

Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I find a list of CSOs?

Many resident missions and the NGOC maintain lists of CSOs with which ADB regularly interacts. In addition, the NGO/Civil Society page of ADB's website features links to CSO directories and umbrella organizations (www.adb.org/ngos).

What is ADB's accreditation process for CSOs?

ADB does not maintain an accreditation system for CSOs except for the specific purpose of attendance at the ADB annual meeting. When ADB engages CSOs as consultants, ADB's *Guidelines on the Use of Consultants* apply. In cases in which ADB provides grants to CSOs, the relevant technical assistance paper specifies the criteria relating to CSO participation.

Do projects do better with or without NGOs?

An OED analysis of rated projects implemented during 2000–2004 compared similar-sector projects implemented with CSO involvement with those implemented in the absence of CSO participation. The analysis revealed that projects with CSO involvement were more likely to be rated "successful." Country assistance program evaluations for Nepal and the Philippines have concluded that beneficiary participation, including that channeled through NGOs, seems to improve project results.

How do I respond to CSO requests for information?

The PCP establishes the requirements for information disclosure. Many key documents of interest to CSOs are placed on the internet for easy public access. Pages 57–58 provide guidance on responding to CSO information requests.

How do I organize a consultation with CSOs?

Consultations with CSOs, as well as those conducted with other stakeholders, require proper preparation. Tips on organizing consultations are found on pages 51–54.

How do I respond to critical CSOs?

ADB has considerable experience in communicating with CSOs that criticize or oppose outright ADB-financed activities for one reason or another. Engagement with “watchdog” CSOs has often revealed shortcomings in projects, and has helped resolve or prevent problems. Even in cases where CSOs promote a rigid agenda to which ADB cannot completely agree, there is value in maintaining an open dialogue. In only a minority of cases do CSOs totally reject engagement and instead opt for a firmly oppositional stance, typically for ideological or political reasons.

How do I find a reliable CSO to help with my project?

The NGOC, resident missions, divisional colleagues, and ADB-wide communities of practice and committees are excellent places to begin looking for potential CSO partners for a project. Bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as CSO apex and umbrella organizations, can also be useful sources of information.

With what kind of CSOs does ADB collaborate?

ADB works primarily with developmental CSOs, i.e., organizations that address concerns such as social and humanitarian issues relating to development, individual and community welfare and well-being, and poverty alleviation, as well as environmental and natural resource protection, management, and improvement.

What kind of funding does ADB offer to CSOs?

ADB does not maintain a dedicated general small grants fund for CSOs. JFPR finances small-scale investment projects that directly target poverty reduction and have a conceptual link to ADB-financed loan projects. CSOs are often engaged to help implement JFPR-financed projects. Separately, ADB's pilot and demonstration activities provide opportunities for CSOs and other entities to test innovative ideas, technology, and methodologies for improving water services delivery and water resources management on a limited scale. However, external proposals must be sponsored by an ADB staff member who agrees to act as the "activity officer."

How accountable are CSOs?

CSOs increasingly respond to the challenge of matching the level of accountability demanded by many governments, media, and the public. Most reputable CSOs establish and make publicly known the standards to which they adhere. In addition, many commit to national or international codes of conduct. In a growing number of countries, ratings and accreditation systems are used to assess CSO accountability, capacity, and performance.

What do I do if the government does not want to work with CSOs?

Explain that it is ADB policy to cooperate with CSOs, and that such cooperation has yielded positive benefits in other countries. Attempt to determine if the government's concern relates only to particular CSOs, or if it extends more broadly. Staff may consider apprising the government of meetings with CSOs, or inviting officials to participate in discussions with CSOs.