



Government of Yemen

Partnership Framework Between the Government of Yemen and Civil Society Organizations

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Yemen has a vibrant civil society sector comprising around 12,000 organizations, of which approximately 8,000 are registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MoSAL). Acknowledging the tremendous contribution of civil society organizations (CSOs) in improving service delivery as well as their role in developing policies for comprehensive and sustainable development, the Government of Yemen (GoY) is determined to strengthen their capacities and facilitate their operations throughout the country. This firm commitment, included in the Mutual Accountability Framework (MAF) approved at Donors Meeting held in Riyadh in September 2012, led to the adoption of a new Partnership Framework between the Government of Yemen and Civil Society Organizations in September 2013.

GoY sought the technical expertise of UNDP, through its Emergency Capacity Development Facility (ECDF) to support the process of consultations and elaboration of the partnership framework; the document consists of 3 elements: (i) compact of concepts and principals of the partnership; (ii) implementation plan; and (iii) monitoring and evaluation plan.



Sana'a, 29.8.2013 - A participant at the workshop in Sana'a sharing her concerns over obstacles that CSOs face in Yemen.

OBJECTIVE

The overarching objective of this framework is to create a partnership in which the GoY and CSOs can collaborate

according to clear and well identified principles to help advancing sustainable development and improve service delivery in Yemen. The partnership's four core goals are to:

1. Provide a framework for CSOs to function as an effective partner to the government and to building trust between both.
2. Improve and strengthen policymaking processes, programs and service delivery to respond to the needs of society and achieve sustainable development.
3. Bolster the culture of public participation, and strengthen the principles of democracy.
4. Strengthen the capacity of CSOs to enable them take effective role in the partnership.

METHODOLOGY

The production of the partnership framework followed a rigorous participatory methodology aimed at ensuring full national ownership and responsiveness to the short and mid-term needs of the country. Below are some of the steps followed:

1. A Taskforce Group was created under the supervision of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. The group was composed of 25 members including officials from Presidential Office, Prime Minister Office, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, and Ministry of Planning; representatives of CSOs and International NGOs; and international and local CSO experts.
2. A detailed survey designed to collect data, conduct a needs assessment and evaluate partnership requirements was sent to 30 CSOs and government agencies.
3. A desk-review of available literature was conducted to analyze current relationship between GoY and CSOs, assess CSOs' development capacities, and review current legislations governing the work of CSOs.
4. Interviews were conducted with 10 CSOs leaders and 10 senior government officials to solicit their professional views and perception of the existing level of partnership.
5. Two workshops were organized in Sana'a and Aden in which a total of 65 government officials and CSOs' representatives discussed, commented and suggested revisions to the proposed partnership framework document.



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THE PARTERSHIP PILLARS



Aden, 1.9.2013 - Participants at Aden's workshop pose for a group photo after spending a day of expanding and elaborating on the draft document

The Partnership Framework between the Government of Yemen and Civil Society Organizations is based on the following pillars:

1. *The Concept of Partnership:* The definition of the concept of partnership states how GoY and CSOs will engage in an organized, complimentary and sustainable partnership aimed at improving policymaking and service delivery.
2. *Definition of CSOs:* CSOs are defined as “active non-governmental organizations, established or being established by citizens in accordance to existing laws, and aim at contributing to public good and conveying concerns and values of their communities based on ethical, cultural, political, and religious or charity considerations; and do not seek profit nor acquire political power.”
3. *Importance of the Partnership:* The focus of the partnership is to improve policymaking, achieve sustainable development, promote and develop CSOs' capacities, reach rural areas, promote voluntarism and create new job opportunities. .
4. *Principles of the Partnership:* The founding principles are identified as mutual partnership, transparency, accountability, shared monitoring, independence, objectivity, impartiality; and sustainability.
5. *Fields of the Partnership:* The areas identified for the partnership include youth and women empowerment, poverty reduction, health and environmental development, human rights, vulnerable groups, humanitarian relief, refugees and Internally Displaced People and good governance.

6. *Criteria for Partnership:* CSOs seeking partnership with the government should be officially registered, have experience in any of the relevant areas of the partnership; have basic internal governance structures (i.e. approved and implemented internal rules and regulations, credible democratic practices, adequate human resources, transparency and accountability); have records of activities for the last two years; and have good financial records.
7. *Institutional framework for the Partnership:* The partnership framework will be implemented by a Supreme Council, which will enjoy financial and administrative independency and legal responsibilities. The Supreme Council will be elected based on agreed and established criteria with 40% government members and 60% CSOs representatives.

ACTION PLAN

Accompanying the Partnership Framework is a proposed action plan intended to guide GoY and CSOs in the implementation phase; it revolves around four major objectives: (i) establish the Supreme Council and provide suitable environment for the partnership; (ii) involve CSOs in policymaking; (iii) increase and strengthen the principles of public participation and democracy; and (iv) build CSOs' technical and professional capacities.



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TIMELINE

The Action Plan covers the period from October 1, 2013 through December 31, 2015. Included in the plan is a 100-day priority activity plan intended to (i) establish the Supreme Council; (ii) officially launch the partnership with a communication strategy and a high-level public event; and (iii) engage CSOs in policy dialogue on development goals for 2014.

The timeline of both plans is summarized in the following timetable:

Expected Result		Timeframe		
		100 day	2014	2015
Provide the appropriate framework for CSOs to function as an effective partner to the government and to building confidence and trust between both.				
1.	Establishment of the Supreme Council to oversee the partnership between GoY and CSOs	4Q	Q1, 2	
2.	Incorporation of the Partnership principles in the Constitution	4Q	Q1	
3.	Revision of existing legislations and proposal of required amendments	4Q	Q1	
4.	Officially launch the partnership framework in two high-level public events	Q4		
5.	Organize two fora in two governorates to engage CSO in policymaking on development for 2014	Q4		
6.	Adoption of new legislations regulating the partnership between government and CSOs		Q1, 2	
7.	Increased public awareness of the partnership		Q1,2,3,4	Q1,2,3,4
Improve and strengthen decision making, implementation and evaluation of policies, programs and service delivery to respond to the needs of society and achieve sustainable development.				
1.	Active CSOs engagement in the formulation of general policies and contribution to the elaboration of national development plans and their implementation		Q1,2,3,4	Q1,2,3,4
2.	Transparent and accessible information about local and international funding opportunities		Q1,2,3,4	Q1,2,3,4
3.	Active CSOs involvement and participation in surveys and situation assessments conducted by government and international partners		Q1,2,3,4	Q1,2,3,4
Bolster the culture of public participation, and strengthen the principles of democracy.				
1.	Creation of functional coalitions and networks of CSOs based on sector specialization and geographical areas		Q1,2,3	Q4
2.	Formulation of code of conduct guidelines		Q3,4	
3.	Elaboration and utilization of mechanism of social accountability and transparency		Q3,4	Q1,2,3,4
4.	Conflict resolution methods applied at local level		Q1,2,3,4	Q1,2,3,4
5.	Volunteerism and youth community initiatives.		Q1,2,3,4	Q1,2,3,4
Build CSOs capacities and improve their professionalism to enable their effective participation in the partnership				
1.	Baseline assessment of CSOs needs and capacities		Q1,2,3	
2.	Allocation of funds in national budget to support CSOs' organizational development and improved service delivery		Q1,2,4	Q1,4
3.	Strengthened CSOs internal governance and accountability		Q3,4	Q1,2,3,4
4.	Specialized national training facilities on civil society and democracy		Q1,2,3,4	Q1,2,3,4

BUDGET



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The estimated budget for implementing the partnership framework is detailed in the table below.

	Component	Budget (USD)
1.	Provide the appropriate framework for CSOs to function as an effective partner to the government and to building confidence and trust between both	570,000
2.	Improve and strengthen decision making, implementation and evaluation of policies, programs and service delivery to respond to the needs of society and achieve sustainable development	460,000
3.	Bolster the culture of public participation, and strengthen the principles of democracy	450,000
4.	Build CSOs capacities and improve their professionalism to enable their effective participation in the partnership	550,000
Estimated Total		2,030,000

Duration	October, 2013 to December 2015
Localization	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor
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