

Meeting Report

Meeting of the Global Facilitation Group for the Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness

Kuala Lumpur, Dynasty Hotel, 20 and 21 January 2009

1. Introduction

A first informal meeting of the Global Facilitation Group (GFG) was held on 30 August 2008 on the occasion of the CSO Parallel Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra. Only 15 of the 25 GFG member organisations were represented at this meeting. In Accra, it was decided to create three working groups to carry forward the preparatory work for the Open Forum (work plan, outreach and fund raising).

The Kuala Lumpur meeting was the first formal meeting of the GFG with all but four member organisations being represented¹. The key objective of the meeting was to reach consensus on outstanding issues (such as political dialogue, management and coordination with the International Coordinating Group), to review and finalise the results of the three working groups and to set the key directions for the Open Forum up to the next High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (scheduled for late 2011).

This meeting report summarises the discussions and decisions that were taken at the meeting in Kuala Lumpur.

2. Update on CSO development effectiveness from all regions

In this session, GFG members reported on issues and experiences related to CSO development effectiveness from their region.

- Nordic+: The Nordic+ group fears that the Open Forum process might become a donor trap and has certain reservations against it. The group has commissioned INTRAC to prepare a paper on how a CSO development effectiveness framework could look like.
- SANSAD: The financial and food crises have significant repercussions on development efforts in India.
- APRN: Given the diversity of CSOs, it will be a challenge to spread the results from Accra all around Asia. Workshops on the implementation of the Accra Agenda for Action have already been held (regional workshop for Central Asia and national workshop in Mongolia).
- Care: It is not yet clear whether the financial crisis has only a psychological or a real financial impact on fund raising. In any case, Care US had to reduce unrestrictive funding, which impacts heavily on its ability to work effectively. The inauguration of the new US administration is definitely an opportunity, but given the magnitude of the financial crisis, their room for manoeuvre might be limited.

¹ See annex 1 for a list of participants

- Plan:** Plan International tries to involve all their branches in the process. Plan also aims to formulate a response to the OECD paper on international NGOs².
- CCIC:** A new legislation has been put in place in Canada that requests that the allocation of Canada's official development assistance to different countries be consistent with human rights standards. This will open up avenues for new advocacy activities.
- ALOP:** The Accra Agenda for Action is very helpful. Aid becomes increasingly political. Colombia pushes for a strong role in the international debate on aid effectiveness and wants to host the next High-Level Forum in 2011.
- CONCORD:** The follow-up of the European Commission and the Council to Accra has been rather meagre. In Europe, there are currently approximately ten national processes on CSO development effectiveness. Development education is becoming an increasingly important subject in terms of effectiveness.
- UNITAS:** UNITAS would like to reformulate the aid agenda in Bolivia to overcome excessive aid conditionality and neo-colonial attitudes. After the end of the Bush administration, it seems that there is a new and fresh wind blowing.
- InterAction:** With the inauguration of the Obama administration, there is a new momentum. InterAction has put together a briefing book on issues such as climate change and gender for Obama's transitional team. Also senators are being updated.
- Civicus:** Civicus participated in the last Advisory Board meeting of the United Nation's Development Cooperation Forum. The case book published by the Advisory Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness shows how much effort CSOs put in demonstrating and improving their effectiveness.
- ACFID:** It is yet to be determined how the principles of development effectiveness apply to the pacific islands. They are not yet involved in the process. Outreach in this region must be very careful, as Europe has left bad traces (nuclear tests of France!).
- ITUC:** The challenge will be to link sectoral concerns with country-level based platforms.
- CC Nicaragua:** CSOs and other development stakeholders always risk siding with governments instead of the poor. Development aid should be perceived of as a public human good. Our main concern should be human rights.
- Caritas/CIDSE:** Development NGOs should learn from the humanitarian sector.
- IBON:** Workshops have been held in Central Asia, South Asia, West Africa, Eastern Africa, the Philippines and Mongolia. There is still confusion among CSOs as to the difference between CSO development effectiveness and aid effectiveness. CSO effectiveness has become an important political issue. ForumSyd is to publish a book on CSO partnerships. A primer on CSO effectiveness is to be published by IBON.
- Presidency Group:** The Czech NGDO platform FoRS currently implements a programme on CSO development effectiveness (case studies, conference on CSO development effectiveness in June).
- ACT Development:** A small working group on effectiveness is being formed to carry forward the work on CSO effectiveness.
- Afrodad:** The focus of Afrodad's interest is on the enabling environment.
- APFWLD:** Women groups suffer from lack of funding. Many organisations risk closing down over the next months. Micro-credit funds are currently the only form of aid that comes in for women in the region, but is a bad

² Dirk-Jan Koch, A Paris Declaration for international NGOs?, OECD Development Centre, Policy Insight No. 73, August 2008

instrument for development and is anti-women. In particular private foundations invest a lot in this instrument. Lack of funding is exacerbated by the fact that Asia is currently a hotspot in the war on terror. Many donors shy away from providing funds for areas in conflict zones.

3. Political dialogue

In the run-up to the meeting, the political dialogue of the GFG with donors and governments has been identified as one of the weakest areas of the Open Forum preparatory work. There was thus an urgent need to set clear directions and also to revisit previous discussions on the issue in the light of developments that have been unfolding since the Accra High-Level Forum.

3.1. Minimum standards for an enabling environment

It was recognised that there are two sets of factors that determine CSO development effectiveness: internal factors, related to CSO practices and relationships, that can be shaped by CSOs themselves and external factors that are shaped by governments and donors. Both sets of factors are equally important in enhancing CSO development effectiveness. This must be reflected by the design of the consultations that are being held under the umbrella of the Open Forum.

Based on a proposal presented by Antonio Tujan (IBON), it was therefore decided to ask CSOs taking part in country-level consultations to develop, in addition to principles, guidelines on how to implement these principles and mechanisms for context-relevant mechanisms, also minimum standards for defining an enabling environment in which CSOs can maximise their contributions to development. It was proposed that a global set of minimum standards could be a major input for the next High-Level Forum in 2011.

The advantage of this proposal is to give the political dialogue of the Open Forum a positive drive. Instead of basing the dialogue with governments and donors on a negative perception of existing disabling environments, CSOs will be able to base their dialogue on constructive proposals on how to improve the environments in which they work.

A common CSO position on minimum standards for an enabling environment could be submitted to donors and governments at the next High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011 (in addition to evidence-based research on CSO development effectiveness).

3.2. Target institutions of the GFG's political dialogue

It was decided that the GFG will seek a political dialogue on behalf of the Open Forum with the OECD-DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness as well as the United Nations. The UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), the UN Development Cooperation Forum (UNDCF), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN NGO Liaison Service and the UN Human Rights Council have been cited as potential UN bodies and organisations that could be involved in the process. Regarding the Working Party, GFG representation could be either direct or indirectly (through the ICG³). Should there be direct GFG representation at the Working Party, the GFG representative would have to deal also with issues that are not covered by the Open Forum process.

³ Each delegation to the Working Party is entitled to invite external speakers to meetings.

In addition to the Working Party and the UN, one participant also raised the idea of reviving the dissolved Advisory Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness. Another participant referred to the idea of a donor reference group for the GFG.

Participants discussed the pros and cons of engaging with the two bodies. Regarding the UNDCF, it was noted that it does not deal with the Accra Agenda for Action and seems to have little capacity to deal with development effectiveness. The overall advantage of the UN, however, is that it gathers a more diverse and broader set of governments than the OECD. If the GFG wants to do more than to preach to the converted and to deal also with CSO-averse or even repressive regimes, it should focus on the UN. Another case in point for the UN is the possibility that the next High-Level Forum might be co-sponsored by the UN.

On the other hand, the Working Party was the body giving birth to the Accra Agenda for Action and it will be the Working Party that ensures follow-up to it. Given that paragraph 20 of the Accra Agenda for Action is a key concern for the Open Forum process, the GFG cannot fail to be represented at the Working Party.

Also the potential role the World Bank in the political dialogue was discussed. Some participants recalled their obstructive attitude towards CSOs in Accra.

3.3. Objectives of the GFG's political dialogue

Three objectives have been cited for the political dialogue of the Open Forum: (1) promoting an enabling environment for CSOs; (2) building the awareness and understanding of donors and governments regarding CSO principles for development effectiveness; and (3) promoting the concept of development effectiveness among a wider range of development actors. CSOs should also use the political dialogue to document and demonstrate their effectiveness.

3.4. Other issues

It was recalled that the political dialogue of the Open Forum will take place on multiple levels: country-level, regional and international level. The GFG will only act on the international level.

It was also highlighted that there is a need to include also private foundations, local authorities, the media, parliaments, vertical funds and multilateral funds into the political dialogue of the GFG. Also on country-level, these actors should be part of the multi-stakeholder dialogue.

It was also stressed that through the political dialogue, CSOs should not only discuss with the usual suspects, but also with governments and donors that are less CSO-friendly or even repressive. Issues to be discussed should also include access to conflict zones, protection of CSO employees, fragile states and repressive regimes.

Furthermore, it was noted that communication work should be an integral component of the political strategy.

The GFG has mandated a working group to develop a political strategy. Members of this working group include Deepali Sood, Tony Tujan (as advisor), Henri Valot, Charles Mutasa (proposed by Tirivangani Mutazu), Ivan Garcia Marenco and Brian Tomlinson (as advisor). The group will prepare a first draft by end-February (in time for the meeting of the International Coordinating Group in Johannesburg) and produce a final draft by mid-March.

4. Coordination between the International Coordinating Group (ICG) and the Global Facilitation Group (GFG)

The ICG is a manifestation of the Better Aid platform which, in turn, gathers CSOs that identified themselves with the Better Aid position paper on aid effectiveness. Several of the present GFG members are also members of the ICG (Sylvain, Henri, Anna, Tony, Brian). On their meeting in October 2008, the ICG decided to review its mandate, terms of reference, work plan and their position paper. There is currently a very loose relationship between the ICG and the Better Aid platform. The ICG will represent civil society in the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness. The mandate of the ICG rests primarily on the Accra Agenda for Action, including paragraph 20.

It was decided that the first draft of the political strategy that will be developed by a GFG working group will be shared with the ICG at their meeting in Johannesburg end-February.

Regarding the country-level consultations that will be carried out under the umbrella of the Open Forum on the one hand and the ICG on the other hand, it was decided to keep them separate due to substantial divergences, most notably in terms of target audiences.

5. Work plan and budget of the Open Forum

A work plan for the Open Forum has been drafted by a GFG working group following the informal GFG meeting in Accra. At the meeting, several amendments have been proposed to the work plan. A final version that will reflect all proposed changes and decisions taken at the meeting will be approved by the working group in charge of developing the work plan⁴.

5.1. Funding and allocation of funds for country-level consultations

It was recognised that country-level consultations are essential for the Open Forum process. It was decided that the GFG will facilitate and encourage as many country-level consultations as possible and aim to mobilise funding for 50 of them. It was pointed out that many organisations, including national NGDO platforms, are already carrying out consultations on the issue and that these consultations don't incur any costs on the Open Forum. It was also pointed out that domestic resources that will cover some expenses of the consultations will be available in many countries.

Once funding is secured, an agreement on the allocation of financial resources of the Open Forum to countries and organisations must be found. It was decided that decisions on funding allocations should be taken by the GFG based on a proposal to be prepared by the consortium of supporting organisations.

Selection criteria for funding allocations are yet to be defined by the GFG. The selection must take into account an even geographical spread, capacity, a mix of diverse experiences of CSOs (including fragile states and repressive regimes). With respect to capacity, one caveat was put forward: In favouring organisations or countries with sufficient capacity to conduct country-level consultations, the Open Forum will risk excluding a great number of civil society stakeholder that have, traditionally, little capacity, such as peasants' movements and women's movements.

⁴ Members of this working group are Sylvain Browa, Blandine Bouniol, Brian Tomlinson, Henri Valot and Daniel Svoboda.

One participant put forward strong reservations regarding the use of national CSO platforms as organisers for country-level consultations. The Open Forum should not exclusively rely on platforms due to their exclusiveness. In many countries, the bulk of CSOs is not member of the national CSO platform.

5.2. Remit of country-level consultations

There was discussion whether principles and guidelines should weigh equally in the first round of consultations or whether this round should focus on principles. Participants agreed that, in general, it does not make sense to separate discussions on principles from discussions on guidelines – both should therefore take place simultaneously.

Also, participants decided to encourage CSOs to bring forward the multi-stakeholder dialogue on country-level, in the initial work plan proposal scheduled for the second round of country-level consultations in 2010-2011, to the first round in 2009-2010. However, a caveat was put forward in this respect: Countries are in different stages and not all countries might be ready to engage in a multi-stakeholder dialogue already in the first round. Some might need more time to build trust and understanding among each other and towards other development actors. The multi-stakeholder segment in the first round of consultation should therefore not be a mandatory element.

5.3. Other issues related to country-level consultations

Some divergences prevailed among participants regarding the degree to which the GFG should prescribe country-level consultations. While some argued for defining a common reporting standard for these consultations, others made a case for giving them more leeway and to look for diversity. One participant put forward the idea of submitting country-level consultations a number of pre-defined principles for discussion. This proposal did not reach consensus among participants, on grounds that it would make the consultations too prescriptive.

One participant asked the question how the results of already ongoing consultations can be captured.

Several participants expressed their view that there is a need to prepare country-level consultations more thoroughly and that the outreach toolkit would not be sufficient.

5.4. Regional consultations

It was decided that each world region can opt for one of the following options for its regional consultation:

- The first one frames regional consultations as preparatory workshops that can be held before the start of country-level consultations in a given region. These workshops would gather organisers of consultations (including from country-level, thematic level and sectoral level) in order to start a consultation process.
- The second option frames regional consultations as workshops that are held after the conclusion of country-level consultations in a given region. Their objective would be to take stock of the discussion, to synthesise the outcomes and to agree on a regional position on CSO development effectiveness.

Participants also stressed the need for a well thought-out definition and denomination of regions. Southern Africa and the Pacific have not been explicitly mentioned as a region or as part of the region in the initial work plan proposal. This should be rectified.

5.5. Thematic consultations

There was also substantial debate on the thematic consultations on the international level that are provided for in the work plan. Initially, the idea of thematic consultations was put forward at the Exploratory Meeting on CSO Effectiveness in Paris in order to also allow those organisations to contribute to the process that do not fit in any of the existing categories (national, regional, international platforms or networks). This applied in particular to the regional branches of the International Trade Union Confederation.

Several options have been discussed for defining and framing thematic consultations:

- Thematic discussions should allow to get an outside perspective on CSO development effectiveness, in particular from those sectors that have already gained valuable experience (humanitarian sector).
- Thematic discussions should allow to situate the discussion on CSO development effectiveness in specific contexts and thereby test their validity. By this, the Open Forum could demonstrate the applicability of its principles in specific contexts. This, in turn, would enhance the credibility and the political stance of the Open Forum and the GFG. However, one participant questioned the existence of significant differences in terms of principles between different thematic areas (for instance rural and gender) that would justify the need for thematic discussions.
- Thematic discussions should allow to tease out the voice of specific interest groups within civil society and should try to point out the diversity of voices within civil society. GFG members that represent certain interest groups could initiate specific thematic consultations.

No final decision has been taken with respect to thematic discussion. A couple of thematic (or sectoral) consultations have however been proposed: faith-based, women, indigenous, national platforms, trade unions, partnership, humanitarian sector, urban poor, environment, social movements. Recognising that there is need for minimum guidance, there was also the idea of creating a GFG working group to design thematic consultations. The GFG is yet to determine who will be in charge of reaching out to specific sectors or thematic networks.

It was also proposed to try to use existing vehicles and channels to conduct thematic consultations. The Civicus World Assembly has, for instance, been cited as one opportunity to advance certain strands of discussion.

5.6. Budget

Participants stressed the need for prioritising budget items. There was broad consensus that country-level consultations are the most essential element. Other essential budget item should be identified in case there is insufficient funding to fund the whole work plan.

Participants also demanded that, for political reasons, in-kind contributions from CSOs should be taken into account when presenting the budget. In particular travel expenses of GFG delegates whose trips are financed by their sending organisation should be recorded.

Participants also pointed out that financial synergies should be sought with the ICG. If feasible, meetings of the ICG and the GFG should be coordinated.

Overall, the GFG has endorsed the overall structure of the budget and the overall allocation of resources to the different sections.

6. Consortium of supporting organisations

6.1. Consortium

In the run-up to the meeting, a draft proposal has been circulated that sets out the composition and mandate of a consortium of supporting organisations to the GFG. The proposal submitted to the GFG for consideration and endorsement included the following elements⁵:

- Member organisations: All African Conference of Churches, Latin American Association of Development Organisations, Asia Pacific Research Network, InterAction, European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development and Civicus.
- Mandate: provision of technical, logistical and administrative support to the Global Facilitation Group.
- Tasks: facilitating the operations of the GFG, assisting the GFG in developing multi-stakeholder dialogues with key stakeholders, mobilising, managing and reporting on financial resources for the Open Forum process, supporting the implementation of the approved work plan, designing and conducting outreach to make the Open Forum as inclusive as possible.

The GFG has endorsed the mandate and composition of the consortium. The endorsed proposal does reflect amendments proposed at the pre-meeting of potential consortium members (held on 19 January) and at the GFG meeting itself.

The role of Civicus in the consortium was subject of intensive debate. In contrast to the other consortium members (AACC, ALOP, APRN, CONCORD and InterAction), Civicus is an international organisation whose mandate is not bound to a specific world region. Originally, it was planned to only include five regional organisations in the consortium and to divide all outreach activities by region to these five regional organisations (one region, one consortium member).

While the five regional members presented themselves already at the informal GFG meeting in Accra on 30 August 2008 (or immediately afterwards), Civicus expressed its interest only at a later stage. Civicus was therefore asked to prepare a concrete proposal to explain how they see their role in the consortium. Civicus identified two different areas of work:

- to reach out to international NGOs (at international headquarters level only⁶); and
- to bring into the process their specific expertise on accountability, an area in which Civicus runs different programmes⁷.

Participants endorsed this proposal and stressed that Civicus must respect the mandate of the regional consortium members. In particular, Civicus was requested to recognise that outreach to African CSOs will be the mandate of the All African Conference of Churches.

The regional consortium members will be in charge of outreach in their respective region⁸:

- All African Conference of Churches: Africa
- Asia Pacific Research Network: Asia
- Latin American Association of Development Organisations: Latin America and the Caribbean
- CONCORD: Europe

⁵ Potential Consortium members met on 19 January to discuss this proposal and open issues.

⁶ Regional and national branches of international NGOs (INGOs) will fall under the mandate of the respective regional consortium member. Participants recognised that dynamics within INGOs on headquarter and national levels differ from each other and that it will be important to involve both in the process.

⁷ International Accountability Charter, International Advocacy NGOs workshops, programme on legitimacy, transparency and accountability (LTA)

⁸ It was however decided that consortium members should be allowed to delegate the responsibility for outreach in specific countries within their region to other consortium members if they deemed appropriate.

- InterAction: North America and the Pacific

Another strand of discussion on the consortium revolved around the proposed management committee. GFG members feared that this management committee risks undermining the consortium's accountability to the GFG and goes beyond the consortium's mandate. Andreas Vogt (CONCORD) explained that the management committee was included in the mandate on its request in order to ensure the commitment and involvement of senior management staff or board members of each consortium member. Based on the understanding that the management committee will serve mere financial and technical purposes, participants finally agreed to not make a reference to the management committee in the mandate of the consortium.

It was made clear at the meeting that each member organisation of the consortium should be provided with adequate technical and human resources for their respective activities. Funding for these resources will be part of the fund raising activities of the consortium. It was decided that each consortium member should at least have human resources for the Open Forum that correspond to one full-time staff. It was also agreed that consortium members can either recruit one full-time staff that works exclusively for the Open Forum or integrate the Open Forum work into its overall organisational structures.

It was further agreed that the consortium mandate can be reviewed in mid-2010.

Overall, GFG members stressed the need to ensure that the GFG remains the leader of the process and that its mandate will not be undermined by the consortium through the dynamics of the process. Governance and decision-making will continue to lie with the GFG.

6.2. GFG co-chairs

As a means to enhance the GFG's capacities to lead the process, a proposal to elect two co-chairs of the GFG was put on the table. The role of these co-chairs would be to ensure external representation of the GFG as appropriate, to call for and chair GFG meetings and Global Assemblies and to liaise with the consortium. The co-chairpersonship would be conferred to individuals, not to the respective member organisation. Their term would be limited to one year (renewable). One chair should be a man, one a woman; one should be from the South, one should be from the North. Co-chairs should not come from an organisation that is member of the consortium.

GFG members endorsed the proposal to elect co-chairs. Elections will take place following the GFG meeting via e-mail. GFG members also endorsed the composition of the consortium, as well as the amended mandate.

7. Fund raising

7.1. State of play

To date, the preparatory phase of the Open Forum process has been financed by contributions from Austria (€50,000), France (€20,000) and Spain (€51,000). For the subsequent phases of the process more substantial amounts will be needed (around €4.5 million). Fund raising is yet to be started.

Informal donor contacts have already been established, inter alia at the International Forum on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness in Gatineau/Ottawa in February 2008 and at the High-Level Forum in Accra in September 2008. Governments that have shown or expressed their interest in

the process include, among others, Canada, Sweden, Switzerland, Austria, France, Spain, the UK and the US.

7.2. Funding sources

Four possible funding sources were identified for the process:

- Funds from official donors, including middle-income governments (Mexico, Brazil etc.)
- Funds from CSOs: It was decided to launch a call for pledges among CSOs in the weeks to come.
- In-kind contributions from CSOs: For political reasons, the need to highlight in-kind contributions from CSOs (in particular also travel costs to GFG meetings) was stressed.
- Funds from private foundations: It was decided that funds from private foundations will only be accepted subject to the approval of the GFG

7.3. Fund management

The GFG endorsed the plan to establish a dedicated funding pool for the Open Forum process that is distinct from the funding pool of the ICG (the ICG will need US\$3 million over two years to implement its work on the international and country level). Donors will be urged to provide non-earmarked funds for this funding pool.

CONCORD, as coordinator of the consortium of supporting organisations, will act as primary fiscal sponsor for Open Forum resources. This will, however, not prevent other consortium or GFG member organisations to mobilise funds for specific segments of the work plan, as appropriate and depending on their comparative advantage vis-à-vis certain donors (USAID, for instance, would not directly fund CONCORD, but rather provide funding for InterAction). CONCORD will decentralise management of funds (most notably resources for country-level consultations) by region to consortium members.

While it was recognised that some donors (including the Chair of the Working Party) have suggested that UNDP be the fiscal sponsor for Open Form resources, this will be strongly resisted by the GFG, given the very difficult experience of the Advisory Group with UNDP finance regulations and the importance of the principle that CSOs manage the Open Forum.

Donors might shy away from pooled funding with a CSO as fiscal sponsor, as the Open Forum is a new initiative. Arguments for a CSO as fiscal sponsor include harmonisation requirements and respect for multi-actor civil society initiatives. One participant pointed out that there are already pooled funds for CSO initiatives on country-level.

One participant warned that designating a CSO as fiscal sponsor will not necessarily prevent donors from interfering in the management of funds and the implementation of the process. IBON, for instance, managed funds for the Advisory Group but was nonetheless confronted with strong donor interference.

7.4. Earmarked funding

It was agreed not to be dogmatic regarding earmarking. If acceptance of earmarked funds results in more available money, the GFG should not insist on refusing earmarked funds. One participant argued that refusing to earmark funds does not mean that a certain activity is not funded. It would only mean that a donor cannot put their flag on a certain activity. This should be made clear to donors.

When faced with proposals for earmarked grants, the GFG and the supporting organisations should make their case for pooled funding, based on donor commitments made in the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Actions.

7.5. Other issues

It was agreed that GFG members that can raise funds for specific consultations should go forward. The funds that are raised in this way would remain with the respective GFG member organisation. A case in point is the Asia Pacific Forum for Women, Law and Development that could probably raise funds for CSO development effectiveness. It was agreed that other organisations should do likewise.

GFG members also agreed that the national CSO platform is to be contacted, before the consortium or GFG contacts the respective government regarding funding for the Open Forum.

The GFG extended the mandate of the fund raising working group. The members of this working group include Andreas Vogt, Antonio Tujan, Roberto Pinauin, Timo Lappalainen and Daniel Svoboda.

GFG members consider it indispensable for the consortium and the GFG to raise funds for at least 50 country-level consultations. Many donors, it was pointed out, do not have the mechanisms or capacities to mobilise funds at country-level for CSO consultations.

The GFG endorsed the idea of drafting a joint cover letter for the funding proposals of the International Coordinating Group and the Global Facilitation Group. The cover letter is intended to give an overall explanation of the two processes.

8. Any other business

Role of the Asia Pacific Forum for Women, Law and Development in the GFG: While all GFG members (except APFWLD) represent specific regions, APFWLD is expected to represent women in the GFG. Given that the GFG has not decided to allocate some of the funding for country-level consultations for national workshops on gender, the question of the role of APFWLD has become more acute. It was suggested that the role of APFWLD will be to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all consultations of the Open Forum and to also facilitate thematic consultations on the issue.

Next meeting: Two proposals have been put on the table: Prague (Czech Republic) on 21 and 22 June 2009 and Montreal (Canada) end-August (Civics World Assembly). GFG members considered end-August too late and chose therefore Prague. ALOP has proposed to host the following GFG meeting in Latin America in December 2009.

Outreach toolkit: The consultant has produced a first working draft for the GFG. Due to limited time, the meeting could not discuss the toolkit in-depth. GFG members overall gave positive feedback on the working draft and acknowledged the importance of the document. Despite the need to finalise the toolkit as soon as possible, several GFG members expressed the wish to have a thorough discussion on it at the next meeting in Prague. The toolkit will reflect discussions and decisions held at this meeting. The GFG must be given the opportunity to comment on the final draft. The mandate of the working group on outreach has been extended to revising the final draft of the toolkit. Members of the outreach working group include Blandine Bouniol, Henri Valot, Brian Tomlinson, Jorge Balbis, Maliha Khan and Charles Mutasa.

Annex 1: Participants

BALBIS Jorge	Asociación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones de Promoción (ALOP)
BERGE Gwen	Action by Churches Together (ACT)
BERGER Franz Josef	European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development (CONCORD) - Open Forum Secretariat
BOUNIOL Blandine	Caritas/International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity (CIDSE)
BROWA Sylvain	InterAction - American Council for Voluntary International Action
BULTRON Ramon	Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN)
DARTER Kimberly	InterAction - American Council for Voluntary International Action
DE LA FUENTE JERIA Irvick Jose	Unión Nacional de Instituciones para el Trabajo de Acción Social Bolivia (UNITAS)
FERNANDEZ Irene	People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty (PCFS)
KHAN Maliha	CARE International
LAPPALAINEN Timo	Service Centre for Development Cooperation Finland (KEPA), representing the Nordic+ Group
MARENCO Iván García	Coordinadora Civil de Nicaragua (CC)
MUTAZU Tirivangani	African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD)
NITOSLAWSKA Anna	International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
O'CALLAGHAN Paul	Australian Council for International Development (ACFID)
PINAUIN Roberto	Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN)
RENGAM Sarojeni	People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty (PCFS)
SAYEED Azra	Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)
SINGH Anil	South Asian Network for Social and Agricultural Development (SANSAD)
SOOD Deepali	Plan International
SVOBODA Daniel	Czech platform of Development NGOs (FoRS), representing the EU Presidency Group
TOMLINSON Brian	Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC)
TUJAN Antonio	IBON International (IBON)
VALOT Henri	CIVICUS - World Alliance for Citizen Participation
VOGT Andreas	European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development (CONCORD)

Excuses presented by:

ATIDEGLA Aurélien (Network of National NGO Platforms in West and Central Africa, REPAOC)

DOUMBIA Bakary (Federation of Malian NGO Networks, FECONG)

NKHOMA Dorica (Civil Society for Poverty Reduction, CSPR)

ZIAD Abdel (Arab NGO Network for Development, ANND)

Annex 2: GFG working groups

Working Group	Members	Mandate
Outreach	Blandine Bouniol Brian Tomlinson Maliha Khan Henri Valot Jorge Balbis Charles Mutasa	To review the draft outreach toolkit that will be submitted by the consultant
Fund raising	Daniel Svoboda Timo Lappalainen Andreas Vogt Antonio Tujan	To prepare a fund raising strategy
Work plan	Sylvain Browa Blandine Bouniol Brian Tomlinson Henri Valot Daniel Svoboda	To endorse the amended versions of the work plan and the budget
Political strategy	Ivan Garcia Marenco Deepali Sood Henri Valot Antonio Tujan Charles Mutasa Brian Tomlinson	To prepare a political strategy for the GFG (first draft by end-February, second draft for consideration and endorsement by GFG mid-March)

Annex 3: Summary of decisions

Political dialogue

- In addition to principles, guidelines and good practices for context-relevant mechanisms (internal dimension of CSO development effectiveness), the Open Forum will also come up with a set of minimum standards for an enabling environment for CSOs (external dimension). These will provide a basis for political dialogue.
- Country-level consultations in 2009/2010 will be asked to not only address the internal dimension of CSO development effectiveness, but also to come up with these minimum standards (external dimension). This must be reflected in the toolkit.
- The UN and the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness were identified as key spaces for the political dialogue of the GFG with donors and governments.
- The objective of the political dialogue is not only to create an enabling environment for CSOs, but also to create understanding and awareness on behalf of donors and governments regarding CSO development effectiveness and to promote the concept of development effectiveness with other stakeholders.
- A working group has been mandated to develop a political strategy (first draft end-February, final draft mid-March for endorsement of GFG). Members of this working group are: Deepali Sood, Tony Tujan (advisor), Henri Valot, Charles Mutasa (nominated by Tiri Mutazu), Ivan Garcia Marengo and Brian Tomlinson (advisor).

ICG-GFG coordination

- Country-level consultations of the Open Forum on the one hand and of the International Coordinating Group (inception workshops on AAA implementation) on the other hand will be kept separate.
- The political strategy of the GFG, if finalised, will be shared with the ICG at their meeting in Johannesburg on 26 and 27 February.

Work plan and budget

- The overall structure of the budget was endorsed⁹.
- The overall structure of the work plan was endorsed. An amended version will be endorsed by the working group on the work plan¹⁰.
- Organisers of country-level consultations in 2009/2010 will be encouraged to include a multi-stakeholder segment in their consultation. This will be reflected in the work plan.
- The GFG will strive for facilitating as many country-level consultations as possible, and aim to mobilise funding for 50.
- The decision on the countries that will enjoy financial support from the Open Forum for their consultations as well as on the concrete organisations within these countries entrusted with carrying out these consultations will be taken by the GFG based on a proposal by the consortium of supporting organisations¹¹.

⁹ An amended version of the budget, taking into account discussions and decisions in Kuala Lumpur, will be prepared by CONCORD.

¹⁰ The amended version of the work plan will take into account the discussions and decisions in Kuala Lumpur. It will be prepared by CONCORD.

¹¹ Selection criteria are yet to be defined. An even geographical spread was mentioned as one core criteria. The selection of countries should also reflect a variety of country experiences for CSOs including those facing strong repression and fragile states.

- Each region¹² is free to choose one of the following two designs for their regional consultation: preparatory workshop ahead of country-level consultations to kick-start and facilitate consultative process; consultation after conclusion of country-level consultations to define a regional synthesis/position.
- A number of thematic consultations have been proposed by GFG members: faith-based, women, indigenous, national platforms, trade unions, partnership, humanitarian sector, urban poor, environment, social movements.

Consortium of supporting organisations

- The GFG has approved the following composition of the consortium: CONCORD (Consortium coordinator), Civicus, InterAction, ALOP, APRN, AACC. The main tasks of Civicus within the consortium will be outreach to INGOs and global CSO networks and contributing their experience and expertise on issues relevant for the Open Forum.
- The GFG endorsed a mandate for the consortium¹³.
- The GFG will elect 2 co-chairs (1 male and 1 female, 1 North and 1 South) whose tasks will be: external representation of the GFG as appropriate, chairing/calling for GFG meetings and Global Assemblies, liaison with consortium. Election will take place through e-mail. The model of co-chairs replaces the initially proposed steering group of the GFG (as specified in the GFG Terms of Reference)

Fund raising

- The GFG will aim to pool all donor funding (the GFG pool will be distinct from the ICG pool). The consortium coordinator (CONCORD) will be the fiscal sponsor.
- The GFG endorsed the idea of a joint cover letter for the ICG and GFG funding proposals.
- The GFG will aim to raise funds for 50 country-level consultations.
- A call for pledges among CSOs will be launched.
- Contributions from private foundations will be accepted only following consultations with the GFG.
- National CSO platforms must be consulted before contacting their respective government regarding funding for the Open Forum.
- The mandate of the fund raising working group has been renewed. Its members include Andreas Vogt, Roberto Pinauin, Antonio Tujan, Timo Lappalainen and Daniel Svoboda.

Any other business

- The role of the APFWLD in the GFG will be to mainstream gender in all consultations and to facilitate dedicated thematic consultations on the issue.
- The next GFG meeting will be held in Prague on 21 and 22 June at the margins of the international conference on CSO development effectiveness that is organised by the Czech NGDO platform FoRS.
- The mandate of the working group on outreach is extended to revise the draft version of the outreach toolkit that is presented by the consultant. Members of the working group include: Blandine Bouniol, Brian Tomlinson, Maliha Khan, Henri Valot, Jorge Balbis and Charles Mutasa.

¹² The denomination and definition of the different regions is still subject to discussions. It must be ensured that Southern Africa and the Pacific are mentioned either as separate regions or as part of one region.

¹³ An amended version of the mandate, taking into account discussions and decisions in Kuala Lumpur, will be prepared by CONCORD.