



Outcome of WG 2 of Structured Dialogue process

To: TUDCN members

From: Henrik Als, the LO/FTF Council

Re: *Observations related to the participation in WG2 of the Structured Dialogue meeting in Brussels, the latest on 13 October 2010*

The Structured Dialogue (SD) is a process, which involves the EU Commission, the EU Parliament, Members states and 10 CSO platforms. The 5 topic areas of WG2 of the SD are: Local ownership, alignment, Harmonisation/coordination (discussed during second Brussels sessions) and mutual accountability and the right of initiative (third session).

I participated in the second (in July) and third WG2 meetings (October). Whereas the second session was unstructured, unfocused and basically a waste of time, the third session was much better structured and focused. Therefore, the following points are based on the discussions of Session 3, partly on the elaborated minutes.

The moderator (Olivier Luyck, Head of Unit, DG Development) gave the clear impression that EU is “moving” and willing to change the relations with CSOs. In his summing-up he emphasised the following points (which are mainly supported by the elaborated minutes):

On Mutual Accountability

- EU has to recognise that CSO’s need space for dialogue
- EU needs to change its culture to focus more on impact/outcome and less on activities and strict monitoring
- EU should allow for a multi-stakeholder and rights-based approach
- EU should allow for funding to capacity building, gaining of knowledge and research
- The difference between CSO’s and Local Authorities should be better taken into account when it comes to support.

On Rights of Initiatives

- CSO’s Right to Initiative is a “given” for future EU funding. It is not negotiable or to be diluted.
- Still, there is a need to find a balance between the Right of Initiative & coordinated effective and strategic planning of CSO initiatives (means-end discussion)
- EU cannot “orquestrate” the CSO, who has their own life. This does however imply increased CSO responsibility in showing results and effectiveness. Need for a shared vision and a common agenda.
- It is important with dialogue at national but also on sub-national levels
- There is a need to identify other better mechanisms than the Call for Proposal system & to call EU and member states to play a political role. (Whatever that means)

All in all, a surprisingly positive CSO-friendly approach. However, the practical implications remain to be seen.