

**Africa Regional Consultation of the Open Forum for CSO Development
Effectiveness, January 27-28, 2010**

Recording of Presentations

Presentation 1.

**Background to the Open Forum: From Aid Effectiveness to Development
Effectiveness.**

By Richard Ssewakiryanga, Henri Valot, Bakary Doumbia, Momar Talla, Kane and Firmin Adjahossou.

- ❖ In many countries, the Paris Declaration has not been well followed by both donors and recipient governments. So much aid was given out without much effectiveness in the delivery of aid and development.
- ❖ In 2008 the Accra meeting was reviewing where we were at in the implementation of the PD. Civil societies became engaged in this process and there was a feeling of the need to see what civil societies do, in receiving, giving and monitoring of aid.
- ❖ How they related with the state and donors. The PD was to go till 2011; the AAA was looking at what needs to be accelerated to achieve the PD thus a recommitment.
- ❖ CSOs to monitor and engage on Aid with governments and donors but also look into their internal mechanisms.
- ❖ This is a development effectiveness debate. Donors did not understand development effectiveness.
- ❖ Aid is not about development, but money being channeled through recipients.
- ❖ Development effectiveness is about democracy and human rights.
- ❖ Governments challenged CSOs about their relationship with others and their effectiveness of delivery of service and aid. This is a global process aimed at convincing the world that CSOs are not only agents of development but also legitimate but also those do so with integrity.
- ❖ In Africa how effective are CSOs? Governments say they do not know how legitimate and accountable we are.
- ❖ How do we work? It is not all CSOs that are serious in terms of their effectiveness.
- ❖ This is what the Open forum process is trying to address. E.g. the new NGO act in Zambia is not enabling, so is Ethiopia, they cannot get funding from outside. There is a big question about the legitimacy of CSOs from churches, NGOs, to trade unions etc.
- ❖ Who are we? Who is a member of Africa CSO? Who has mandated us? Are we credible? Do we have performance indicators?
- ❖ Political authority is putting up platforms to inhibit the work of CSOs,
- ❖ Do the laws in our countries allow our operations? How do we work at all levels to make sure that we have the right environment for solutions to poverty and the things we are against?

- ❖ PD is interested in the mechanism not the impact of aid.
- ❖ The PD discussion was earlier on a government/donor issues.
- ❖ Budgetary support comes out in the PD. This is an agreement that financing has only to be through the budget. This principle when used got the government of Senegal spending more than it had at hand. PD was drafted without conceptualizing impact and without CSOs input.
- ❖ As we criticize others we must also be able to be seen to be effective.
- ❖ It is left to us to let our critics see that we are credible.
- ❖ Are civil societies trusted today as it was 10 years ago?
- ❖ Huge monies are being channeled through the CSO e.g. World vision's budget is 5billion.
- ❖ World vision must therefore align to country priorities.
- ❖ All big providers must engage in constructive development with governments and others to see how their operations add value to the people.
- ❖ We need to prove that as CSOs are able to deliver aid.
- ❖ How does Aid effectiveness facilitate dependency or development?

Presentation 2.

Reflections on the Social, Economic and Political Dynamics in Africa

By Ambassador Patrick Mazimhaka - Former Deputy Chair of the African Commission of the Africa Union (AU).

At 50 years of AU, it was felt that there was need for Africa to address many shortcomings that were holding it down for the many past years.

The dynamics have been changing since 1945, from desire then to independence, from military rules to the cold war and then the post-cold war, and now we are at another war. Overall three main issues have dominated political dynamics in Africa. These are Security, Governance and Development. If well addressed, these will address the future of Africa.

There is a lot of improvement in governance since the end of the cold war. We can see integration and some movement towards integration. We now have the Africa Union's Conventions on women, children, and prevention of corruption, and also a convention on the Africa court of justice. This tells you that there is for the establishment of better governance. But we need to keep pushing to have the will of the people respected by the leadership.

Change in governance which has characterized the post-cold war era has created weak states. Competition for space - masked as complaint for a legitimate issue - has given room for local conflict.

Relations with our former masters:

It is important for us to understand that development is the work of the government and that it is not the goal of free markets corporations. This explains why in most African states the means of production are dictated by the economies of others not our own. Initially this brings in good results but it later stagnates.

The AU has not better than the countries that make it, by 2007, the AU-EU summit, Africa, Japan, Africa- Caribbean, AU-South Africa etc were regular things. The reasoning was that this will make us get better concessions. Today these others have better ties between themselves and not Africa. The agenda of these meetings are not aimed at Africa's development. The paradox is that Africa peace missions cannot be done without donor funds while Africa has the money to finance its wars. Africa needs Africa-Africa dialogue for security and development. This essentially tells us that setting up of an agenda that is home grown is the best way.

We need to complete the alliances that would make Africa's freedom. A relationship with bilateral donors must be based on country priorities. I believe that APRM is a nice way to start. The civil society could help in developing common benchmarks for CSOs to peer review themselves and others.

Crisis of leadership:

There is need to reshape the direction of our leadership in line with the established benchmarks of good governance and peace. We need to be aware that though elections produce leadership, the quality of that leadership is determined by the voters. Today elections are not giving clear winners and so coalition governments between winners and losers, losers and losers, winners and winners etc is becoming fashionable. In some instances, some of these coalitions have decided that the transition period is permanent. CSOs can help in determining what is good for us. After all, elections need not be violent.

Participants wondered how these emerging trends were affecting Africa's development. They also added that not all Africans were doing what is good for the continent and its people. Participants also wondered whether sub-regionalization was helping Africa to think as one. They also wondered whether APRM was a formidable mechanism towards accountable leadership. They also wondered if it was possible for the African Union to organize a consultation with the African CSOs so that both CSOs and AU may work from the same blue print.

Ambassador Patrick responded by saying that the trend towards coalition government was affecting democracy and that such should not be encouraged. He said that it was difficult to imagine about a united Africa while ethnicity was rife in Africa. This can only be overcome by looking at our commonalities and maximizing on them. He said that the APRM is voluntary process and thus one can be forced to participate. Countries do not want another country to come and scrutinize them –the state is sovereign. He said that there was need for a different kind of training and education that would orient people to a development that will make change. He said that there was also need to structurally direct the AU to become Citizens' organized or not a governments organized platform.

Presentation 3.

Rationale for AACC's Engagement

By AACC General Secretary - Rev. Dr. Andre Karamaga.

AACC is an ecumenical organization est. in April 1963 one day before the African Union. It has 169 members in Africa and claims to represent 120 million Christians.

AACC accepted to be part of the process as a church. AACC being a CSO has been able to coordinate faith based organizations to participate in the 2008 Accra meeting. On coming to office in January 2009, I also revisited AACC's engagement in the process and also visited Concord's office in Brussels. I said that we are interested because we share in the notion of the Open Forum. That is, we are not bound to think like we were created in series, we are to be open.

I noted that we have a number of principles that we share with others among them - credibility, accountability and transparency. We can therefore work with whoever is interested in these values.

We will speak about development effectiveness and self-sustainability than aid effectiveness for the following reasons.

Money sent to Africa may be more than that of the Marshall plan in Europe but the reality on the ground tells us that this is not true. Poverty continues to exist even in small localities way after well articulated proposal about Eradication of poverty have been implemented.

We have a commonality between NGOs and Churches, the Church preaches the fullness of life. Indeed, there is a lot of growth in the church but it is a growth in misery not of prosperity. So the AACC is in the open forum to discuss with other actors about bringing real change and to facilitate the process on the Africa continent to bring change.

We believe that we are not to implement that agenda of the Paris Declaration but to have our own agenda with the intention of bringing hope and dignity to Africa. Following the reality on the ground over the last few years about the amounts of aid received and to whom it is channeled to without much change, we are now told that we cannot change our situation. Is our brain smaller? No, but have we proved that we can reverse our situation?

The Manchester conference of 1945 where you Africans sat and said Africa must be free from colonialism, is was the beginning of our freedom. In 50 years their agenda was achieved. This proves that Africa can achieve its desires. But we are still enslaved economically and spiritually. How can we get to the next level of economic and spiritual independence for hope and dignity?

For the AACC the Open Forum is a place for free expressions that will usher in national forums towards the betterment of the people of our countries.

Those that are Gurus in this process will help us in understanding the process while the others who have just come will have the opportunity to bring in their strengths. No single donor country gives more than 7% of their GDP this makes me believe that we will not be bound by the Paris Declaration and that the volume of aid will not dominate our discussions.

We need to see this as the moment at which we chart our own destiny towards hope and dignity.

Presentation 4:

Legitimacy, Transparency and Accountability

By Thomas Deve (UN- Millennium Campaign Africa Office)

We are to hold governments into account and the Outreach Tool kit answers all these questions you are asking which can be summed up as about ownership. The 1990 African Charter for Popular participation, (the Arusha Charter) was aimed at asking the same questions by challenging Donors and southern elites to let the ordinary citizenry determine what is good or bad for themselves.

We in the civil society have weaknesses that cause us to call ourselves “the evil society”. So who are we for us to understand ownership?

- ❖ It is shared vision that can move us from aid to development effectiveness.
- ❖ Do we have an exit plan on aid? Development effectiveness is about rights which must be articulated.
- ❖ CSOs are about social justice.
- ❖ They are there to make sure there is right for development and not right to aid.
- ❖ Our structures in the south must be there to advance our course and so must be any North- South relationships that we get into. For instance why should the AU allow northern NGOs to participate in its meetings while African CSOs are not? Does the AU see CSOs as agents of imperialism?
- ❖ We need architecture of international co-operation that allows a move towards sustainable development and not aid development because Aid has not developed any country.
- ❖ APRM was to be conditionality for aid and was therefore refused by some leaders.

Tharcise Gatwa

- ❖ The transparency on resources by both governments and CSOs must come clear.
- ❖ The position of churches and CSOs in relation to banking and other aspects other than political processes is also important because these areas also shape our economies.
- ❖ We cannot live on the past and lament about the past tragedies of slavery, colonization, and now failed independence. We need to get our act together without forfeiting the past.
- ❖ We need to claim certain legitimacy, for instance as CSOs and Churches do we question the wrongs that happen in our organizations like we question politicians?
- ❖ Self examination is going to be our sign of hope. The sign of hope can be seen in the many success stories and we need to document them.

Presentation 5.

The Tool Kit by Rose Wanjiru

In this presentation, participants were informed that the tool kit is a resource to support Open Forum's consultations. Purpose of the toolkit is to provide:

- ❖ Operational definitions e.g. CSOs DE, principles, standards
- ❖ Highlights various issues that have been key in the dialogue on CSOs development effectiveness. Country consultations have to be contextual and therefore the issues may vary from country to country
- ❖ highlights principles that have emerged during various consultation - as examples/guidelines and not as prescriptions
- ❖ How the consultations should be carried out including a proposed program (3 days – 2 CSOs & 1 multistakeholders)
- ❖ Provides templates for reporting

Reactions on the tool kit.

The following reactions came up: -

1. Content i.e. what the CSOs understand by National Consultations
2. The number of participants to be invited, which CSOs, methodology etc
3. Different platforms and how to work with the AACC
4. Budget
5. Dates of the Consultations.

In responding to the above questions, participants were requested to refer to the tool kit since it contained all the answers to the above questions. However it was mentioned that that there might be variations due to the dynamics in each country. Moreover, all the consultations should take place before Mid July 2010 since the Open Forum Assembly is in August 2010. Thus from March to June 2010 most of the consultations must take place.

Concerning the platforms, it was mentioned that the criteria of selection will be:

- ❖ Have expertise in conducting national consultations
- ❖ Participated in the Aid Effectiveness agenda
- ❖ Participated in the regional consultation

A platform that is involved in at least one of the above process with expertise in organizing national consultation will be selected in each country.

On the relationship between the CSOs and the AACC, it was mentioned that AACC is one of the platforms mandated to lead and manage the funds for the National Consultations in Africa. The CSOs will be accountable to the AACC and AACC will be accountable to GFG. The AACC is in contact with the CSOs office in Brussels which channels money through AACC. The AACC will channel the money through the National Christian Councils which in turn will channel the money to the CSOs organizing the National Consultations in that country. In countries where there is no National Christian Council, the AACC will look for a credible CSO where an MOU will be entered. Where the CSOs want the money to

be sent directly to them, they will need to enter an MOU directly with the Brussels office. The AACC will handle the follow up and work together with the GFG members who will also participate in the National Consultations.

Concerning the Budget, participants were informed that the available budget per country is \$12,000. The allocation did not consider the size of the African Countries. However, the scale used to allocate the funds the organizer will look into it. Concord offered to provide funds for translation.

The platforms to choose the appropriate methodology to use in the National Consultations and ensure that the participation is all inclusive.

The countries that have been selected to carry out the National Consultations are:

-

Central Africa

- ❖ Democratic Republic of Congo
- ❖ Rwanda
- ❖ Cameroon
- ❖ Angola

Southern Africa

- ❖ Zimbabwe
- ❖ Zambia
- ❖ Mozambique
- ❖ South Africa

East and Horn of Africa

- ❖ Ethiopia
- ❖ Kenya
- ❖ Uganda
- ❖ Tanzania

West Africa

- ❖ Nigeria
- ❖ Benin
- ❖ Mali
- ❖ Liberia
- ❖ Senegal
- ❖ Niger
- ❖ Ghana

Dates of the National Consultations

There were tentative dates proposed for the National Consultations. However, participants could not agree. They proposed that the participants go back home and consult their constituent and submit the dates to the AACC not later than close of business on 10th February 2010.

WAY FORWARD

The following was agreed as the way forward: -

- National Consultations to be participatory and inclusive
- Organize a preparatory meeting to at least brainstorm on how best to organize the National consultations
- The National Consultations to be organized as per the directions in the tool kit.

- To establish a strong secretariat that will report after the National Consultations
- Give a deadline on when to give the report and account to the AACC after the National Consultations
- Think about fundraising and the sustainability of the CSOs.

Closing Remarks

Participants expressed their satisfaction with the meeting saying that it was fruitful and had achieved the intended objectives. The meeting was well facilitated and they commended the AACC for this.

On behalf of the AACC Leadership, the participants were assured of AACC leadership and her commitment beyond the National Christian Councils to see the fruitful results. There will be synergy between the AACC and the CSOs.