

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

Paul G. Schaefer
Hanns Seidel Foundation
Makati City, Philippines

Thank you very much for sharing with us the second draft as of February 2003 of the ADB-Government-NGO Cooperation Framework (2003-2005). We have reviewed the whole document and we are pleased that our comments were given due consideration in the revised version. We look forward to receiving a copy of the final document along with the participation guidelines.

We are open to exploring a partnership with ADB in the framework's implementation. Therefore, we hope that we could stay in touch with each other through regular consultations, information exchange and participation in both our institutions future activities.

Padma Ratnayake
South Asia Partnership
Colombo, Sri Lanka

Thank you for sending the revised draft of the ADB - NGO - Government Cooperation Framework. I find it quite satisfactory and I have no reservations in making this the final copy.

Roni S. Sya'roni
Spektra
Surabaya, Indonesia

I would like to say thank you for your e-mail about the revised draft of "ADB-Government-NGO Cooperation: A Framework for Action, 2003-2005" you have sent to SPEKTRA, Surabaya. I think I've already agreed with the content of the revised draft. It is very helpful for us to lay part the groundwork for increased networking among Indonesian organizations and greater access to information.

And I would be glad to make myself available for another cooperation where we can discuss and support each other about some issues and programs.

Ahmed Shaikh
Aga Khan Foundation
Pakistan

Thanks for sharing the revised framework for action. I have just glanced through it and it seems to cover very comprehensively the issues discussed during the national and international consultations. More so, it is very much in line with the NGO Enhancement framework (based on the concept of managing and supporting social investment funds for a stronger civil society) developed by the Aga Khan Foundation at the Pakistan level. As the Programme Coordinator for the NGO Enhancement Programmes and Civil Society Strengthening Initiatives for the Aga Khan Foundation in Pakistan and an active participant of the ADB consultations, I extend all possible support to develop the modalities of the proposed framework and a smooth and efficient implementation of the same.

Zhao Jie
Yunnan Reproductive Health Research Association
Yunnan, P.R.C.

Thanks for the document about Framework for Action of ADB-Government-NGO Cooperation both in English and Chinese. From that we found your great effort to compose this writing, as well as your good faith of cooperation. I have forwarded these documents to my NGO colleagues from Yunnan Reproductive Health Research Association and Yunnan Participatory Action and Research Network, two local NGOs in Yunnan province, which will be printed out and placed on bookshelf of our organization's office for widely sharing.

With regard to the comment in your reference, my opinions follow:

Para 83. *"To assist in the development of improved tripartite relations, a full-time NGO Liaison Officer (or an NGO Liaison/External Relations Officer) position should be established in each Resident Mission"* is much admirable and practicable, for matching it, the consideration I suggest might be in order to promote government being more active in this tripartite cooperation, seek for assisting to establish a similar position of liaison in department of government, as one of ADB's projects in action plan. For instance civil administration organ of China that is one specific department responsible to engage NGOs, and that would be a better vehicle for the planed fora in Action Framework.

A1. *"ADB should formalize participation guidelines, including minimum standards for participation and information dissemination, and incorporate these into its Operations Manual"* It is a few hard for me to understand the meaning of this sentence. In my point, if we set up standards, that might implicate to be ready to exclude some one who doesn't accord with this standard of "Participation", but real participation advocates multi-center and diversity and that have been emphasized as principles of cooperation in this Action Framework. So this statement should be given another thought.

Thank you again for sharing information and all the best.

Leav Roeun

*Human Inborn Freedom
Cambodia*

I have gone carefully through your papers (in Khmer and in English). I am very interested in the cooperation between ADB, Government, and NGO, and for the aims to achieve the proper development. On behalf of The Human Inborn Freedom (Hi-Free) members and myself, I would like to inform you that I am very delighted to support the second draft on ADB-Government-NGO-Cooperation: A Framework for Action, 2003-2005.

Please, get my highest respect and long-term cooperation.

Kh. Enkhjargal

*National AIDS Foundation
Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia*

We fully support the Framework and believe that implementation of this document will make visible change in tripartite partnership of ADB-Government-NGO in the future. The Framework looks very well designed, comprehensive, responsive to the NGO needs, relevant to the country specifics, action oriented, result-based and feasible to implement. We agree with five key recommendations for action over the next three years. I appreciate very much all, in particular, it is really nice to see how ADB is willing to review current funding modalities and seeking to establish separate ADB funding modality for NGOs. All NGOs very much want it!

I have a few comments.

1) In some countries, for example, former socialist countries, due to past governance systems, community mobilization and participation in development process are quite challenging issue. Most NGOs do not have link with marginalized communities and often take "intermediate role". Therefore, it may be important to highlight "strengthening the links of NGOs with their target communities and focus on helping these groups understand more of their needs and empowering them" in relevant sections, for example in the "stakeholder participation". Also I was wondering why it did not mention about "CBO". I think that the Guidelines should have clarification on that.

2) Building NGO capacity and providing institutional support is essential. Proposed topics for training for key NGO staff are very relevant. In addition, advocacy skills, resource mobilization, partnership building, introducing participatory methodologies and techniques are useful. Not only just training, but also comprehensive package of collective and one-to-one on-going technical support linked with program implementation is effective.

3) Strengthening the policy, instruments and mechanisms of government-NGO cooperation is crucial. Providing technical support to develop new regulations is important, also to "review existing policies and mechanisms" may be useful. The result of other activities outlined in the Framework is very much linked with this action.

Therefore, "at least one country" seems too low target. Could you consider this, of course if it is possible?

Finally, I would like to express again our full support the document and congratulations to all of you for this wonderful collaborative, participatory and new initiative!

Wish you success in implementation of the Framework in the future.

Lalbiak Mawia Ngente

*L B Associates
New Delhi, India*

Having gone through the Revised Draft, I am happy to state that the paper is well documented, containing the relevant information and input that's needed. However, I'd like to highlight, once again, few of the points that I feel are vital for achieving the overall goal, though they are already expressed and reflected in the Revised Draft:

1. Greater involvement of NGO in CSP formulation, as well as in monitoring and evaluation of ADB policies.
2. Strengthening ADB's central NGO database and allowing public access to NGO profile, and establishing public information centers - as part of enhancing transparency and interaction through access to information.
3. Strengthening the stakeholders' cooperation and collaboration by institutional development and capacity building for the Governments and NGOs.

I look forward to receiving the final Draft, and a further and continued involvement to implement the Framework.

Bindu Ananth

SIG-Ibank-BKC

We read with great interest the draft document on the captioned subject. The ADB efforts to further stakeholder engagement are certain to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of sustainable growth, social development and good governance. Please find below some observations on the document:

1. We would make a case for the 'community' to be viewed as a stakeholder in addition to NGOs and Governments. NGO involvement, in all cases, does not translate into a truly participatory approach. Given the scale of ADB's projects, it might be a useful strategy to help partner-NGOs and Governments themselves to adopt participatory strategies.
2. It might be necessary to think of different strategies for various levels of the Government as it is far from being a homogeneous entity. The strategies for Govt-NGO cooperation would be different at the state level than say, at the local self-government level.

3. The document makes a very valid observation on the need to share information through documentation and public databases. In this connection, we would like to add that sharing of experiences/innovations between partner NGOs would be of significant value too.

4. In order to increase transparency, the formulation and dissemination of criteria for the selection of NGOs as project partners might be useful. Recent e-governance initiatives have also contributed to a great deal of transparency in government processes. This could be a trend that ADB could champion in the pursuit of accountability and transparency with partners.

Mihir Kumar Thakur

Pro Public

Kathmandu, Nepal

Now, I believe that the Framework need not be added with new notions and concepts unless it is accepted and approved by the Board of Directors and implemented to the specified period of 2003 to 2005. After the implementation of the Framework, it is proposed in the paragraph 130 of the Draft Framework that there should be major review of the Framework in mid-2005 and at that time there may be a need to add or omit any concepts after intensive participatory process. The Framework for 2006-2010 may be designed and developed in accordance with the present Framework and the experience gained during its implementation.

So, I like to suggest that the Framework should take its final shape immediately and receive approval of all concerned soon. I congratulate all concerned in improving the second draft, particularly dedicated staff, learned consultants and experts of NGO Center.

Taleya Rehman

Democracywatch

Bangladesh

As a participant NGO we welcome the proposal for working more closely with ADB and also the training element is useful. But in the document it would be good to know your criteria for selecting NGO partners to provide a clear guideline.

Rabindra Lal Barua

Voluntary Organization for Social Development

Dhaka, Bangladesh

We have gone through the document and found it very much appropriate, nice and well documented. Each section is well elaborated and well pictured. We hope the document will act as a guideline for future programming of the ADB-GO-NGO cooperation, which will reduce the misunderstanding among the tripartite (ADB, GO & NGO). The

implementation will be smooth and effective, because, it has been found from previous experiences ADB-GO-NGO project, it took time, constraints to implement the project activities, difficulties in decision-makings, etc. as the roles were not clear and complexity of superiority. The NGO personnel could not express their sorrows and sufferings to the stakeholders. As Head, NGO Center has been created and fixed, so, they could expressed their sorrows and grievances to the Head, who will take appropriate steps in solving problems. We highly appreciated the creation of the NGO Centre for the ADB-GO-NGO Cooperation.

As the document has been translated in Bengali, so, the document will be helpful to all the NGOs, and other stakeholders. Here are some of our extra comments:

- a) NGO Center should be given more and useful responsibility for performing the project activities in due time through providing financial and materials supports.
- b) Should increase the communication and sharing of the NGOs with the NGO Center.
- c) NGO Center should follow up, monitor and evaluate the project activities frequently.
- d) More and more technical assistance be ensured by the NGO Center for the participating NGOs.
- e) Small NGOs should be considered for the projects.
- f) During tri-parties' workshop and seminar, focus group discussions should be arranged for identification of problems and solutions, because, the government officers exploit and try to deprive the NGO participants.
- g) More authority and power should be given to the NGO Center because there are less honest officers in the government machinery based from our working experiences. In this regard, arrangement should be adopted by ADB.
- h) It is also necessary to avoid the political pressure through taking certain policy.
- i) Impartial body should be formed with impartial persons for project selection otherwise the whole process will be in vain and in every case quality of the work than quantity.

We would request to consider the points, if you think they are appropriate and necessary. We have raised the points from our working experiences. We hope the document is very well described and clear and will be very useful for future programming.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Andrew Velthaus
Conservation International (CI)
Washington, DC

I would like to offer CI's strong support for the proposed Framework for Action for ADB-Government-NGO Cooperation. We are pleased to see that the ADB is working to fulfill this important recommendation of the Presidential Committee and Task Force on ADB-NGO Cooperation. CI is active in several countries in the Asia-Pacific region, and we look forward to exploring with the ADB expanded opportunities for collaboration under this framework.

The ADB's Framework for Action comes at an opportune moment for CI. We have recently launched a new Center for Conservation and Government (of which I am part), and we are in the midst of reviewing CI's outreach and interaction with multilateral institutions in general. During this process, we will examine how our field offices and staff can work more closely with organizations such as the ADB to support shared objectives.