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## Editorial

# Civil society on the right track to handle global problems?

For years, Official Development Assistance and its effectiveness have been intensely criticised as “useless”. Aid has not contributed to the economic growth of poor countries or to a better distribution of wealth. Aid has not reduced poverty. Aid often falls into the hands of the wrong recipients; the rich and the corrupt.

Is aid misused in the interests of the donors? What development paradigms are we following and are these still valid for poverty eradication? What role should civil society organisations play in development cooperation?

At the European level we have built a new Europe of 27 members, which should be the sum of all experiences and not simply driven by the ideas of the 15 old EU member states. Civil society organisations in the new EU member states were recipients until recently. They have their own experiences, which are sometimes different from those of civil society in the EU-15. Their work in development cooperation is based on their two-fold experience as a giver and a receiver. It is not just the rich giving to the poor; there is a lot of experience that the “East” and “South” share.

The question “ARE WE ON THE RIGHT TRACK?” was taken up by TRIALOG in a conference in May 2008, in cooperation with the European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development CONCORD, the Czech NGDO platform FoRS and the Ecumenical Academy Prague, in order to review the paradigms that underlie the development work of civil society organisations. Speakers and participants from all over the EU as well as from developing countries in the South (Africa, Latin America, Asia) and from the Eastern EU neighbourhood discussed the current nature of development cooperation and tried to find the most promising development approaches for the future.



The discussions resulted in changed paradigms: The Millennium Development Goals are not sufficient as they focus on quantity instead of quality and accept that half of the poor stay poor. There have been changes in geopolitics as old powers lose influence and new powers gain influence but the political unbalance in terms of the power of countries continues to matter. Free market and neoliberalism do not offer answers to the

big crises of energy, food, climate change and finance. We need global justice with respect for the limits of growth.

In response to the challenges, civil society organisations called for increased joint efforts in development cooperation, accompanied by strong advocacy actions and public awareness raising. It is time to further engage in supporting coherence between policies that affect development issues and encourage the re-distribution of wealth and power worldwide. The human rights based approach should guide our work; and new partnerships are needed in Europe, in the South and globally. Critical thinking at all levels should be supported in order to facilitate alternatives. Last but not least, civil society organisations should engage in a critical self-reflection of their own values and approaches.

The debate on development principles has to continue beyond the conference. This bulletin presents the results of the discussions in May 2008 and further views on the topic, with a strong focus on voices from new member states and the EU neighbourhood. The growing engagement of these civil societies in development cooperation deserves special attention. A follow up conference in 2009 will ensure that we stay “on track” and suggest practical steps to reach development aims and challenge donor policies and practices.

*Christine Bedoya*  
TRIALOG Director

# After the Prague development conference

## PARADIGM CHANGE INEVITABLE

140 participants from fifty countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America attended the conference “Are we on the right track? Paradigm review by civil society organisations (CSOs) as development actors” which took place between 14th and 16th May 2008 in Prague.



Prague conference 2008

### ON THE WRONG TRACK

The strong interest shown by CSO representatives from around the world to participate in the conference, underlined the need for deepened dialogue between West, East and South on the basic concepts of development. The conference challenged paradigms not only from a European perspective, but started from the needs and expectations expressed by recipient countries of development cooperation in the global South. Most participants answered the question “Are we on the right track?” negatively. In many ways it was felt that paradigm change or reorientation was inevitable. As Justin Kilcullen, president of CONCORD, stated at the beginning of the conference, not even the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) as minimal requirements are being met because of the insufficient engagement of rich countries. They are better at promising than performing.

### ATTITUDES TOWARDS CAPITALISM

Key speakers came from the South and the Eastern EU Neighbourhood: Chico Whitaker (Brazil), T. Rajamoorthy (Malaysia), Rebecca Tanui (Kenya) and Olga Ponizova (Russia). In spite of the big differences in terms of context and background, the common message was that the present form of globalisation driven by unregulated neoliberal capitalism, caused or deepened poverty and ecological disasters and intensified the violation of human rights. This clear consensus was rather surprising for many participants from “post-socialist” countries, where mostly neoliberal ways of transformation are favoured. The related discussions created special dynamics during the conference and beyond with a strong interest of both the new EU member states and the South to come to deeper exchange and better understanding of each other’s experiences and expectations.

Nevertheless, a certain shyness to express ideologically controversial positions was observed on occasion. There were different attitudes towards capitalism and the role of the state. Not everyone agreed with the need to “overcome capitalism”, on the other hand not everyone considered it possible to create a type of capitalism that would support poor people.

### DIALOGUE BETWEEN WEST, EAST AND SOUTH

Participants from the old EU member states seemed to know better the situation in the South than the ways of thinking and acting in the new EU member states and in the Eastern neighbourhood. The conference was not able to bridge gaps of knowledge on all sides but it was successful in awaking a good deal of curiosity. Most of the participants greatly appreciated the so far unique opportunity to discuss basic development issues on such a broad base.

### LISTEN TO THE SOUTH: BE POLITICAL!

The topics centred around human rights and development policies, as requested by southern partners, were considered among the most exciting. Representatives from the South placed emphasis on social human rights to guarantee life in dignity and happiness for everybody; a prerequisite for all other development efforts. The development co-operation that CSOs in the South expect from their partners in the North no longer focuses primarily on the construction of hospitals, schools and/or other conventional development projects but on supporting the empowerment of southern civil society. At the same time, southern CSOs call for strong advocacy and lobbying in the North to change unjust rules and structural discrimination inherent in the present day world economy and international politics. This is probably the main challenge resulting from the conference.

### SPACE FOR CRITICAL CIVIL SOCIETY?

Given this challenge, it was found disturbing and worrying that many CSOs in Europe merely act as implementers for outsourced state Official Development Assistance (ODA) programmes or are on their way to becoming quasi-commercial consultancy agencies, losing their specific critical role, which is so badly needed. The European Commission is even strengthening this tendency by involving more and more private firms (“Non State Actors” according to their definition) instead of genuine CSOs and by increasing budget support to southern governments, some of which lack democratic legitimacy. At the same time the interest in strengthening critical and vigilant civil societies in southern countries is far less strongly pronounced.

### FOLLOW UP CONFERENCE 2009

As planned from the outset, TRIALOG will organise a second conference of this kind in 2009 (possibly in Nicaragua) to deal with the very question of CSOs as critical actors in development and to challenge governments and other donors about their responsibilities.

Jiří Silný  
Director

Ecumenical Academy Prague

## Conference Documentation:

More about the key findings, texts of all speeches, video statements of speakers and organisers, minutes of working groups and a photo gallery of the Prague conference are available on the TRIALOG website at:

[www.trialog.or.at/start.asp?ID=155](http://www.trialog.or.at/start.asp?ID=155)

The 2008 Prague conference was organised by TRIALOG in cooperation with CONCORD, the Czech NGDO platform FoRS and the Ecumenical Academy Prague and supported by a variety of donors: European Commission, Czech and Austrian Development Cooperation, Regional Partnership Programme, Brot für die Welt, Oxfam GB, Fondation de France and Glropolis.

If you are interested in receiving information about the follow up conference in 2009, please write to [office@trialog.or.at](mailto:office@trialog.or.at)

# South-East cooperation

## A NEW MEMBER STATE PERSPECTIVE

In the past, relations between Eastern Europe and the global South have been politically and economically motivated. Those links disappeared with the establishment of the new democracies at the beginning of the 1990s. In Slovakia, we have started to strengthen East-South relations, on new foundations since 2003 and with renewed attention since EU membership in 2004.

Most development cooperation partners of new member states (NMS) are in the EU Neighbourhood, the Western Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia. NMS do not have many southern partners from Africa, Latin America or Asia yet as there has not been enough time to establish long term partnerships. Therefore, it was interesting to experience real enthusiasm for more exchange and mutual learning between South and East at the 2008 Prague conference.

The reason may be common experience: Similarly to countries in the South, Eastern Europe was perceived as “peripheral” just two decades ago. But through a rapid transformation process, mainly supported by development interventions from North American and Western European countries, we have joined the “rich” part of the world.

Another aspect of the dialogue could be a fruitful confrontation between “old” socio-political ideologies. The rapid transformation in Eastern Europe, especially

in the economy, was reached by apparent “right-wing” policies that counterbalanced the shortcomings of the left-wing communist regimes. Southern development activists have often experienced the opposite: right-wing policies that threw huge parts of the population into deep poverty without any hope of change for the better. This often pushes them to the left side of the political

spectrum. An exchange between people with these two different experiences could help to find ways for development without producing a new “development ideology” stuck in political stereotypes.

More partnerships with the South and participation in meaningful development cooperation programmes also form pre-conditions for being more active in European development policy. As a NMS diplomat recently said: “The EU would like us to provide budget support and improve donor division of labour, but first we need project experience.” We need time to develop this experience...



*Project partners from Slovakia, Austria, Uganda and Sudan*

Last but not least, fresh input and first hand experience from development workers and volunteers are perfect resources for successful public awareness activities. The lack of history in development cooperation explains the low public awareness in NMS on problems in the global South and the demand for more expert and volunteer sending programmes to southern countries. It's high time for a stronger South-East cooperation across all sectors and actors to become reality!

*Marián Čaučík  
Chair of the Board  
Slovak NGDO platform MVRO*

## CONCORD strategy PUTTING POLITICS BACK INTO DEVELOPMENT

The 2008 conference in Prague created a space for European non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and their partners to have provocative and timely deliberations on development paradigms. This very much needed exercise has sparked an honest appraisal of our actions as development actors and came at an opportune moment for the European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development CONCORD. Coinciding with the initial stages of our next strategic planning process, the Prague conference has inspired CONCORD members to challenge the institutional approach, which has taken politics out of development.

Following the Prague conference, at the General Assembly of June 2008, CONCORD members asked themselves what it means to be “political”. From our perspec-

tive we must challenge the de-politicisation of development which sees donors more comfortable dealing with the technical problems of development rather than the political and economical issues that underpin it. The pre-General Assembly on the strategic plan in October was a key moment to move forward on this issue. At the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra in September, CONCORD demonstrated and reinforced its capacity for political commitment. In keeping with the timetable for the next strategic plan for 2009-2015, this is what we are moving towards: a strong confederation that fights first at the highest political level for the policy foundations and principles themselves, and which, at the same time, is also able to influence the technical and operational aspects of these policies.

Development paradigms influence not only our actions but also shape our understanding of what we are striving to achieve. In this regard, the discussions in Prague also stimulated the participants to rethink their development objectives. As agents of change, NGOs have a responsibility to address the root causes of poverty and inequality and challenge the political status quo that upholds global injustice. Promoting gender equality and a human rights based approach to development and strengthening the North-South partnership are without a doubt some of the fundamental issues that the Prague conference has raised and that CONCORD members will have to find ways to address within the context of their next strategic planning process.

*Justin Kilcullen  
CONCORD President*

# Key note speeches of the 2008 Prague conference

## ARE WE ON THE RIGHT TRACK?

PARADIGM REVIEW BY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOs) AS DEVELOPMENT ACTORS

*These speeches were summarised by TRIALOG with permission from the key note speakers.*

### CHICO WHITAKER, BRAZIL

*Member of the World Social Forum (WSF) International Council*

When I speak about different approaches to development, my main concern is to make a clear conceptual distinction between development and economic growth. They are accompanied by completely different kinds of logic.

The logic of growth does not include the necessary redistribution of wealth, something that is vital to development, but it is caught in the logic of productivity. If we confuse development with simple economic growth, where people are seen as consumers, not as citizens, the situation is one of competition, with the main goal one of profit.

The logic of development is completely different; cooperation in the place of competition and a different conception of wealth; one that is not financial. Development values equality, real democracy, and human needs, which are put above profit. Nature is respected and power is used to serve rather than to dominate.

In Brazil, the focus of those in power is on growth and financial wealth, despite the massive inequality in the country. Those who do not agree with this do not speak about development, but talk about change. We must change things and enter into another kind of logic! In fact, this means overcoming the economic system; the capitalist system of economic growth.

“ My main concern is to make a clear conceptual distinction between development and economic growth. ”

Civil society is vital in this process if we want to raise development concerns above growth aims, and has also been crucial for the World Social Forum, which is and was always a space allowing CSOs to discuss how to build a new post-capitalist system. It works in a different way from governments, embracing its diversity and with the use of network systems rather than



*Working group with Chico Whitaker*

pyramids of power. Cooperation is very important – learning from each other, deciding by consensus and finding new ways of working politically. Change is necessary not only within the structures but also in terms of personal behaviour; the way we view the world and act.

Another world is possible, but more than this, it is absolutely necessary. It is necessary because we want justice and absolutely urgent because of the ecological problems the world is facing.

### REBECCA TANUI, KENYA

*Coordinator of the Building Eastern Africa Community Network (BEACON)*

Africa is a diverse continent of people with different needs. What development means to us is very complex. Development is a way of reaching an acceptable standard of living for all people. It means that people have the basic things they need to live in dignity. This can only come about if they have opportunities and can make informed decisions about how to improve their living standards.

Many important issues are linked to these opportunities and decisions. One is the respect for human rights, which can create an environment conducive to development. Another issue is the fair distribution of national resources. Then, the interaction between issues of governance and democracy with development, shows that genuine democracy characterised by the rule of law and respect for human rights cannot be maintained unless people

enjoy a minimum standard of living. Justice – a reliable independent judicial system, the principle of equality before the law and freedom of opinion for all – is a precondition of democracy. Human security is a recognition of the need for peace and security as a backdrop to development. Without peace, there cannot be any development. The question of sustainable development must be addressed in light of the problems of the market driven economy. Communities need to be involved to build a sustainable environment.

“ What we expect from civil society partners in the North is support in advocacy. ”

We should also consider the role of civil society. Civil society plays an important role in the democratisation process; as an advocate for the rights of minority and marginalised groups and as an agent for community empowerment. CSOs in the South face the challenge of sustainability since they are not supported by governments.

What we expect from civil society partners in the North is support in advocacy, and a sharing of experiences between actors around the world. We need to interlink to challenge but also to act in the North and South on policy issues that are unfriendly to the South.

The key challenge we face is empowering people to determine their own development. People in Africa are poor because they are not empowered. We have to place people in the centre of development!

## T. RAJAMOORTHY, MALAYSIA

*Legal advisor to the Third World Network*

As we consider development paradigms, global hunger and an impending global depression are haunting the world. The need for alternatives has never been so pressing.

Asia has offered development paradigms that have challenged other models. The initial challenge came from the East Asian countries Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, followed by a second tier of South East Asian countries: Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand.

In the Asian model state intervention in the economy did not impede economic growth and development; economic growth did not rely on full-blown trade, investment and financial liberalisation; public enterprises played a significant role in development; and intellectual property regimes were shown not to be the only way to guarantee industrial development.

Taking Malaysia as an example, it is clear that the country has developed dramatically over recent years. Malaysia halved its levels of absolute poverty every fifteen years after 1970, so that by the early years of the new millennium, just 5.1% of households were poor. This was achieved through state intervention, with targeted poverty reduction measures. One way in which the state intervened was through regulating foreign direct investment reducing from 65% of the economy being foreign-owned in 1970, to just 28% by 1995. Regulation rather than deregulation was the crucial tool that reduced poverty and maintained peace in the country.

“ Regulation rather than deregulation was the crucial tool that reduced poverty. ”

India and China emerged on the scene as new economic dynamos, but following their accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the liberalisation of agriculture led to price instability. This just goes to show that, contrary to the claims of neo-liberal ideologues, liberalisation is no magic wand that guarantees development. It should be undertaken cautiously and it is an open question whether it should ever be undertaken in the agricultural sector.

Although Asia has offered alternative models of development, there are still concerns regarding them. They are not informed by the spirit of democratic par-

ticipation and decision-making, although civil society has developed along with societies. Secondly, they, like the neo-liberal model, are inherently unsustainable, relying on systems of production that must continually grow and expand.

## OLGA PONIZOVA, RUSSIA

*Executive Director of Eco-Accord Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development*

The NGO Eco-Accord works in Russia and 11 countries of the former Soviet Union that are at various stages of transition from totalitarian to democratic societies, from centralised to market economies. During discussions organised by our centre, participants have brought

Sustainable development principles should be included in policies at all levels, to ensure the links between economic, social and environmental problems are taken into account.

“ The specific situation of countries in transition should be taken into account. ”

Making global trade work for people is crucial to achieving sustainable development and poverty eradication. Economies in transition should be able to benefit from the same flexibility as developing countries when negotiating membership in the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Financing for development is another area that can strengthen the foundation



Panel: Olga Ponizova, Justin Kilcullen (Chair), T. Rajamoorthy, Chico Whitaker, Rebecca Tanui

up several issues they consider crucial for development.

Debates and talks about development tend to involve countries from the North or South, but not those in between, those in transition. These societies still have economic, social and environmental problems too, and we believe additional targeted assistance should be made available to such states.

Good governance is essential, and CSOs have an important role to play in contributing to the establishment of good governance. There needs to be good administration, independent and respected courts, media freedom, no corruption, respect for human rights and the engaged participation of civil society groups.

for trade justice. Enforcing international legislation can curb the illegal transfer of funds from developing countries and economies in transition. The specific situation of countries in transition should be taken into account.

I am extremely pleased that CSOs have started this global dialogue. As CSOs, we can network, exchanging information between countries all over the world and showing our solidarity; we can run public campaigns in donor and recipient countries to increase awareness of sustainable development; and we can lobby for real change.

Russia is also becoming a donor country, but there are no public debates and there is no civil society involvement in this field. We need to start this debate.

# Macedonia on the way into the EU

## THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Macedonia is an Official Development Assistance (ODA) recipient country. The major donors are the EC, the US and the Netherlands. The problems the country, an EU candidate since 2005, is facing are a result of a protracted transition and difficult political and institutional consolidation since independence in 1991: a high unemployment rate (around 30%), a low level of education, a high level of poverty and high regional disparities. In this context, it is obvious that when one thinks of development cooperation in Macedonia, it is thought of as internal or domestic development foremost. This is also how local civil society organisations (CSOs) work and understand development currently.

This inward focus, however, is not necessarily a disadvantage for development cooperation in the EU context. Local CSOs currently work as recipients of development assistance. Their experience on the recipient side of "the chain" provides them with a direct insight on how to manage projects

and how EU institutions and procedures function; an insight that will be highly useful as future international development actors once the country joins the EU.

The main present challenge for CSOs is to see the EU not just as a donor but as a partner with political leverage and pressure, which in the accession process can help to effectively and swiftly solve some of the country's development problems. The challenge is great as the EU, with the withdrawal of other bilateral donors from the country, is filling the gaps as the main donor of civil society activities. The role of CSOs as implementers versus policy actors in this context is extremely challenging.

Another invaluable characteristic of Macedonian CSOs and the country as future international development actors is the experience of transition from a communist state-driven economy and society to a democratic and capitalist-driven one. This is a similar background to that of the coun-

tries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, all of which are top candidates to become future ODA priority countries for Macedonia. Here, the lessons learned on transformation from a recipient to a donor country could be particularly important.

CSOs have already started showing an interest in the topic, most recently through co-organising a TRIALOG conference and training event in Skopje in October 2008. It is the first time such an awareness raising and capacity-building event in development cooperation has been taken up so early in the EU accession process of a country.

In sum, the development work in the country has made CSOs into effective project implementers. Now the challenge is to make them actors and equal partners in policy-making at the European and national levels.

*Tanja Hafner Ademi  
Project Officer  
Macedonian Centre for  
International Cooperation*

# Civil society development in Moldova

## THE ROLE OF THE EU

The situation of civil society in Moldova has slightly improved over the past 4-5 years but not in all sectors. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in the social field are well-organised and interlinked. NGOs engaged in advocacy however are hardly visible. The public knows little about the sector: 40% do not know what an NGO is. NGOs still need to gain the population's trust.

The legislation provides a relatively favourable environment for civil society. However, low administrative capacity and awareness, particularly within law enforcement bodies, are cause for concern. The EU should offer financial assistance that is conditional on the progress of reforms and be more inventive and realistic in monitoring the actions of the government. One possibility could be to establish regular consultations with Moldovan civil society.

The country suffers from a high incidence of poverty and has become a hub for traffickers in human beings. Due to the

difficult economic situation, the incentive to seek employment abroad remains strong, with a considerable number of citizens falling victim to various forms of trafficking. Moldova falls under the remit of the EU Neighbourhood Policy and Instrument. The Moldovan government adopted an Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (EG-PRSP) in May 2004 and approved a First National Report on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in March 2005. Country-specific MDGs have

been developed. The external assistance strategy for Moldova has a strong focus on poverty reduction, in particular at regional and local community level.

NGOs can play a vital role in solving problems. A stronger collaboration between EU and Moldovan NGOs could strengthen the capacities of civil society in an important way. Moldovan civil society urgently needs exchange of experience between professionals as well as public awareness on the two most challenging problems: human trafficking and emigration. The EC Delegation in Moldova should also intensify cooperation with civil society, for example through a mechanism of small grants for local NGO projects.

Probably the most important role of the EU and EU NGOs is to open up possibilities for partnerships with Moldovan organisations in order to strengthen civil society in both Moldova and the EU.

*Anna Balmus  
Vice-President  
Association of Professional  
Women of Moldova*



*IT training as a measure to prevent trafficking*

# The Mediterranean region

TIME FOR NEW MINDSETS TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

The Mediterranean as a region faces particular development challenges, linked to the gaps between the developed and developing countries. Another major challenge in the region is Israel's continuing military occupation of Palestine – a fact many analysts point to as having led to the failure of the Barcelona process, a partnership between the EU and several Mediterranean countries launched in 1995. It is hard to discuss development paradigms in the Mediterranean if these two points are not taken into account. Of course the region is vulnerable due to a plethora of other causes, not least the scarcity of water, desertification, limits to food production and a highly polluted sea (which means depletion). Furthermore recent scientific research on the Mediterranean indicates that climate change will exacerbate many of the region's existing problems.

It was Einstein who said that you cannot find the solution to a problem with the same mindset that created the problem in the first place. That is why I am personally so sceptical of tweaking some policy instruments, while remaining firmly stuck within the same old policy mindsets and

frameworks that have not brought about the desired changes. The whole discourse around the Union for the Mediterranean, which reinforced the Barcelona process in 2008, did not really try to learn any lessons



TRIALOG platform-building seminar in Cyprus

from the failure of the original process; so I share little hope of it contributing firmly towards the urgent and necessary solutions to the problems in the region.

We move towards solutions when we open up democratic spaces to get people together to debate, propose next steps

and act. This year, within the Maltese NGDO Platform SKOP, we are opening up a Working Group on the Mediterranean, with a particular focus on Palestine. We hope that this will be one of the spaces to put forward policy proposals that really respond to the Mediterranean reality.

Outside the dominant mindset, we need to squarely debate:

- The protection and sustenance of bio-cultural diversity;
- Freedom of movement;
- Strengthening civil society, building alliances among autonomous civil society actors, and creating solidarity networks;
- The need to move beyond infinite growth and towards elegant sufficiency; and
- The political will to put an end to the military occupation in Palestine and dismantle the Israeli "apartheid wall".

It is through such debates that we would like to answer the question: "Are we on the right track?" which was posed to civil society organisations from different world regions at the 2008 Prague conference.

*Vince Caruana*  
Chair of the Board  
Maltese NGDO Platform SKOP

## TRIALOG

A project to raise awareness of development issues in the enlarged EU.

### Objective

Strengthening development cooperation through the smooth and full integration of development NGOs (NGDOs) from New EU Member States (NMS) and Accession Countries (AC) into European networks.

### Activities

**Capacity Building:** training on development topics, EC funding and NGO working tools, study visits, internships

**Platforms:** support for the creation and strengthening of national NGDO platforms, integration into CONCORD

**Networking:** liaison with key actors, opportunities for mutual learning, finding partners for joint projects, support for attending conferences

**Policy:** strengthening capacities for participation in debates at national and EU levels, facilitating the CONCORD Working Group on Enlargement,

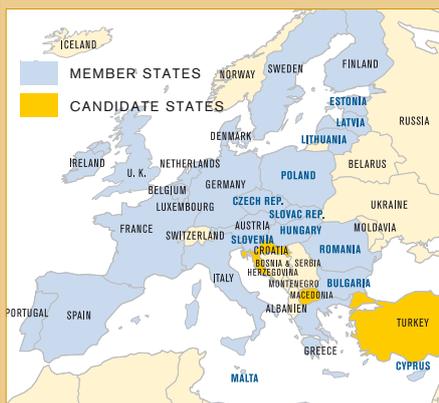
Pre-Accession and Neighbourhood (EPAN)

**Advocacy:** support for joining international campaigns, making the voice of NMS/AC heard

**Information:** online NGO Database, TRIIALOG Information Service (TIS), publications, 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 (83.6%), consortium partners and private European sources (12.4%), Austrian Development Cooperation (4.0%). Head Office in Vienna, Liaison Office in Brussels. TRIIALOG started in March 2000, the project is now in its third phase (2006 – September 2009).

### Consortium partners

HORIZONT3000 (Austria) – Lead agency  
Brot für die Welt (Germany)  
Licht für die Welt (Austria)  
AGEH (Germany)  
eRko (Slovakia)  
Polska Akcja Humanitarna (Poland)  
Ekumenická akademie Praha (Czech Rep.)  
CONCORD  
Kopin (Malta) – European partner

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# FoRS for civil society development effectiveness

PROGRAMME OF THE CZECH NGDO PLATFORM FOR THE EU PRESIDENCY 2009



FoRS General Assembly  
in May 2008

In the first half of 2009, the Czech Republic will become the second country from the 12 new member states to hold the EU presidency. During that period, the international scene will see crucial follow-ups of the 2008 revision

of the Paris Declaration and the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus. Moreover June 2009 will feature the European parliamentary elections.

The Czech development NGO platform FoRS took up

the challenge of the ongoing processes by choosing the hot topic of the **development effectiveness of civil society organisations** (CSOs) as the primary theme for actions during the Czech EU presidency.

In June 2008, the Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness was launched as a global civil society self-driven process. CSOs from around the world have acknowledged their obligation to take forward and lead a process to improve their own effectiveness as development actors. The global effectiveness framework for CSOs is to be proposed by late 2012.

The FoRS presidency programme was designed to engage the Czech NGDO

constituency to contribute to the global process through reflecting on its own development experience gained during the implementation of Czech development projects.

The second thematic priority of FoRS is **good governance**. FoRS would like to bring together two dimensions: "good governance and development" and "pro-democracy and the political dimension". Other selected topics include development education, sustainable technologies for sustainable development, migration and development, and agriculture and food security.

Jana Krczmářová  
Director  
FoRS Secretariat

## Indicative FoRS Presidency Programme:

**Jan./Feb. 2009:** 3 Expert Seminars – Sustainable Technologies for Sustainable Development, Migration and Development, Agriculture and Food Security

**March 9–11, 2009:** Roundtable "Development Cooperation, Good Governance and Mainstreaming of Human Rights and Democracy Conditionality" organised as part of the Prague Democracy Conference

**May/June 2009:** International Conference on Development Education

**June 2009** – Main FoRS Presidency Event: Conference on CSO Development Effectiveness



## Useful Weblinks:

**Czech NGDO platform  
FoRS:**

[www.fors.cz](http://www.fors.cz)

**Open Forum for  
CSO Development  
Effectiveness:**

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

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In association with  
European NGO confederation  
for relief and development

CONCORD

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