also seek to strengthen European CSO and LA networks, including their capacity to build transnational alliances, to coordinate and collaborate, and to actively contribute to EU development policy processes. European CSOs and LAs indeed play an important role in promoting networking and coordination at different levels and in linking their local partners to global networks and ultimately to global policy debates.

Priority 3:

Development Education and Awareness Raising initiatives fostering citizens' awareness of and mobilization for development issues

DEAR activities aim at developing citizens' awareness and critical understanding of the interdependent world, of their role and responsibility in relation to a globalised society; and to support their active engagement with global attempts to eradicate poverty and promote justice, human rights and democracy, social responsibility, gender equality, and a sustainable social-economic development in partner countries.

As an integral component of this Programme, the EU DEAR strategy will aim to support initiatives promoted by different types of international, national and local public institutions, academia, research centres, non for profit media and civil society organisations.

The Programme will enhance citizens' advocacy role towards authorities at local, national, European and international levels, allowing citizens to participate in and respond to the public discourse, and to hold public authorities more accountable for their development cooperation policies, including issues linked with Policy Coherence for Development (PCD).

In an increasingly globalised world, the concept of shared responsibility and awareness is no longer limited to Europe. Although the programme is primarily concerned with development, awareness-raising of European citizens in the European Union, as well as acceding and candidate countries, opening up DEAR activities beyond Europe is considered a promising and enriching field of intervention, through the introduction of non-European perspectives. The programme will encourage exchange, networking and collaboration between DEAR actors in the EU, acceding and candidate countries on the one hand, and development actors in middle-income and developing countries, on the other. It will therefore also promote and support development education and awareness-raising initiatives which foster a sense of global solidarity between citizens from the EU and from developing and middle income countries, and which seek to develop a common sense of global responsibility for development.

⁸ As defined in Article 1(1)(b) and Article 8 of the draft DCI

Guiding principles will be to ensure added value and complementarity with Member States DEAR policies and programmes by supporting primarily initiatives with a clear pan-European dimension; and to link supported initiatives with the main issues debated at European and international levels (post MDGs, SDGs...) and identify an evolving but limited number of priority sectors.

Dissemination of experiences is particularly important in the area of DEAR, therefore the programme will support capitalisation and exchange of best practices made available for capacity building of other stakeholders in the field. It will also support capacity building and networking among Member States, DEAR Stakeholders and the EU.

In this perspective two strategic objectives will be pursued.

Strategic objective 3.1: Raise public awareness and mobilise the public regarding development issues on a European scale

Awareness-raising shall stimulate the public understanding of, and empathy with, a development issue from the perspective of communities with which the European public may not be familiar. Enhanced understanding should then lead to strengthened support for development and stronger mobilisation of public support for actions against poverty and for more equitable relations between developed and developing countries. Positive developments, such as advocacy for policy change, or changes in consumption behaviours may be triggered as a result.

In order to improve the impact of actions, a selection of global development issues will be made. The programme will then support initiatives promoted by stakeholders and focusing on non-profit media information and advocacy campaigns, including through social media, targeted advocacy projects raising citizen awareness on e.g. specific development, human rights and democracy, social justice, gender issues including policy coherence for development, etc.

Strategic objective 3.2: Promote development education.

Development Education shall contribute to making "development" an issue systematically addressed in educational systems, for instance through its inclusion in the curricula, through trainings to teachers or working directly in formal or non-formal education sectors. Attention will be given to the development of tools and indicators intended to measure the impact of development education and awareness-raising programmes.

<p><i>What is meant by CSOs</i></p> <p>The EU considers CSOs to include all non-state, not-for-profit structures, non-partisan and non-violent, through which people organise to pursue shared objectives and ideals, whether political, cultural, social or economic. They encompass a wide range of actors with different roles and mandates, e.g. community based organisations, non-governmental organisations, trade unions, cooperatives, professional or business associations, not-for-profit media, philanthropic organisations, etc.</p>	<p><i>What is meant by LA</i></p> <p>The term LA is used in its widest sense referring to directly or indirectly elected public governing bodies at sub-national level possessing, within a given territory, a degree of autonomy from the central government as defined by law, and a set of competences to promote governance and development outcomes (effective service delivery, local economic development). LAs encompass a variety of public governing bodies at various levels i.e. municipalities, communities, districts, counties, provinces, regions etc. Within this Programme emphasis is given to the municipal level, the lowest government tier of public institutions closer to citizens.</p>
<p>CSO roles</p> <p>CSOs can advocate for change, mobilise communities and vulnerable groups, activate participation in policy processes and reinforce accountability systems, or complement actions of the state in delivering services to the populations. CSOs voice the concerns of specific populations, including marginalized groups, represent their</p>	<p>LA roles</p> <p>LAs may be mandated by law to deliver a wide range of public services. This is done through decentralisation reforms, in terms of formal transfers of powers, responsibilities and resources from central government to LAs. LAs promote development that leverages the comparative and competitive advantages of localities and mobilises their specific physical, economic, cultural, social</p>

<p>interests at various levels or facilitate their direct engagement. CSO raise awareness about local and global development challenges and promote actions to respond to these.</p>	<p>and political resources for improving local conditions, livelihoods and well-being. As public authorities, LAs have the duty to acknowledge and respond to communities' concerns and needs. They are thus key in ensuring people's access to services and in bridging citizens and governance at the local level.</p>
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