

# Accra Agenda for Action (AAA)

In September 2008, the 3rd High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness gathered in Accra (Africa) high level officials from all over the world, to monitor the Paris Declaration implementation.

CSO from developed and developing countries joined as well to voice their demands.

At the end, the international community adopted a common plan of action called the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA).

## **What is new with the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) :**

**Democratic ownership:** to ensure broad-based participation of Parliament, civil society, local government and private sector in the formulation / monitoring of the national development strategy.

**Aid is increasingly untied :** progressively no more obligation to purchase goods and services in the country providing aid.

**CSO are recognized as independent development actors in their own right :** commitment to build an enabling environment for CSO & to consider CSO as interlocutors and development partners.

## **Governments are committed to :**

Provide full and timely information on annual commitments and actual disbursements of aid and related conditionality ;

Integrate in their evaluations independent evidences (parliamentary scrutiny and citizens engagement) in government reviews assessing development progresses ;

Build more effective and inclusive partnerships with CSO and have more inclusive dialogue with CSO on development policies.

The Accra Agenda for Action can be used to legitimate calls for ***broader access to information and participation in dialogue on development policies.***

Referring to the Accra Agenda for Action will strengthen CSO position towards governmental partners ***to promote inclusive development benefitting the most vulnerable groups.***

## **Accordingly, you are entitled to :**

**Ask for information about aid :** how much, for what, under which conditions ? This is intended to allow a better follow-up by elected parliamentarians and by civil society organisations of how aid is being spent.

**Ask to contribute to the dialogue on development policies** by attending discussions with development partners and/or with the government.

**Ask that existing sectorial and thematic working groups be open on a regular basis** to allow for civil society organisations to part take or for more inclusive groups to be created.

**Ask to be involved in evaluating development progresses**, being at sectorial level (health, education...) or in general (NSEDP).

## Challenges

Development policies are being globalized, following models driven by economic growth. Promoting real ownership should lead to alternative models rooted in gender-inclusiveness, environmental sustainability and respect for basic rights.

An enabling environment and appropriate funding mechanisms for civil society organisations : there is a need to go beyond short term project-based logic and improve predictability of funding by setting up mechanisms / procedures which preserve CSO flexibility and respect their diversity.

Civil society organisations (national and international) should improve their cooperation and get better organised (in networks, coalitions, working groups...) in order to work more effectively and get their voices heard.

## Perspectives

End of 2011, the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness will take place in Busan, South Korea.

## **We need to ensure that :**

The debate is enlarged to include development effectiveness (as to cover large scale investment projects funded by FDI).

The process does fully include CSO as independent development actors.

CSO calls for democratic ownership and to create an enabling environment for civil society are taken into consideration.

## What you need to know about

# THE AID EFFECTIVENESS AGENDA

## Paris Declaration

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## Vientiane Declaration

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## ACCRA

## Agenda for Action

A short summary for  
Civil Society Organisations  
in Lao PDR

# Aid Effectiveness Agenda

More and more development partners are referring to the Aid Effectiveness Agenda and the Paris Declaration.

## What is it about ?

In 2005, the international community gathered in Paris to discuss Aid Effectiveness and concluded that *development partners do not coordinate and impose too often the development agenda to the beneficiary countries.*

To improve their practices, development partners signed the Paris Declaration in order to make aid more effective.

## Why is Aid Effectiveness important for the Lao PDR?

The Lao PDR is a country looking to graduate off the Least Developed Countries category by 2020.

To achieve this it has laid out an ambitious National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) and National Growth & Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES).

These form an integral part of a broader 'Growth with Equity' framework.

Successful implementation of the NGPES is critical and will require various sources of funding, including Official Development Aid (ODA), and effective cooperation among wide range of development actors.

Aid Effectiveness Principles are meant to improve aid delivery framework.

# Paris Declaration

There are **five basic principles** :

**Ownership** : The aid recipient government sets its own poverty reduction strategy and development agenda.

**Alignment** : Aid flows are aligned with national priorities and development partners use public finance management systems to disburse aid.

**Harmonization** : Development partners have common procedures and arrangements (joint missions, basket funding..) to reduce burden of aid management for beneficiary government.

**Managing for Results**: Managing resources and improving decision making for development results.

**Mutual Accountability**: Both Government & Partners are accountable for development results.

## Criticisms addressed to the Paris Declaration by Civil Society Organisations (CSO)

Paris Declaration drafting process did not involve civil society organisations (CSO).

Paris Declaration focuses on governmental partners and ignores other development contributors (like CSO).

Paris Declaration deals with aid effectiveness only looking at management issues and not at the results in terms of living conditions improvement for the population.

Paris Declaration favors budget support (contribution to State's budget) compared to other aid modalities (projects...)

# Vientiane Declaration

In Laos, Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness has been translated into a **Vientiane Declaration** which was agreed at the 9th Round Table Meeting in November 2006 in Vientiane. It is signed by **24 development partners** (including Thailand, Philippines, WB and ADB) who also endorsed a **Country Action Plan on Aid Effectiveness 2007-2010 (VDCAP).**

The Vientiane Declaration demonstrates Lao Government and its partners willingness to comply with international aid effectiveness agenda.

However, Vientiane Declaration does not yet fully reflect latest commitments made in Accra as to democratic ownership and more inclusive dialogue and partnership with CSO.

## Regarding CSO effectiveness

In Accra, governments committed to ensure participation of full diversity of "CSOs as independent actors of their own rights".

However too **little progress** has been achieved in this regard in many countries.

Through extensive consultations under the Open Forum Initiative, **CSOs have reflected on their own effectiveness.**

In Istanbul in September 2010, CSOs from all over the world (82 countries) agreed on 8 principles, known as **the Istanbul Principles on CSO effectiveness.**

# Istanbul Principles on CSO effectiveness

CSOs are effective as development actors when they...

1. **Respect/promote human rights & social justice**
2. **Embody gender equality and equity while promoting women and girls' rights**
3. **Focus on people's empowerment, democratic ownership and participation**
4. **Promote Environmental Sustainability**
5. **Practice transparency and accountability**
6. **Pursue equitable partnerships and solidarity**
7. **Create and share knowledge and commit to mutual learning**
8. **Commit to realizing positive sustainable change**

To turn these principles into practice, CSO need an enabling environment (including legal, political, fiscal conditions).

In the 4th HLF on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, South Korea end of 2011, CSO intend to present demands **for Minimum Standards as to create this enabling environment for CSO.** These Minimum Standards address *CSOs' problems to get legal recognition/ registration, limited access to information, state interference in their operations, inadequate access to funding...*

All governments have an obligation to uphold basic human rights – among others, **the right to association, the right to assembly, and the freedom of expression.** Together these are pre-conditions for effective development.