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## Editorial

# Looking for the Collective Well-Being

("EL BUEN VIVIR")

"El buen vivir" is originally a concept of the indigenous people of the Andes, which was elaborated as a response to the growth-driven and historically linear concepts of development. It means life in harmony and balance between men and women, different communities and, above all, between human beings and the natural environment of which they are part. In practice, this concept implies knowing how to live in a community with others while achieving equality. It means eliminating prejudice and exploitation between people as well as respecting nature and preserving its equilibrium.

One highlight of TRIALOG's work was the conference in Nicaragua on "Global Crossroads: The Role and Perspectives of CSOs in Development Cooperation" in November 2010, which provided space to reflect on these issues in the North and South and promote inclusive and sustainable development. The conference was organised by TRIALOG, HORIZONT3000 and the University of the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast in Nicaragua (URACCAN) with the participation of around 120 representatives of civil society organisations (CSO) from various parts of the world.

Participants agreed in the outcome document of the conference: "CSOs that claim legitimacy as genuine agents for a positive change must be based on the eight Istanbul Principles (of the Open Forum on CSO development effectiveness – see page 4) and, additionally, promote the concept of collective well-being ("El Buen Vivir"). Collective well-being – to live well and with dignity – brings about physical, mental and spiritual health, leading to a life of complete harmony and the most profound respect for Pacha Mama (mother Earth)."

Searching for examples of and attempts to achieve this collective well-being, TRIALOG arranged field visits for around 30 participants from the 12 new EU member states (EU12, NMS) to different development projects in the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast in Nicaragua. Participants and national platforms concluded that there is a need for more

exposure to the South. This is something that TRIALOG V will take up more in depth.

A frequently asked question – not only in Nicaragua – is: "What added value can CSOs from NMS bring to development cooperation?" There is hardly any established cooperation with Latin America, Africa and Asia while the historic cooperation from some NMS was abruptly ended in the late 1980s. NMS have a lot to share from their own transition experience in different areas; in their political, economical, institutional and society models. Some NMS can even share experience on how to create a new independent state with its institutions, and last but not least, the transition from being a receiver of development aid to becoming a donor. For the developing countries in the European neighbourhood this expertise is very valuable.

Despite this, the development cooperation sector remains under-developed in NMS, ODA spending figures are far behind the international agreements and the quality of ODA is criticised in most countries due to significant parts of the budget being spent on debt relief and refugee costs. The financial crisis hit most NMS very strongly and unfortunately, development cooperation has been one of the first budgets to be cut. Most national platforms have an insecure and poor financial and personnel situation which limits not only their national engagement but especially their involvement in European and global processes. A challenge for TRIALOG is to support NMS platforms in their policy and advocacy work at European level and ensure their empowerment.

There are more and more spaces where the voice of CSO is heard and a dialogue is established but it is necessary to have the human and financial resources to actively participate in a qualified way. One example is the Structured Dialogue with the EU institutions which has officially ended but will continue in some way beyond 2011. There is still a long way to go for NMS – more for some, less for others – until they fully participate in European development policy but TRIALOG will do its best to support this.

*Christine Bedoya*  
TRIALOG Director

# Walking in Nicaraguan Boots

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION EXPERIENCE ON THE GROUND

There is a saying in Latvia that it is a hundred times better to see something than to hear about it. This is definitely true of the field visits organised last November in Nicaragua by TRIALOG, HORIZONT3000 and the University URACCAN for members of national development platforms from EU12 countries. Five day long field trips followed the conference "Global Crossroads: Roles and Perspectives of CSOs in Development Cooperation". The aim of the field trips was to give hands on experience on what HORIZONT3000 and its partner organisations are doing to promote development in various sectors; mainly education and agriculture. Four groups visited projects in the autonomous region on the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua.

My group visited Siuna and Rosita, two small cities dealing with the impact of the gold mining industry. The negative aspects include environmental and health challenges as well as a lack of employment. On top of these are the challenges the Caribbean coast has to face in terms of politics, very poor infrastructure, mixed cultures and languages, deforestation, domestic violence, child labour, low income levels and so on.

## RICHNESS OF ACHIEVEMENTS

There are three main challenges in the Nicaraguan countryside: Unemployment and poverty; low productivity and competitiveness in the agricultural sector; depletion of natural resources and environmental concerns. Small and medium size farmers have to overcome a number of problems: They do not have relevant technologies and technical assistance, there is limited production infrastructure, non-existent or poor transportation and communication possibilities, no sufficient funding, problems with land ownership, low levels of education and organisation, and women are excluded from decision making.

The regional University URACCAN is not only supported by HORIZONT3000 to promote education in the Caribbean coast for students from different backgrounds and income levels, but is directly helping farmers to acquire new knowledge. One area in which farmers are currently most active is the production of cocoa beans. This is significant as production of cocoa beans has increased income for local farmers and promoted the need for organisation, new experience and knowledge in different areas. It is equally important for the environment especially in areas of

deforestation. Cocoa trees provide shade for other crops.

During the field trip we met several students who visit farmers and provide technical knowledge as a part of their studies. We also met truly inspirational farmers, among them Mr. Cosme López who is showing other farmers how agroforestry works in practice (as well as making the best organic hand-made chocolates in the Caribbean coast!).

Another great example of co-operation between the community and URACCAN is the University Radio which broadcasts several educational programmes and serves as a real communication point for the areas which otherwise cannot be easily reached and where several different languages have to be used.

Though we came just a day too early to see the municipality of Rosita gathering leaders from different areas in a soccer field (including religious leaders, elected representatives and midwives among others) to decide on the budgetary priorities for the next year, this example of direct participation was impressive in itself. As admitted by the mayor of Rosita, almost none of the aims can be reached without the help of other donor countries. As most of them phase out of Nicaragua in the coming years, it will definitely change the budgetary situation of the municipality forcing the mayor to knock on many new doors.

## THE ROLE OF THE NEW EU MEMBER STATES

This is really a rich base for learning best practice in development in Nicaragua. It was a great opportunity to learn about challenges, projects, work of academia and NGOs as well as the life, people and culture of Nicaragua. It provided a



Don Cosme López and his wife in their chocolate stall

good foundation for the platforms to develop their experience and share this with member organisations. This learning is crucial before going into any development projects. But it is also of utmost importance for global education which can be promoted at all levels and show the similarities, differences and interdependencies of Europe and Central America.

The field visit provided not only food for thought but a great inspiring pool of ideas for participants of what can be done on the ground with few resources, many challenges, but involving local wisdom, building on existing networks, using available knowledge and experience and requiring a great deal of motivation.

As it was the beginning of the rainy season in Nicaragua, visiting the farmers and walking through the mud was made easier after the purchase of rubber boots. For most of the people living in the places we visited this is unaffordable and some girls will not get a pair in their life time. This small example of the many unforgettable things from the field visit is the one that I keep to remember that perspectives can be very different even when it comes to the simplest things.

I would like to thank in particular Doris Kroll, Director of the HORIZONT3000 office in Nicaragua, for making this field visit so relevant and motivating.

Linda Jākobsone  
Chair of the Board of the Latvian NGO  
Platform LAPAS



# Transition Experience

*In February 2011 governments of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia published a Non-Paper calling upon the EU to use their transition experience in EU development cooperation efforts. Below are excerpts from the Non-Paper.*

## **A CIVIL SOCIETY PERSPECTIVE ON “TRANSITION”**

Transition is frequently referred to as the special know-how of Central Eastern Europe (CEE). There is a need to open up debate from a civil society perspective and

to provide reflection on transition democracies, especially in light of EU NMS, struggle to build a graspable (and potentially transferrable) transition know-how.

Most often transition experience is reflected in terms of institution building

and standard setting, and these aspects are clearly detectable. But there are also democratic deficits that – among other reasons – originate in the lack of participation of citizens in “using” these democratic institutions. What we see missing is the level of freedom of civil society as a quality mark of a democracy to be established, to be measured and to be demonstrated towards the state, citizens, financial market actors and towards international stakeholders. Increasing citizens’ trust of civil society actors is one of the key elements for strengthening democratic processes, acceptance of the sector and sustainability.

To further increase public trust, civil society actors should better demonstrate transparency, communicate the importance of good governance and make their work more accessible to the public and potential donors. Furthermore, financial sustainability and reduction of public dependence (where applicable) are ways of building even greater trust towards their own civil societies and local communities.

Regarding financial sustainability, these problems are current in NMS, as well, addressed already in the 1990’s, albeit in a modified context. Private donors were keen to help the process towards resource diversification, but eventually very few organisations could manage this, or communicate their impact. Good governance, transparency mechanisms, full-cost recovery planning, impact demonstration, quality assurance, and others are useful tools for better contextualization of CSOs.

Risk taking is a key element of building democracy and sustainability, and like social innovation seems to effectively respond to new global challenges “under” the leadership of civil society. Although the crisis motivates all social actors to minimise risk, social experimentation is necessary to create impact, and provide innovative and sustainable responses. Advocacy efforts should mainstream this including nurturing local creativity and social innovation potential in communities of partner countries.

**“There is no transition without space carved out for self-reliant communities and groups (movements, organizations, etc.), from the post-communist, paternalistic state-dependency.”**

*Brigitta Jaksa, external expert on international development and social innovation and Barbara Erős, Strategic Programme Officer, DemNet Hungary*

## **Harnessing the Transition Experience in EU’s External Relations – from Policy to Implementation**

### **Setting**

The European Consensus for Development sets in Article 33 that “the EU will capitalise on new Member States’ experience (such as transition management) and help strengthen the role of these countries as new donors”. This was reiterated by the Council conclusions of 18 November 2009 [...], by the recent Commission’s Green Paper on EU development policy [...] as well as by the European Council conclusions of 4 February 2011 [...].

With the Lisbon Treaty in place and the ongoing process of setting up the EEAS, the EU has a potential to make external policies and instruments more effective and coherent in pursuing its strategic interests. [...] transition cooperation refers to a specific technical support which uses the experience of the EU and its Member States from political and economic reforms in areas such as democratic institution building, public administration, judicial and security sector reform, public finance management, market economy reforms, trade liberalization, privatisation of state owned-enterprises, environment protection and management, etc. [...]

European Commission has developed a concept of European Transition Compendium, a comprehensive summary of the experience of those countries that would like to make it available to different development partners. [...]

### **Objectives**

The EU should develop a more systematic approach towards using transition experience in external relations. This relates both to the policy formulation as well as to its implementation [...]

### **The Way Forward**

We call on the Commission and the EEAS to consider how to systematically employ transition experience in EU external action. This could include steps to:

1. Complete the work on the European Transition Compendium with the aim to create a practical tool and categorize “the pool of expertise” to be used in EU transition cooperation vis-à-vis third countries. Ways to operationalize the Compendium need to be identified focussing on the needs and specificities of the different countries or group of countries facing different transition challenges.
2. Incorporate the notion of transition cooperation in relevant policy documents and discussions, such as the EU Enlargement Package, the ENP Strategic Review, EDF Performance Review and the new EU Development Policy Strategy [...]. Where appropriate the transition cooperation should be used in the EU joint programming exercises.
3. Maximize the potential of current schemes (in particular under the IPA, ENPI and EIDHR programmes) and create new opportunities for a systematic use of transition experience in the framework of EU financial instruments for the period after 2013 – for example by earmarking funds dedicated to transition cooperation under the DCI thematic programmes.
4. Include regularly an exchange of views on transition needs and possible EU support in relevant dialogues with third countries concerned. [...]

### **Full document:**

[mzv.cz/public/b8/eb/d6/591175\\_508622\\_non\\_paper\\_on\\_the\\_transition\\_experience.pdf](http://mzv.cz/public/b8/eb/d6/591175_508622_non_paper_on_the_transition_experience.pdf)



# The Structured Dialogue

The Structured Dialogue (SD) process was launched in March 2010 and concluded in May 2011 in Budapest. The SD was a multi-stakeholders' process made up of 3 institutional actors on one hand (the European Commission – EC, EU governments and the European Parliament – EP) and representatives of CSO platforms and Local Authorities (LAs) on the other, discussing the involvement of CSOs as well as the roles and responsibilities of CSOs and LAs in EU development policy.

## WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE STRUCTURED DIALOGUE?

The **role of CSOs as a development actor** is no longer a question, it is a reality that has been properly acknowledged. During the SD process, some **important global principles** were reaffirmed and acknowledged by all, for example the Rights Based Approach and democratic ownership.

“**Southern**” involvement was strong in the SD process and brought a more complete

perspective and ownership to the process. CSO is not a monolith actor and profound differences were observed from one region to another, but it is clear that a global civil society is emerging, at different levels.

Some concrete outcomes that resulted from the SD process are:

- The EC will produce a new Civil Society and Local Authorities Communication by next year (2012). And the terminology “Non State Actors” has been abandoned in favour of “Civil Society organisations”, as requested by CONCORD.
- On aid delivery mechanisms, the EC should use a full range of delivery mechanisms, going beyond the call for proposals system.
- Institutionalised dialogue between CSOs & LA and EU institutions in Brussels and most importantly at country level will be established.

The outcomes of the SD should be linked to on-going and future political proc-

esses, particularly, the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014-2020 and the 4<sup>th</sup> High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan. CONCORD's main expectation at the beginning of this process was “policy before funding, but funding instruments that deliver policy”. The SD has helped us to define the policy. Now we hope that these political commitments will be reflected in the future instruments and programmes to be laid out in the next Multiannual Financial Framework. CONCORD proposes that the total annual EC funding for civil society in development cooperation should be at least 15% of the total EC ODA. Furthermore, there should be reinforced areas of thematic focus, in relation to promoting global civil society, human rights, and linking relief, rehabilitation, and development (LRRD).

*Ester Asin Martinez*

*Care International, Chair of the CONCORD Structured Dialogue Task force*

*Izabella Toth*

*Cordaid, Vice-Chair of the CONCORD Structured Dialogue Task force*

## Busan ante portas

### MORE HIGH LEVEL ENGAGEMENT NEEDED

The fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF IV) will take place at the end of November, 2011. Much is at stake: The HLF IV offers a real opportunity for all relevant stakeholders to reform the current aid architecture and make it more effective for millions of beneficiaries. Civil Society Organisations are lobbying governments to make the most of this historic opportunity. Sadly, what seems obvious for so many, is not getting through to those in power: Development Effectiveness is a highly political issue and political commitment at a high level is crucial considering the enormous challenge of combating poverty and generating sustainable change.

The international evaluation on the implementation of the Paris Declaration, an OECD-led survey on governments' engagement regarding the integration of the PD-principles, comes to the same conclusions: The poor performance of so many countries is mainly due to a lack of political will. Though considerable dedication on an administrative level to implement the principles was monitored in some cases, the lack of equally dedicated political action prevented positive results.

And the failure continues: Instead of attributing the HLF in Busan the importance it

has for so many people in developing countries by attending, many ministers plan to send civil servants with no decision-making power. Furthermore, the first draft of the Busan outcome document – a successor of the influential Paris declaration – does not (yet) include strong political commitments.

Civil Society has been much more dedicated to this process: As well as being part of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness – the forum responsible for preparing the HLF and the outcome document –, where the Open Forum and Better Aid (the two main civil society platforms active in the field of aid/dev. effectiveness) tried to use the small, but existing space for promoting ideas of more effective development, CSOs around the world have been part of a joint effort to reflect on their own effectiveness.

In autumn 2010 the “Istanbul Principles” were finalised and in June 2011 complemented by the international framework. The whole document, based on the inputs of more than 3000 CSOs worldwide, contains joint principles of effective CSO-work, a common vision of effective development work and internationally agreed minimum standards for an enabling environment while strengthening the importance of the

diversity of the sector. It clearly is a strong and helpful tool for times when the relevance and professionalism of civil society organisations are criticised or challenged.

*Melanie Obberger*

*Project Coordinator, Global Responsibility – Austrian Platform for Development and Humanitarian Aid*

## The Istanbul Principles

**CSOs are effective as development actor when they...**

1. respect and promote human rights and social justice
2. embody gender equality and equity while promoting woman and girl's rights
3. focus on people's empowerment, democratic ownership and participation
4. promote environmental sustainability
5. practice transparency and accountability
6. pursue equitable partnerships and solidarity
7. create and share knowledge and commit to mutual learning
8. commit to realizing positive sustainable change (outcomes and impact)

## Useful Weblinks

[cso-effectiveness.org](http://cso-effectiveness.org)  
[betteraid.org](http://betteraid.org)

# The Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020

The Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) is a multiannual spending plan that translates the European Union's policy priorities into financial terms. It sets limits on EU expenditure over 7 years and thus imposes budgetary discipline. This exercise is of particular importance as it is not only the EU budget and the instruments to implement it that are at stake but more broadly the EU integration process and ambitions and the future role of the EU in a variety of policy areas including foreign policy and development. The current MFF runs from 2007 to 2013 and the next one will run from 2014 to 2020.

## WHAT WILL THE NEXT MFF LOOK LIKE?

The EC communication published on 29 June revealed the main tendencies and priorities for the next EU budget 2014-2020.

The main proposals related to external action and development aid are:

- An increase in external spending from €56 billion to €70 billion, with a clear commitment to the 0.7% GNI development aid targets along with a clear focus on poverty eradication. The justifi-

cation for the increase to development is to help the EU meet the 0.7% target for ODA and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

- Significant increase in funding for development:
  - Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI): from €17.3 billion to €20.6 billion
  - European Development Fund (EDF): from €22.3 billion (over 6 years) to €30.3 billion (over 7 years) 1
  - European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI): from €11.3 billion to €16 billion
- Streamlining of the thematic programmes (under the DCI) to only two:
  - Global Public Goods (covering human development, water and energy, climate, environment, food security, migration)
  - Civil society organisations and local authorities. This programme will be strengthened and there will be a strategic reorientation towards supporting platforms in partner countries and global and regional networks.

- No less than 25% of the thematic programmes will be earmarked for climate and environment. Climate and environment will also be mainstreamed in all EU policy areas.

- A Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) to generate own EU resources.

CONCORD welcomes the EC proposal and calls on Member States to support the proposal on development funding levels and to take responsibility at national level to meet their MDG commitments.

## WHAT NEXT FOR CONCORD?

CONCORD will now have to lobby the Member States and the European Parliament to support the EC proposal published on 29 June (regarding the general budget and priorities).

The more detailed negotiations on the MFF will come with the drafting of the new delivery instruments (as from autumn 2011). These instruments will set the exact amounts, priorities, rules and regulations to implement the EU Budget. For example the instruments will set how civil society will be included, what are the specificities for New Member States, what countries will receive EU development aid...

*Elise Vanormelingen*  
Policy Officer CONCORD

## Timeline for the MFF negotiations

**29 June 2011:** official start of the MFF negotiations with the publication of the European Commission's proposal "A Budget for Europe 2020".

**December 2011:** EC legislation proposal for the revised and new delivery instruments of the MFF.

**End of 2012:** Agreement by the European Council on the MFF regulation and subsequent assent by the European Parliament

**End of 2013:** Adoption by Council and Parliament of the regulations for delivery instruments

**January 2014:** Entry into force of the MFF for 2014-2020

## Useful Weblinks

**"A Budget for Europe"**

[europa.eu/press\\_room/pdf/a\\_budget\\_for\\_europe\\_2020\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu/press_room/pdf/a_budget_for_europe_2020_en.pdf)

## European Vision Needed for MFF

Over the next 30 months European leaders will discuss, publicly and behind closed doors, the overall spending of and political priorities for the European Union from 2014. It has yet to be seen whether these debates will take place within a truly European perspective. First signs show rather the contrary. Even before the first proposals a number of EU Member States called for the EU budget to be frozen - an indication that the Multiannual Financial Framework will not be informed by a political vision for Europe in the next decade.

The European Commission's proposal "A Budget for Europe 2020", which kicked off

the official negotiations, largely follows the current framework. The proposed increase in external spending from 56 billion to 70 billion EUR is certainly a positive signal on the importance the Commission places on the external action of the EU, as is the proposed increase for the Development Cooperation Instrument by 3.3 billion EUR. Still questions about the political priorities and the future orientation of the EU's foreign policy and development cooperation remain. Remarkably, the Commission has proposed a huge 50% increase for the European Neighbourhood Instrument to 16 billion EUR. Together with the funding foreseen for the Pre-Accession

Countries, about 40% of external spending would stay in the immediate neighbourhood of the European Union (excluding the European Development Fund).

However, this proposal is a first step of many. At this stage we need to demand a strong commitment from EU Member States to a European Agenda, including the role of the EU as a global actor to keep the proposed level for external spending. At the same time we have to engage in discussions on priorities and the overall orientation of the EU's development cooperation and the role of civil society in Europe and partner countries.

*Johannes Trimmel*  
Director International Programme Support  
and Policies, Light for the World  
TRIALOG Advisory Group



# Ambitious Poland for Developing Countries

THE ZAGRANICA GROUP CALLS ON THE POLISH GOVERNMENT TO DELIVER AMBITIOUS, TRANSPARENT AND EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

During its presidency of the EU, Poland will lead discussions concerning the foreign policy of the European Union. The Zagrancia Group, the platform of Polish development NGOs, has published a statement with presidency-related demands towards the government. Member organisations of the Zagrancia Group expect that Polish engagement in the countries of the Eastern Partnership region, developing countries in the Global South and North Africa will be an expression of solidarity and co-responsibility, instead of focusing purely on Polish and European economic interests.

The group underlines the commitment to the Millennium Development Goals linking them with development aid financing objectives; in 2010 Poland spent barely 0.08% of GNI on development cooperation, whereas in order to achieve the promised 0.33% in 2015, the level of financing should be much higher by now. The government's attention is at the same time drawn to spending effectiveness and transparency, as in 2011 Poland will chair the IV High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. The Zagrancia Group supports

CSO demands in the process leading up to this event: Strengthening democratic ownership, promoting equality and justice in current structures of development cooperation, as well as enhancing development effectiveness through implementing a series of rights-based recommendations. Development NGOs will be pushing for a common, strong EU position, under the leadership of the Polish presidency. One of the events focusing on this advocacy process will be the conference "Aid Effectiveness Principles: Voices from the South", organised by the Zagrancia Group on 10 October.

In addition, after this year's successful signing of an agreement between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education and the Zagrancia Group, Polish NGOs are calling for recognition of Global Education as a basis for building civil society not only in Poland but as well in all partner countries. The Global Education working group is currently monitoring the implementation of this agreement and in the meantime works on issues such as the introduction of Global Education into the higher education system.

Internally, during the presidency time the platform is going through another very important process, "democracy and development"- defining the added value of Polish transition experiences in the relation between development cooperation and so-called "democratisation" activities. The process will produce a recommendations paper, addressed to the Polish government as well as other public institutions which will be presented during an international conference, in December this year.

At the same time, the Zagrancia Group is proposing last amendments to the draft act currently under the legislative procedure in the Parliament. The outcome of several years of advocacy will define the framework, directions and financing of Polish aid.

*Monika Matus  
Policy Officer  
Zagrancia Group*

## Useful Weblink

**Information on the Presidency Project**  
[zagrancia.org.pl](http://zagrancia.org.pl)

## The Cypriot EU Presidency 2012

Considered by many the potential end of the world, the second semester of 2012 is seen as a unique opportunity by the Cypriot Island-wide NGO Development Platform, CYINDEP. From 1 July until 31 December 2012 the Republic of Cyprus will hold the EU presidency as the last in the Trio, with Poland and Denmark laying the groundwork.

Cyprus faces a unique challenge, given the political situation on the island. The Republic of Cyprus became a full member of the EU in May 2004. While the whole island joined, it has been divided since 1974 with the *acquis communautaire* currently suspended in the northern part of the island. A number of measures have been implemented since Cyprus' accession to remedy the difficulties of full integration of the Turkish Cypriot community as EU citizens, including the establishment of a "Task Force for the Turkish Cypriot Community" under the auspices of DG Enlarge-

ment. In this instance, it could be considered that the Turkish Cypriot community is an aid recipient rather than an aid donor, as opposed to the Republic of Cyprus.

Despite political challenges however, CYINDEP – as the joint platform of both the Greek and the Turkish Cypriot platforms – aims to assume a more active role within civil society as well as *vis-à-vis* authorities. With the financial support of the EU, CYINDEP aspires to build the capacity of its members to advocate more effectively on issues related to development, and to participate in the policymaking process; to raise awareness in the general public in both communities in Cyprus on issues related to international development, including *inter alia*, ODA and development education through an island-wide awareness campaign; connect Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot organisations more effectively in coordinating their actions with regards to advocacy and development related issues and by doing so, contribute

to the peace building efforts of civil society on the island.

The Presidency will enable CYINDEP to become an active player in Cyprus' public debates and to contribute to development policy dialogues and processes. CYINDEP will focus on three main areas during the presidency: 1. the link to civil society in the Euromed region, especially building on the active role of civil society in its neighbouring Middle Eastern countries; 2. exploring the concept of Gender in Development, based on the World Bank report to be published in 2012 and drawing a link to the communities in Cyprus, linking at the same time to the government priority of a more social agenda; and 3. promote the inclusion of Global/ Development Education into national policies through expert seminars, policy recommendations and concrete suggestions, building on the experience of Poland and other EU countries.

*Kerstin Wittig  
Member of Coordinating Committee  
CYINDEP*

# Struggling with a Difficult Environment

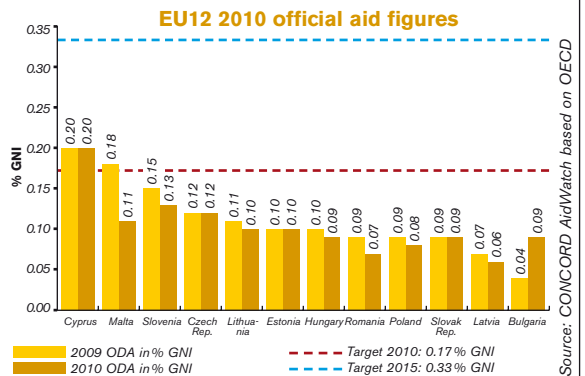
SITUATION OF NMS AND ODA, EVALUATION OF AidWATCH

In 2010, the year of the MDG interim review, many EU donors were still far behind their promised objective of official development assistance (ODA) spending. No EU12 country reached the 2010 target of 0.17% of GNI spending on ODA with the exception of Cyprus which reached 0.19% GNI. According to this year's AidWatch Report **“Challenging Self-interest: Getting EU Aid Fit for the Fight against Poverty”** seven out of the 12 countries decreased their aid levels as a percentage of GNI. The problem is not only the quantity of aid but also the quality of aid. The CONCORD AidWatch report criticised the high proportion of “inflated aid” by reporting debt cancellation, student and refugee costs as ODA. This general trend of inflating official aid is also one of the main criticisms of new EU member states (NMS).

According to the results of a survey among the 12 NMS platforms as well as the annual exchange at TRIALOG's Central Training in May 2011 almost all platforms are active in the field of Development Education/Awareness Raising including advocacy on government level for the integration of Development Education/Global Education into school curricula or curricula of teachers' training. These activities are also reflected in the active participation in the Development Awareness Raising and Educa-

tion (DARE) Forum of CONCORD. Additionally, all NMS platforms participate in the AidWatch working group which analyses the quality and quantity of ODA, holding their respective governments accountable on official aid spending. NMS platforms are still under-represented in other key working groups of CONCORD such as the Financing for Development and Relief (FDR) working group or the Policy Forum due to a lack of human resources and capacities. The main challenge for all platforms is to ensure financial and organisational survival and sustainability. Most of the platforms do not know to what degree they will be able to continue their activities after June 2012. This influences the longer-term strategic planning. Other challenges are how to engage the platform members actively, and – related to this – the membership of and active participation in CONCORD working groups.

Regarding the national policy framework and cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) there is a wide range from ad hoc and weak links (Cyprus, Malta) to the acknowledgement of the platform as partner and established links (e.g. Latvia, Czech Republic, Poland) up



to Memoranda of Understanding with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Slovak Republic, Romania).

The way ahead for NMS platforms is challenging and the recommendations to governments remain: EU12 must reaffirm their commitment to spending at least 0.33% of GNI as ODA by 2015 and to support an enabling environment for the NGO platforms and their members.

*Ulrike Bey*  
TRIALOG Information Officer

## Useful Weblink

**AidWatch website**  
[aidwatch.concordeurope.org](http://aidwatch.concordeurope.org)

## TRIALOG

A project to strengthen civil society and to raise awareness of development issues in the enlarged EU.

### Objective

To contribute to the mobilisation of more public support in New EU Member States (NMS), Accession and Candidate Countries (AC/CC) for actions against poverty and for equal relations between developing and developed countries through Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) as multipliers.

### Activities

**Policy Dialogue:** strengthening capacities for participation in debates at the national and European level, coordinating the CONCORD Working Group on Enlargement, Pre-Accession and Neighbourhood (EPAN)

**Advocacy:** supporting NMS to join campaigns and advocacy actions, supporting active participation in CONCORD working groups, making the voice of NMS / AC heard

**Capacity Building:** training on development topics and CSO working tools, regular Central Training events, supporting the

creation and strengthening of development CSO platforms

**East-West-South Triologue:** providing opportunities for mutual learning and supporting the search for suitable project partners including events such as the Partnership Fair

**Coordination and Networking:** liaising with key actors, planning, monitoring and evaluating, actively involving the Management Team and Advisory Group

**Information Platform:** TRIALOG Information Service (TIS), an online NGO database, publications and the TRIALOG website

### Target group

NGDOs and their co-ordination bodies in NMS and AC

### Structure

A project in association with CONCORD, the European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development. Financed by: the European Commission (69.04%), the Austrian Development Cooperation (17.54.0%), consortium partners and

private European sources (10,62%), and others (2,8%). Head Office in Vienna, Liaison Office in Brussels. TRIALOG started in March 2000, the project is now in its fourth phase (2009 – Sept. 2012).

### Consortium partners

HORIZONT3000 (Austria, Lead Agency)  
AGEH (Germany)  
Civil Society Development Foundation (Romania)  
CONCORD  
Ekumenická akademie Praha (Czech Republic)  
eRko (Slovak Republic)  
European Perspectives (Greece)  
Kopin (Malta)  
Licht für die Welt (Austria)  
Lietuvos Kolpingo draugija (Lithuania)  
Polska Akcja Humanitarna (Poland)  
Terre des hommes Foundation  
“Lausanne” in Hungary

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CROATIA:

## Already a Donor of Development Cooperation



Photo: TRIALOG

*Civil Society Seminar at the Centre for Peace Studies, Zagreb April 2011, supported by TRIALOG*

As part of the pre-accession process Croatia has, in accordance with EU requirements, introduced national legislation and a strategy for development cooperation. Although Croatia has promised to reach the goal of 0.33% GNI by 2015 for official development aid, in 2010 this was 0.17% GNI (and a significant amount of this percentage was spent on translations of EU acqui and other documents to the states in the region – otherwise the calculation would be 0.04%). Since Croatia is at the beginning of establishing the development cooperation structure and system there are several challenges facing the government and non-governmental sector as well as society in general. First, is the change of

perception from Croatia as an aid recipient to an aid donor. The perception of Croatia as an aid recipient is still present in most of the minds of people in Croatia. This is partially the consequence of the recent war history which has brought many foreign donors to Croatia. NGOs have relied heavily on this international support. Croatia is also still recovering from the past military conflict and in people's mind it is hard to make the shift towards Croatian responsibility to participate in international development cooperation.

A second issue is to understand that aid should not be exclusively reserved for the Croatian diaspora but rather for the protection of human rights and development where it is most needed

regardless of the national identity or race. A culture of solidarity should be fostered within society.

However, since the key documents have been voted in the parliament, a separate section for development aid and international cooperation has been established at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). This section has started with the organisation of statistics and collecting the data on development aid provided by Croatia through different government bodies. Also, an inter-sectoral group has been established with representatives of the government and civil society and is making strategic decisions related to development cooperation and humanitarian aid.

Recently, Croatian NGOs have also made some steps towards organising themselves into a national platform. The initial group of 15 NGOs has started discussions on how to structure the work of NGOs in the field of development cooperation. It has not yet been decided whether a platform will be established or the focus will be more on creating particular interest-based ad hoc networks depending on projects. Croatian civil society has been working

intensively since the beginning of the conflict in the territory of former Yugoslavia and this is likely to remain the focus in the following years. However, the direct conflict and post-conflict recovery experience of Croatian NGOs could be valuable for civil society around the globe where conflicts are taking place. For such initiatives stronger cooperation between the MFA and CSOs needs to be established. In this initial phase of learning, understanding and structuring the development cooperation system and policies there is a process of mutual learning between state and non-state stakeholders with the help of international organisations that have great experience in the field. However, the efficiency and recognition we achieve in the field of international cooperation will depend on the capacities and motivations of Croatian NGOs and state institutions. There is an expectation that Croatia will become full EU member in July 2013. This is also a deadline for Croatian institutions and CSOs to create an efficient system of development cooperation.

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In association with

European NGO confederation  
for relief and development

## CONCORD



This project is funded by the European Union. This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of TRIALOG and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

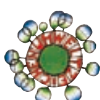
with funding from

Austrian  
Development Cooperation

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Editor: Ulrike Bey, TRIALOG Information Officer  
Layout: typhothese.at – m.zinner.grafik  
Printed by Grasl Druck & Neue Medien

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This product conforms to the standards of the Austrian Environmental Seal of Approval for environmentally friendly printing products (UZ 24). Grasl Druck & Neue Medien, Bad Vöslau, UW-Nr. 715, www.fairprint.at