

The DAC-CSO Dialogue Framework

INFORMATION BRIEF FOR CSOs

THE DAC-CSO DIALOGUE

Over the last decade, governments and other development actors have made global commitments to enhance the role of civil society in development and provide an enabling environment for CSOs, including in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation. One of the key elements of the enabling environment is access to multi-stakeholder dialogue fora that address development policies and practices.

Within this overarching framework, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) – responsible for promoting development policies and development co-operation – developed the [DAC-CSO Dialogue Framework](#). The framework, approved by the DAC in July 2018, aims to provide for an effective, efficient and inclusive partnership between the DAC and civil society.

The Dialogue Framework offers a structure for a long-term and ambitious approach to the interactions between the DAC and CSOs. It was drafted in close co-operation with civil society, represented by the DAC-CSO Reference Group and is based on joint principles and commitments. The DAC-CSO dialogue is part of a broader DAC reform process, which prioritises increased outreach to development actors beyond the DAC's Membership to influence and be influenced and increase transparency. It is also in line with the commitment made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to “hold open, inclusive and transparent discussions on the modernization of the ODA measurement” and on the proposed measure of “total official support for sustainable development”.

WHY YOU SHOULD ENGAGE IN THE DAC-CSO DIALOGUE

The DAC-CSO Dialogue offers CSOs a space to engage with and influence the DAC as well as for the DAC to leverage CSO knowledge, capabilities and their role as advocates for fighting poverty and promoting gender equality, inclusion and sustainable development. CSOs have the opportunity to be consulted before key decisions are made and are invited to attend the DAC's High Level and Senior Level Meetings. As stated in the DAC-CSO Dialogue Framework, CSOs can interact directly with the DAC to promote policy debate and exchange information and experiences about both DAC policies and initiatives and about issues concerning the role of civil society in development.

CSOs also have the opportunity to engage in dialogue and co-operation at the level of OECD's Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD) work streams. DCD has for example recently strengthened the civil society perspective and CSO participation in the OECD's Peer Reviews, included CSO results management and reporting in the results community, and improved the monitoring of CSO-related commitments in the Global Partnership on Effective Development Co-operation. Ongoing dialogue is taking place on themes such as the modernisation of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) and innovative financing for development.

HOW YOU CAN ENGAGE

The DAC-CSO Dialogue Framework respects the principle of CSO self-organisation. CSOs that have expressed interest in the DAC have agreed among themselves to coordinate civil society's participation in the dialogue and aim for a balanced representation. This is the responsibility of the DAC-CSO Reference Group, established in September 2017. This Group is the only civil society platform whose express purpose is to be an interlocutor with the DAC and facilitate the exchange of information between the DAC and CSOs. The DAC-CSO Reference Group operates as a flexible coalition and is open to any CSO interested in DAC-related work. To-date, around 200 individuals from over 100 organisations have requested to join the list-serve. These include national CSO platforms from DAC countries, southern-based CSO networks, INGOs and local CSOs. Outreach is undertaken to broaden the Group's membership further and ensure diverse representation.

In line with the recognised principle of CSO self-regulation, the Group is responsible for organising its engagement with the DAC, including the selection of CSO representatives for the DAC's High Level and Senior Level Meetings. The Group seeks to support CSOs to engage with the DAC in the way that best fits their priorities and overall capacity. As such, the Group does not expect all members to endorse all its positions: rather, each letter or submission to the DAC only reflects the views of CSOs who have chosen to endorse them. The Group does not act as a gatekeeper, and does not prevent individual CSOs from interacting with the DAC as they see fit (and vice-versa).

People in the Group also sit in existing networks working on aid and development finance at the national and international levels – national and regional CSO platforms, the Civil Society FFD Group, the CSO Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, and the Reality of Aid network, etc. This facilitates communication with all these groups and, enables the platform to build on existing expertise.

The Group has light-touch coordination structures, including a secretariat function by Reality of Aid. Thematic working groups have also been set up on the following issues: private sector, in-donor refugee costs and migration, peace and security, DAC reform, TOSSD, and development effectiveness. Organisations sign-up to each thematic group on a voluntary basis. Information is shared across the whole Group through a DAC-CSO Reference Group list serve.

TO CONTACT THE REFERENCE GROUP, PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL TO THE DAC-CSO RG COORDINATORS:

Julie Seghers (jseghers@oxfamfrance.org); Lyn Pano (lpano@realityofaid.org);
Nerea Craviotto (ncraviotto@eurodad.org).

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE DAC-CSO DIALOGUE FRAMEWORK AND THE OVERALL OECD WORK STREAM ON CIVIL SOCIETY (INCL. POLICY RESEARCH AND GUIDANCE):

Please contact OECD's Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD) - Foresight, Outreach and Policy Reform (FOR) Unit: Ms. Jacqueline Wood, Team Leader, Senior Civil Society Specialist (Jacqueline.Wood@oecd.org) and Ms. Marilyn Cham, Civil Society Policy Analyst (Marilyn.Cham@oecd.org)