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Working with civil society: Findings from surveys and consultations

This chapter presents a comprehensive picture of how members and civil society organisations (CSOs) work together. It draws on responses of members and CSOs to two separate surveys conducted over 2018 and 2019; members' policy documents that are relevant to their work with civil society; and feedback from online and in-person consultations with both members and CSOs. This analysis of how members work with civil society suggests there is room for improvement and a need for guidance to better equip members to enable civil society and CSOs to maximise their contributions to development.

2.1. How members define CSOs and civil society

Key findings

There is considerable commonality across members' definitions of a civil society organisation (CSO). There are also differences, especially in the degree to which the diversity of civil society actors is reflected in definitions. Civil society is rarely defined.

The survey of members asked *how does your institution define CSOs and civil society?*¹ Members provided quite varied responses.² Two members (Australia, Canada) cite the definition in the OECD (2010_[1]) report, *Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness: Findings, Recommendations and Good Practice*. This definition is also used in the OECD (2011, p. 10_[2]) report, *How DAC Members Work with Civil Society Organisations: An Overview*. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) refers to the DAC definition in the OECD (2018, p. 2_[3]) report, *Aid for Civil Society Organisations*, and also in DAC reporting directives. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) does not have a corporate definition of civil society but cites the definition of a CSO developed by Johns Hopkins University as an organisation that is separate from government, non-profit distributing, self-governing, formal or informal and in which participation is voluntary. Some recurring themes in members' definitions that reflect the Johns Hopkins University definition are that CSOs are distinct from the state and the private sector and that they are non-profit organisations. A few members (Canada, Germany, Iceland, Ireland), specifically state that voluntarism is a distinguishing feature of CSOs. For other members, voluntarism is implicit in the concept of CSOs as a coming together of people (or citizens) on a voluntary basis in the pursuit of shared objectives, interests or ideals.

The CSO definitions of Belgium, Italy and Spain are enshrined in their laws on development co-operation. Italian Law 125/2014 (Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, 2014_[4]) sets out six categories of CSOs that are considered part of the Italian development co-operation system, inclusive of a category dedicated to a category of Italian CSOs awarded advisor status at the United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council in the previous four years. Spanish Law 23/1998 stipulates that in order to receive official aid funds, CSOs must be registered under the Registry of Non-Governmental Organizations of Development (Government of Spain, 2014_[5]). A non-governmental development organisation (NGDO) is further defined as an organisation that includes, as one of its purposes, promotion of the principles and objectives of international co-operation as stipulated in Law 23/1998. Article 2 of the Belgian Law on Development Co-operation defines a CSO as a "non-state and non-profit entity in which people organize themselves to pursue common goals or ideals" (Government of Belgium, 2013_[6]).³ CSOs applying for funding from some of Belgium's support mechanisms must demonstrate that they meet the CSO definition in the Law on Development Co-operation as well as criteria in the Royal Decree of 11 September 2016 on non-governmental co-operation (Government of Belgium, 2016_[7]).

As discussed in Section 1.2, many types of organisations are considered to be CSOs, and this is reflected in members' definitions of CSOs and how they refer to them in policy documents. Examples of CSO types are at times specific to the individuals, communities or causes represented. These include diaspora or migrant organisations (Belgium); gender and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender organisations (European Commission (EC)); and NGDOs (Belgium and Portugal). Some organisations fall in a grey area, considered CSOs by some members but not so by others. Research and academic institutions, for example, are a separate organisational category for some members including Belgium and the French Development Agency (AFD). Occasionally, a member's CSO definition includes non-formal associations of civil society (EC, Czech Republic, USAID). Members' CSO definitions also commonly refer to the activity arenas – e.g. cultural, environmental, social and economic, civic and political – engaged in by the CSO. Two members (EC, Spain) specify the non-partisan nature of CSOs and their activities.

A distinction between civil society and CSOs is not always made in members' policies or survey responses. For many, civil society seems to be understood as the collection of CSOs. For others, civil society is seen as a broader sphere of human activity (Finland); of initiatives and social movements (Germany, Canada, Ireland); and of the individuals engaging in this sphere such as volunteers, artists or journalists (Czech Republic).

In sum, the way members define and refer to CSOs has much in common with the OECD and DAC definitions of CSOs and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as non-profit, non-state entities in which people organise to pursue common interests (Section 1.2). However, there are also considerable differences. These differences may lead to confusion across members. The differences also suggest that some members are more inclusive in the range of civil society actors that they support and engage with. The broader concept of civil society is rarely defined.

2.2. Member CSO and/or civil society policies

Key findings

- There is considerable variation in the types of document that members consider to be a policy for working with CSOs and/or civil society, and these include legislation, policies, strategies, guidelines, principles and action plans.
- Most members (22 respondents) have some form of policy covering CSOs and/or civil society and for 16 of these, their policy is specific to either CSOs and/or civil society.
- Three members indicate they are developing policies and four indicate they do not have a policy.
- Policies are being developed in consultation with CSOs, and some members involve CSOs in policy monitoring.
- Integration of civil society-related issues across other policies, inclusive of but even beyond development and foreign policy, is insufficiently addressed by members.

According to survey responses, the majority of members (22, 76%) have in place some form of *policy/strategy for working with CSOs and/or civil society*.^{4,5,6,7} The type of document that members consider to be a policy for working with CSOs and/or civil society varies. Some have CSO and/or civil society-specific policies in the form of legislation (e.g. Portugal's NGDO Charter), multi-year or annual plans (e.g. Poland), policies (e.g. Canada), strategies (e.g. Germany), principles (e.g. Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)), or guidelines (e.g. Finland).

Of the 22 members that indicated they have a policy, 22 (73%) refer to a document specific to CSOs and/or civil society in development. For instance, the Netherlands' 2014 CSO policy, *Dialogue and Dissent*, is not only CSO-specific but is exclusive to partnerships with CSOs in a lobbying and advocacy role (Government of the Netherlands, 2014_[8]). The policies referred to by 6 of these 22 members are broader development policies that also address CSOs and/or civil society.

Three members indicate they are developing policies. Irish Aid, for example, is updating its 2008 policy, with completion anticipated in 2019. The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) 2018-21 master plan for development co-operation commits to elaborating a strategy for collaboration with CSOs (Government of Spain, 2018_[9]). In the case of Belgium, the Royal Decree of 11 September 2016 addresses the practical and political implementation of Belgium's support for CSOs in development co-operation and, combined with a theory of change for this support under finalisation, will make up Belgium's CSO policy (Government of Belgium, 2016_[7]).

Another four members indicate that they do not have a CSO and/or civil society policy. Of these, New Zealand is revisiting its approach to CSOs following a 2018 evaluation, while Hungary does not indicate that a policy is planned for. The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) (2018^[10]) published “guiding principles” for its support for civil society. But because Norad does not have the authority to make policy per se, Norway considers it does not have a specific CSO and/or civil society policy. However, partnership with civil society is covered in overall development policies including the central white paper of 2017, *Common Responsibility for Common Future: The Sustainable Development Goals and Norway’s Development Policy* (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017^[11]). Similarly, USAID indicates that it does not have a CSO and/or civil society-specific policy. However, the importance of civil society and CSOs is recognised in various sector-specific policies as well as in broad government policies that guide USAID’s programming. Box 2.1 presents a summary of member responses.

Box 2.1. Members with CSO or civil society policies

Findings from member responses to the survey include the following:

- 22 members indicate they have some form of CSO and/or civil society policy
- of the 22 members indicating they have some form of CSO and/or civil society policy, 16 of the policies are CSO and/or civil society-specific
- 3 members indicate they are developing policies
- 4 members indicate they do not have a policy.

Note: Findings are drawn from member policies provided in response to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

Some members that do not have a CSO and/or civil society-specific policy say in their survey responses that they have a policy. These members consider the coverage of CSOs and civil society in broader legislative or policy documents or in sector-specific policies as providing adequate coverage to constitute a CSO policy. Thus, based on their survey responses, these members are included among the 22 having a CSO or civil society policy. They tend to be newer members and/or those with smaller official development assistance (ODA) budgets than longer-standing members. Poland, for example, refers to its CSO policy as being covered within the *Multiannual Development Cooperation Programme 2016-2020* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, 2015^[12]) and associated annual plans. For Luxembourg, coverage of CSOs in its 1996 Law on Development Cooperation, together with amendments to the law in 2012 and 2017 addressing CSO partnerships, constitute its CSO policy (Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, 1996^[13]; Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, 2012^[14]; Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, 2017^[15]). This is further supported by CSO coverage in its 2018 development co-operation strategy, *The Road to 2030* (Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, 2018^[16]).

Having a CSO-specific policy does not preclude coverage of CSOs and/or civil society in wider development co-operation or in sector-specific policies (or legislation) as well. The EC communication, *The Roots of Democracy and Sustainable Development: Europe’s Engagement with Civil Society in External Relations* (European Commission, 2012^[17]), is complemented by the 2017 *New European Consensus on Development* (European Commission, 2017^[18]). The Czech Republic considers all or parts of several official documents as constituting its CSO policy: its annual Resolution on Main Areas of State Subsidy Policy Towards Non-governmental Non-profit Organisations (which covers all NGOs supported by the Czech government, not solely those involved in development co-operation) and reference to these actors in its 2018-30 *International Development Cooperation Strategy, the Human Rights and Transition Policy*

Strategy and the annual *Humanitarian Assistance Strategy* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2017^[19]; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2015^[20]).

Sweden effectively has two CSO-specific policies and also integrates civil society-related issues in other development and foreign affairs policies. The 2017 *Strategy for Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations* (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, 2017^[21]) governs Sweden's support for framework CSOs; the Sida (2019^[22]) *Guiding Principles for Sida's Engagement with and Support to Civil Society* cover all CSO and civil society support. Additionally, civil society features in the government's overarching *Policy Framework for Swedish Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance* of 2016 (Government of Sweden, 2016^[23]) as well as in sector strategies such as the 2018 *Strategy for Sweden's Development Cooperation in the Areas of Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law* (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, 2018^[24]).

CSO survey respondents indicated that they highly value the existence of members' CSO-specific policies, as these provide a clear statement of principles and objectives to guide the member-CSO relationship. Equally, CSOs lament the absence of comprehensive CSO-specific policies. In their consultation feedback, CSOs strongly encouraged an approach of integrating civil society-related issues across a wide range of policies, inclusive of but even beyond development and foreign policy. Such an approach is seen as having the potential to advance whole-of-government coherence while being consistent with the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda commitments. Examples of policy areas that would benefit from incorporating CSO-related coverage include members' foreign policies; policies on private sector investment, trade, migration, security, taxation and digital technology; and other domestic policies or regulations directly or indirectly affecting CSOs. Incorporating the issue of civic space is seen as an important contribution to the contextual background of these policies and one that empowers policy makers to take necessary steps to address issues of civic space restrictions.

Indications are that members' policies are developed in consultation with CSOs, especially in the case of policy, strategy, principles and guidance documents. However, it is more difficult to assess whether this occurs in the case of legislation. Korea's *Policy Framework for Government-Civil Society Partnerships in International Development Cooperation* is a joint framework developed by and for the Korean development CSO umbrella network and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (Korea NGO Council for Overseas Development Cooperation and Korea International Cooperation Agency, n.d.^[25]).⁸ Section 2.7 discusses at greater length dialogue and consultation with CSOs in policy making.

In consultations, CSOs strongly stress the necessity of developing policy in close dialogue with CSOs, both in member and partner countries. Involving CSOs in policy development increases the likelihood that policies will reflect CSOs' experience of the member-CSO relationship and address areas of the relationship where there is room for improvement.

CSOs also stress the benefit of member collaboration with CSOs in monitoring policy implementation and in revising policy as necessary to reflect lessons gathered. Members' plans for monitoring their policies and for CSOs' involvement in such processes are not obvious from the survey findings, though this may simply be because this information is available in documents (e.g. action plans for policy implementation) that were not accessed for the survey. The 2015 Australian framework, *DFAT and NGOs: Effective Development Partners*, commits the government to collaborate with the Australian Council for International Development, the country's umbrella body of development CSOs, to monitor the policy's implementation (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia, 2015, p. 15^[26]). The 2018 AFD strategy, *Partnerships with Civil Society Organisations*, sets out annual and end-of-strategy assessments to be discussed with CSOs (French Development Agency, 2018, p. 34^[27]). In accordance with *Policy for Civil Society Partnerships*, which was put in place in 2017, Global Affairs Canada (2020^[28]) will engage with CSOs and their networks for annual reviews of mutual implementation.

In sum, the majority of members have policies and a handful of other members either have policies under development or consider that the integration of CSO and/or civil society issues across their development

policy framework constitutes their policy. Among those members indicating that they have policies, 73% have a CSO and/or civil society-specific policy. CSOs encourage integration of civil society considerations, including that of civic space, beyond development and foreign policies to enhance coherence. The practice of consultation with CSOs in policy development is ongoing and there is more room for CSO involvement in monitoring policy implementation.

2.3. Objectives for working with CSOs and civil society

Key findings

- The majority of members identify two types of objectives for working with CSOs and civil society: first, *to reach a specific development objective (implement programmes)* and second, *to strengthen civil society in partner countries*, including supporting CSOs as independent development actors.
- Almost the same number of members select as a main objective for working with CSOs and civil society *to reach a specific development objective (implement programmes) in service delivery* as select as their main objective *to strengthen civil society in partner countries*.

As discussed in Section 1.4, members ideally would have two types of objectives for working with CSOs and civil society. One is to strengthen a pluralist and independent civil society in partner countries. The other is to meet development objectives beyond strengthening civil society in partner countries. The first type of objective is grounded in the intrinsic value of civil society and the CSOs in it. The second type of objective stems from the instrumental value placed on CSOs as a means to implement programmes targeting various other development objectives on behalf of members. USAID articulates these dual objectives well in its survey response. The agency works with CSOs as a means to help it to achieve specific development objectives other than civil society strengthening. The agency also works with CSOs as an end, recognising the intrinsic importance of a vibrant civil society sector as part of a democratic political culture and the critical role played by strong, vibrant and diverse CSOs in development.

Asked to identify their *main objective for working with CSOs and civil society*, all but three responding members select multiple main objectives.⁹ As seen in survey responses (Figure 2.1), the majority of members are pursuing the two types of objectives mentioned above. The objective *to reach a specific development objective (implement programmes) linked to service delivery* is most frequently selected by members (22 responses). The objective of *strengthening civil society in partner countries, including CSOs as independent development actors* ranks a close second (21 responses). These are followed by the objective *to reach a specific development objective (implement programmes) linked to human rights and democratisation* (17 responses). The next most frequently selected objectives were *enhancing CSOs' institutional or development capacity in partner countries* and *enhancing their capacity in member countries* (16 and 12 responses respectively).

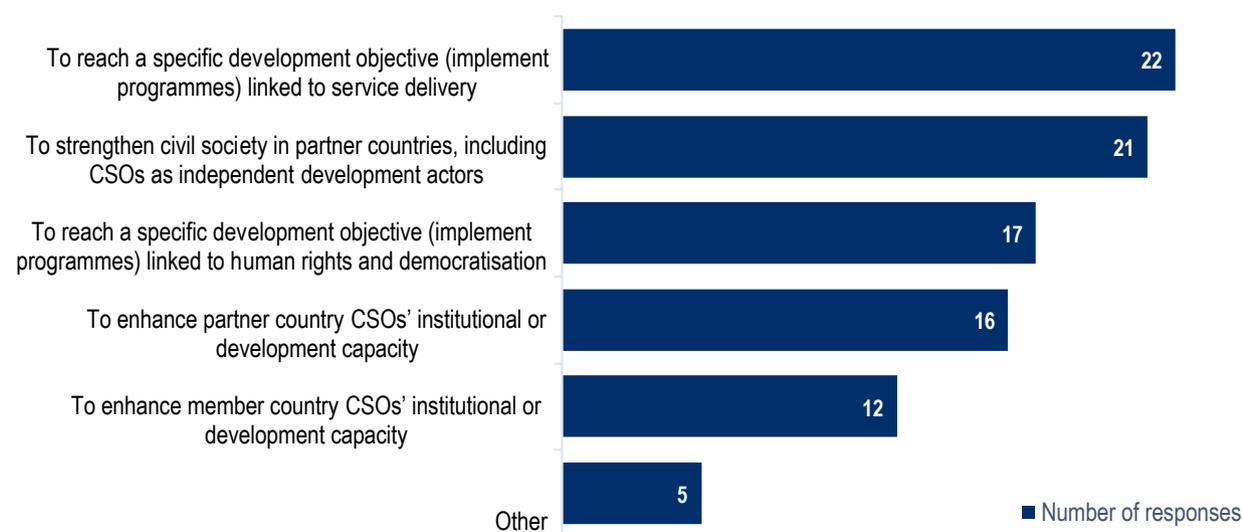
It is noteworthy that of the 22 members that indicate they work with CSOs *to reach a specific development objective (implement programmes) related to service delivery*, almost three quarters (16) also choose to work with CSOs *to strengthen civil society in partner countries*. Of the 17 that indicate they work with CSOs *to reach a specific development objective (implement programmes) related to human rights and democratisation*, almost three quarters (12) also select working with CSOs *to strengthen civil society in partner countries*.

Sections 2.3.1 through 2.3.5 highlight how members depict these varied objectives in their policy documents and survey responses. An additional objective of *public awareness raising* featured in

members' survey responses and thus is also covered in this study.¹⁰ Additionally, members' treatment of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus is briefly addressed in recognition that the nexus needs attention, especially in light of the 2019 DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.

It is worth underlining that members' policies and objectives for working with CSOs and civil society are not static. This study presents a snapshot from late 2018 and 2019. Eleven members state that their *objectives for working with CSOs and civil society have changed in the past five years*.¹¹ Changes are mainly linked to new, overarching development policy directions; lessons drawn from programme implementation and evaluations; and, since 2015, emphasis on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Ireland offers an example of these shifts. The priorities set out in its 2015 policy document, *The Global Island: Ireland's Foreign Policy for a Changing World*, and in its 2013 international development policy, *One World, One Future*, have influenced Ireland's objectives for working with CSOs (Government of Ireland, 2015^[29]; Government of Ireland, 2013^[30]). In another example, Japan's CSO partnerships are increasingly focused on CSOs' contribution to the SDGs, as reflected in Japan's *SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles* and associated action plan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2016^[31]).

Figure 2.1. Member objectives for working with CSOs and civil society



Note: A total of 29 members responded, with respondents able to select multiple options. The options shown here are shortened versions of the language used in the survey.

Source: Responses to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

2.3.1. Service delivery (programme implementation)

To reach a specific development objective linked to service delivery is identified by 22 members, approximately 75% of respondents, as one of their main objectives for working with CSOs and civil society. That said, member policies and narrative responses to the survey do not necessarily refer to service delivery as an objective per se. Rather, they refer to objectives such as promoting sustainable development and realising humanitarianism (Korea), reducing poverty and improving living conditions (e.g. Austrian Development Agency (ADA)), reducing inequalities (e.g. Italy), improving economic livelihoods (e.g. Australia), and protecting the planet (e.g. SDC), among others. References to CSOs as important partners in implementing the SDGs are also common.

Of course, aims such as reducing poverty or inequalities can also be achieved when members partner with CSOs to reach objectives in human rights and democratisation, or in strengthening civil society, when underlying, systemic causes of poverty and inequality can be addressed using a rights-based approach. But the prominence given to the objective of programme implementation in service delivery reflects that members' approaches to development co-operation continue to emphasise services as a way to address members' development mandates. This is evident from the figures on the volume of ODA channelled *through* CSOs by sector (Table B.4 in Annex B). Approximately 80% of such funding goes to sub-sectors such as emergency response, health, education and agriculture where service is the likely form of intervention.

Examples from member policies illustrate the varied ways in which CSOs are seen as implementing partners in service delivery. Ireland's international development policy document, *One World, One Future*, points to Irish NGOs' "pivotal role in responding to humanitarian emergencies, providing services where they are needed most, and supporting vulnerable people in developing countries to come together and participate in the development of their communities" (Government of Ireland, 2013, p. 32^[30]). For the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), supporting CSOs to "deliver goods, services and improvements in people's lives across DFID's work – from fragile and conflict affected states and emergency and humanitarian situations to long term development activities" is one strategy among others in the *Civil Society Partnership Review* (DFID, 2016, p. 10^[32]).

Some members state that their support for CSO service provision outside of the humanitarian realm is based on the principle of subsidiarity – in other words, that CSOs have a role in complementing, but not replacing, service provision by government (e.g. ADA, Germany, Italy).

2.3.2. Human rights and democratisation (programme implementation)

The survey responses of 17 members, representing just under 60% of total respondents, identify as a main objective for their work with CSOs *to reach a specific development objective (implement programmes) linked to human rights and democratisation*.¹²

The objective for working with CSOs as implementing partners in human rights and democratisation also features in member policies and survey responses. Norad's objectives for its CSO support include democratisation and human rights, with CSOs encouraged to work towards inclusion, as well as the goal of holding governments to account for upholding human rights. Italy's development co-operation priorities include promotion of human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment and support for democracy under the rule of law. Italy's main objective for working with CSOs is to reinforce CSOs' role in contributing to the achievement of these priorities. The Luxembourg Law of 18 December 2017 articulates parameters for CSO human rights initiatives that Luxembourg will support, among them initiatives that target human rights institutions and laws, dialogue and awareness raising on rights, and the work of human rights defenders (article 4(5)) (Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, 2017^[15]).

As noted, programming with CSOs in human rights and democratisation can be organised to achieve results related to reducing poverty, inequality and marginalisation, for example by addressing barriers to access to services (e.g. social accountability programming). In the consultations for this study, CSOs and members also stressed that CSO programming in service delivery can lay the groundwork for engagement in human rights and democratisation-related work. Through services, CSOs build up knowledge and understanding of the communities and partners they engage with and the legitimacy to undertake policy advocacy from a sound base of evidence and trust (Najam, 1999^[33]).

2.3.3. Strengthening civil society in partner countries

Strengthening civil society in partner countries, including CSOs as independent development actors is selected as a main objective by 21 members, or almost 75% of survey respondents. Some members'

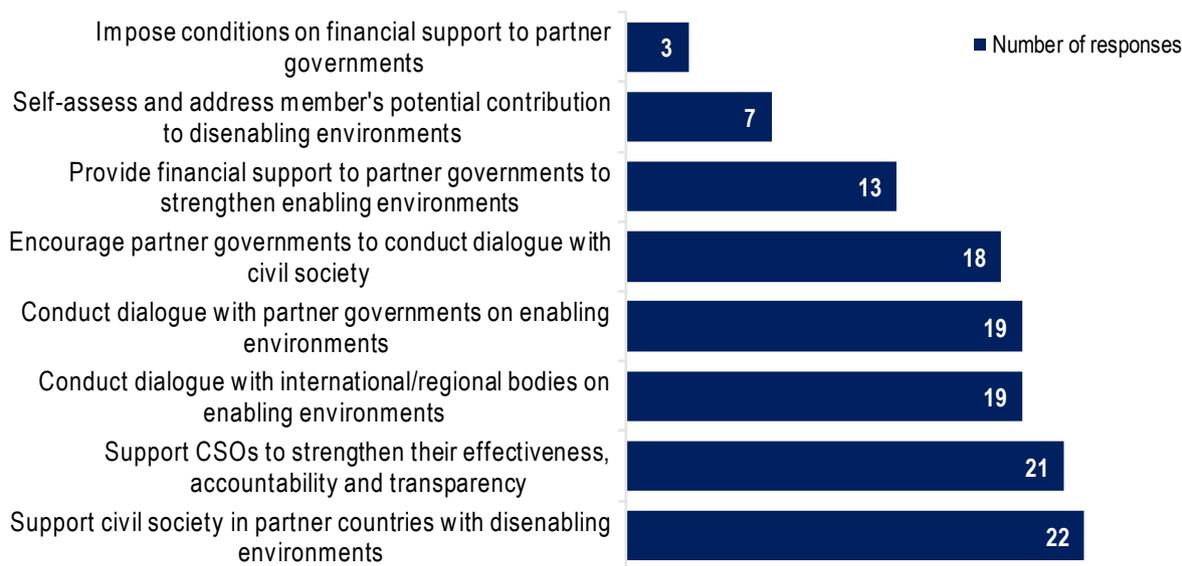
policies are more explicit than others' in articulating this objective. Sida's 2019 guiding principles clearly state that supporting "a pluralistic and rights-based civil society" is "an objective in itself [given the] understanding that a strong, independent civil society is an essential part of a democratic society, and is key to inclusive and sustainable development" (Sida, 2019, p. 11^[22]). The European Commission (2012, p. 4^[17]), in a communication on its engagement with CSOs, stated that its support aims to contribute to the development of a dynamic, pluralistic and competent civil society. Ljungman and Nilsson (2018, p. 2^[34]), evaluating Iceland's CSO support, state that its 2015 guidelines call for development support through CSOs "to contribute to an independent, strong and diverse civil society in low income countries that fights against poverty in its various forms" as the principle objective of Icelandic support for civil society. The stated purpose of Canada's *Civil Society Partnerships Policy* (paragraph 1) is to enhance effective co-operation with Canadian, international and partner country ("local") CSOs "to maximize the impact and results of Canada's international assistance and foster a strong and vibrant civil society sector", including by supporting "a robust CSO ecosystem" (Global Affairs Canada, 2020^[28]). The AFD strategy, *Partnerships with Civil Society*, includes as a strategic objective the strengthening and empowering of "local civil societies" (French Development Agency, 2018, p. 6^[27]).

The most commonly selected *practices used by members to strengthen civil society in partner countries* are *promoting enabling environments for CSOs and civil society in partner countries* and *providing financial support to CSOs as independent development actors in their own right* (19 responses).^{13,14} Fifteen responding members require that the *member country and international CSOs they financially support work with partner country CSOs in ways that respond to the specific demands and priorities of the partner country CSOs*. Sixteen responding members *provide resources* that are not for specific CSOs but are intended to be accessible to the *civil society sector writ large* (e.g. *resource centres, training, co-ordination fora, etc.*).

CSO survey respondents confirm that members use these methods for civil society strengthening. However, CSOs highlight barriers that hinder effective implementation, in particular the design and requirements of funding mechanisms that are less than conducive to supporting CSOs as independent development actors. CSOs also remark that members' pursuit of strengthening civil society in partner countries is haphazard when a CSO or civil society-specific policy is absent.

When it comes to one of the most frequently selected practices that can strengthen civil society in partner countries – *promoting enabling environments for CSOs and civil society in partner countries* – members use various financial and non-financial practices (Figure 2.2). The practice used by most responding members is *providing support (financial and otherwise) to CSOs and civil society, including human rights defenders, in partner countries with disabling environments* (22 responses), closely followed by *supporting CSOs to strengthen their own effectiveness, accountability and transparency* (21 responses) and *engaging in dialogue both at the international level and with partner country governments about the need for enabling environments for CSOs* (18 responses).¹⁵ A lesser-used practice is *self-assessment to understand and address the member's potential contribution to disabling environments for CSOs* (7 responses). The practice used by the least number of responding members is *making financial support to partner country conditional on partner country government effort to strengthen enabling environments for CSOs and civil society* (3 responses).

Figure 2.2. Member practices to promote CSO and civil society enabling environments in partner countries



Note: A total of 24 members responded, with respondents able to select multiple options. The options shown here are shortened versions of the language used in the survey.

Source: Responses to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

2.3.4. Enhancing partner country CSOs' capacity

Sixteen members, approximately 55% of respondents, select *enhancing partner country CSOs' institutional or development capacity* as one of their main objectives for working with CSOs and civil society. Capacity development of partner country CSOs, most often done via member country or international CSOs, is a longstanding CSO and member practice. While members select this as a specific main objective, it is also a means of strengthening partner country civil society.

For example, an objective of Denmark's 2014 *Policy for Danish Support to Civil Society* is to "contribute to the development of a strong, independent, vocal and diverse civil society as a prerequisite to long-term poverty reduction; respect and protection of human rights; and the promotion of equality, democracy and sustainable development" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2014, p. 8_[35]). The Danish policy further states that capacity development to "promote agendas for change" requires an accompanying approach in which "one civil society actor follows and guides the other through important change processes", with the organisation whose capacity is developing in the lead and owning the process (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2014, pp. 8, 22_[35]). In its policy, Denmark also commits to working with its CSO partners towards more systematic monitoring and reporting of capacity development processes and results.

Other members likewise refer to capacity development approaches that reflect interest in more equitable relationships between member country CSOs and their local partners. For AFD, strengthening local civil societies will happen in part through "dynamics based on enhanced reciprocity" between French and partner country CSOs (French Development Agency, 2018, pp. 6, 10_[27]). In its *NGO Cooperation* policy document, Austria commits to strengthening partner country NGOs both via knowledge transfer and support from Austrian NGOs and greater transfer of responsibility and resources to partner country CSOs where conditions allow (Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs-Austrian Development

Agency, 2007, pp. 8, 10^[36]). For USAID, capacity development includes support to the more traditional form of organisational development as well as to what the agency calls Capacity Development 2.0, which emphasises assisting CSOs to improve performance, strengthen networks and relationships among CSOs, and understand their role in the broader system.

Of the 13 responding members that did not select *enhancing partner country CSOs' institutional or development capacity* as a main objective, 7 selected *strengthening civil society in partner countries* as a main objective that is achieved in part through capacity development of partner country CSOs. An example is the EC, whose aim of contributing to a dynamic, pluralist and competent civil society is to be achieved through promoting a conducive environment for CSOs in partner countries, promoting participation of CSOs in partner countries' policy and increasing partner country CSOs' capacity as independent development actors (European Commission, 2012, p. 4^[17]).

2.3.5. Enhancing member country CSOs' capacity

Enhancing member country CSOs' capacity is identified by 12 respondents (approximately 40% of responding members) as one of the main objectives for working with CSOs and civil society. Japan, as outlined in its *Development Cooperation Charter*, supports the development co-operation projects of Japanese NGOs and CSOs and their capacity development, with emphasis on human resources and systems development (III(2) B(e)) (Government of Japan, 2015^[37]). Strengthening the technical and operational capacity of NGOs also is an objective of Portugal's work with CSOs. Similarly, the Australian policy document, *DFAT and NGOs: Effective Development Partners*, sets out an objective of enhancing NGO performance and effectiveness that includes enhancing capabilities of Australian NGOs as development partners and building the capacity of partner country CSOs as agents of change (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia, 2015, p. 14^[26]). The Slovak Republic development co-operation strategy also notes that deployment of volunteers not only offers a form of assistance to partner countries, but builds the Slovak Republic's development co-operation capacities (Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, 2019, p. 26^[38]).

2.3.6. Public awareness raising in member countries

It is clear from member survey responses and policy documents that the objective of public awareness raising in member countries is quite important to members. Only 2 responding members do not provide *financial support to CSOs for public awareness raising/development education/citizen engagement in development*; 17 members provide this support *as part of CSOs' development project budgets*; and 20 provide it to *specific, stand-alone public awareness/development education/citizen engagement projects by CSOs*.¹⁶ Further, 14 members support CSOs' public awareness raising in both ways.

In its *Development Cooperation Charter*, Japan commits to encouraging the "participation of its people from all walks of life in development cooperation", including as Japan International Cooperation Agency volunteers (III(2) B(e)) (Government of Japan, 2015^[37]). An objective in Australia's 2015 policy describes Australian NGOs as "a bridge between the Australian aid program and the Australian community" and thus a participant in "public diplomacy" at home (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia, 2015, p. 10^[26]). Portugal's policy, presented in *A Strategic Concept for the Portuguese Development Cooperation 2014-2020*, points to NGOs and foundations as "key partners for debating and thinking about public policies on development, as they have in-depth knowledge of local realities and are widely recognised at local and international levels" (Government of the Portuguese Republic, 2014, p. 62^[39]).

2.3.7. Humanitarian-development-peace nexus

An assessment of the state of members' efforts to address the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in relation to their work with civil society is beyond the remit of this study. Nonetheless, impressions can be gleaned from coverage in select members' civil society-related policies.¹⁷

The nexus is well integrated into Poland's *Multiannual Development Cooperation Programme 2016-2020*. The programme sets out Poland's two-pronged approach in its work with Polish NGOs and other actors that combines a focus on addressing urgent humanitarian needs with lasting and structural developmental measures so that these dovetail (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, 2015, pp. 10, 18, 34_[12]). For other members, the need to better address the nexus is more implied than stated outright. One of the objectives of Australia's engagement with CSOs, for instance, is specific to working with CSOs to enhance their emergency response capacities while also supporting their engagement in recovery; building resilience and preparedness of communities and governments; and harnessing traditional knowledge to mitigate disaster risk (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia, 2015, pp. 12-13_[26]). As outlined in France's strategy, AFD has taken steps to better accommodate not just crisis but also post-crisis contexts and resilience through specific funding mechanisms, among them Calls for Crisis and Post-Crisis Projects, a Vulnerability Mitigation and Crisis Response Facility, and integration of the Relief-Rehabilitation-Development continuum in operations (French Development Agency, 2018, pp. 16-17_[27]). These examples suggest there is growing awareness among members of the need to specifically support nexus approaches within the context of their CSO support.

In sum, almost all members indicate multiple main objectives for working with CSOs. The majority of members pursue two types of objectives: strengthening a pluralist and independent civil society in partner countries and reaching other development objectives. The most frequently selected main objective is that of working with CSOs to *reach a specific development objective (implement programmes) related to service delivery*, followed closely by the objectives to *strengthen civil society in partner countries* and to *reach a specific development objective (implement programmes) linked to human rights and democratisation*. Members give considerable importance to the objective of *public awareness raising* in member countries.

When it comes to the objective of strengthening civil society, the practice most frequently selected by members responding to the survey is *promoting enabling environments for CSOs and civil society in partner countries*. Various financial and non-financial practices are used to promote enabling environments. These range from providing support to CSOs and civil society in partner countries with disabling environments (most frequently selected by responding members) to making members' financial support to partner countries conditional on partner country governments' efforts to strengthen enabling environments for civil society (least frequently selected by responding members).

2.4. Advantages and disadvantages of working with CSOs

Key findings

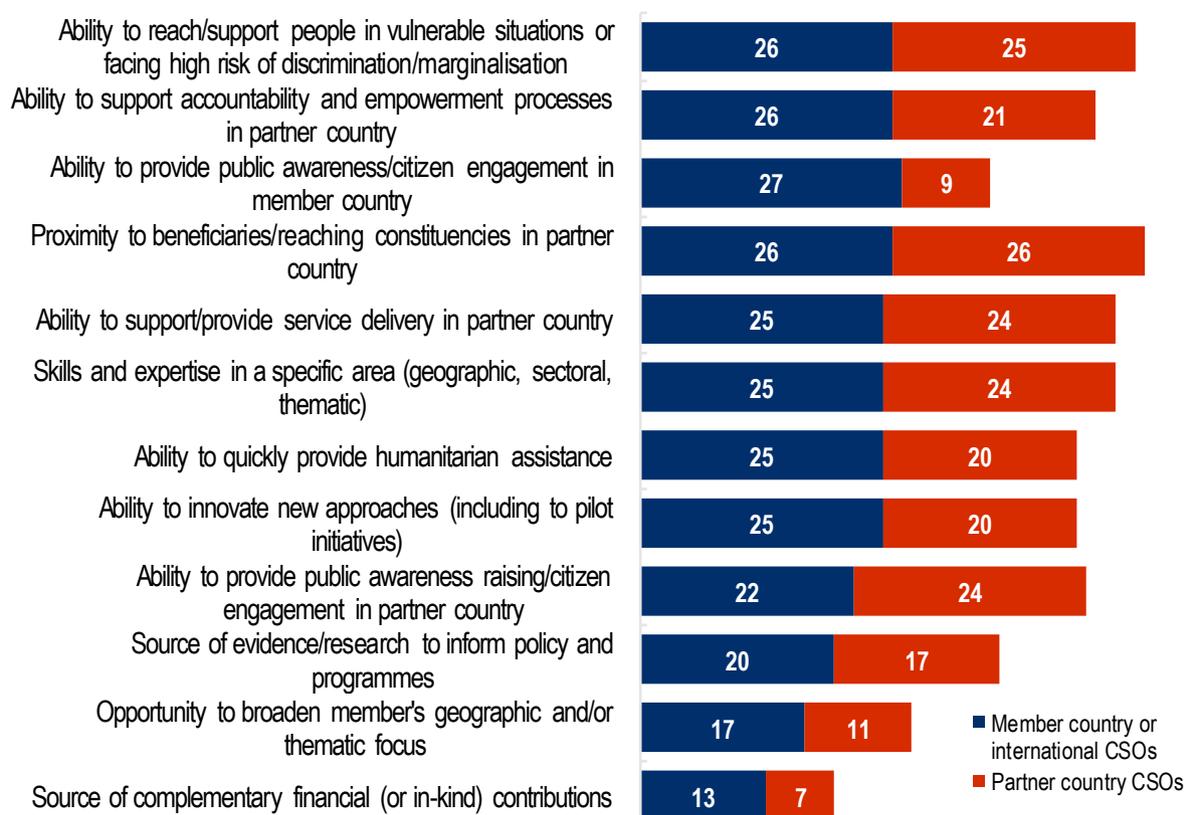
- Members identify advantages more frequently than disadvantages of working with CSOs, though both qualities are reported.
- Members identify more advantages and fewer disadvantages of working with member country or international CSOs than of working with partner country CSOs.

Many members select many advantages of working with CSOs in their survey responses. At the same time, members experience some countervailing difficulties in working with CSOs.

Among the most frequently selected *comparative advantages* of working with member country or international CSOs and with partner country CSOs are their *proximity to beneficiaries and constituencies in partner countries* and, relatedly, their *ability to reach people in vulnerable situations or facing high risk of discrimination or marginalisation* (Figure 2.3).^{18,19} The ability of member country or international CSOs and partner country CSOs to *support (or provide) service delivery* in partner countries is another important comparative advantage, as is their ability to *support accountability and empowerment processes in partner countries (promote democracy)*. A smaller but still significant number of members identify these two as advantages of working with partner country CSOs.

Additional noteworthy advantages are the *specific skills and expertise* of CSOs and their ability to *quickly provide humanitarian assistance*, again with these selected by many members. Fewer members select these as advantages when the question pertains to working with partner country CSOs. The ability to provide *public awareness and engage citizens in member countries* is the most frequently selected advantage of working with member country or international CSOs.

Figure 2.3. Advantages of working with member country or international CSOs and with partner country CSOs



Note: A total of 29 members responded, with respondents able to select multiple options. The options shown here are shortened versions of the language used in the survey.

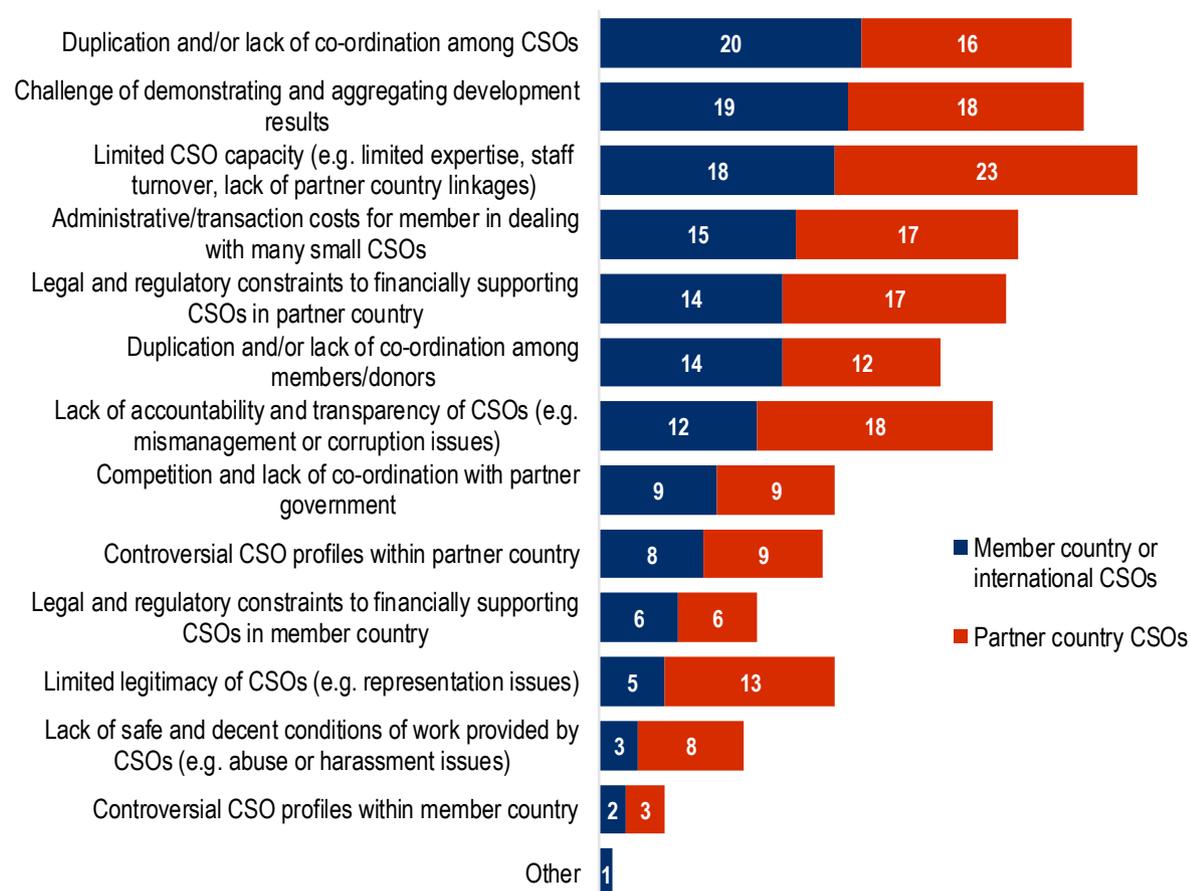
Source: Responses to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

The most frequently selected disadvantage of working with member country or international CSOs is that of *duplication and/or lack of co-ordination among CSOs*, which is also selected as a disadvantage of partner country CSOs but less frequently (Figure 2.4).²⁰ The most frequently selected disadvantage of working with partner country CSOs is *limitations in capacity*, which is also selected for member country or

international CSOs but less frequently. The *challenge of demonstrating and aggregating development results* is attributed to working with member country or international CSOs and with partner country CSOs almost equally.

Administrative and transaction costs for the member in dealing with many small organisations are a disadvantage for just over half of responding members in regard to member country or international CSOs. A bigger share (three fifths) of responding members select this as a disadvantage of working with partner country CSOs. Many members select *legal and regulatory constraints* to financially supporting CSOs within partner countries as a disadvantage impeding work with partner country CSOs, but many also select *legal and regulatory constraints* as a disadvantage when working with member country or international CSOs. *Lack of accountability and transparency of CSOs* is identified more frequently as a disadvantage of partner country CSOs than of member country or international CSOs. Members also identify issues of *duplication and lack of co-ordination among themselves and with other donors* as a disadvantage in their work with member country or international CSOs and partner country CSOs.

Figure 2.4. Disadvantages of working with member country or international CSOs and with partner country CSOs



Note: A total of 29 members responded, with respondents able to select multiple options. The options shown here are shortened versions of the language used in the survey.

Source: Responses to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

In sum, members more frequently select advantages over disadvantages of working with CSOs. They also select more advantages and fewer disadvantages of working with member country or international CSOs than of working with partner country CSOs. Respondents select advantages of member country or international CSOs a total of 277 times, compared to 228 times in regard to partner country CSOs. They select disadvantages of member country or international CSOs 146 times, while selecting disadvantages of partner country CSOs 169 times.

Moreover, while many members appreciate CSOs for their many advantages, members are also challenged by some countervailing difficulties they experience in working with CSOs. On balance, however, an appreciation of the advantages of working with CSOs outweighs the disadvantages, with the former much more commonly identified than the latter.

2.5. How financial support is provided

Key findings

- The majority of members maintain multiple funding mechanisms to support CSOs.
- The most commonly identified mechanism of financial support for CSOs is *project/programme support*. *Partnership/framework/core support* is less common, though it is increasing incrementally.
- OECD statistics confirm members' responses, showing that most funding flows *through* CSOs as programme implementers on behalf of members and that considerably less funding flows *to* CSOs, i.e. in the form of core support to CSOs as independent development actors.
- This pattern raises a question as to whether members' financial support mechanisms adequately match their stated objectives of *reaching a specific development objective (implement programmes)* and of *strengthening civil society in partner countries, including CSOs as independent development actors*.
- Members appear to be pursuing the objective of strengthening civil society in partner countries via their *through* support.
- To better assess members' support to civil society strengthening, the data on *to* and *through* flows should be supplemented with information on the degree to which financial support mechanisms either respond to CSOs' priorities and strategies or, alternatively, rigidly steer CSOs to meet member-defined conditions (e.g. sectors, themes, countries, specific results).
- CSOs experience members' financial support mechanisms as being overly directive and steering CSOs to operate as implementers on behalf of members.

The survey finds that members tend to maintain *multiple funding mechanisms* for their CSO support.²¹ Of respondents, 25 members maintain at least 2 CSO support mechanisms at *headquarters level* and only 3 have just one mechanism.²² Additionally, 19 members maintain at least 2 CSO support mechanisms at *partner country level*, 7 have just one partner country-level mechanism and 2 have none.

Regarding financial support mechanisms managed at *headquarters level*, a majority of responding members (22) report they have *project/programme support* available to *member country CSOs*. Also regarding such mechanisms at *headquarters level*, almost half of responding members (14) report they have *partnership/framework/core support* available to *member country CSOs*. Regarding support mechanisms managed at *partner country level*, 17 responding members report they have *project/programme support* available to *partner country CSOs* and 16 report having *support provided via partner country governments* also available to *partner country CSOs* and to *international/regional CSOs*.

Partnership/framework/core support at partner country level available for *partner country CSOs* is selected by 7 members, or just under one quarter of respondents.

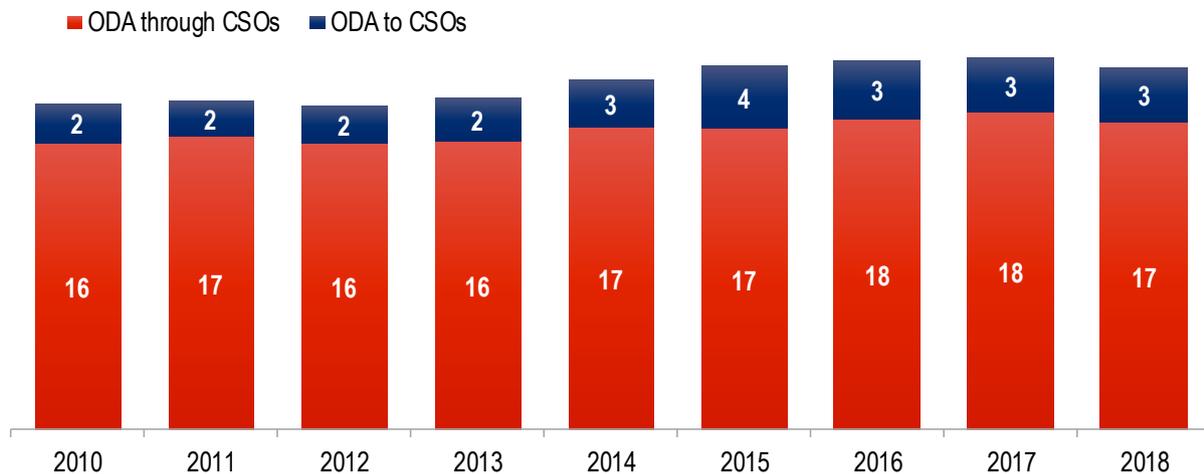
Within these mechanisms, members can either use a competitive process of calls for proposals or they can accept unsolicited proposals. At *headquarters level*, 24 responding members use *calls for proposals available to member country CSOs* and 16 use *calls for proposals available to international CSOs*. At *partner country level*, 15 respondents use *calls for proposals available to partner country CSOs*.

As discussed in Section 1.5, core funding mechanisms are most often used to strengthen civil society as an objective in its own right. Core support is to support CSOs to pursue their self-defined priorities while respecting CSOs' independence and right of initiative. Members also refer to partnership or framework support, which is sometimes provided as core support but can also be a hybrid of core support and project and/or programme support.²³ Project and/or programme mechanisms, on the other hand, are most often used to meet other development objectives, wherein CSOs are supported as implementing agents or instruments on behalf of members.

These survey findings indicate that mechanisms supporting CSOs as implementing partners to reach members' other development objectives are favoured over mechanisms of support to CSOs as independent development actors.

Figures from the OECD on flows from members *to* and *through* CSOs confirm that the latter type of mechanisms predominates (Figure 2.5 and Figures B.2 and B.3 in Annex B). In 2018, approximately USD 17 billion of members' bilateral ODA flowed *through* CSOs, almost six times the volume (USD 3 billion) that flowed *to* CSOs. In other words, 85% of members' 2018 flows for CSOs went *through* CSOs, while 15% went *to* CSOs. While the 2018 figures represent an incremental reduction in the relative share of flows *through* CSOs since 2010 (when flows *through* CSOs were almost eight times the volume of flows *to* CSOs), the dominant mechanisms are clearly channelling flows *through* CSOs.

Figure 2.5. Total ODA to and through CSOs, 2010-18, USD billion, 2018 constant prices



Source: (OECD, 2020_[40]), *Creditor Reporting System (database)*, <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=crs1>.

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As noted in Section 1.5, members' funding mechanisms need to match their stated objectives for working with CSOs. Given that second most frequently selected objective is *strengthening civil society in partner*

countries, including CSOs as independent development actors (Figure 2.1), one would expect to see more use of partnership/framework/core support mechanisms and more flows *to* CSOs. Yet the dominant funding mechanisms and OECD statistics show that members' CSO support is predominantly channelled *through* CSOs as programme implementers to meet other, unrelated development objectives (e.g. in health, education, humanitarian assistance, etc.) on behalf of members, rather than *to* CSOs as independent development actors.

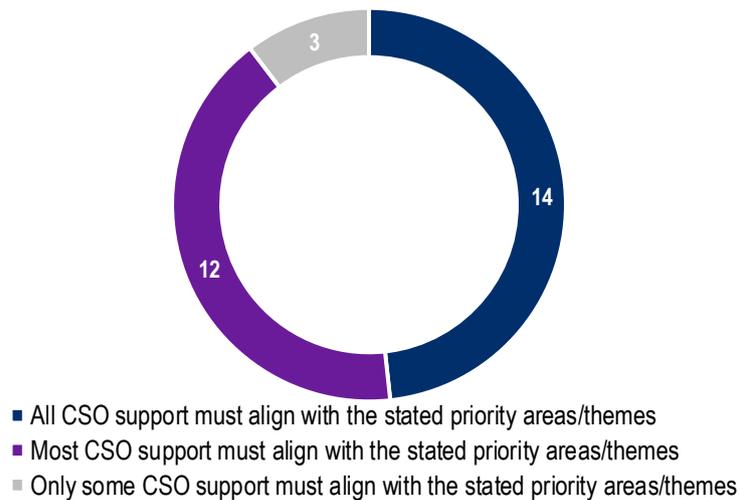
Is there thus a contradiction between stated objectives and financial support mechanisms and flows? The answer is both yes and no.

Again, as noted, OECD statistics on flows *to* and *through* CSOs do not reliably capture the volume of flows that members are allocating for one or the other of the two types of objectives. Rather, the degree to which members' financial support mechanisms tip towards being responsive to CSOs' priorities and strategies or, alternatively, rigidly steer CSOs to meet donor-defined conditions (e.g. sectors, themes, countries or even specific results) needs investigation to complement the *to* and *through* figures and the survey responses on funding mechanisms. This issue of conditional support that steers CSOs is explored in Section 1.5, which underscores the need for members' funding mechanisms to strike a balance between the conditions attached to funding on one hand and respect for CSOs as independent development actors on the other.

Member survey responses shed some light on this grey area. As noted in Section 2.3, 19 responding members consider they are *pursuing the strengthening civil society objective by supporting CSOs' right of initiative* – that is, the right of CSOs to apply for member support for initiatives in which the CSOs define their own priorities to be pursued. At the same time, 5 fewer members (14 respondents) indicate that they use core support mechanisms at *headquarters level*. Members are therefore finding ways to support CSOs' right of initiative within the framework of project and/or programme support *through* CSOs, possibly through the use of calls for proposals. In such instances, CSOs may be invited to submit proposals for self-defined initiatives, even as these initiatives must align with higher-level priorities defined by members.

Member responses to other survey questions indicate a high incidence of conditional funding that steers CSOs to meet member objectives; for some, this includes steering CSOs towards the objective of strengthening civil society in partner countries. When asked *the degree to which their financial support for CSOs must align to member-defined priority areas or themes*, almost 90% of responding members (26 responses) answer that *either all or most of their CSO support must so align* (Figure 2.6).²⁴ When asked if *strengthening civil society in partner countries is one of their priorities/themes*, a similar majority of responding members (25) respond positively.²⁵

Figure 2.6. Member requirements for CSO support to align with member priorities



Note: A total of 29 members responded. The options shown here are shortened versions of the language used in the survey.

Source: Responses to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

An additional consideration to help determine whether members' support mechanisms and flows *through* CSOs are conducive to meeting the strengthening civil society objective relates to support that involves capacity development. As Figure 2.1 shows, *enhancing partner country CSOs' institutional or development capacity* is also one of the main objectives for just over half (16) of responding members. In this instance, a mechanism of support *through* CSOs may be designed so that the CSOs it supports are steered to an objective of strengthening civil society in partner countries through capacity development. Further, it may be that the strengthening civil society objective is being reached in part via the considerable portion (almost 20%) of flows *through* CSOs that go to the DAC reporting directive's government and civil society sub-sector code (Table B.4 in Annex B). Though this specific sub-sector code is not limited to capturing the strengthening civil society objective, members are more likely to be reporting their support for civil society strengthening under this sub-sector than under the other, largely service delivery-oriented sub-sector options (e.g. emergency response, education, health).

Finally, the fact that members maintain multiple funding mechanisms also reinforces the idea that they are finding multiple ways to pursue the strengthening civil society objective through these varied mechanisms, including both *to* and *through* support. The Sida (2019^[22]) *Guiding Principles* suggest additional ways in which this can be done. Sida provides a combination of core support *to* CSOs as independent development actors as well as support *through* CSOs to reach specific sector or thematic objectives. Capacity development and a human rights-based approach are integrated into the CSO support so that support is "for both the organizational development of the partner CSO itself, and for activities where the partner CSO develops the capacity of rights holders and accompanies them as they engage in advocacy and ... improv[ing] their living conditions" (Sida, 2019, p. 11^[22]). At partner country level, support *to* or *through* CSOs is pursued in co-ordination with other donors to help ensure outreach to a multitude of actors making up the civil society sector in partner countries. In addition, investments are made not only in individual CSOs but in the civil society sector as a whole. These include "public access resources", such as civil society resource centres where information and services ranging from photocopying to project management support are available, or support for networking and co-operation across civil society actors (Itad Ltd and COWI, 2012, pp. 110-111^[41]; Sida, 2019, p. 12^[22]).

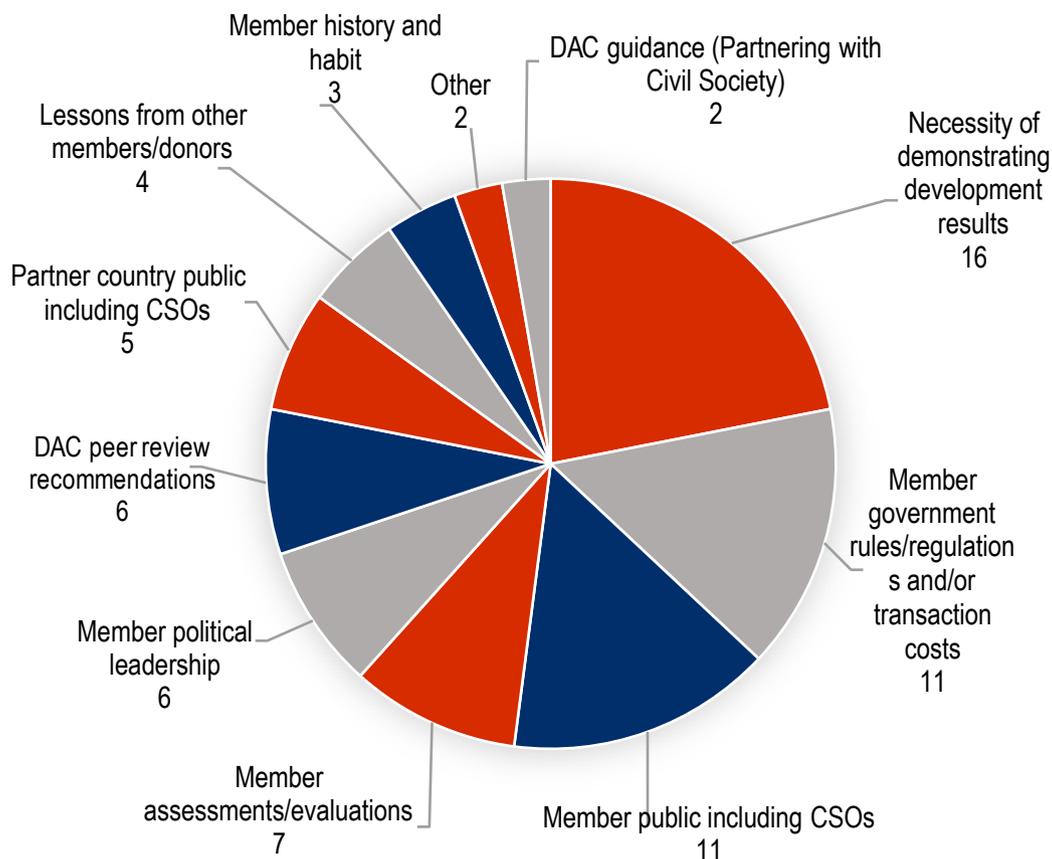
While indications are that members are finding ways to strike a balance between steering CSOs and being responsive to them as independent development actors, responses to the survey issued to CSOs still

suggest that members' financial support mechanisms fall short of an optimum balance. One CSO respondent notes that even where a member delineates principles or objectives for supporting CSOs as independent development actors, the member-CSO relationship remains "largely rooted in a transactional function, whereby CSOs are partners for the implementation of the [member] government's agenda". Another CSO respondent notes that even though a member states that it pursues the objective of enhancing CSOs as independent development actors, "the vision of CSOs just as implementing actors prevails".

CSOs also were asked whether they consider that *member mechanisms are effective and appropriate for supporting and facilitating the work of CSOs*. According to one respondent, the dominant use of project/programme support via calls for proposals is "overwhelmingly directive" and thus inconsistent with CSOs' right of initiative, while also fostering competition rather than collaboration among CSOs. Another CSO respondent sees the dominant use of project funding as a *narrow approach* that lacks flexibility and supports initiatives of too short a duration to allow for long-term capacity development of partners and, more broadly, sustainable change in partner countries. On the other hand, a CSO respondent that answered the question in the affirmative notes that the framework/partnership/core support provided has as its main objective strengthening civil society in partner countries and, beyond that, allows receiving CSOs to carry out work in keeping with their self-defined sectoral or thematic areas of focus.

Members' responses to a survey question regarding the *main influences on their decisions regarding financial support mechanisms for CSOs* (Figure 2.7) help to explain the dominance of project/programme mechanisms and *through* support. The most frequently selected influence is the *necessity of demonstrating development results* (17 responses), followed by *member government rules and regulations and/or transaction cost considerations* (12 responses) and the *influence of member country public including civil society/CSOs* (11 responses).²⁶

Figure 2.7. Main influences on members' decisions regarding financial support mechanisms



Note: A total of 21 members responded, with respondents able to select multiple options. The options shown here are shortened versions of the language used in the survey.

Source: Responses to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

These influences are also discussed in Section 1.5 and featured in consultations with CSOs and members. Members' results pressures incline them towards support *through* CSOs as implementing partners to meet other development objectives, especially service-oriented objectives from which tangible results are more readily demonstrated in the short term than are the results of a strengthening civil society objective. Member input from consultations suggests that such pressures are becoming even more pronounced as members tie their reporting to SDG targets. Also heard in consultations is that these pressures are felt ever more strongly in contexts of growing public and political divisions in member countries over the value of ODA.

As regards member rules and regulations and/or transaction costs considerations, members' agreement and disbursement rules and regulations can limit their ability to enter into core support arrangements, which are deemed higher risk than project/programme arrangements. In addition, a high level of due diligence assessments is required prior to providing core support and is experienced as a heavy upfront transaction cost, even though the transaction cost of core support diminishes considerably once an agreement is entered into.

That member country publics including CSO are an influencing factor for many members echoes the above-noted pressures from member publics to demonstrate development results. Moreover, domestic constituencies inclusive of CSOs have an interest in tapping into development co-operation funds and are

more readily and frequently able to do so when it is in the form of project/programme funding. Consultation inputs note that core support mechanisms can be a closed shop, exclusively available to CSOs of substantial size and capacity.

In sum, findings from the survey, consultations and OECD statistics indicate that members favour mechanisms of support *through* CSOs as implementers of projects/programmes on members' behalf, and that these are more frequently used than mechanisms providing core support *to* CSOs as independent development actors. These findings suggest that members' financial support mechanisms and flows are not fully reconciled to both stated objectives for working with CSOs, i.e. *to reach a specific development objective (implement programmes)* and *to strengthen civil society in partner countries*, including CSOs as independent development actors.

In favouring project/programme support *through* CSOs, members are influenced by legal and administrative constraints and transaction cost concerns, results pressures, and the voices of member country publics and CSOs.

However, members do appear to be supporting CSOs as independent actors to some degree – and thus contributing to strengthening civil society – via their *through* support mechanisms. Supporting CSOs can take place along a spectrum ranging from more or less rigid steering of CSOs to meet member priorities to being responsive to CSOs and respecting their independence and right of initiative. Statistics on member flows *to* and *through* CSOs are too blunt an instrument to adequately assess the extent to which members are in fact pursuing the objective of strengthening civil society in partner countries, including by supporting CSOs as independent development actors. More nuanced information on the design of members' mechanisms is needed to assess the match between objectives and mechanisms of support and to evaluate what kind of balance is being struck between steering CSOs and respecting their independence.

Nonetheless, CSOs experience members' financial support mechanisms as overly directive with many conditions tied to member-defined priorities.

2.6. Who receives financial support

Key findings

- Support flows primarily for member country and international CSOs rather than for partner country CSOs, though direct member funding for partner country CSOs is increasing incrementally.
- Some members are at the early stages of seeking to work with a wider diversity of civil society actors.
- Members' rationales for favouring working with member country and international CSOs include members' rules and regulations and/or transaction cost constraints of working with partner country CSOs; longstanding and relevant experience and expertise of member country and/or international CSOs; and member country CSOs' role in public awareness raising in member countries.

2.6.1. Member country, international and partner country-based CSOs

Members' financial support flows to CSOs based in members' own countries, to international and regional CSOs, and to partner country-based CSOs. Findings from the survey of members show that all 29

responding members financially *support CSOs based in their own countries*.²⁷ All but one of the members responding (28) also *support international (or regional) CSOs*.

Twenty-five responding members *support partner country-based CSOs*. For the most part, members' financial support for member country and international CSOs is based on a partnership model through which these CSOs work with partner country-based CSOs (or other types of partner country-based organisations). Thus, some of the funds received by member country and international CSOs are re-allocated by these CSOs to their partner country-based CSO (or non-CSO) partners, though there is no method available at this time to confidently assess the portion of onward flows.

Unfortunately, this survey question does not distinguish between members' direct support for partner country-based CSOs and indirect support for partner country-based CSOs that flows via member country and international CSOs (or other intermediaries). However, OECD statistics show that 24 members (almost 80% of all members) provided financial support directly for developing country-based CSOs in 2018 (OECD, 2020_[40]).²⁸ This is a slight increase over 2010, when 19 members funded partner country-based CSOs directly (OECD, 2020_[40]).

Despite the high and growing number of members that, according to OECD statistics, support partner country CSOs directly, member country CSOs receive the bulk of members' financial support – approximately USD 13 billion, representing about 66% of total members flows for CSOs in 2018.

Table 2.1. ODA allocations to and through CSOs by type of CSO, 2010-18, USD billion, 2018 constant prices

Total to and through	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
International CSO	2 885	3 447	3 587	4 032	4 221	4 601	4 934	5 266	5 459
Donor country-based CSO	13 128	13 051	12 559	12 327	13 096	14 212	14 435	14 213	13 476
Developing country-based CSO	1 048	1 157	1 263	1 490	1 478	1 403	1 283	1 404	1 417
Undefined	1 396	1 036	941	993	1 061	407	319	247	182
Aggregate	18 457	18 692	18 350	18 842	19 856	20 623	20 971	21 129	20 535

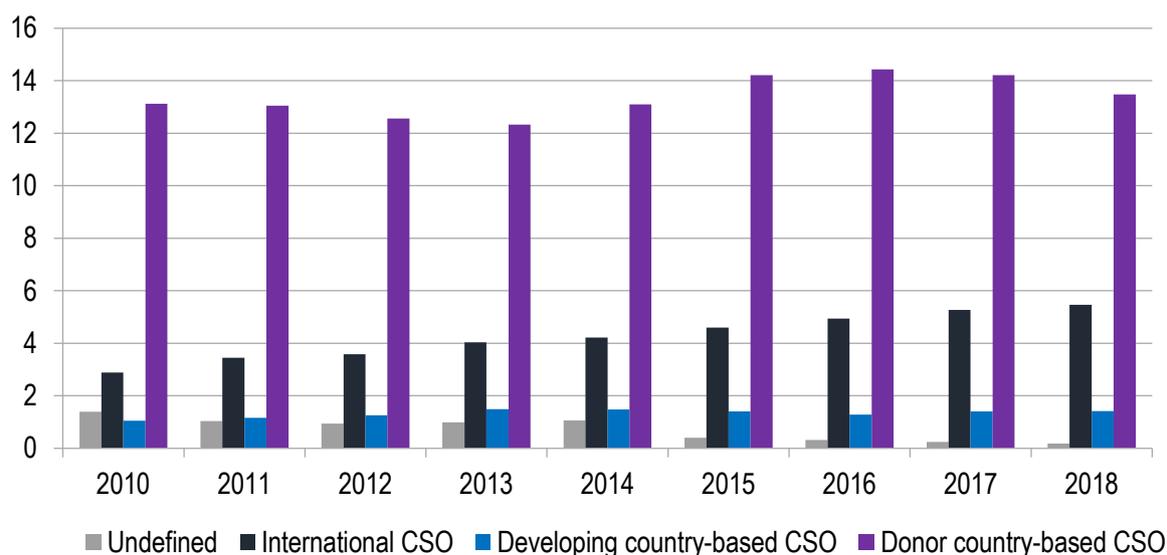
Note: The term “developing country-based” is used in this figure as it is the term used in the DAC statistical reporting directives. “Undefined” is used when member reporting does not specify the type of CSO receiving funds.

Source: (OECD, 2020_[40]), *Creditor Reporting System (database)*, <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=crs1>.

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International CSOs, the second largest recipient of member support, received approximately USD 5 billion, representing approximately 27% of flows in 2018. Developing country-based CSOs received the least amount of member funds in 2018 at approximately USD 1 billion, representing about 7% of flows in that year.²⁹ In 2018, members provided about ten times more support for member country CSOs than for developing country-based CSOs. This points to an incremental shift towards more direct support for partner country CSOs compared to 2010, when support was 13 times greater for member country CSOs than for developing country-based CSOs. Indeed, between 2010 and 2018, the volume of direct financial support for developing country-based CSOs increased by 35% while it increased by 3% for member country CSOs. At the same time, the support for international CSOs increased by 89% between 2010 and 2018. OECD statistics on flows for different types of CSOs are presented in Figure 2.8.

Figure 2.8. Share of ODA allocations to and through CSOs by type of CSO, 2010-18, USD billion, 2018 constant prices



Note: The term “developing country-based” is used in this figure as it is the term used in the DAC statistical reporting directives. “Undefined” is used when member reporting does not specify the type of CSO receiving funds.

Source: (OECD, 2020^[40]), *Creditor Reporting System (database)*, <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=crs1>.

StatLink  <https://doi.org/10.1787/https://doi.org/10.1787/888934124375>

These shifts in the share of financial flows for member country, international and partner country CSOs are happening within a context of increasing ODA for CSOs overall. As shown in Section 1.1, member flows for CSOs increased by 11% between 2010 and 2018. Some of this increase thus seems to be directed towards partner country CSOs, as well as to international CSOs.³⁰

Member survey responses and policy documents point to member efforts to channel more funds directly to partner-country based CSOs. One example is the effort of AFD, as elaborated in *Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations 2018-2023*. According to this strategy, AFD, together with the French Ministry for European and Foreign Affairs and with CSOs (via the umbrella network Coordination SUD), plans to reflect on how financing methods and conditions could be better geared for direct support for local CSOs (French Development Agency, 2018, p. 30^[27]). Norway is another member that will explore ways of transferring more of its funding and decision making regarding CSO support to partner country level (Norad, 2018, p. 7^[10]). Italy and Canada are seeking to provide more direct humanitarian response funding to partner country CSOs in keeping with the Grand Bargain. The EC has also tailored its funding to allow greater direct access for partner country CSOs (European Commission, 2012, p. 10^[17]). According to OECD statistics, in 2018, the European Union (EU) was the top member provider of direct support for partner country CSOs, followed by the United Kingdom.

As discussed in Section 1.6, multi-donor pooled funds are a financing mechanism that members use to reach more partner country CSOs and potentially a broader swathe of civil society actors. According to member survey responses, nine responding members participate in *multi-donor pooled funds established at partner country level and accessible to partner country CSOs*.³¹ Five responding members participate in such funds *established at members' headquarters level, also accessible to partner country CSOs*. Eight responding members also contribute to *multilateral/global funds that are available to partner country CSOs*, with such funds offering another way to broaden members' reach to these CSOs.

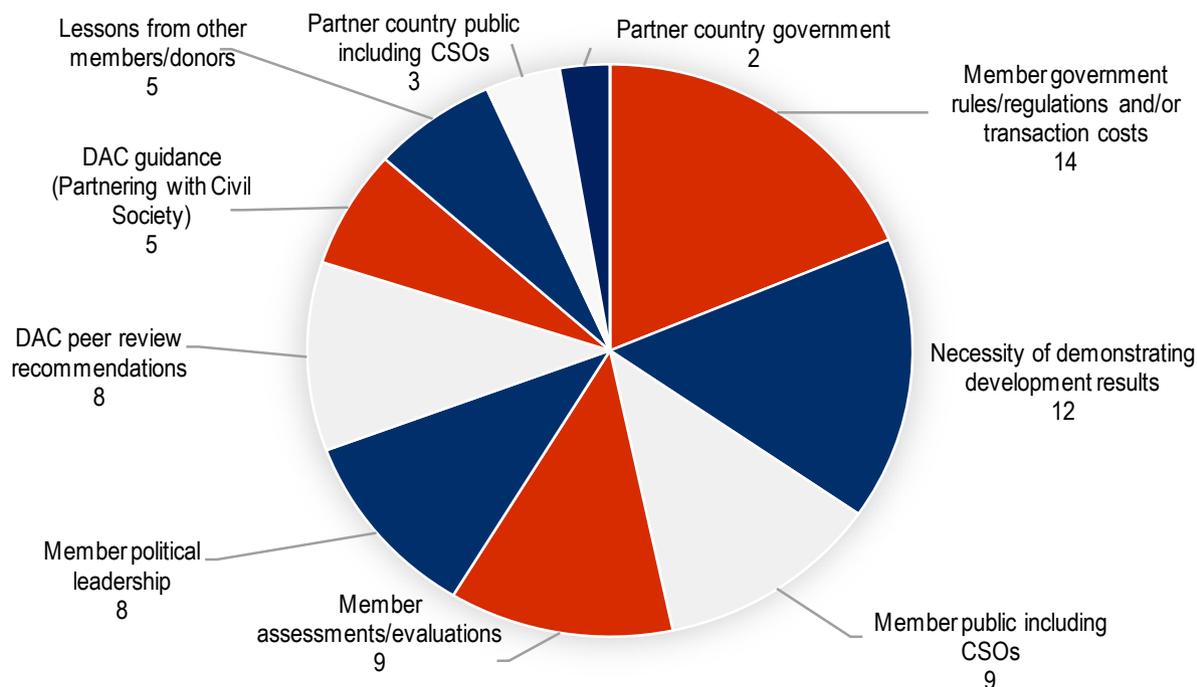
Members' survey responses indicate that south-south or triangular co-operation is another way that members seek to expand their reach to partner country-based CSOs. The member survey indicates that 11 responding members have *funding mechanisms that explicitly support CSOs to engage in south-south or triangular co-operation*.³² Spain draws attention to the importance of this type of co-operation support in the more developed partner countries that Spain works with. The DFID UK Aid Connect funding mechanism supports coalitions of CSOs, think tanks, and public, private and third sector organisations, including those in partner countries, to work together to find and share innovative and flexible solutions to the most important and difficult development challenges.

Despite these various efforts, member country CSOs receive the bulk of members' CSO funding. OECD statistics show that the combined share received by member country and international CSOs amounts to 93% of members' total CSO flows. This is the case even though members find their member country CSOs (and international CSOs) and partner country CSOs fairly similarly advantaged when it comes to most of the frequently selected comparative advantages attributed to CSOs (Section 2.4, Figure 2.3).

Members' survey responses and policy documents shed some light on the pragmatic rationales for their tendency to favour working with member country CSOs. There are generally three explanations, two of which also apply to their decisions regarding international CSOs.

One rationale relates to members' legal, regulatory and administrative requirements and, relatedly, to their capacity to administer and monitor CSO support. Asked to identify the *main influences on their decisions regarding the type of CSOs supported and on their policies and strategies related to CSOs or civil society*, the largest number of responding members select *member government rules and regulations and/or transaction cost considerations* (14 responses).^{33,34} Figure 2.9 shows the breakdown of responses.

Figure 2.9. Main influences on members' decisions to support particular types of CSOs and decisions on members' policies, strategies and priorities



Note: A total of 22 members responded, with respondents able to select multiple options. The options shown here are shortened versions of the language used in the survey.

Source: Responses to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

In the case of some members (e.g. Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Portugal, Spain), domestic legal frameworks for development co-operation limit the type of CSO that can be directly supported.³⁵ Some members also note that partnering with member country (and international) CSOs is a risk management strategy, as member country legal recourse measures are more easily applied should they be needed.

Yet for other members, according to survey responses, the administrative and/or transaction cost challenge is considered a disadvantage of working with member country or international CSOs (15 responses) and with partner country CSOs (17 responses), as shown in Figure 2.4. Supporting fewer but larger and often more experienced member country or international CSOs is a way for members to manage the administrative burden that comes with direct support for a greater number of smaller and often (though not necessarily) less-experienced partner country CSOs. For example, Finland's survey response reflects the emphasis in its 2016 development policy report to the Parliament on the need for Finnish aid to support fewer and larger programmes in order to reduce the relative share of administrative work (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2016, p. 15^[42]). Finland's primary mechanism of CSO support, which provides grants to the multi-annual programmes of experienced Finnish CSOs (and foundations), is thus considered an appropriate approach. Belgium, Iceland and Slovenia also draw attention to limited member capacity to perform due diligence and follow-up on direct partnerships with partner country CSOs. Slovenia notes that it is convenient to partner with CSOs that can work in its own language.

A second but related rationale for members to favour member country and international CSOs is the experience and expertise that these CSOs have acquired over decades of development co-operation aided by members' financial support. Member policies attest to this. The DFID *Civil Society Partnership Review* highlights the "expertise, skills and experience" of United Kingdom CSOs as "second to none" (DFID, 2016, p. 4^[32]). Member country CSOs have built considerable knowledge and networks in partner countries. The Australia report, *DFAT and NGOs: Effective Development Partners*, points to the long-established connections and commitment to local communities, local networks and knowledge of international and Australian NGOs and to their trusted relationships with local actors (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia, 2015, pp. 4-5^[26]).

As discussed, members value partner country CSOs (25 responses) almost as much member country CSOs (24 responses) for their *skills and expertise in specific geographic, sectoral or thematic areas* (Figure 2.3). Additionally, *CSO capacity constraints* (including *expertise*) are identified as a disadvantage of both member country CSOs and partner country CSOs, but more so for the latter (18 versus 23 responses) (Figure 2.4). Member country CSOs are seen to have more skills, expertise and capacity, especially in meeting members' financial, administrative, monitoring and reporting requirements. The capacity of member country CSOs for monitoring and reporting results likely contributes to members' preference for working with these CSOs, given that the *necessity of demonstrating development results* is the second most frequently selected influence on members' decisions regarding the type of CSOs supported (12 responses). This is acknowledged in Norad's *Guiding Principles* for its support for civil society, which state that "[c]ivil society actors who represent or have greater access to those left behind, may lack the necessary financial or technical skills to meet Norad's and other donors' demands for direct support. Partnerships with Norwegian or international organisations, South-South partnerships, or trust fund mechanisms are a means to reaching these actors" (Norad, 2018, p. 6^[10]).

A third rationale for members' preference for working with their member country CSOs stems from the value they place on public awareness raising and citizen engagement and the important role they consider that member country CSOs play. Twenty-seven responding members (93%) identified a comparative advantage of member country CSOs to be their work in *public awareness and citizen engagement* (Figure 2.3). For many members, support for CSOs is the main vehicle for increasing public awareness, support and engagement in development co-operation and global issues. Finland is a prime example, as discussed in Box 2.2. Public engagement by CSOs also provides members a way to demonstrate development results – that is, the results achieved by their CSO partners – to the public, which is an important influence on decision making. It is also worth noting that member country CSOs, on the whole,

have earned the trust of member country publics thanks to their extensive experience and connections within those communities.³⁶

Box 2.2. The role of Finnish CSOs in public awareness raising and citizen engagement

Finland's *Guidelines for Civil Society in Development Policy* highlight the role of CSOs in promoting citizen engagement, a positive narrative around development co-operation and communication of its benefits and they refer to this role to coherently explain the advantages of working with Finnish CSOs:

“The participation of Finnish CSOs in development cooperation and humanitarian assistance adds to the Finns’ understanding of and competencies in development issues. The organisations’ activities in developing countries and the opportunities for participation and volunteering they provide forge contacts between Finns and the citizens of other countries. Successful communication concerning development is instrumental in that the Finns are ready to be actively involved in the promotion of global justice and burden-sharing. Understanding global problems can also reduce xenophobia and the social tensions arising from it in Finland. This is where Finnish civil society actors play an important role alongside official communications.” (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2017, p. 12_[43]).

Members also see member country CSOs as having a role in informal diplomacy. AFD deems French CSOs’ participation in development co-operation “an essential driver for France’s diplomacy” (French Development Agency, 2018, p. 12_[27]). For DFID, a vibrant and effective civil society sector is considered part of Britain’s “soft power” around the globe (DFID, 2016, p. 4_[32]).

Further, just as member country CSOs are an important public engagement ally for members and a source of support for development co-operation, they also can rally political pressure domestically when their funding from members is squeezed (OECD, 2012, p. 21_[44]; Wood and Fällman, 2013, p. 145_[45]). Indeed, the *voice of member country CSOs and the public* is the third most frequently selected influencing factor in determining the type of CSO that members support (nine responses), which attests to member country CSOs’ interest in protecting the funding they receive from members (Figure 2.9).³⁷

2.6.2. Diverse civil society actors

As noted in Sections 1.2, 1.6 and 2.1, civil society is made up of diverse actors such as development or human rights CSOs, faith-based CSOs, trade unions, professional associations, social enterprises and informal associational forms, among others. Only nine members responding to the survey indicate that they support *informal associations or movements in partner countries*.³⁸ Five responding members indicate that *the type of CSO or civil society they support has changed in the last five years*. Some of the members that shifted support say the change is due to their increased efforts to reach to a greater diversity of CSOs and more varied associational types of civil society beyond the larger, well-established CSOs.³⁹

For example, Italy has widened eligibility to allow funding of smaller CSOs that enter into partnerships and consortia with other CSOs and to allow funding of international and partner country CSOs. In 2016, the EC entered into partnership agreements with major civil society networks of NGOs, private sector organisations, trade unions, farmers’ organisations, co-operatives, and community-based and faith-based organisations. Members’ policy documents provide other examples. AFD, for instance, is considering opening access to actors in what it calls the “Social and Solidarity Economy” (French Development Agency, 2018, pp. 6, 29_[27]). Denmark encourages its Danish and international CSO partners to work with excluded groups, informal movements and new types of civil society actors and reaches out directly to newer actors in Denmark and internationally (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2014, pp. 19-20_[35]). Sida is also looking into ways to broaden its support across a greater diversity of civil society actors such as social movements, digital networks and other informal associational types. As noted in Section 2.6.1, nine

members participate in multi-donor pooled funds at partner country level, in part to broaden and diversify their reach across civil society.

Their own rules and regulations pose a challenge for members seeking to directly support a broader swathe of civil society, much as these stand as a challenge to direct support for partner country CSOs (see Section 2.6.1). Usually rules and regulations require that a member enter into some form of formal agreement with a legally registered organisation. USAID is one example of a member with such rules and regulations, although it is exploring mechanisms to enable support for informal groups and movements and to foster linkages between these actors and more formal CSOs.

In sum, a disproportionate share of members' funding goes for member country and international CSOs, though members' direct flows for partner country-based CSOs are increasing incrementally. While member country and international CSOs share similar advantages (and disadvantages) with partner country CSOs, members identify numerous reasons for opting to primarily support member country or international CSOs. Some members are making efforts to expand the scope of their support for a wider swathe of civil society actors, though such efforts are at an early stage.

2.7. Dialogue and consultation with CSOs and civil society

Key findings

- All members consult with CSOs regarding the member's policies, strategies or other strategic orientations.
- Regular, advance-scheduled (i.e. systematic) dialogue with CSOs is undertaken by a majority of members, especially at headquarters level with member country CSOs. Less frequent, ad hoc dialogue is undertaken with CSOs at partner country level.
- There is room for improvement in the quality and inclusivity of dialogue and consultation with CSOs and civil society at member and partner country levels.
- CSOs would welcome opportunities to participate in dialogue on member policies other than development co-operation policies.

Survey findings show that all responding members *consult with CSOs on member's policies, strategies, or other strategic documents* (hereinafter "policies"). As Table 2.2 illustrates, the type of policy consulted on and the type of CSO consulted vary across members. Across all types of member policies, *consultations* are mostly held with *member country CSOs*. Still, a few members engage in *consultations with partner country CSOs* across all or most of their policies. These include DFID, the EC, the Slovak Republic, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and USAID.⁴⁰ In its survey response, USAID indicates that it consults frequently with partner CSOs at partner country level on its CSO and civil society policies during the country strategy development process and during the design phase for new activities. The AECID manual for development, monitoring and evaluation of country partnership frameworks is clear on the need to consult with stakeholders, inclusive of CSOs, in the framework country (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, 2015^[46]).

All responding members hold consultations with CSOs at headquarters level and 9 do not hold consultations with CSOs at partner country level.⁴¹ Of those that hold consultations at headquarters level, 20 hold *regular, advance-scheduled* (i.e. systematic) *consultations* with CSOs at *headquarters level* and 26 hold consultations on an *as needed (ad hoc)* basis there. In addition, 7 responding members hold *regular, advance-scheduled consultations* with CSOs at *partner country level* and 20 hold *as needed (ad hoc) consultations* at *partner country level*.

Table 2.2. Types of policies consulted on and CSOs consulted with

Type of policy consulted on	Type of CSOs consulted with			
	Member country CSOs	Other member country CSOs	International or regional CSOs	Partner country CSOs
Member's policies at headquarters level	27	2	9	6
Member's policies at partner country level	19	4	11	16
Member's multilateral policies and/or strategic positions	20	2	9	5
Member's CSO and/or civil society policies at headquarters level	26	4	9	8
Member's CSO and/or civil society policies at partner country level	9	3	7	13

Note: A total of 29 members responded, with respondents able to select multiple options.

Source: Responses to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

Fourteen responding members state that their *approach to consultation with CSOs has changed in the last five years*, with more members undertaking systematic dialogue with CSOs.⁴² The three most frequently selected *main influences* on responding members' *decisions regarding their approach to consultation with CSOs* are the *influence of the public, including CSOs, in the member country* (12 responses); *member history and habit* (10 responses); and *the necessity of demonstrating development results tied with the influence of member political leadership* (9 responses).^{43,44}

Members' survey responses and policy documents show that they are increasingly hosting some form of platform on development co-operation in which CSOs participate alongside the member government and/or elected representatives. Platforms are diverse in their composition, set up and the scope of their subject matter. All of them include CSOs, are systematic rather than ad hoc, and address strategic and policy directions. A sampling of examples shows the diversity of member practices of dialogue and consultation with CSOs (Box 2.3).

Box 2.3. Member practices of dialogue and consultation with CSOs

Members have adopted a range of practices to include CSOs in dialogue and consultation:

- The EU Policy Forum for Development (PFD) was established in 2013 following an extensive Structured Dialogue with civil society actors and local authorities. It involves a regular cycle of global, regional and stakeholder dialogues. Governed by a jointly agreed PFD Charter, it has as objectives to facilitate dialogue on cross-cutting issues; promote policy debate and exchange of information and experiences; and support and follow up on the recommendations from the Structured Dialogue (Garcia, 2016^[47]).
- Slovenia's Expert Council for Development Cooperation includes an NGO representative. In addition, its effort to include NGOs and civil society in development co-operation planning, implementation and evaluation also involves structured dialogue between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the NGO Platform at least twice a year, and working exchanges between the MFA and the Platform are also encouraged (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, 2013, p. 1^[48]); paragraph 25 of (Government of the Republic of Slovenia, 2017^[49]).
- The French National Council for Development and International Solidarity, which meets three times a year, enables dialogue between the French government and "development and international solidarity actors" inclusive of groupings of "NGOs, trade unions, employers, companies, parliamentarians, territorial authorities, universities and research institutes, and

high-level foreign figures” (French Development Agency, 2018, pp. 11, 15^[27]). This high-level, institutionalised dialogue platform is complemented by additional strategic dialogue with CSOs on broad development co-operation policy, sector and thematic issues, and CSO funding mechanisms. Some of this is institutionalised and thus systematic; some is more informal and ad hoc.

- The NGO Working Group of the Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs meets at least six times a year to discuss not only policy but also CSOs’ programme implementation and members’ operations. Topics covered range from progress in CSOs’ programmes, the status of funding opportunities and partnership agreements, plans for annual development roundtables, and even staffing changes in the ministry (Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, 2018^[50]).

Members also have systematic dialogue fora on specific topics. According to its survey response, Denmark has established clusters for dialogue on specific development themes. During its 2015 evaluation of the Australian NGO Cooperation Program, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) worked with the Australian Council for International Development, a network of Australian development CSOs, as a reference group to get continuous feedback on findings and recommendations (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia and Coffey International Development, 2015, pp. iii, 24^[51]). In 2018, following the launch of its *Civil Society Partnerships Policy*, Global Affairs Canada initiated a joint Advisory Group with CSOs to advise on a shared approach, vision and priorities to support the policy’s implementation. Comprised of four Global Affairs Canada officials and eight CSOs selected by the civil society sector and guided by the Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness, the advisory group is developing an implementation plan for the policy (CPAG, n.d.^[52]).

Consultations with members and CSOs for this study show the value of members co-ordinating their dialogue with CSOs. Co-ordination is a way to manage consultation demands on CSOs while facilitating joint and cross-border learning. In response to a survey question on *methods used to co-ordinate and harmonise their CSO support and engagement*, members most frequently select *co-ordinated dialogues with CSOs* and *joint knowledge-sharing platforms* (15 and 10 respondents, respectively).⁴⁵

There is minimal indication of dialogue co-ordination at partner country level. On the contrary, consultation inputs reveal instances of members creating multiple, parallel dialogue structures at partner country level. One example of co-ordinated dialogue at partner country level, however, is the development of EU Country Roadmaps for Engagement with Civil Society. The EU, with input from members and CSOs, has initiated joint analysis and planning in 107 partner countries as the basis for joint and co-ordinated programming between and among the EU and EU member states; this is sometimes co-ordinated with other donors, though the degree to which the Roadmaps are taken up by EU members to guide their strategic engagement with CSOs is said to be mixed (CONCORD, 2017, pp. 16-17^[53]). At global level, the survey responses of three members (ADA, Portugal and Slovenia) cite the Global Education Network Europe in which they participate as a good practice example. The Network uses structured networking, strategy sharing and peer learning across participating members and CSOs towards improving the quality and provision of global education in Europe.

As regards CSOs’ overall level of satisfaction with members’ consultation processes, 24 of the responding members indicate that CSOs are satisfied with the member’s consultation processes at *headquarters level*.^{46,47} Of the 20 members that hold consultations at *partner country level*, 9 indicate that CSOs are satisfied with the member’s consultation processes.⁴⁸

Survey responses from CSOs, however, indicate that CSOs tend to be partially rather than fully satisfied with members’ consultation processes. CSOs indicate that consultation schedules do not always leave CSOs with sufficient time to prepare or ensure appropriate representation. In member countries that prioritise consultation, CSOs sometimes struggle to meet the volume of consultation demands, especially when schedules are set unilaterally by the member country government. CSOs also indicate that

consultation outcomes are not necessarily relayed back to CSOs. Nor, they say, are the outcomes commensurate with the investment of time, energy and insights provided by CSOs.

According to their survey responses and consultation inputs, CSOs appreciate the existence of regular and permanent platforms for dialogue and consultation with members and would like to see more such systematic dialogues established with CSOs in partner countries. CSOs also welcome opportunities for less formal, ad hoc dialogues that allow for more frequent exchange with members on varied topics.

In consultations for this study, CSOs call for dialogue that is more inclusive of a broad swathe of civil society in both member and partner countries. They recommend that inclusivity stretch to dialogue with CSOs that are not necessarily members' direct funding partners. Transparent and clear criteria for participation would help to foster inclusivity, with the criteria informed by analysis of the civil society sector (e.g. power imbalances among CSOs, representation of the most marginalised groups, geographic spread, civic space, etc.). Inclusivity also requires that capacity challenges hindering the participation of various civil society actors, especially at partner country level, be addressed. Among the capacity challenges for CSOs are the human resources and time needed to undertake the research and analysis for well-informed engagement, as well as even the time required to travel to often centralised dialogue sites. The design of dialogue and consultation platforms also needs to account for linguistic and cultural diversity.

Survey and consultation responses from CSOs further underscore the importance of dialogue, not solely on members' development co-operation policies and strategies but also on broader subjects based on mutual interests and needs. CSOs point to the role they can play in sharing knowledge, experience and analysis drawn from their close contacts with civil society and other actors on the ground in partner countries, which can assist members to develop and implement better-informed policies and programmes in partner countries.

In sum, members are consulting more, and more systematically, on all types of policies and strategies. However, there is a greater emphasis on consultation and dialogue with member country CSOs than with partner country CSOs. This imbalance holds for co-ordination of dialogue as well. There is room for improvement in dialogue quality and inclusivity, in keeping with good practice, and dialogue on topics beyond development policy and programmes would be welcome.

2.8. Administrative requirements

Key findings

- Some members are making efforts to reduce the administrative burden of proposal, reporting and associated administrative requirements, though more could be done and by more members.
- There is minimal allowance for the use of CSOs' own proposal and reporting formats, though combined member-CSO formats are seen.
- There is a risk that new requirements from members cancel out their efforts to reduce transaction costs.
- Harmonisation of requirements across members is occurring to a limited degree, specifically through member participation in multi-donor pooled funds. The 2013 Code of Practice on Harmonisation across members could be revisited.

Survey responses and consultation inputs from members indicate a recognition that the administrative requirements of members' CSO funding tend to be burdensome, both for CSOs and members. As

illustrated in Figure 2.4, approximately half of responding members identify the administrative/transaction costs of their CSO funding as a disadvantage of working with CSOs.

Survey responses point to efforts by some members to reduce the administrative burden and associated transaction costs of their CSO support. For example, the EC responds that it has introduced longer implementation periods and larger funding amounts *in the past five years*. Also notable is a new EU Financial Regulation (2018/1046) that took effect in 2018 and includes a number of simplifications and allows for further reliance on the rules and procedures of European Commission partners (European Parliament-European Council, 2018^[54]).

Member survey responses and policy documents provide other examples of member efforts in this regard, including longer contracts with greater budget flexibility (ADA); simplifying and digitalising funding guidelines and procedures (AECID, Germany); accepting English as the reporting language (Czech Republic); simplifying and clarifying administrative cost coverage allowance (DFID); and reducing specific reporting requirements e.g. on public anchorage (Denmark). In Spain, a working group has been established with AEICD and the autonomous communities (regional governments) to harmonise procedures and reduce the administrative burden on CSOs. In Canada, measures to reduce the administrative burden on Global Affairs Canada and CSO partners such as simplified funding application forms and streamlined assessment processes are in place or in progress (Global Affairs Canada, 2017, p. 69^[55]; Global Affairs Canada, 2020^[28]). Australia's longstanding use of an accreditation process for CSO partners is reputed to streamline the due diligence process and thus reduce transaction costs for DFAT and the CSOs it funds (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia and Coffey International Development, 2015, pp. 43-44, 59^[51]).

Formats for proposal submission can be long and complex and not necessarily tailorable to CSOs' approaches or priorities. Fifteen responding members require that *funding proposal formats for CSO funding* be submitted in a *format provided by the institution*.⁴⁹ Ten responding members use formats that *combine sections pre-defined by the member with CSOs' choice of format*. Iceland, for example, requires applicants to fill out a four-page application form detailing the funding needed, timeline and project outline and to accompany this form with a more detailed proposal in a format the CSO chooses. Four responding members accept proposal submissions in a *format the CSO chooses*. Different formats can be used for different financial mechanisms. For example, when providing core support to CSOs, SDC has accepted proposals in CSOs' chosen format. However, for support *through* CSOs, SDC's format must be used.

CSO respondents to the CSO survey offer a mix of views regarding whether or not member proposal formats and procedures are overly burdensome on CSOs. CSOs critique members' proposal formats as demanding a level of detail that is not of clear benefit to programme planning. CSOs note that they must invest considerable time and financial resources to respond to calls for proposals, with success far from guaranteed. A positive development noted by CSOs is that members sometimes use a two-stage process involving a preliminary, less detailed concept note followed by a full proposal for partially approved candidates.

According to member survey responses, members show less flexibility on reporting formats than on proposal formats. Twenty responding members require reporting to be done in a *template provided by the member*.⁵⁰ Twelve responding members are open to *reporting that combines the member's pre-defined sections and CSOs' choice of format*.

CSO respondents to the CSO survey are again mixed in their views of whether members' reporting formats are overly burdensome or not. Those that see formats and related requirements as overly burdensome note again the high level of investment (human resources, financial) required to comply and their frustration over frequently changing formats and new requirements. In one instance, recently revised reporting formats, newly introduced requirements – for example, sign-off on integrity charters – and the obligation to report to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standard all demand a large time investment.

As regards the *duration of members' financial support for CSOs*, 18 responding members indicate they have agreements or contracts for CSO support lasting from *one year to three years* and/or from *three years to five years*.⁵¹ Only five respondents offer agreements and/or contracts of *more than five years* and nine offer agreements of *less than one year*. That there is a preponderance of members with agreements and/or contracts of less than five years may be due in part to inclusion of agreements for humanitarian assistance, which tend to be of shorter duration than those for development. When it comes to the *frequency for reporting for CSOs*, 19 responding members require CSOs to report *annually*, with 6 responding members requiring *bi-annual reporting* and 4 requiring *quarterly reporting*.⁵²

When asked about a range of *methods* members use to *co-ordinate and harmonise their CSO support and engagement with other donors at partner country or headquarters level*, nine members select as their response *harmonising conditions for agreements and/or proposal and/or reporting requirements*.⁵³ Seven responding members select *joint evaluations and/or site visits* as another method to co-ordinate and harmonise their CSO support, and four responding members select the method of *joint audits*.

As seen in Sections 1.8 and 2.6.1, there is some use by members of multi-donor pooled funds, which is one way to co-ordinate and harmonise requirements. Just under one third of responding members (ten) participate in pooled funds operating at *headquarters level*, nine participate in pooled funds operating at *partner country level*, and ten contribute to *multilateral/global funds*.⁵⁴ Responding members select multiple reasons for *why [they] pool funding for CSOs*. The most frequently selected reason (ten) is *to enhance effective development co-operation through co-ordination and harmonisation*, the underlying rationale of which is to reduce transaction costs for fund recipients and members.⁵⁵ Other reasons for pooling funding for CSOs are, in descending order of frequency, to *find synergies and build on comparative advantages of members* (eight), *increase the funding for specific projects/programmes of CSOs* (eight), and *increase the reach and diversity of CSOs supported* (six).

More generally regarding the administrative burden of requirements placed on CSOs, survey and consultation findings give a sense that CSOs are hearing mixed messages from members. On one hand, members make official statements about reducing the administrative burden and take some steps in that regard, such as extending agreement durations or simplifying reporting formats. On the other hand, detailed rules, for instance on budget adjustments, additional reporting requirements or other due diligence requirements are felt to cancel out reductions in transaction costs. CSOs would like to see more members aligning with CSOs' own formats and requirements, rather than CSOs having to conform to the many requirements imposed by different members. They would also like to see members harmonise requirements in line with the 2013 Code of Practice on Donor Harmonisation.

Nonetheless, members make clear in consultations for this study that the requirements placed on CSOs are tied to member governments' legal, regulatory and administrative requirements and that it can be challenging to alter these requirements. Members also note that the administrative requirements of their financial support can serve to bolster CSOs' capacity by helping CSOs to better plan, monitor and manage implementation of their programmes.

In sum, members are making some effort to reduce the administrative burden associated with both the application and proposals process and the reporting by CSOs they financially support. However, members remain largely tied to traditional requirements. While they acknowledge that these can be burdensome, members also say that these requirements help them to meet their own upward accountability demands. At the same time, CSOs continue to experience the administrative and technical burden of proposals, applications and reporting to members as an ongoing hindrance to their effectiveness as development actors. More effort is needed to streamline administrative requirements while ensuring that members maintain the standards necessary to meet their domestic requirements. The 2013 Code of Practice on Harmonisation could be revisited.

2.9. Monitoring for results and learning

Key findings

- Members experience constant pressure to demonstrate results of their CSO support.
- Most members allow CSO-defined indicators to be used in results frameworks.
- There is some use of iterative or adaptive approaches to results and performance management, with an emphasis on learning to inform decision making on programme directions.

Members are under pressure to demonstrate that ODA is achieving development results. When asked to name the main influences on their decisions on policies, funding mechanisms, monitoring and reporting, and even consultations with CSOs, members consistently cite the need to demonstrate development results as one of the top three influences.

Members use various types of arrangements as the *basis for reporting and learning between the member and CSOs* (Box 2.4). Approximately half of responding members (15) use more than one type of arrangement for the different funding mechanisms they have in place.⁵⁶ Many more responding members (21) use an *agreement or contract with a results framework, for example a logical framework or results matrix with indicators* compared to the members (8) that use an *agreement or contract with objectives or milestones, but no results framework with indicators*.

Box 2.4. Basis for reporting and learning between members and CSOs

Members use a range of instruments to share reporting and learning with CSOs:

- 21 members use agreements or contracts with a results framework, for example a logical framework or a results matrix with indicators
- 16 members use agreements or contracts with (adaptive) results frameworks, for example a theory of change, logical framework or a results-matrix with indicators
- 10 members use agreements or contracts aligning to CSOs' strategic objectives and internal systems and approaches to planning, monitoring and evaluation
- 8 members use agreements or contracts with objectives or milestones, but do not use results framework with indicators.

Source: Responses to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

To strengthen the relevance and CSO ownership of monitoring and reporting and reduce the administrative burden on CSOs, members pursue a strategy of using indicators defined by or with CSOs in performance results frameworks or matrices. Approximately half of responding members use this type of bottom-up approach, allowing *all* (15 respondents) or *some* (16 respondents) of the *indicators in results frameworks or matrices* to be *defined by CSOs* or allowing *indicators [to] be jointly defined between the member and CSOs* (Box 2.5).⁵⁷ Ten responding members use more than one approach.

As one example, the format for the yearly outcome monitoring and reporting of the Belgian Federal Public Service (FPS) Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation was developed in consultation with Belgian CSOs and combines some government-defined requirements with CSOs' defined indicators.

Reporting CSOs rank their progress using a four-point scale and are not obliged to provide a detailed narrative except on objectives that receive the lowest score.

Several members refer to ways in which they are placing greater emphasis on iterative or adaptive approaches as integral to results monitoring and performance optimisation, and they note methods they are trying out to enhance learning. Just over half of responding members (16) indicate that they use *adaptive results frameworks as a basis for reporting and learning between members and CSOs* (Box 2.4).

Box 2.5. Defining results indicators

Members use indicators in a variety of ways:

- 16 members' frameworks and/or matrices for CSOs' monitoring and reporting contain both CSO-defined and member-defined indicators
- 15 members allow CSOs to define the indicators
- 9 members work with CSOs to jointly define indicators
- 2 members define the indicators for CSOs.

Source: Responses to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019).

Sida is one of the members that has embraced the iterative approach referred to as adaptive management. For Sida, adaptive management inherently recognises that development results are not always, and perhaps only rarely, achieved via a linear path. Adaptive management is a way to provide Sida staff and partners “more leeway to adjust their efforts based on their judgement and it encourages them to reconsider their strategies” (Sida, 2019_[56]). Adaptive management can be an especially relevant approach when a CSO is being supported to affect transformative social or institutional changes, including strengthening civil society in partner countries, rather than when a CSO is supported as an implementing agent on behalf of a member (Sida, 2019, p. 15_[22]). In another example, USAID notes in its survey response that it is increasingly using what is called a collaborating, learning and adapting (CLA) approach. Among other benefits, CLA is seen to reduce duplication through knowledge sharing and co-ordination within USAID and with other development actors; improve effectiveness by grounding programmes in evidence and proven or promising practices; and enable adaptive course corrections during implementation to shorten the path to results achievement.

Member survey responses show additional examples of member attempts to better integrate learning into monitoring processes. The use of theories of change in Belgium's five-year programmes with CSOs has encouraged more flexibility to modify programmes based on learning through implementation, while mid-term learning evaluations precede the final accountability evaluation of these programmes. Staff of the Belgium FPS Foreign Affairs organise field visits with its CSO programme partners at least once every year, and reports about these visits are published on an internal knowledge database for easy access by other staff. Irish Aid has a similar approach to country-level monitoring visits of its partners, involving both staff and a pool of consultants. A terms of reference template is used for these monitoring visits to maximise lesson learning and enrich comparative findings. In the case of ADA, CSOs themselves lead programme evaluations, but the Civil Society and Evaluation units are consulted and provide quality assurance throughout the process in a collaborative spirit that allows for joint learning while increasing the evaluations' use and quality. The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs brings together its Dialogue and Dissent partners annually to discuss results progress, implementation challenges and success strategies.

Most CSOs responding to the CSO survey, in contrast, indicate that in their experience, members are not using monitoring and reporting of CSOs' supported initiatives as a source of learning – regardless of

whether the learning is by and for members, the supported CSOs or for the wider CSO community. Though monitoring reports may contain lessons learned sections, actual learning on the basis of these lessons does not appear to receive concerted attention. The responses of CSOs suggest that overall, there are missed opportunities for sharing outcomes, successes and good practices based on CSOs' lessons from monitoring.

Consultations with CSOs and members for this study reveal additional elements of good practice for monitoring and learning from results. One such element is working in a consultative, interactive way with CSO partners to develop results indicators and monitoring frameworks. Such an approach is considered a worthwhile investment in strengthening CSOs' monitoring and learning capacity, not solely for the agreement at hand but for the long term. Another necessary element of good practice is openness on the part of CSOs to report on lack of progress and openness on the part of members to accept the value of learning from failure or at least from slow progress.

Also noted in consultations is the value of including dialogue with partner country government representatives, where feasible, as part of the planning and monitoring process. This can help to foster joint learning and ensure relevance and complementarity and can be an important investment in the accountability of both CSOs and members at partner country level.

In sum, members face a dilemma when it comes to their approaches to CSOs' monitoring and reporting. They may fully understand that flexibility to use CSOs' own indicators and frameworks can increase relevance and ownership while reducing the administrative burden on CSOs. But at the same time, they are constrained by the need to demonstrate results to the public in member countries. Results monitoring is an area of ongoing effort by members to identify methods that both meet needs and better integrate learning. Iterative or adaptive approaches to results management are gaining ground.

2.10. Accountability and transparency of CSOs and members

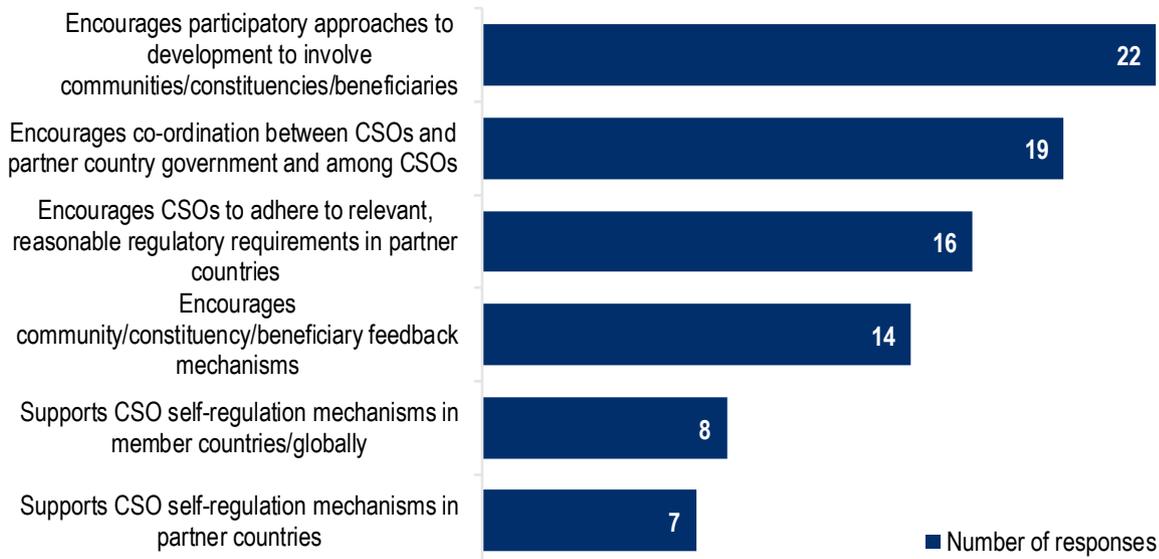
Key findings

- A majority of members indicate that they encourage CSOs to foster relationships of accountability in the partner countries CSOs work in and that they use multiple approaches to encourage CSOs to do so.
- More members need to assess and address how they support and engage with CSOs to ensure that their practices do no harm to CSOs' accountability at partner country level.
- Members are practicing transparency by making information about their financial flows to CSOs publicly accessible, though accessibility to partner country stakeholders is inadequately addressed.

As discussed in Section 2.3.3, the practice of *supporting CSOs to strengthen their effectiveness, accountability and transparency* as a way to promote enabling environments for CSOs in partner countries is the second most frequently selected answer of responding members (Figure 2.2). Asked how they *encourage CSOs to foster relationships of accountability in the partner countries they work in*, responding members most frequently select *encouraging participatory approaches* (22 responses) (Figure 2.10).⁵⁸ The next most frequently selected options, in descending order, are *encourage co-ordination between CSOs and partner country governments and among CSOs* (19 responses) and *encouraging CSOs to adhere to reasonable regulatory requirements in partner countries* (16 responses). Fewer members indicate that they *support CSO self-regulation mechanisms in member countries/globally* (8 responses) or

in partner countries (7 responses).⁵⁹ Additionally, 18 responding members say they encourage the use of 3 or more approaches.

Figure 2.10. Members' approaches to encourage CSOs to foster relationships of accountability in partner countries



Note: A total of 23 members responded, with respondents able to select multiple options. The options shown here are shortened versions of the language used in the survey.

Source: Responses to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

Some members' CSO policies speak to a gamut of CSO effectiveness and accountability issues that members encourage CSOs to address. For example, for the EC, issues of CSOs' representativeness, internal governance, transparency, and co-ordination with national or local authorities are all areas of CSO responsibility that indirectly form part of the enabling environment for CSOs needing attention (European Commission, 2012, p. 6_[17]). Norad's *Guiding Principles* call on CSOs to "be accountable to the affected populations" and offer examples of how to do so, including through development and implementation of publicly available ethical guidelines; whistle-blowing channels for financial irregularities, sexual harassment and other misconduct; and public disclosure of reports and evaluations, among other information (Norad, 2018, p. 8_[10]).⁶⁰ Member survey responses point to member steps to promote CSOs' accountability in relation to the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. One example is a new financial and moral integrity charter in Belgium. Another is DFID's new safeguarding standards applied through the programme management cycle, as described in the document entitled *DFID Enhanced Due Diligence: Safeguarding for External Partners* (DFID, 2020_[57]).⁶¹

When it comes to CSO self-regulation as an approach to encouraging CSOs to foster relationships of accountability in partner countries, three member policies encourage CSO participation in self-regulation: the EC communication entitled *The Roots of Democracy and Sustainable Development* (European Commission, 2012_[17]), the Sida (2019_[22]) *Guiding Principles* document, and Canada's *Policy for Civil Society Partnerships* (Global Affairs Canada, 2020_[28]). In each of these, reference is made to the Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness as an example of a CSO self-regulation initiative.

As noted (Sections 1.10 and 2.3.3), how members support and engage with CSOs has the potential to negatively affect CSOs' accountability in partner countries and can fuel the type of regulatory restrictions by partner country governments that shrink the space for CSOs' operations. Thus, the promotion of

enabling environments in partner countries also requires that members self-assess to understand and address whether and how their support for and engagement with CSOs may be undermining CSOs' accountability at partner country level and, in turn, contributing to disabling environments for civil society. Survey responses show, however, that few members are undertaking this kind of self-assessment (Figure 2.2).

Members' own accountability at partner country level is also a concern. One way that members address their own accountability is through transparency regarding their CSO funding. According to survey responses, 18 responding members use more than one practice to *make information about their support for CSOs publicly accessible* (Box 2.6).⁶²

Box 2.6. Making information about CSO support publicly accessible

The survey of members finds that:

- 15 members make annual reports available to the public
- 15 members report to their member country parliaments
- 9 members maintain an open access database covering all CSO support
- 8 members require CSOs to report to the International Aid Transparency Initiative standard
- 6 members maintain an open access database covering CSO support in specific partner countries
- 2 members provide reports to partner country governments.

Source: Responses to the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society survey of members, conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

Responding members tend to favour practices such as *annual reports to the public* and/or to *member country parliaments* (15 responses for each option) for the purpose of making information about their CSO support publicly accessible, and 9 have established *open access databases of their CSO support*. The disadvantage of these practices, however, is that they are not necessarily disaggregated by the partner countries in which the supported CSOs operate. Nor are the partner country stakeholders necessarily aware of their existence. Few members (5) maintain or participate in *open access databases covering their CSO support in specific partner countries*. The number of members requiring CSOs to report to the IATI standard has grown in the past few years, with 8 members responding that such reporting is a requirement, although as noted, IATI data are not necessarily easily disaggregated for partner country level access either.

In sum, survey responses indicate that members recognise CSO accountability and transparency as important components of enabling environments for CSOs in partner countries. There is use among members of a mix of methods to support CSOs to enhance their accountability in partner countries. However, members have not sufficiently taken up self-assessment to better understand and address how their support and engagement with CSOs might undermine CSO accountability. At the same time, transparency regarding members' country-specific flows for CSOs is inadequately developed.

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Notes

¹ Where the exact wording or key words of a survey question are used in this chapter, they are italicised.

² The survey data cover 29 out of 30 members. Responses to some survey questions were mandatory; others were optional. A response to the question on how members define CSOs and civil society was optional; 22 members responded. For some of the 7 members that did not respond, policy documents contained the definitions they use or that could be inferred from the ways such documents refer to CSOs or civil society.

³ This quotation is drawn from Belgium's survey response and the author's translation of the French version of the Belgian Law.

⁴ This survey question was mandatory, and all surveyed members responded to the question.

⁵ In the 2011 survey, *How DAC Members Work with CSOs*, only 20 members reported having a policy in place. However, the DAC had a smaller membership (24) in 2011 than in 2019, meaning that the percentage of responding members with such policies decreased from 2011 to 2019 from 87% to 76%.

⁶ While Switzerland indicated in its survey response that it did not have a policy, it has since developed one and therefore is included in the 22 members with such policies.

⁷ Hereinafter in this study, reference is made to policies, though the survey questions ask about members' policies/strategies.

⁸ The network is the Korea NGO Council for Overseas Development Cooperation.

⁹ This survey question was mandatory, and all members surveyed responded. One member, however, did not select any of the responses available for the *main objective for working with CSOs and civil society*, and instead responded with a different main objective. Members could select multiple responses.

¹⁰ The public engagement objective was raised in several members' narrative responses to the survey. In hindsight, public engagement should have been included in the survey's list of objective options.

¹¹ This survey question was optional; 26 members responded to the question of whether their *objectives for working with CSOs and civil society have changed in the past five years* and 3 members did not respond.

¹² Members' selection of human rights and democratisation as an objective is complemented by the use of a human rights-based approach to development, though the two are not the same.

¹³ According to the member survey, environments are considered enabling for CSOs in partner countries when legal and regulatory frameworks for the CSO sector facilitate CSOs' ability to exist and operate and when there is space for CSOs to engage in policy processes. In such environments, the rights to freedom of association, expression and peaceful assembly are respected and CSOs have access to institutionalised, multi-stakeholder spaces for dialogue where they can contribute to defining and monitoring development policy and planning.

¹⁴ This survey question was optional; 24 members selected one or more *practices to strengthen civil society in partner countries* and 5 members did not select any. Members could select multiple responses.

¹⁵ This survey question was optional; 24 members selected one or more *practices to promote enabling environments for CSOs and civil society in partner countries* and 5 members did not select any. Members could select multiple responses.

¹⁶ This survey question was mandatory, and all surveyed members responded to the question.

¹⁷ The design of the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society surveys preceded the adoption of the DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, and coverage of the nexus was not part of the surveys. The commentary provided here on members' treatment of the Recommendation recognises that comprehensive coverage of how members are addressing the nexus is not to be found in their CSO policies. Plans for disseminating and supporting implementation and monitoring of the Recommendation are underway at the OECD Development Co-operation Directorate in collaboration with the International Network on Conflict and Fragility.

¹⁸ This survey question asked *what does your institution identify as the comparative advantages of working with CSOs*. The question was mandatory, and all surveyed members responded to it. Members could select multiple options.

¹⁹ There are more members that ascribe comparative advantages to member country and international CSOs than there are members that ascribe comparative advantages to partner country CSOs in all but these two comparative advantage areas. That some members do not support partner country CSOs directly does not fully explain this, as only two of the members not supporting partner country CSOs directly chose to not select any comparative advantages for partner country CSOs.

²⁰ This survey question was mandatory, and all surveyed members responded to it. Members could select multiple responses.

²¹ While the surveys refer to *funding mechanisms/modalities*, this study refers simply to funding mechanisms.

²² This survey question was mandatory. However, one member did not reply to this question and thus the total number of respondents is 28.

²³ For the survey, *partnership/framework* and *core support* were provided as a single option.

²⁴ This survey question was mandatory, and all surveyed members responded to the question.

²⁵ This survey question was mandatory, and all surveyed members responded to the question.

²⁶ This survey question was optional; 22 members selected one or more *main influences on their decisions regarding financial support mechanisms for CSOs* and 7 members did not select any. Members could select multiple responses.

²⁷ This survey question was mandatory, and all surveyed members responded to it. Members could select multiple responses.

²⁸ The term "developing country-based" is used here and elsewhere in this study specifically when referring to OECD statistics, as that is the term used in the DAC statistical reporting directives. See also Section 1.2.

²⁹ These percentage figures do not add up to 100% because a small portion (almost 1% in 2018) of members' CSO flows are reported in OECD statistics as undefined by CSO type.

³⁰ Some of the increase in the reported share of flows for developing country-based CSOs and/or for international CSOs may also be due to how flows are reported, with members now attributing to these CSOs the bulk of flows previously reported as undefined. The share of flows reported as undefined declined from almost 8% of total flows for CSOs in 2010 to almost 1% in 2018.

³¹ This survey question was mandatory. However, as one member did not reply to this question, the total number of respondents is 28. Members could select multiple responses.

³² This survey question was optional; 23 members responded to the question of whether they have *funding mechanisms that explicitly support CSOs to engage in south-south or triangular co-operation* and 6 did not respond to the question.

³³ This survey question was optional; 22 members selected one or more *main influences on their decisions regarding the type of CSOs supported and on their policies and strategies related to CSOs or civil society* and seven members did not select any. Members could select multiple responses.

³⁴ This survey question would have been more informative had it been separated into two separate queries, one on *type of CSOs supported* and a second on *policies, strategies and priorities*.

³⁵ It should be noted, however, that for such members, other means can be used to reach partner country-based CSOs. So while the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development does not directly support partner country CSOs, German implementing agencies such as Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit and KfW do. The Czech Republic notes its contribution to multi-donor pooled funds and funding via the European Union and UN bodies as ways it reaches partner country-based CSOs.

³⁶ Of course, the level of public trust in CSOs varies by member country, by CSO and over time. Nonetheless, it can be said to be higher than public trust in partner country CSOs, as these are less directly connected to and known by member country publics.

³⁷ The *voice of member country CSOs and the public* tied for third place, in terms of frequency of responses, with the influence of recommendations from *members' assessments/evaluations*.

³⁸ This survey question was mandatory, and all surveyed members responded to the question. Members could select multiple responses.

³⁹ This survey question was optional; 23 members responded to the question of whether *the type of CSO or civil society they support has changed in the last five years* and 6 members did not respond to the question.

⁴⁰ Each of these members consult with partner country CSOs on at least four of the five policy areas in Table 2.2.

⁴¹ This survey question was mandatory, and all surveyed members responded to the question. Members could select multiple responses.

⁴² This survey question was optional; 24 members responded whether their *approach to consultation with CSOs has changed in the last five years* and 5 members did not respond to the question.

⁴³ This survey question was optional; 24 members selected one or more *main influences on their decisions regarding their approach to consultation with CSOs* and 5 members did not select any. Members could select multiple responses.

⁴⁴ This survey question asked about *influences on members' decisions regarding their approach to consultation with CSOs* and members' approach to *public awareness/development education/citizen engagement*. CSOs' role in public awareness raising is discussed in Section 2.6.1.

⁴⁵ This survey question was optional; 19 members selected one or more *methods used to co-ordinate and harmonise their CSO support and engagement with other donors at partner country or headquarters level* and 10 members did not select any. Members could select multiple responses.

⁴⁶ This survey question was mandatory. All but one surveyed member responded, for a total of 28 respondents.

⁴⁷ One member, the EC, indicates CSOs are *very satisfied* with its *consultation processes at headquarters level*; 16 members indicate that CSOs are *satisfied*; 7 indicate that CSOs are *partially satisfied*; and 5 indicate that *data on level of satisfaction is not available*. None of the responding members indicate that CSOs are *not satisfied at all* with *consultation processes at headquarters level*. One respondent indicating that *data is not available* also indicated that *CSOs are satisfied* with the consultation processes, hence the total number of responses is 29.

⁴⁸ Four responding members indicate CSOs are *satisfied* with *consultation processes at partner country level* and five indicate they are *partially satisfied*. None indicate that CSOs are *very satisfied* or *not satisfied at all* with *consultation processes at partner country level*. Ten members indicate that *data on level of satisfaction is not available*.

⁴⁹ This survey question was optional; 20 members selected one or more *funding proposal formats for CSO funding* and 9 members did not select any. Members could select multiple responses.

⁵⁰ This survey question was mandatory. All but 2 surveyed members responded, for a total of 27 respondents. Members could select multiple responses.

⁵¹ This survey question was optional; 23 members selected one or more options related to *duration of financial support for CSOs* and six members did not select any. Members could select multiple responses.

⁵² This survey question was optional; 24 members selected one or more option for *frequency for reporting for CSOs* and five members did not select any. Members could select multiple responses.

⁵³ This survey question was optional; 19 members selected one or more *methods used to co-ordinate and harmonise their CSO support and engagement with other donors at partner country or headquarters level* and 10 members did not select any. Members could select multiple responses.

⁵⁴ This survey question was mandatory. However, one member did not reply to this question, thus the total number of respondents is 28. Members could select multiple responses.

⁵⁵ This survey question was optional; 11 members selected one or more reasons for *why they pool funding for CSOs* and 18 members did not select any reason. Members could select multiple responses.

⁵⁶ This survey question was mandatory. However, one member did not reply to this question, meaning that the total number of respondents is 28. Members could select multiple responses.

⁵⁷ This survey question was mandatory. However, 2 members did not reply to this question, meaning that the total number of respondents is 27. Members could select multiple responses.

⁵⁸ This survey question was optional; 23 members selected one or more approaches to *encourage CSOs to foster relationships of accountability in the partner countries they work in* and 6 members did not select any. Members could select multiple responses.

⁵⁹ This survey question could more appropriately have asked whether members urge CSOs to *participate in* such self-regulation mechanisms rather than whether they provide *support to CSO self-regulation mechanisms*, possibly leading to a more positive responses from members.

⁶⁰ The *Guiding Principles* for Norad's support to civil society stipulate that public disclosure must be at a level of detail that does not put staff, partners or affected populations at risk.

⁶¹ The design of the How DAC Members Work with Civil Society surveys preceded the adoption of the DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance, and coverage of the sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment issue was not part of the surveys.

⁶² This survey question was optional; 24 members selected one or more practices to *make information about their CSO support publicly accessible* and 5 members did not select any. Members could select multiple responses.



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