

ADB-Government-NGO Cooperation: A Framework for Action, 2003-2005
External Comments on December 2002 Draft

Pri Fernando

*International Development Support Services
Melbourne, Australia*

Thanks for the draft Framework and it is looking good. Congratulations to the team who would have condensed the outputs from the 'Write shop' into this streamlined document. Very few comments at a first read.

Para 51 and 53 still repeat. Can move 53 'ADB can play a key role in facilitating NGO-Government engagement.' to the start of 51 and delete the rest of 53 given the rest is stated in 52.

Pg 10, Para 62, 2nd sentence can be read to be derogatory of NGOs implying that NGO reservations are more because of lack of information rather than a legitimate concern at the development policies and projects of the ADB/GO and their impact on the poor and indebtedness of DMCs. I know this is not intended but it could be read that way and could re-inforce NGO skepticism of this document. A more appropriate re-wording is recommended and could read as follows.

"NGOs have strong concerns about policy based lending, program loans or loan conditionalities, the likely impact on stakeholder groups as well as the failure to engage the public, including NGOs in informed debate about proposed reform measures. Greater information sharing about the aims of specific reforms could alleviate some of these concerns as well as providing a forum for dialogue with the key stakeholders."

Hurrah for some diagram being brought in. Well done again.

Under ADB Bullet Point 3 states "Build capacity of all stakeholders to work together toward poverty reduction". This in broad terms could be taken to include building internal capacity within the ADB and GOs to work with NGOs as well. However, under NGOs the 3rd Bullet point reads "Develop internal capacity to dialogue with government, ADB and other international agencies".

Again its looks like that both ADB and Governments know how to engage with NGOs while NGOs need the skill to work in reverse. Maybe the NGO point should read as 'Develop internal development management capacity and governance including networking with the Government, bi-lateral and multilateral agencies.'

That is all for now. Again an excellent output.

Thanks for the opportunity given to participate and look forward to an ongoing collaboration in various ways.

Ikramullah Jan

*Sarhad Rural Support Program
Pakistan*

Thank you very much for the draft document on ADB-Government-NGO Cooperation. The document is very excellent and all recommendations formulated are relevant and doable. However I would like to share with you my personal experience of working in ADB-Government Projects. Perhaps, these may be useful in clarifying role and responsibilities of the partners.

(a) ADP loan projects are implemented through Government agencies. All Govt. sectoral departments are considered partners by the design of the project while NGOs are contracted and treated as contractors. This undermines the role of NGO as partner in the projects. NGOs should be identified and assessed as partner during the ADB appraisal mission and should be considered as partner by design.

(b) Community development is an integral component of many ADB projects. This subject needs long-term commitment at ADB and MDC level. In many cases it is easy for ADB and MDC to withdraw from a project. But it is very difficult for NGO involved in country development to withdraw. Such un-planned withdrawal means collapsing of all efforts initiated to achieve the status of self reliance on one hand and the re initiation of such work in the said community on the other hand, because of confidence which they lose on the implementing agencies.

Angela Maria Pangan

*NORFIL Foundation, Inc
Philippines*

Many thanks for giving me the opportunity to read a copy of the Draft Framework for Action 2003-2005 on the ADB-NGO Cooperation.

I rapidly read the document and found it is very comprehensive, very well thought of, and was prepared in a highly participative way by all stakeholders. I think all the aspects of the collaboration from all sides: GO, NGO and ADB have been taken up.

My only comment is in the more specific areas of social welfare and development. This involves especially the marginalized sectors: the women, children and youth who are disabled, abandoned, prostituted, exploited, abused, etc. This sector suffers the most from economic crises, disasters and conflicts. They are also affected the most from development projects and infrastructures that are built with ADB funds. I suggest that there should be clear guidelines on specific areas for each sector for the common use of the stakeholders regarding projects being considered for funding.

My experience and expertise as NGO are in these welfare sectors, hence my remarks.

Thanks again for furnishing me a copy.

Chamroeun Keo

NGO Forum on Cambodia

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

On behalf of Development Issues Coordinator in NGO Forum on Cambodia, I would like to provide some comments, concerns and ideas involved with this Cooperation. Overview of this document is likely to be enough for cooperating between ADB-Government-NGO but some points should have clearly and toward more to marginalized and vulnerable groups.

For example, in Executive summary (ii) enhance transparency..... I want to add one more point that is: Simplifying and translating ADB documents supported projects into various national or local languages and then distributing on time to NGO or government staff.

At point 3 Policies and (61) Experience shown that..... I think it most important for ADB that must deeply consider because some governments have not comprehensively regulation, national policies and law about development activity. For example, in Cambodia government has not yet national policy or law on resettlement so when ADB provides loan to government consider only ADB project but other projects they never take care or less; that is, it seems to discriminate between ADB project and another project. Thus, ADB should accelerate or be incentive to government to design their policies covered legitimate development.

At point 1 Guideline on stakeholder participation and point (77) Line 3 from top Stakeholder participation is particularly emphasized with is very good idea but how scope of gender, indigenous people... can participate and consult with; that is why, I consider NGOC should have localized establishment of consultation plan rather than meeting or workshop is only in cities because over-there we really know actual situation.

At point (81) NGO involvement in monitoring and evaluation of ADB policies. I think NGOs in Cambodia are still weak so the strengthening capacity of NGOs monitoring and evaluation is one thing but another thing I consider ADB should find and select itself of independent NGOs or other agencies rather provides this activity to government manages because this story occurred at Highway 1; government dominated all activities NGOs that hired by its conducted to survey so the reported result of these was bias not fit to actual location. NICFEC hired by government was not professional on resettlement monitoring and evaluation and I wonder why they hired it to do for this activity.

At point (A20), ADB should review the current modalities through which NGO receive or disburse funding from ADB..... I think ADB should differently consider between NGO worked with advocacy and with pro-poor development. Yes, I agree ADB can provide input like training and other skills to NGO advocacy but the fund should be limited or sometime not disbursed. Should give NGO advocacy to find fund from other places and then work with ADB projects supported I think it is more efficiency.

At 2. Monitoring and point (130)... , and monitor its progress, both internally and externally it is good idea but I think ADB should provide firstly priority to internal monitor because local NGO can well know either language or location of each development site.

And they provide more benefit to ADB staff so that they can develop the project to be fit to basic need of local people especially indigenous people.

Lastly, the cooperation between ADB-NGO-Government should be based on equity and motivation and independent concept among ours. NGO based on objective with non-profit from other individuals or institutions and served affected, marginalized, vulnerable people will do more benefit to ADB if the ADB openly consults, debates and accepts more and more on NGOs' development ideas.

Paul G. Schäfer

Hanns Seidel Foundation

Makati City, Philippines

First of all, congratulations for coming up with this major document. This is another milestone towards a more effective cooperation between ADB, GO and NGOs.

Please find below our comments on the draft framework document for the "ADB-Government-NGO Cooperation".

The document is well prepared addressing key elements of the tripartite cooperation. We also recognize the participatory processes that were employed in formulating the document.

We would like to raise some important points that we think needs further clarification/consideration in the document, viz:

- Definition and description of NGOs reflects more the position/status of local NGOs. The foreign/international NGOs, given its extensive experience and strengths in international development cooperation, could contribute a lot in the whole process. The operational structures of those NGOs should be looked into.
- While we respect the partnership agreement between ADB and the national government, we also call for greater participation/direct involvement of local government units in the identification/implementation of development projects to ensure success. This will also enhance the process of decentralization/devolution. Further, it would be beneficial to take into account models of good governance/people empowerment in the evaluation/selection of such projects.
- As we all are aware, there are parallel/complementary programs on GO-NGO-PO/other stakeholders' cooperation being undertaken by national, regional and international organizations (i.e., USAID, UNDP, etc.). We should develop/strengthen coordination mechanisms to learn from and work with each other.
- In the framework, it was recommended to develop 'Participation Criteria/Guidelines/Standards" for NGOs. This is good to ensure constructive engagement with truly developmental NGOs.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share our ideas. We look forward to the final version of the Framework for Action 2003-2005 to guide us in our future cooperation with ADB.

Qadeer Baig

*NGO Resource Centre, Karachi/Aga Khan Foundation
Pakistan*

Thank you very much for sharing the draft framework. I also shared it with my colleagues at the Aga Khan Foundation. Following are some of our reflections and comments:

- a) Clearly ADB has taken more pains than the World Bank to be consulting many NGOs and instigating a process for this purpose. We assure ADB our support and cooperation.
- b) We are surprised that the draft framework has alienated itself from the Millennium Development Goals especially as these are being pushed hard by Western donors and indicators being developed accordingly. Is this deliberate and if so what does this mean for our cross donor relations.
- c) It would be good to know where Japan stands on all of this and whether they then see this as an additional window to channel funds, opportunities through or not.
- d) While having an NGO liaison officer in each ADB office is seemingly a good thing, what will be his/her authority and access to budgets?
- e) We are not sure how sincere the effort for collaboration is though, as the total amount involved in the exercise (USD 3.7m) is very small, although this excludes the small grants fund.
- f) We would suggest ADB - NGO Center to form a small task force to address these issues.

Sanat Kumar Bhowmik

*COAST Trust
Dhaka, Bangladesh*

1. Stakeholder Participation

- a. Effective participation should be ensured is all levels. Here effective participation means NGO will involve to the design, implementation and monitoring of any projects. For this effectiveness the policy should be developed so that NGO can play active role for the design.
- b. The project design will be started through bottom up approach. The top down approach will not last for the long term. That is, to design the project there will be involved the NGOs and GO as that they will be well acquire about the problems of the specific areas. This is one thing and another thing is that for the design of the projects there should be ensuring the participation of direct clients.
- c. Resource sharing will also be another mode of stakeholder participation.
- d. At present it has been rarely but it should be regularly and need basis.
- e. The policy should be developed how the hardcore poor can be addressed as stakeholders. The hardcore poor are now somehow neglected, as large number of NGOs has no policy to reach to the hardcore poor's doors. The ADB should have special attention on these crucial issues.

- f. The ADB has to take an active role to decrease the gap between GO & NGO. The objectives in relation to the GO NGO activities are more or less same. The both are committed to develop the nation as well as the mass poor people.
- g. The special program should be developed for the coastal people who are the most vulnerable in comparison to the people of main land. They will also be another core stakeholders for the development activities.

2. Transparency and Accountability

- a. For enhancing the transparency and accountability there should be developed in the MIS in each sector. The each MIS should be openly distributed among the partners.
- b. For each party there should be developed the monitoring device. This will also enhance the relationship among the partners and not only that there will be possible for the exchange of knowledge and information.

3. NGO capacity building

- a. The training manual should be developed for getting the training of the participants of the three parties.
- b. In the process for the preparation of training manual there should be involved the NGO, GO and ADB personnel for getting the more result oriented manual.
- c. The implementation strategies of the training courses should be the way out with the participation of the parties.
- d. After getting the training there should be system for the deliberation of Technical Assistance to the respective organization.
- e. The arrangement of regular meeting, workshop will strengthen the capacity of the NGOs with the more effective and efficient way.
- f. The exposure visit in the country and outside the country will also accelerate the building the capacity.

4. Good Governance

- a. Governance should be practiced at all levels. First of all NGOs should practice the governance in themselves.
- b. There are some NGOs, which do not really practice the good governance to the organizations. They are not accountable and responsible to the commitment of proper development. The ADB can take a good initiative to establish the governance in the NGOs and GS and itself, which will be appropriate for the sustainable development.
- c. In the government sectors there should be necessary of practicing good governance. They should strengthen the local government structure. The development concept should be started from the grass root level and that will be possible when the local government will take real participation to development process. We think that the local government will play a strong role for the sustainable growth of the people.

Gulzi Nabieva

*"ZHARiA" ("Women Association of Development and Adaptation")
Astana, Kazakhstan*

Fists of all we would like to thank you for your attention for non-governmental movement as a whole and in our organization in particular. We were very pleased to receive your letter with the suggestion to discuss and comment the framework for Action 2003-2005. We estimate it like a very positive process of mutual making decision that shows the democratic features of your organization work.

We are really happy to hear about such trend of activity as tripartite relationship with governments, because there are no really such international organizations that connect with NGOs and governments at the same time and solve problems of their collaboration.

We estimate as a very significant achievement the objective of reducing poverty in the Asia and Pacific region. And of course the proclaimed need to strengthen stakeholders involvement in ADB-supported activities is seemed to us a very wise idea of collaboration.

The idea of formalizing participation guidelines, including minimum standards is seemed to us as a very grateful because it will really help to avoid mutual claims and misunderstanding. May be we can only add to this idea to make governments to follow the rule of minimal standards, because the governments themselves will be the greatest violators of standards of work instead of NGOs who looks for future collaboration.

We agree also with the idea of tripartite meetings and think that the convening such meetings must be compulsory to protect problems understanding. Problems of NGO and government collaboration for Kazakhstan has been already solved because it was decided to create a special regular meeting that will include the representatives of government, NGOs, associations and other social movements but of course it may be the main problem for other countries where such problem is on the peak of activity.

The idea of on-site project consultations is seemed very progressive for us because we have never met it with the work of other funds and organizations. We can only add to hold such consultations in the period of project preparation. There are many questions in the time of projects writing and these questions are usually unanswered because many grant funds don't see any need in commenting their application forms.

As far as the monitoring and estimating of ADB work by NGOs we think that it is a very brave and positive step because it will help receive needed information about problems of ADB programs implementation. The third (alternative) report is a very spread-widen mechanism of work and it will be useful for this case also.

In one word we think that suggested draft is a very good prepared document that will be the strong basis of future activity and collaboration and hope that our good wishes and comments will help this process. With great pleasure we will take part in discussing any other topics of collaboration and suggest other comments.

Kalyan Paul

*Pan Himalayan Grassroots Development Foundation
India*

The document is very clear about the intentions of ADB and its vision regarding the involvement of NGOs in the macro sphere of national developmental processes.

In order to actualize the vision, several steps have been described, quite adequately, which would enable ADB to reach its stated goals and objectives.

It would, however, be necessary to prepare **country-specific** details regarding each and every aspect of the **vision**.

Establishing the Small Grants Window is a very good idea, for it will provide an opportunity to ADB to realize the actual potential of participating NGOs. It ought to be understood that only real-time field activities would be able to provide real-time experiences regarding the capabilities of NGOs in terms of facilitating the participatory development process at the grassroots. In reality, over a period of 2-3 years, ADB would be in a stronger position to appreciate the potential role of NGOs in achieving its broader macro vision.

Therefore, it may be a good idea to operationalise the Small Grants Window as soon as possible. For it would provide ADB with a real-time experience as compared to meeting NGO leaders in discussion forums only.

In order to harness the strength of NGOs in bilateral development processes, sector-specific action plans ought to be developed. And, these plans ought to clearly spell out the responsibilities of NGOs. For instance, NGOs could be ideally involved with the process of participatory grassroots planning and also during the critical stages of program implementation and monitoring, NGOs would be able to provide an adequate platform for communities to harness their energies towards sectoral reform programs. However, ADB would need to select NGOs with the capacity to fulfill such an ambitious task.

We look forward to working closely with ADB in the future.

Marlene D. Ramirez

Asiadhrra

Quezon City, Philippines

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft ADG-Government-NGO Framework for Action. The laudable draft document is a very concrete manifestation of ADB's effort to strengthen its relationship with NGOs.

Our only comments are on page 21, on two points:

1) A20, a caution that the review of existing funding modalities will not be another long process since from many accounts these modalities have not been heard responsive to the realities of NGOs. The recommendation can be made stronger by starting with: establish a small grants window... taking into account strengths/weaknesses of existing ADB modalities for NGO access.

2) Training for Government Staff, #123, ADB can help institutionalize NGO participation (especially in not so supportive governments) if the provision for training and orientation about NGOs' (role and contributions) to government officers/staff is made a pre-requisite, rather than "upon request" as noted in the #123. This is a leveraging that ADB can do for NGOs to promote harmonious/effective GO-NGO collaboration.

Vic Fowler

Foundation for Community and Career Development (FCCD)

Quezon City, Phillipines

Historically, ADB transfers funds direct to the Government and if the funds are for an NGO / Government approved project; the NGO is exposed to project commitments on the release of funds. I am strongly in favor of ADB working with the NGO as the administrator of the funds to the project (Paragraph 112.)

Along with ADB staff awareness of NCO issues and concerns (paragraph 33), we would welcome the release of detail from ADB on programs and projects (Paragraph 95) it has interest in funding and make such funding available direct to the NGO's. (Paragraph 109, 110 & 111)

We would welcome the interaction and support from the ADB in not only obtaining cooperation from government (Paragraph 121), but in holding hands with the NGO in working towards a timely response from government-NGO, in addressing specific NGO needs.

I have concern about the relationship between the NGOC and NGO at the NGOC level (Paragraph 125 & 130) if such responsibility for managing and implementing the Framework becomes restrictive to the NGO in the future.

FCCD would welcome a grant from ADB to assist in an FCCD project addressing poverty issues in Mindanao (Paragraph 136) and FCCD (NGO) has ability to manage and administer the funds.

Arkhipova Liliya

Ust-Kamenogorsk, Kazakhstan

First of all we would like to thank you for providing us with the draft Framework document and for being interested in our feedback and comments on it. In our term we would like to say that we are interested in improving ADB - Government - NGO - cooperation.

We consider the partnership among three sectors of the civic society such as NGOs, Government and ADB to be possible and realistic. We have got an example of successful cooperation among Government, NGOs and business structures here in Ust-Kamenogorsk. Taking into account the demand of finance, informational resources, lack of wide support, serious work for improving cooperation between Government and citizens has been done in Ust-Kamenogorsk. The project "Transparent city" has united efforts of akimat of Ust-Kamenogorsk, Social Fund "Local Self-Governance Development Center", Soros Foundation, Librarians Association of East-Kazakhstan region with the technical support of Rating firm, for establishing an open dialog, enhancing transparency of the local government and increasing of citizens' involvement in solving of social problems through the city site. The Institute of Open Society (Budapest) monitored that project and estimated the results. The pilot project "Transparent city" has been successfully realized. Thus you can see that the base for future development of partnership among three sectors of our society has been laid but still there are problems with technical and finance support of this program. Moreover we have some ideas for development of ADB-Government-NGO-cooperation. For example, it might be useful to create a work group, kind of a Committee, consisting of representatives from each sector of current tripartite relationship (ADB, Government, NGO) that would monitor the cooperation of these sectors, work out comments and recommendations for their further work.

Modules of some seminars and workshops for representatives of legislative and executive branches of government were worked out by Social Fund "Local Self-Governance Development Center". Those modules might be re-made and used by ADB. That will help to lighten the communication among ADB, Government and NGOs. As a result they will cooperate to promote pro-poor sustainable growth. Social development and good governance as partners but not as employees. Then we can exchange gained experience with other participants of the program supported by the Bank.

Next step undertaken for strengthening capacities of the NGOs was uniting some NGOs of Ust-Kamenogorsk in one electronic net (through the Internet) for facilitating the access to the information and its efficient exchange. The workshop "Perspectives of the NGOs' cooperation in 2003" was held by Social Fund. During that workshop participating NGOs expressed their will and ability to cooperate in the frame of the virtual society for effective and efficient work.

We would like to conclude that the partnership is a real goal that might be achieved together and first steps were already undertaken. Our Social Fund has gained technical and people resources and we will be glad to participate in realization of your program.

Rae Julian

*Council for International Development
New Zealand*

Thank you for giving us an opportunity to comment on your document on cooperation with NGOs. As I mentioned when I met Robert Dobias in Manila late last year, I was very disappointed to find that New Zealand NGOs had not been included in the consultation process when you visited this region for that purpose. I have also found out that PIANGO and other regional NGO agencies in Pacific were also omitted. I hope that they have a chance to comment on the draft document.

In general we consider that the document makes its case well and sets out a feasible and useful set of recommendations. If implemented, they should lead to an ongoing tripartite relationship between the ADB, national governments and NGOs throughout the region.

There seemed to be no acknowledgement in the document of the power differential among the 3 members of the tripartite process. The ADB as the donor is the most powerful, and many NGOs and national governments in developing countries would hesitate to speak freely or critically for fear that they might jeopardize their chance of getting funding. Similarly the government is more powerful than the NGO, in that it can influence the NGOs chances of getting funding or could even de-register the NGO. The NGOs should not be made to feel that they are the poor relation – they have their own strengths, which are not based on income, and their essential characteristics should be acknowledged and respected accordingly.

The comments below relate to specific points in the paper:

1. Para 62. To assume that NGO reservations about loans as a form of development assistance are “often” due to a lack of understanding about the reforms that they are intended to promote underestimates the intelligence of NGO workers and their capacity for international research. There is a great deal of evidence, particularly from the work of Jubilee 2000, showing the effect of the debt burden on many developing countries. The most heavily indebted must spend most of their meager GNP on debt servicing, with consequently severe effects on areas such as health and education.
2. Para 68. While it is true that many NGOs lack capacity to participate effectively in consultations with agencies such as the ADB, many are part of umbrella organizations that are able to undertake such consultations, including those members’ agencies that choose to participate. Many developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region have national, and regional umbrella bodies; while others have coalitions of NGOs who often work together for reasons such as advocacy.
3. Para 88. We support the concept of NGO liaison officers. It is important, however, that if this person performs other roles on behalf of ADB, then the two aspects should not come into conflict. For example, the liaison officer should not also be involved with advising or assisting with government reform processes, since it is possible that some of the NGOs may not support that process.

4. Para 116. We do not support the idea of cash awards for “best practice”. Who would determine eligibility? Who would decide on definitions of best practice? We would prefer to see discussion or promotion of “models of innovative practice”, without some NGOs, who may be better at presenting themselves, being singled out for prizes. If there were an NGO project fund, then those with worthwhile and well-designed projects would be more likely to qualify for assistance. This would be their reward.
5. Para 119. We would prefer that training for NGOs were provided as part of general capacity building, rather than to assist them to work with the ADB. The latter appears to be a self-serving objective rather than one that is in the interests of international development.

Myagmar Esunmunkh

*Mongolian Youth Development Centre
Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia*

1. Building NGO Capacity and Providing Institutional Support

The framework pointed out that the ADB already has extensive experience in working with NGOs in the areas of informal advisers, project sub-contractors for government, and sometimes as implementers of particular components of ADB-supported. We welcome the recognition of ADB Staff working with NGOs and would like to point out that perhaps more could be done to ensure that those joint efforts are better recognized and publicized.

Publicity could be done in a number of ways.

- i. Declaring through official media to publicize joint ABD-NGO efforts in key accomplishments and success stories of ABD-sponsored initiatives.
- ii. Recognition of NGO efforts through “ADB-NGO Day” or joint celebration events to gain widespread publicity
- iii. Influencing government’s perception and support towards NGOs and civil society organizations in general

The impact will be enormous. As pointed out in your framework, a dynamic ABD-government-NGO relationship has been constrained by a lack of direct funding for NGOs, funding on a project-by-project/ limited timeframe basis, as well as a lack of understanding, capacity, or commitment by some governments to the development of a vibrant and active civil society sector.

Government resistance to civil society development could stem from misconception, misunderstanding, and in some countries, fear of foreign domination control and influence in a close-up society. These misconceptions could be effectively dealt with if multilateral organizations and banks work closer with NGOs in the shaping of ideas that revolves around the civil society concept.

2. Staff exchange programme

We also like to comment on your promising rotational exchange program where by NGO personnel reside at ADB to undertake assignments relating to ADB-NGO collaboration, and for NGO staff to be placed in ADB for specified period of time. We see this as part of the positive steps in solidifying the joint-collaboration and to bring in first hand knowledge of how ADB can further help and advance the cause of Civil society organizations in general.

3. NGOs as partners – not just recipients of support

Finally we like to bring to focus the essence of our note – that is, to bring in the concept that NGOs are not just recipients of support grants/fund, but that is a part and parcel of the overall strategic plan of the ADB. To bring this to reality, we would proposed that the ADB involve, consult, and consider the strategic plans of NGOs (in general) in planning its strategy. The perceived gap between ADB and NGOs will be eliminated, if top planning for the ADB involves the civil society organizations from the very start. To achieve this, perhaps one suggestion is to bring in the idea that ADB will be much more effective in its implementation with its partners – that is the NGOs, and therefore will be much less effective or efficient when it act alone.

Putting the entire framework in perspective we find it – overall – a very promising document, which will pave the way for a greater ABD-Government-NGO collaboration level. We hope all plans will go smoothly, and quickly. We also like to avail ourselves if ever assistances, inputs or comments from our end are required. Please let us know and we will respond duly.

Nara Sagar Shrestha

Ministry of Finance

Kathmandu, Nepal

1. The Framework has put ADB first then Government and NGO at the end. It seems that this framework has again laid more emphasis on already existed ADB Government relation than on promoting ADB's relation with NGOs. So in the regional and country level workshops ADB-NGO- GO title was quoted and the same should be quoted in this framework as well.
2. Page 8 (chapter III vision) paras 49 and 50 should have been deleted because the themes of these paragraphs have been directly or indirectly explained in the background and other sub chapters.
3. Page 9 (chapter IV Issues and Challenges) only the name of consultation and studies have been mentioned but major issues and challenges have been left out. It seems to a literature review of challenges and issues scattered in different studies and consultation reports. So very briefly issues and challenges should have been spelled out and this should have been a statement of the problem, which the framework will have to address in future.
4. Page 15, para 88, in the last line instead of saying dedicated NGO Liaison position only NGO Liaison position should be spelled out. In a regional bank like ADB all staff are dedicated to achieve the goals of ADB.
5. Para 89, the provision of discretionary budget for NGO should be deleted. After ADB approved the policy of enhancing ADB-NGO –Government Cooperation it is within the duty and responsibility of each Resident Mission to implement it.
6. A7, NGO involvement should be in not only with large and complex projects but also the projects dealing with cross cutting issues like gender, environment etc should have been included.
7. Page 16, para 94, in the line number 4 projects presented in an easy to understand format should be read as in an easy format to understand.

Anthony Krieg

Development Banks Section

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)

The draft framework is a well-written and comprehensive document, which provides a good basis on which to go about strengthening ADB/NGO relationships. We endorse both the general vision of the framework and the specific recommendations outlined. We would like to particularly commend the strong focus on:

- Planned efforts to strengthen the ADB's capacity for NGO cooperation, including through increased dedicated resourcing at resident missions, staff training and revisions to the Operations Manual;
- Outlining a balanced approach to strengthening relationships e.g the broad range of initiatives presented at an NGO, partner government, ADB and regional level; and
- Plans to closely monitor and evaluate the implementation of this important initiative through an open and consultative approach.

In our view, the strength of the framework reflects the thorough and consultative process undertaken during its development. We are encouraged to see that the ADB plans to continue to this approach, both in reviewing implementation, and in the design of the subsequent 2006-2010 framework.

We do have a couple of comments on the approach though, which will need some consideration:

Resources

The framework presents an ambitious and challenging agenda for the next three years. We are pleased to note that responsibility for specific recommendations has been clearly assigned to stakeholders, which will assist implementation. However, the document assumes the NGOC will take the lead role in advancing the recommendations. We believe it is essential that the NGOC is adequately resourced for this task.

It would be useful if the framework could address in more detail the resource implications of implementing the agenda, including through an implementation and resources schedule, and an associated risk matrix.

Monitoring and evaluation

The framework is inevitably a broad statement of intent. As the document notes, an effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan will be critical for its successful implementation, and to allow stakeholders to gauge progress and to engage in discussion about next steps.

While it will take some time to develop the initial M&E plan, it would be helpful if the framework could include more detail on the specific approach the ADB has in mind. For example, an appendix could be used to outline in very broad terms the key elements of the approach, to provide us with an early indication of the ADB's plans.

From an Australian perspective, we will be looking to see detailed, time-bound and verifiable performance indicators for the different framework recommendations.

Girish Menon

DFID

New Delhi, India

Thank you for sending me a copy of the draft ADB-Govt-NGO Co-operation Framework. I think it is fairly comprehensive and captures a wide range of issues that are relevant. A few points for consideration:

1. It would be useful to have a para somewhere in the beginning on the 'rationale' for collaborating with NGOs. While this does find mention at different places, it would be useful to emphasize the comparative advantage NGOs have in social mobilization and their capacity to facilitate processes that would ensure enhanced social equity and justice. NGOs have a critical role in amplifying the voices of disadvantaged communities and bringing it into the mainstream of development processes.

2. In a country like India, the obvious question would be "What type of NGOs to work with". I think it is important to work essentially with networks NGOs and NGO resource groups who have expertise of a specific theme (health, environment), rather than work with a disparate set of individual NGOs. ADB would need to be more strategic about this. To facilitate this process, it could be done sector-wise e.g. identify a network on issues of environment, another for micro credit/enterprise etc.

3. I think that it would also be useful if there is a mention of networking among international development organizations in-country (multi-laterals, bi-laterals and INGOs) to facilitate sharing on a regular basis on approaches adopted by each in collaborating with local NGOs. ADB of course may not be able to take a lead on this (and for that matter, none would be able to specifically 'lead' on this), but this could be tasked with the NGOC/Resident Missions.

4. The corporate sector is increasingly playing an important role in social development through their corporate social responsibility agenda. It may be worthwhile including their social development initiatives (such as their own foundations) in the NGO framework for co-operation.

5. Though the document does mention working with 'development NGOs' only from among the civil society organizations, it may be worthwhile looking out for other development initiatives not necessarily through NGOs (e.g trade unions, co-operatives) that may be relevant in the context of their respective countries.

I hope these are relevant.