

**FICHE CONTRADICTOIRE-** Evaluation of the Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities thematic programme (2014-2020). For details on the conclusions and recommendations, please refer to the evaluation report

Recommendations	Response of the services ( <i>December 2020</i> )	Follow-up ( <i>February 2022</i> )
<p><b>Recommendation #1 – Strengthen the programme through enhancing complementarity with other EU and member state instruments and processes and focusing on interventions that are catalytic.</b></p> <p>This recommendation goes beyond the programme itself and is potentially relevant for both the future CSO programme and LA interventions. It could be implemented through the following measures:</p> <p>1.1 Systematise/automate information on different instruments and programmes supporting CSOs and LAs at country level, so that the Delegation can better exploit the complementarities and synergies among the instruments. By using the various degrees available through different geographic and thematic instruments and modalities, support can be provided that re-enforces the effects through large and small, long term and short term interventions as well as engagement at the central and local levels and across different actors (examples of this were present in Chad).</p> <p>1.2 Draw lessons across all EU and</p>	<p><i>From a CSO perspective:</i></p> <p><b>This recommendation has two elements that are both accepted.</b></p> <p><b>On enhancing complementarity with other EU and Member States instruments and processes:</b></p> <p>The EU agrees on the importance of complementarity. At country level, <b>the Roadmaps are the main framework</b> for coordinated and complementary engagement with civil society by the EU and the Member States. The Roadmaps will be strengthened in the future MFF, including with <b>more regular and structured dialogue</b> with civil society.</p> <p>In the <b>programming process</b>, the Team Europe Initiatives and Joint Programming will also facilitate better coordination between engagement with civil society and local authorities and other programmes supported by the EU and the Member States to jointly contribute to key priorities of the partner countries.</p> <p>Guidance to delegations provided in the context of programming will indicate the key elements of <b>complementarity between the CSO thematic programme</b> and geographic funding to civil society. This pertains to the independence from governments of the first and to policy objectives and not to specific implementation modalities.</p> <p>Delegations received information on current global and</p>	<p><i>From a CSO perspective:</i></p> <p>The CSO Multiannual Action Plan 2021-2024 (Action Document 2 pertaining to actions at country level) as well as the operational guidance addressed to Delegations in January 2022 following adoption of the programming documents highlighted key elements of complementarity between funding for CSOs under thematic programme and under geographic programmes. Examples of actions with catalytic potential will feed into the guidance for Delegations concerning support to service delivery under the programme.</p> <p>The third generation of Civil Society Roadmaps (covering the period 2021-2024) is currently under way: EU Delegations in 58 countries have already adopted new roadmaps, and another 31 roadmaps are under finalisation. The RM is both a strategic &amp; operational tool, guiding the EU engagement with CSOs. It links each objective to a set of actions and make a reference to the instruments /programmes that will be used. This enhances the complementarity between CSOs Programme and other EU instruments, as well as other MS/ Lined-minded partners' CSO support. The articulation of the RM with the Joint Programming efforts (e.g., Mongolia, Laos, Bolivia) and the closer articulation of the RM with the areas of engagement of the MIP have proved very effective (e.g., Mongolia) and will be further strengthened during the implementation of the third generation</p>

<p>member state actions at country level that are linked to civil society and local government, to feed into dialogue with government and enhance the collective impact of the different projects that work with civil society. The roadmaps are a tool where this has been done in some cases; an example is the Hoja de Ruta in Colombia.</p> <p>1.3 Sharpen the analysis, criteria and tools for judging where projects are likely to be transformative, either by being highly catalytic or by being linked to other credible processes that can sustain their benefits. Notes on this are given in Box 2.6 in the report.</p> <p>1.4 Increase awareness of regional/global CSO-LA activities at country level and increase networking, and alliance building between local, regional and global levels, e.g. through a web-based mapping of all CSO-LA activities and events.</p>	<p>regional <b>Framework Partnership networks and their members at country level:</b> this will continue in the future to facilitate synergies between country processes and global work with CSOs.</p> <p><b>Transparency on support to civil society.</b> It will be explored the possibilities to better exploit/improve existing tools like OPSYS, DEVCO reporting and the EU Aid Explorer that publishes up-to-date information on the EU and MS aid.</p> <p><b>On focusing on interventions that are catalytic:</b></p> <p>The good examples identified in the evaluation will be reviewed and will contribute to strengthening the assessment of the catalytic potential of new projects. Where relevant specific criteria may be used in future calls for proposals.</p> <hr/> <p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p> <p><b>Very relevant recommendation.</b></p> <p>In order to strengthen the complementarity with other programmes, the recently piloted Roadmaps for EU engagement with Local Authorities could be a powerful tool to create links between actions and to build up a systemic approach to local authorities.</p> <p>The <b>synergy and complementarity are already developed</b> in those countries where projects in the field of local authorities strengthening or real process of decentralization are implemented through budget support operations. Grants projects have in fact contributed to support the implementation of more systematic reforms</p>	<p>RMs.</p> <p>OPSYS is progressively deploying new functionalities, that leads to a more efficient, transparent and results-based way of delivering aid. The collaboration between internals and implementing partners is enhanced through OPSYS My Workplace and the Funding &amp; Tender Opportunities Portal.</p> <p>Equally, the needs for Monitoring and Evaluation are addressed by OPSYS by letting the implementing partners be involved in the monitoring and reporting of results.</p> <hr/> <p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p> <p>Regarding recommendation 1, we can report the implementation of four main follow-ups:</p> <p>a. The recent programming process and the consultations requested by the programming guidelines have been an excellent opportunity to strengthen the policy dialogue between EU Delegations and Local Authorities and draw lessons from the past EU budget cycle. The result has been that in 37 (INTPA) countries, local authorities or national associations of local authorities (NALAs) have been included in EU country multiannual</p>
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	<p>implemented through budget support.</p> <p>A <b>regular dialogue</b> with the national association of local authorities can also help to identify the space for subnational governments in the EU's overall cooperation with the given country and to detect the layovers between different actions and sectors. The dialogue as suggested should be proposed also between the LAs and the National Government. The current programming process and the consultations requested by the programming guidelines offer an appropriate opportunity to put in place and promote such a dialogue. The Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism DEVCO has developed for its Framework Partnership Agreements with Associations of Local Authorities is a useful instrument to share lessons learned and innovative advocacy tools which could be shared beyond the FPAs</p> <p><b>Criteria and tools existing at the level of HQ (such as the IDDF)</b> should be used to promote the transformative character and fuel reform processes within actions targeting other priorities actions and not only for projects targeting the decentralization processes.</p> <p><b>EUD should promote the linkages between the FPAs with ALAs</b> and the local NALA and LAs. The current mapping exercise carried out in C5 can provide interesting analysis and materials which should be provided to EUD, geo colleagues and LAs for each and every single country.</p>	<p>indicative programmes for the period 2021-27 as main development cooperation partners. Moreover, this dialogue has been an opportunity to discuss decentralization issues and local development and to set the path for a more structured policy dialogue through LA road maps (please also see LA follow up #4).</p> <p>b. The Team Europe Initiative portal to be launched in 2022 will allow to strengthen coordination, coherence and complementarities of actions at country level linked to LAs. The portal will include a matchmaking tool to promote decentralised cooperation where private and public providers can showcase what they can offer as support to partner countries.</p> <p>c. A mapping exercise has started in 2020 and is now in the completion phase to list and analyse all interventions and actions in support to LAs under the last two MFF (2007-2013 and 2014-2020). This mapping provides an historical perspective and will allow current strategies and programmes to build on previous achievements for sustainable impact and long-term change.</p> <p>d. The Associations of Local Authorities having signed Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) with the Commission exchange data, information and good practices on a constant basis involving their member organisations, hence linking the local, national regional and global levels and increasing awareness on their respective activities and results.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #2 Strengthen country level support to</b></p>	<p><i>From a LA perspective:</i>  <b>Agreed, very relevant recommendation</b> that includes</p>	<p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p>

<p><b>associations of local authorities under the new programme.</b></p> <p>This recommendation could be implemented through the following measures:</p> <p>2.1 Where the associations of local authorities are credible partners and can contribute to change, develop mechanisms at country level to support their role and mandate as advocacy bodies, service providers and best practise disseminators. The support should carefully avoid distorting accountability links between associations of local authorities and association members and be based on the association's own business plans. Where needed, it should include support to core operational capacity (knowledge management, communication, budget and accounting etc.), including sufficient capacity to manage EU funds.</p> <p>2.2 Future FPA-ALA support to regional advocacy should include support to regional or sub-regional CEO-networks for national associations of local authorities.</p>	<p>the very sensitive links between the Associations and their constituency.</p> <p>The measures are very relevant but potentially partially feasible (see comments below):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implementation will depend greatly on the will, the capacity and the available resources in the EUDEL – the cooperation with the thematic unit in headquarters will be important in this regard.</li> <li>- Assessing the Financial and political risks is primordial: some NALA are very weak and financial support must be tailored accordingly to avoid ineligibles – some NALA are very active politically (majority or opposition party), but also the accountability links within the ALA and the implications support may have need to be assessed.</li> <li>- A close link with the global and regional associations with whom the EC has signed FPAs is very important. As most NALAs are members of the FPAs, this represents an additional entry point for support. With the remaining funds of the CfP 2020 with the Budget 2020 of the CSO-LA budget line we could foresee direct awards to NALAs. The critical issues will be how can we select them? It should be discussed at a higher level if the NALAs can be financed indirectly through the existing regional and global FPAs (with sub-contracting). It would be in fact impossible to enter in direct awards with all NALAs for each partner country</li> <li>- Awareness raising on the situation of LAs and ALAs in EUDs needs to be a priority to implement this recommendation.</li> </ul>	<p>The Commission has been working with five strategic ALAs partners: PLATFORMA, the pan-European coalition of local and regional government partners, with over 30 members actively engaged in decentralised development cooperation; The International Association of French-Speaking Mayors (AIMF), with 294 local governments or their groups in French-speaking countries; The Commonwealth Local Government Forum with local governments from 53 member states of the Commonwealth of Nations; United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)-Africa with 40 national associations from all regions of Africa and 2000 cities; and UCLG with local authorities members in 2/3 of UN Member States.</p> <p>These organisations with whom the EC has signed FPAs are heavily involved in supporting local authorities in INTPA partner countries, strengthening local government systems that contribute to improving the quality of life of local communities. The five ALAs are currently recipient of EU action grants and operational grants. As the majority of the NALAs are members of the ALAs, FPAs represent an additional entry point for support we intend to explore at country level.</p> <p>Regarding recommendations 2.1 and 2.2, we can also highlight the following:</p> <p>On point 2.1: The five ALAs were able to strengthen their capacities in a wide range of fields, thanks to EU action grants or annual operation grants. For all the ALAs, the support brought by EU is totally aligned to their work and strategic plans as described in the draft FPAs (new FPA to be signed in the first half of 2022).</p> <p>On point 2.2: Several FPA (e.g AIMF and UCLGA)</p>
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		have or are setting up regional offices to facilitate regional networking between NALAs.
<p><b>Recommendation #3 Continue to tailor the programme at country level through the roadmap and enhanced strategic engagement.</b></p> <p>Whilst this recommendation is focussed on the future CSO programme, it is also relevant for future LA actions in connection with recommendation #4.</p> <p>3.1 Deepen the understanding of the political context at country level to calibrate the programme’s level of ambition for civil society and allow a differentiated strategy depending on civic space and civil society dynamics.</p> <p>3.2 Develop scenarios to take into account possible changes (positive or negative) in the level of restriction for civil society, so as to anticipate opportunities and risks that may arise. Develop a change strategy for countries where change is unlikely. An example of this has been done in Chad where a simple 3 point scenario response has been considered (situation gets better, gets worse, stays the same).</p> <p>3.3 Explore means of transferring elements of roadmap and multi-stakeholder consultation from the</p>	<p><i>From a CSO perspective:</i></p> <p><b>This recommendation is relevant and partially accepted.</b></p> <p>The roadmaps will continue to be the framework for dialogue and tailored engagement with civil society at country level.</p> <p>Agree that a good understanding of the political context is important in the updating of the roadmaps. Mapping of civil society will be reviewed as and where appropriate.</p> <p>Work on the enabling environment at country level will benefit from enhanced technical assistance and a new global initiative that will provide long-term strategic support, accurate updates on the situation for civil society and the possibility of quick reactive support. This will take future outlooks into account without producing complex scenarios and response plans that are difficult to maintain in such a complex thematic environment of actors and variables.</p> <p>CSOs participation can be reinforced in the longer term when it comes to roadmaps process and in the articulation of joint activities</p> <hr/> <p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p> <p>Following the experience of the CSO roadmaps, this recommendation is <b>highly relevant for Local Authorities</b>. In 2019, four first LA roadmaps were piloted aiming at tailors the EC’s response to the country</p>	<p><i>From a CSO perspective:</i></p> <p>3.1. Work on the enabling environment at country level has benefited, and will continue to benefit, from enhanced technical assistance under the Roadmap Facility, that can support Delegations in conducting analytical work to underpin level of ambition and strategy of engagement with CSOs.</p> <p>Several EUDs have launched CSO mappings during the process of updating their RM, for a better understanding how CS landscape is evolving and analyse new actors that are emerging in the country (e.g., through targeted studies preceding the update of the RM, like in Chile, Vietnam, Mozambique, etc).</p> <p>3.2. The new global initiative on enabling environment, the Monitoring and Engagement System, is included in the Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021-2027 for the Thematic Programme for Civil Society, and the subsequent Multiannual Action Plan 2021-2024, and is currently being developed (Call for Proposal to be launched 2022). In line with the recommendation, it will provide accurate updates on the evolution of civic space in partner countries along with a mechanism that will allow to respond to positive and negative changes, seize opportunities and address risks through both short term measures and long term capacity support.</p> <p>Several EUD in contexts of high volatility, have used of scenario planning techniques for the drafting of the RM (e.g., Yemen, South Sudan, Chad, etc). This approach will continue. In some cases, EUD will</p>

<p>EUD platforms to platforms run by CSO apex bodies where these are in place. This will enhance ownership and ensure that the contribution to CSO-led coordination of civil society is transferred to the country. Ultimately, this is an element of a EU exit plan for the programme.</p>	<p>context and enhance its relevance and effectiveness with regards to the work with subnational governments.</p> <p>The tailoring at local level should be done using the structured dialogue and the roadmaps where they exist or engaging with the local authorities through the NALAs. This approach should be followed for all EU actions implemented in the countries in absence of country based actions (due to the withdrawal of the budget Line for LA and the funds). Whether the actions are on green deal, or digital, infrastructure priorities Local authorities should be involved and supported at country level to allow the respect of the commitment undertaken (at least same level of support as ensured with the MFF 2014-2020)</p> <p>The support to LAs are particularly relevant in those country where no reform of public administration is foreseen and the change and innovation is part of a gradual process of LAs empowerment.</p> <p>In the case of the LA this measure is very important since the roadmaps are an exception. These platforms of dialogues should be put in place beyond the existence of the roadmaps and of the current programming consultation</p>	<p>develop 2 years RM strategy to accompany dialogue with CSOs during a transitional process.</p> <p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p> <p>Please, see LA follow up #4.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #4 Consider a general introduction of LA road maps or equivalent analysis to underpin EU decentralisation support and to support empowerment and mainstreaming of local authorities in all relevant EU financed actions.</b></p> <p>This recommendation could be implemented through the following measures:</p>	<p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p> <p><b>Highly relevant recommendation</b> that is very much welcomed. This need has been already identified within DEVCO and it is at the basis of the launch of pilot roadmaps. DEVCO HQ has a facility in place which among other different needs, has been used to develop country roadmaps for LAs. Due to the limited funds available only a limited number of countries have been targeted. . EUDs themselves should proceed all to put in place such a structured dialogue with support and guidance from HQ.</p>	<p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p> <p>We set-up an advisory facility and help desk within our Unit G2 to offer technical assistance and tailor-made support to EU Delegations. Delegations have the opportunity to benefit from a wide array of services available that include policy dialogue on decentralization and local development (LA Roadmaps), capacity building, technical assistance, decentralized cooperation support missions, support to national and subnational associations of local</p>

<p>4.1 Underpin bilateral decentralisation support with a roadmap based on a structured dialogue with central and local government and relevant development partners, including EU member states. The roadmap should take into account lessons learned from previous support and include a donor map to facilitate a coherent approach.</p> <p>4.2 The roadmap should depending on the context consider 3 levels of engagement:</p> <p>i) decentralisation policy; Where possible, the roadmap should be aligned to the government public sector-decentralisation reform programme and monitored through regular joint reviews, preferably coordinated by the relevant sector working group, if available.</p> <p>ii) LA empowerment. Where possible a capacity development strategy should be developed (some potential aspects could be inspired by the CSO 5 dimension approach used under the CSO-LA programme, for ALAs)</p> <p>iii) mainstreaming of local authorities in all relevant EU actions e.g. waste water and roads and others.</p>	<p>Of course, a roadmap is not a precondition to strengthen existing subnational frameworks and the roadmaps are only one of the conditions to conduct policy dialogue. This will however depend especially on the openness, interest and genuine will of the national authorities to engage in decentralisation reform processes, or at a lower scale in actions to support local authorities empowerment and roles. The structured dialogue should be developed also in absence of the roadmaps particularly now in the framework of the programming process and the consultation to be carried out by the EUDs at local level and should underpin either the decentralization processes or other actions favouring the Las within the frameworks of programs targeting other domains</p> <p>The roadmaps will have ta take into account the government public sectors reforms in general -, anot only the one related to the decentralization process and contribute to ensure the involvement of LA vision, concerns and needs in all government sector policies . Reporting and monitoring should be integrated in all programs in which Las will be mainstreamed to allow the reporting of the COM and of DEVCO to the PFD and to the other institutions.</p>	<p>authorities (ALAs), tailored support to specific programs and projects, among other instruments, to further strengthen HQ and EUDEL engagement with local authorities, in particular to operationalize what is understood as the Territorial Approach to Local Development (TALD). Within this framework, a revision of the existing methodological framework concerning the EU Country Roadmaps (RM) for engagement with Local Authorities has recently been done. The new series of RM will involve the following steps:</p> <p>a) Simple analysis of the situation of LAs and decentralization in a country (can be based on the IDDF).</p> <p>b) Agreement on priority topics for LAs (in dialogue with them and ideally proposing a permanent structured space for policy dialogue, in countries where this is possible), drawing the contours of a work plan between EUDs and LAs.</p> <p>c) Work Plan towards implementation (where the additional TALD tools that can be offered are identified as well as the concrete means for monitoring and follow up), allowing the promotion of joint action between local stakeholders. The facility is providing these services described above to Delegations from January 2022.</p>
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<p>4.3 Where reform programmes are not present, roadmaps could focus on the strengthening of existing subnational frameworks.</p>		
<p><b>Recommendation #5 Ensure service delivery that pilots innovative approaches and has wider transformative impact.</b></p> <p>This recommendation could be implemented through the following measures:</p> <p>5.1 Calls for proposals (or other means) should promote piloting of innovations that complement and can be made use of by local government. The calls for proposals should be based on solid assessment of the subnational framework, to ensure that projects are indeed innovative and have a catalytic potential vis a vis decentralisation and local governance in the local context.</p> <p>5.2 Calls for proposals should include a mandatory requirement for project designs to outline a credible pathway for sustainability and replication/scalability. Where feasible, this should entail a default cooperation with associations of local authorities at either project or</p>	<p><i>From a CSO perspective:</i></p> <p>This recommendation is in line with the 2012 Communication on ‘the roots of democracy and sustainable development and is overall accepted. The EU agrees that the sustainability of service delivery often depends on the potential future transfer to local (in decentralised settings) or national public systems.</p> <p>At the same time one of the objectives of the program is in fact to address issues to which the authorities are not or weakly committed but are still important from a leave-no one behind or from a human rights perspective.</p> <p>The thematic programme also supports advocacy and civil society’s contribution to policymaking and oversight: this also implies working with local authorities.</p> <p>Agree that actions that could become part of public policy and practice should be considered, at least partly, as part of a wider and long-term process aimed at incremental change in mind-sets.</p> <p>Agree that more transformative impact can be achieved by associating service delivery with advocacy and oversight and by including CS in sector processes where the EU is involved (dialogue, monitoring, etc.).</p>	<p><i>From a CSO perspective:</i></p> <p>Service delivery under the CSO programme was foreseen under the NDICI-Global Europe instrument regulation and subsequently included under the Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021-2027 for the Thematic Programme for Civil Society, and the subsequent Multiannual Action Plan 2021-2024. Service delivery is allowed only under certain circumstances (in fragile and conflict affected countries and/or in severely restricted environment for CSOs, i.e., where no other type of support is feasible or highly limited etc.) and/or towards specific objectives (support that can be regarded as catalytic and/or innovative etc.). Such support should always include efforts to strengthen organisational capacities and/or links to advocacy efforts, in order to contribute to long-term positive and transformative effects.</p> <p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p> <p>Under the NDICI – Global Europe a new approach of geographisation has been adopted and consequently the thematic budget line specifically dedicated to local authorities has disappeared. Nevertheless, the support foreseen to local authorities under the geographic programmes should amount indicatively to at least</p>

<p>country level to enhance programme learning.</p> <p>5.3 Where feasible, encourage and actively promote CSO-LA project pilot and innovations which are linked to – and coordinated with - priority interventions of larger-scale decentralisation or thematic reform programmes.</p> <p>5.4 Longer project durations could ensure that results achieved in service delivery are leveraged and CSOs become trusted partners of government (central and/or local).</p> <p>5.5 Encourage civil society organisations to work openly and transparently with local authorities, and with government more generally (budget discussions and sector policies are particularly promising).</p>	<p>The Calls for Proposals actually already contains and will continue to contain in the template of the full applications a compulsory requirement for a dissemination plan and the possibilities for replication, (multiplier effects), capitalization on experience and knowledge sharing.</p> <p>The promotion of pilot projects and innovation can be done in the context of the Team Europe Initiatives.</p> <hr/> <p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p> <p><b>Highly relevant recommendation.</b></p> <p>However, CSO may tend to replace LA in certain circumstances and programme design should make sure that public services are delivered (as soon as possible) by LA as per their mandate.</p> <p>NB: ‘Deepening’ of service delivery (meaning local appropriation, local acquiring capacity for implementation, procurement, monitoring, etc and participatory or at least self-assessment i.e local transformative impact) should come before scaling up any initiative for solid sustainability at local level.</p> <p>The cooperation with the national association is a very valuable recommendation to increase the sustainability of pilots. In absence of Call for Proposals (due to the withdrawal of the budget line for LAs and the geographization approach) an analysis of the subnational context and the development- on its basis - of innovative pilot projects supporting local authorities or even more broader reform process (decentralization processes), will</p>	<p>EUR 500M. In this view, G2 continues to support EUDELs and the capacity and participation of Local Authorities in policy decision-making processes, policy implementation and service delivery.</p>
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	<p>have to be conducted for the most relevant EU actions in the areas of service delivery where LAs play a major role (waste water, water management, infrastructure, etc.). The potential of EU roadmaps for engagement of local authorities will have to be exploited.</p> <p>Very interesting measures that due to the changed approach will have to be translated in other instruments: in the direct agreement with NALA, if feasible.</p> <p>Very relevant measure, partially covered above within the geographization approach pilot and innovations actions with the LAs and CSOs involvement should be integrated in all thematic reforms programs (both on reform of public administration and non)</p> <p>To ensure sustainability in the provision of service is it fundamental to integrate CSOs and LAs in the national and local development plans and frame the actions and projects to be supported on them.</p> <p>Promote joint consultations of CSOs and LAs and their integration in the national consultation.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation #6 Expand capacity development across all five dimensions defined by the programme (aiming among others to increase the involvement of local CSOs and where relevant ALAs), and set up simplified but systematic monitoring.</b></p>	<p><i>From a CSO perspective:</i></p> <p><b>This recommendation is accepted.</b></p> <p>Capacity building of civil society is a main objective of the thematic programme and part of most of its projects. Ensuring that capacity is built across all five dimensions is a good recommendation that has been taken into account in the CSO concept for the next thematic programme and will be followed up in the next thematic programme.</p> <p>Guidance on simplified monitoring, reporting and</p>	<p><i>From a CSO perspective:</i></p> <p>The Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021-2027 for the Thematic Programme for Civil Society, and the subsequent Multiannual Action Plan 2021-2024 both clearly highlight the need to ensure that capacity is built all across. This will be further developed in upcoming call for proposals at global and partner country levels.</p>

	<p>learning on capacity development will be strengthened.</p> <p>Capacity building of CSO networks and members is already at the heart of the Framework Partnership Agreements under implementation. This approach will continue.</p> <hr/> <p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p> <p>This measure is already part of the obligations for any grant contract. There is a monitoring system always in place, probably what it is needed is better LOGFRAME with baseline, indicators, elements which ensure a valid monitoring process</p> <p>For the LAs the process could be ensured by integrating specific actions in this directions in the SGAs the COM has with the FPAs</p>	<p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p> <p>The “partnerships for sustainable cities” program, with 57 city-to-city ongoing partnerships worldwide, has set up a technical coordination facility team aiming to systematically monitor progress, capitalize on valuable experiences and good practices and favouring a cross-fertilisation across all the different partnerships participating in the program. This should allow to amplify the scope and impact of the peer-to-peer exchanges and foster mutual learning and capacity development. The coordination facility attaches great importance to ensuring that these partnerships -acting as “laboratories” for finding innovative solutions- also positively influence the overall EU policies and approaches to engaging with cities in external action and development cooperation. To this end, the effective “uptake” of lessons learnt by the various EU institutions will be actively promoted.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #7 Widen use of grant award procedures to make it easier to strengthen and support CSO’s own strategic plans and reach out to local CSOs.</b></p> <p>Whilst this recommendation is focussed on the future CSO programme it is also relevant in part for future LA actions.</p> <p>This recommendation goes beyond the programme itself and could be implemented through the following measures:</p>	<p><i>From a CSO perspective:</i></p> <p><b>This recommendation is partially accepted.</b></p> <p>To improve the effectiveness of our cooperation with civil society opportunities to support CSO’s own strategic plans and to increase support to local and grassroots organisations will be explored, in line with the existing rules. Relevant experience from delegations and Member States will be considered in this process.</p> <p>The use of direct agreements is defined in the FR. The</p>	<p><i>From a CSO perspective:</i></p> <p>Action document 2, of the CSO MAP 2021-2024 , “Support to Civil society in Partner Countries”, gives priority to supporting CSO and/or their associations from partner countries in order to strengthen their capacity.</p> <p>Financial support to third Parties (FSTP) can be an effective way to fund grass-roots organisations. An info session for all Delegations was organised in June 2021. The info session covered both legal basis and</p>

<p>7.1 Review all relevant guidelines on the programme in light of the recommendations of this evaluation and conduct an anonymous survey of EUDs to capture suggestions for change.</p> <p>7.2 Develop clarification and guidelines for how the current procedures can be used to better serve the purpose of the programme including how to support CSO strategic plans and increase the involvement of local CSOs. These clarifications, interpretations and guidelines could be based on EU and other donor experience on providing core support to CSOs, including if relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanisms including use of call for proposals to support the strategic plans of CSO platforms where these plans have a credible prospect of catalysing change.</li> <li>• Refine and if possible, relax procedures for undertaking direct negotiation.</li> </ul> <p>7.4 Initiate in a longer term perspective a discussion within EUDs/DEVCO on how procedures</p>	<p>evaluation does not demonstrate which benefits would result from an easier use of direct agreements instead of calls for proposals and does not indicate circumstances when the use of direct agreement could be considered.</p> <p>In the longer term, possible solutions to restrictions linked to rules and regulations could be identified and considered.</p>	<p>practical cases.</p>
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<p>instruments and modalities can be adjusted to better meet the special needs of civil society.</p>		
<p><b>Recommendation #8 Enhance results framework and reporting especially at programme and country level.</b></p> <p>This recommendation could be implemented through the following measures</p> <p>8.1 Make use of theory of change and intervention logic tools at programme and country level and be open to adjustment based on monitoring outcomes and lessons learnt.</p> <p>8.2 Develop a set of outcome and impact indicators at programme level (e.g. taking the suggestions of the 2019 evaluability assessment as a starting point) that are simple (SMART) and linking to the sustainable development goals.</p> <p>8.3 Ensure that there are sufficient resources at the country level to monitor and report on the country roadmap, if necessary by outsourcing.</p> <p>8.4 Consider making use of support facilities or CSO platforms to provide basic monitoring and reporting at programme level, which entails harmonised reporting at</p>	<p><i>From a CSO perspective:</i></p> <p><b>This recommendation is partly accepted.</b></p> <p>The need to strengthen the result framework of the programme is recognised.</p> <p>Two high level KPIs related to the programme will be monitored as part of the DEVCO Strategic Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow up of recommendations from the Policy Forum on Development</li> <li>- Number of policies developed with the inclusion of civil society supported by the EU.</li> </ul> <p>However, at country level the result-framework will be linked to the Roadmaps that include but go beyond initiatives funded by the CSO thematic programme.</p> <p>These recommendations will need to be further explored and clarified to be framed under the existing rules and support.</p> <hr/> <p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p> <p><b>Agreed, very relevant recommendation.</b></p> <p>It is fundamental to ensure that in all actions baselines and indicators are well developed in the logical frameworks of all actions .</p> <p>DEVCO has put in place a new agreement with OECD to</p>	<p><i>From a CSO perspective:</i></p> <p>MIP and MAAP results framework for the CSO programme include indicators at impact, outcome and output level for activities at global and country level. A robust monitoring system is being developed, which will include baselines and targets along with a methodology to measure progress over time, in order to facilitate harmonised reporting across countries and the programme level.</p> <p>Alongside CSO programme results framework, Roadmaps have a monitor system integrated: for each objective, one (or several) outcome indicators have been defined, as well as the suggested target(s), baseline information (if possible) and sources of information/means of verification.</p> <p><i>From a LA perspective:</i></p> <p>In terms of strategic monitoring, conscious that the “Partnerships for sustainable cities” programme represents a major innovation in EU engagement strategies with cities on the multi-dimensional issue of urban development, it was decided to put in place a technical coordination facility to ensure a strategic monitoring of this experimental programme. The facility will monitor the outcomes of each project (57 in total) and their contribution to the objectives of the programme and to the localization of SDGs. This will allow the EC to go beyond a traditional ‘project approach’ to city-to-city partnerships intending to: (i) develop a community of practitioners to reflect together on lessons learnt and good practices; (ii) inject this accumulated knowledge into the EU</p>

<p>country level.</p>	<p>follow in an homogeneous manner the implementation of the 43 new partnerships among local authorities of EU and of partner countries (outsourced as indicated in the recommendation). The new methodology is based on localised indicators to assess the achievement of SDG 11 and SDG 17 (in particular) by the partnerships and their contribution to the overall programs' objectives.</p> <p>The system put in place aims at ensuring knowledge sharing and knowledge capitalization for replicability of models.</p>	<p>system; and (iii) communicate about these pilot experiences and demonstrate the added value of this type of city-to-city partnerships.</p> <p>The strategic monitoring of our decentralised cooperation portfolio will also be complemented by the work develop in collaboration with the OECD aiming to:</p> <p>1) Measure the contribution of each city-to-city partnership project awarded under the Calls for proposals to the objectives of the Partnership programme; (set of indicators of the programme).</p> <p>2) Analyse and evaluate to what extent these partnerships are performing in localising the SDGs, notably the SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) and the SDG 17 (Partnerships and enablers for SDGs).</p> <p>These two main analysis will feed the final official report "Partnerships for sustainable cities. A consensus-based evaluation framework for local authorities to localise the SDGs".</p>
<p><b>R9. Strengthen the DEAR programme by developing a theory of change.</b></p> <p><u>This recommendation could be implemented through the following measures:</u></p> <p>9.1 Draw on intellectual resources produced by the 2010 DEAR Study as well as newer thinking as reflected in the analytical work done by the DEAR Support Team, CONCORD, and the project Frame. Voice. Report!, as well as GENE.</p>	<p><i>From a DEAR perspective</i></p> <p>Partially agree:</p> <p>In implementing the DEAR programme, the Commission has to balance the right of initiative of our main partners such as CSOs and local authorities with the need to have a coherent, impactful programme, which responds to strategic priorities.</p> <p>For the last call for proposals in 2018, the Commission pursued a more strategic and focused approach by concentrating on two key areas: climate change and migration. The Commission has also started to work on</p>	<p><b>From a DEAR perspective:</b></p> <p>A <u>Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework</u> was developed and finalised at the end of 2021 and published in February 2022. The process included discussions and comments from stakeholders (MSG) that could be added directly into the document. Several dedicated meetings with stakeholders were held as well.</p>

<p>9.2 The theory of change should clarify concepts at the core of DEAR and develop a coherent definition of the meaning of public awareness, public engagement, public mobilisation, and how these elements hang together.</p>	<p>a set of common indicators that would allow reporting aggregated results from the projects funded under the call for proposals.</p> <p>Having carefully analysed the value added, constraints and requirements in terms of input required from stakeholders, the Commission considers that developing a fully-fledged theory of change could prove too heavy (in terms of input required from stakeholders and the process to analyse and agree on all elements). Therefore, the Commission suggests to develop as a first step an intervention logic to provide “the conceptual link from an intervention’s inputs to the production of its outputs and, subsequently, to its impacts on society in terms of results and outcomes”<sup>1</sup>. At a later stage, and based on the experience of the implementation of this intervention logic, the Commission will review whether the development of a complete theory of change would be justified. The relevant resources developed so far and the relevant work done by the projects and other stakeholders will feed into this process.</p>	
<p><b>R10. Develop a results and monitoring framework for the DEAR programme.</b></p> <p><u>This recommendation could be implemented through the following measures:</u></p> <p>10.1 Based on a theory of change, develop standardised and verifiable</p>	<p><i>From a DEAR perspective</i></p> <p>Partially agree:</p> <p>Measuring the results<sup>2</sup> is key process to enable us to report on what programmes and projects are achieving. Measuring progress on awareness, level of engagement and change behaviours is however challenging and also takes time which usually goes well beyond the time line of projects and programmes.</p>	<p><i>From a DEAR perspective:</i></p> <p>A Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework was developed and finalised at the end of 2021 and published in February 2022. The process included discussions and comments from stakeholders (MSG) that could be added directly into the document. Several dedicated meetings with stakeholders were held as well.</p>

<sup>1</sup> European Commission, DG Budget, ‘Evaluating EU activities: a practical guide for the Commission services’, July 2004, pp. 87 and 106, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6ff3c67d-bd1e-4909-8158-01cd57c4375d>

<sup>2</sup> According to the OECD DAC terminology, the term of results covers the outputs, outcomes and impact of a development intervention. These three levels of results can be represented in a chain that is reflected in the structure of the Logical Framework Matrix (Impact - Overall Objective, Outcomes - Specific Objective/s, and Outputs).

<p>indicators applicable across actions to account for results, and which provide guidance on what constitutes a successful DEAR project.</p> <p>10.2 Draw on intellectual and analytical work conducted by DEAR stakeholders to inform this work.</p> <p>10.3 Introduce more stringent requirements for how monitoring covers all partners in a CSO-LA consortium, and provide closer scrutiny of project reporting during project implementation.</p>	<p>Measuring outputs (e.g. how many teachers have been trained) might seem simple a priori, but aggregating results is more complex. For instance, in the case of teacher training, question remains how to compare and aggregate results from trainings of a different duration and nature implemented by the different projects.</p> <p>With regard to outcomes, e.g. convincing consumers to buy “fair” fruits, and impact, e.g. change of attitudes of parts of the population towards migration, the questions that need to be answered are i) how to measure the outcomes, ii) whether the measuring would require an justifiable amount of resources and iii) how to account for external factors, outside of control of the projects?</p> <p>The Commission has started to work on a set of common DEAR indicators that would allow reporting aggregated results from the projects funded under the call for proposals launched in 2018.</p> <p>For the future, the Commission could envisage to: i) develop an intervention logic including relevant indicators, ii) continue relying on the well-functioning ROM system, and iii) to improve the system for collecting results and project reporting that it has developed recently. This could be further strengthened by i) including a reference to the intervention logic and the common indicators in future calls for proposals, making their integration in the applications a requirement; ii) foreseeing a reference to this system in the contract; iii) requiring a dedicated annual reporting on these indicators; iv) aggregating the results and reporting them in the DEAR Programme annual reports.</p> <p>The relevant resources developed so far and the relevant work done by the projects and other stakeholders will feed into this process.</p>	
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<p><b>R11. Ensure that programming decisions are reflective of stakeholder feedback and that they are transparent.</b></p> <p><u>This recommendation could be implemented through the following measures:</u></p> <p>11.1 Communicate why programming decisions are being taken, including those relating to the size of consortia; the thematic focus of the calls; as well as specific aspects of calls.</p> <p>11.2 In particular, provide feedback on such issues where stakeholders have provided substantiated feedback to DEVCO over the years.</p>	<p><i>From a DEAR perspective</i></p> <p>The DEAR programme has relied on a dedicated Multi Stakeholder Group (MSG), consisting of representatives of CSOs, LAs, MS, academics and the Commission services, meeting once to twice per year, to discuss the development of the DEAR programme, for example, before drafting MIPs (Multi Annual Indicative Programmes), MAAPs (Multi Annual Action Programmes) or before launching the respective calls for proposals (last one being the call launched in 2018). During these meetings, meaningful exchanges have taken place and overall the communication between and understanding of each others' objectives has vastly improved.</p> <p>The Commission has taken note of all contributions made during the MSGs and during other meetings and exchanges. Inputs are taken into account wherever possible and relevant to ensure that the DEAR Programme is relevant, effective and efficient.</p> <p>In response to the recommendation, the Commission will attempt to strengthen and clarify the mandate of the MSG and to make its participation more representative. The Commission will also make sure that it gives the feedback on the main issues raised by the stakeholders.</p>	<p><i>From a DEAR perspective:</i></p> <p>Both during the MSG meetings (last one in October 2021) and the NDICI Committee meeting (November 2021), we received feedback and recommendations from stakeholders on the MIP. During the MSG meeting the upcoming Call for Proposals was also a topic of discussion with all stakeholders (MSs, LAs, CSOs, academics) and all feedback is taken into consideration.</p>
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